

Forward notice of arrival and health precautions to be taken for calling ports in Gabon

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In consideration of the health situation which currently prevails in West Africa, i.e. the epidemic of Ebola hemorrhagic fever, and taking in account the non-negligible risks it represents for our country, the Health Ministry, via the Directorate of the National Laboratory and the National Institute of Public Hygiene and Sanitation and the Office for the Ports and Roads of Gabon (OPRAG) have held a meeting on the 14th of August of 2014 in order to find ways and means in order to minimize the risks of propagation of this epidemic in our country.

To this effect, pursuant to the precautionary principle, some preventive measures have been adopted in relation to the berthing of vessels in our ports. The measures are as follows:

Any vessel willing to call in the ports of Gabon, shall send to the Port Master's office, three (3) days prior to her arrival, the exhaustive list of all the ports the vessel called during the thirty (30) days preceding her ETA;

- Any vessel coming from or having called in at least one of the ports of countries currently hit by the Ebola and with no person of Gabonese citizenship is forbidden to call in the ports of Gabon;
- Wearing gloves is compulsory for all persons who will be in contact with any vessel and her crew. Any person not wearing gloves will be prevented to access the vessel;
- The health inspectors of the National Institute of Public Hygiene and Sanitation will board the berthing vessels at the same time than the pilots;
- The access to the vessels is forbidden to any person before the health inspectors of the National Institute of Public Hygiene and Sanitation will have disembarked;
- No crew member is allowed to exit the port limits until further notice,
- No crew change is authorized until further notice;

Health being a concern of all, all the administrations as well as the operators working in the ports of Gabon are in charge to the implementation of the provision of the present notice to the extent of their own tasks.

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