

# Press Brief

**Contact:** Rwanda Health Communication Centre:  
+250788350035/malick.kayumba@rbc.gov.rw

## **U.S Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Azar leads U.S. Delegation to Rwanda regarding Ebola Outbreak**

**Kigali, September 15, 2019-** The United States Department of Health and Human Services Secretary, Alex Azar, led a delegation to Rwanda on Sunday, on behalf of the Trump administration, as part of a tour in the region regarding the Ebola outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

To assess the situation on the ground, Secretary Azar was accompanied by twenty-nine people including delegates from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), and local U.S. government officials.

Delegates met with Rwanda Minister of Health Dr. Diane Gashumba, and Ministry of Health and Rwanda Biomedical Center representatives to celebrate achievements in health system strengthening through a partnership between the two countries.

Secretary Azar reaffirmed the U.S. support in combating the Ebola crisis across borders and commended the Rwanda Health Sector for building a strong capacity in prevention and preparedness efforts.

“The U.S. government has supported us for the last twenty years in building a strong health system from the community level up to the central level. It is very meaningful to us and has contributed to the high level of preparedness regarding Ebola”, said Dr. Gashumba.

The United States has been a key partner in supporting Rwanda, through the CDC and USAID. Secretary Azar also touched on Rwanda’s advancements in the prevention and treatment of disease.

“I want to commend Rwanda for its overall public health accomplishments by achieving tremendous progress on important goals. Rwanda has achieved MDG 4 and 5 pertaining to infant and maternal health and there has also great progress on MDG 6 regarding HIV and Malaria. The US Health Department through the Center for Disease Control and Prevention can now count more than 16 years of direct partnership with the Rwandan Ministry of Health through PEPFAR”, said Secretary Azar.

Secretary Azar and Dr. Gashumba spoke of continued opportunities for growth including the importance of coordination between the governments to keep Rwandans safe and healthy.

To close out the day, delegates paid tribute to victims of the Genocide against the Tutsi at the Kigali Genocide Memorial. In his message in the visitor's book at the memorial, Secretary Azar wrote "What happened in Rwanda should have never taken place. We will never forget."