

# Biographies of Members of, and Advisers to the Meeting of the International Health Regulations (IHR) Emergency Committee for Ebola Viral Disease in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

## Chair

### Professor Robert Steffen



Department of Epidemiology and Prevention of Infectious Diseases, University of Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland  
Professor Robert Steffen, Professor Emeritus at the University of Zurich, Switzerland, was the Head of the Division of Communicable Diseases in the Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Prevention Institute and Director of a World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Traveller's Health. Currently, he is also Adjunct Professor in the Epidemiology, Human Genetics & Environmental Sciences Division of the University of Texas School of Public Health in Houston, Texas, USA.

He began his systematic research in morbidity and mortality of illnesses and accidents related to international travel with the aim of concluding on preventive strategies. In 1988 he convened the first Conference of International Travel Medicine in Zurich, and thereafter became a co-founder and President of the International Society of Travel Medicine which launched the GeoSentinel project jointly with the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In addition to (co-)authoring almost 400 publications, he was the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Travel Medicine the International Journal of Public Health.

Not limiting his focus to travel health, he has presided over the Swiss Federal Commission for Influenza Pandemic Planning and Response and he was Vice-President both of the Federal Commission on Vaccination and of the Swiss Bioterrorism Committee.

He has been invited by WHO to be an advisor or Chairman of advisory boards, such as during the revision of the International Health Regulations (IHR), on malaria, tuberculosis, yellow fever, vaccine preventable diseases, epidemiological preparedness in international airports, aircraft disinsection for controlling the international spread of vector borne diseases, and on public health measures in chemical and biological warfare. He also served in UN peacekeeping missions in Namibia and the Western Sahara.

Professor Steffen served as Vice-Chair of the 2014-2016 IHR Emergency Committee for Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), Chair of the 2018 IHR Emergency Committee for EVD which took place in May 2018, and Chair of the IHR Emergency Committee on Ebola in October 2018.

## Members

### Dr Preben Aavitsland



Senior Consultant, Professor, Domain for infectious disease prevention, health and the environment, Norwegian Institute of Public Health, Oslo, Norway.

Dr Aavitsland is the former state epidemiologist of Norway (2002-2012). He served for 21 years in various posts at the Norwegian Institute of Public Health until 2012, including several leading roles, such as Director of Preparedness. He was the Norwegian member of the Advisory Forum of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the EU's Network Committee for Communicable Diseases.

Dr Aavitsland was part of the Norwegian delegation in the 2004-2005 negotiations on the International Health Regulations. He served on the 2010-2011 Review Committee on the Functioning of the International Health Regulations (2005) in relation to Pandemic (H1N1) 2009, and on the 2015-2016 Review Committee on the Role of the International Health Regulations (2005) in the Ebola Outbreak and Response.

He has published extensively on infectious disease epidemiology and control and supervised eight PhD candidates at the University of Oslo. He was Medical Editor at the Journal of the Norwegian Medical Association for 13 years and is now on the editorial board of Epidemiology and Infection.

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### Professor Lucille Blumberg



Deputy-Director, Head of Division and Head of Travel Health at the National Institute for Communicable Diseases, National Health Laboratory Service, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Division of Public Health Surveillance and Response and Centre for Emerging , Zoonotic and Parasitic Diseases.

She trained at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, and has specialist qualifications in clinical microbiology, infectious diseases and travel medicine.

She is the founding head of the of the Public Health Surveillance and Response Division which is responsible for outbreak preparedness and response, travel medicine, and surveillance for diseases of public health importance. She is a medical consultant to the Emerging Pathogens Centre on rabies and viral haemorrhagic fevers.

Professor Blumberg's special interests are tropical diseases, travel medicine, mass gatherings, severe malaria, the viral haemorrhagic fevers and rabies.

She is a member of South African expert groups on Ebola, rabies, malaria (Chair of the national advisory group) and National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) lead for the WHO Collaborating Centre for Mass Gatherings. She was a member of the 2014-2015 IHR Emergency Committee for Ebola Virus Disease (EVD). In January 2017 she was appointed Chairperson of the Yellow Fever Advisory Group to WHO for travellers (GRYFF).

Professor Lucille Blumberg was also member of the 2018 IHR Emergency Committee for EVD which took place in October 2018.

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## Dr Abdoulaye Bousso



Director, Senegal Health Emergency Operations Center, Dakar, Senegal. Dr Abdoulaye Bousso is a national of Senegal, and is an expert in disaster management and health emergencies. He is also an International Health Regulations and Health Emergency Operations Center expert for WHO. He established one of the fully functional Health Operation Centers in Africa Dr Bousso has degree in medicine, disaster management, orthopedic and trauma surgery and administration and finance.

He is also a humanitarian, member of Médecins Sans Frontières, and as such has worked as a surgeon in different operation theatres in Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Haiti.

He has occupied senior positions in Senegal as a Technical Adviser to the Minister of Health, Vice-President of the Senegalese Medical Council and Secretary-General of the Senegalese Physicians' Union.

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## Dr Martin Cetron



Director, Division of Global Migration and Quarantine, National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta Emergency, USA.

Dr Cetron holds faculty appointments in the Division of Infectious Disease at the Emory University School of Medicine and the Department of Epidemiology at Rollins School of Public Health. He received his B.A. from Dartmouth College in 1981 and his M.D. from Tufts University in 1985. He trained in Internal Medicine at the University of Virginia and Infectious Diseases at the University of Washington before joining the CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service and becoming a Commissioned Officer in the United States Public Health Service (PHS) in 1992.

His primary research interests are global health and migration with a focus on emerging infections, tropical diseases, and vaccine-preventable diseases in mobile populations. Dr Cetron has co-authored more than 100 publications. He has also been a leader in public health emergency preparedness and response activities at CDC and is a graduate of the Harvard School of Public Health & Kennedy School of Government's National Preparedness Leadership Institute. For over 20 years, he has conducted epidemiologic research globally, developed global health policy and led domestic and international outbreak investigations including high profile international emergency responses to emerging infectious disease outbreaks [Anthrax bioterrorism 2001, SARS epidemic 2003, U.S. Monkeypox 2003, Hurricane Katrina/ Rita 2005, H1N1 influenza pandemic 2009, Haiti Earthquake / Cholera Responses 2010-11, Japan Tsunami-Radiation 2011, H7N9 2013, and MERS CoV 2012-3, Coronavirus Response (2013), Unaccompanied Children Central America (2014), Ebola Response (2014) & Zika Virus (2015).

Dr Cetron has been a consultant to several WHO Expert Committees: the United States delegation intergovernmental negotiations of IHR 2005, the Pandemic Influenza and IHR Review Panel 2010, and the IHR emergency committee roster of independent experts. He also was elected in 2016 for a fellowship with IDSA (Infectious Diseases Society of America) & ASTMH (American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene).

Matin Cetron was a member of 2018 IHR Emergency Committee for EVD which took place in October 2018.

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## Dr Joanna Jordaan



Chief, Aviation Medicine Section, International Civil Aviation Organization, Montreal, Canada.

Dr Jordaan is also the Manager of the “Collaborative Arrangement for the Prevention and Management of Public Health Events” (CAPSCA) programme in Civil Aviation. CAPSCA is a global multi-partner programme (ICAO, WHO, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, aviation industry and other partners) providing assistance to international airports and States to help build capacity to manage public health emergencies.

Previously, Dr Jordaan was the Medical Director of Occupational Health at International SOS, where she was responsible for the oversight of

Emergency Medical clinics and occupational Health clinics of International

SOS corporate clients in remote areas in sub-Saharan African countries. In this position she also facilitated air ambulance transport of patients from remote clinics to specialized medical centres of care.

Prior to International SOS she was employed by the Life Occupational Health Hospital group as the Project Director for Transnet Freight Rail in South Africa, reviewing the client’s health policies based on occupational risk assessments and compliance audits and assuming accountability for quality management of clinic operations.

From 2007 to 2011 she was the Medical Director of South African Airways, responsible for planning and managing all medical related aspects of the company’s operations including strategic management, on-board medical care and public health emergencies.

Prior to this she was an Independent Consultant for four years in the aviation industry, consulting to private and corporate clients on various aspects related to aviation medicine.

In 1999 she established the Civil Aviation Medicine department in the South African Civil Aviation Authority, after having worked in the military medical aviation industry for several years. She remained at the Civil Aviation Authority as the Senior Manager of Civil Aviation Medicine until 2003 and was responsible for developing civil aviation medical standards and ensuring industry compliance with national regulations and international standards.

Other current professional activities include memberships in the Aerospace Medical Association, International Academy of Aviation and Space Medicine Faculty, South African Society of Aerospace and Environmental Medicine and the South African Society of Occupational Medicine.

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## Dr Brian McCloskey



Senior Consulting Fellow at the Chatham House Centre on Global Health Security, London, United Kingdom.

He has worked in public health at local, regional, national and international level over a period of 25 years, including the Health Protection Agency (HPA), with a remit for emergency planning and responsibility for cross government aspects of the agency’s response to major emergencies. This included the HPA’s response to the London bombings, Buncefield Oil Depot fire, flooding incidents and pandemic flu. He also had the lead role in planning the public health services for the 2012 London Olympics.

Brian has been working with the WHO’s Mass Gatherings Advisory Group since 2008, heading up the Collaborating Centre on Mass Gatherings

working with mass gatherings such as the World Cup in South Africa as well as the London Olympics.

Brian acted as the PHE National Incident Director for Ebola when it became a national incident in 2014 and was seconded to work with the United Nations Special Envoy on Ebola, based in Geneva. Brian is also a Senior Consulting Fellow at the Centre for Global Health Security at Chatham House in London and a Professor at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. In the January 2013 New Year's Honours List, Brian was awarded a Commander of the British Empire for services to public health.

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### **Professor Jean-Jacques Muyembe-Tamfum**



Director-General of the National Institute for Biomedical Research and Professor of Microbiology at Kinshasa University Medical School, Kinshasa, Gombe, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

He was part of the original research team at Yambuku Catholic Mission that investigated the first outbreak of Ebola virus disease. He later worked on the WHO team that implemented detection and control measures in the first documented urban outbreak of Ebola, in Kikwit, DRC, in 1995. For 20 years, he has chaired international committees for the control of Ebola outbreaks in Gabon (1996 and 2001) and DRC (2007, 2012, and 2014).

Dr Muyembe has worked at Institut Pasteur de Dakar and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He received a PhD in virology from the University of Louvain, Belgium, and a medical degree from Université de Léopoldville, DRC. Professor Muyembe-Tamfum was also an Advisor in 2014-2015 IHR Emergency Committee for Ebola virus disease.

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### **Ms Olubimi Ojo**



Director, Disease Surveillance, Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, Ebitu Ukiwe Street, Jabi- Abuja, FCT, Nigeria.

Mrs Ojo is currently responsible for the management of the surveillance arm of the national public health institute, with focus on reporting and analysis of data of Nigeria's priority diseases - Lassa fever, cholera, measles, yellow fever, cerebrospinal meningitis and monkeypox. Additional responsibilities include her coordination of implementation of International Health Regulations (IHR, 2005). She has held this position for the past 11 years alongside her duties in the Federal Ministry of Health.

She led the voluntary Joint External Evaluation (JEE) and the development of National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS) in the country and she has supported JEE and NAPHS activities in other countries including South Africa, Zambia, Ghana within the region and the development of a 5-year Strategy Plan of Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (IDSR) in Liberia.

She was a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Technical Committee on Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in 2014 charged with the responsibility of advising the President of ECOWAS Commission on the EVD outbreak and response.

She has been involved in different public Health activities in Nigeria for the past 34 years including Yellow Fever vaccine production, immunization activities and as public health cross border focal person.

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## Jean-Marie Okwo-Bele, MD, MPH



Independent Public Health Consultant and Former Director of the Vaccines and Immunization Department, World Health Organization (WHO), Geneva, Switzerland.

During his 36 years of career in public health, Dr Okwo-Bele has worked at the national level in the Dem Rep of Congo, at the WHO regional office for Africa as well as at the UNICEF and WHO Headquarters, in support of child health, disease control and immunization programmes, contributing to policy formulation, management capacity support, advocacy and fundraising. From 1993 to 2002, he launched and directed the Polio Eradication Initiative in Africa, resulting in the reduction of polio endemic countries from 34 to 2.

At the WHO Headquarters, he facilitated the development of the Global Vaccine Action Plan 2011-2020, endorsed by the World Health Assembly. Under his leadership, the WHO's vaccine policy recommendations became much needed references in guiding country level vaccine adoption as well as global investments in the field of immunization. Dr Okwo-Bele has been involved with the Gavi operations and governance since its inception and was the WHO alternate member of the Gavi board and member of the Policy and Programme Board Committee for several years.

After his retirement, he served as Senior Advisor to the Health Minister of the D.R.Congo on strategic matters related to Ebola outbreak response (May 2018-April 2019). He now provides board advisory and consulting services and contributes to vaccinology courses as a faculty member.

Dr Okwo-Bele received his Medical Degree from the Medical School of the University of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo and holds a Master of Public Health from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

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## Professor Helen Rees



Executive Director, Wits Reproductive Health and HIV Institute, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa.

Professor Rees is the Executive Director of the University of Witwatersrand's largest research institute, Wits RHI, where she is also a professor in obstetrics and gynecology and Co-Director of ALIVE, the Wits African Leadership in Vaccinology Expertise centre.

She is an honorary professor at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and a fellow of Murray Edwards College, Cambridge University.

She is globally recognised for her work on HIV, vaccines and reproductive health. She is the Chairperson of the South African Health Products

Regulatory Authority, the national drug regulatory authority. She chairs the

WHO's African Regional Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (RITAG) having previously chaired the WHO's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunisation (SAGE).

Professor Rees is the Chair of the IHR Emergency Committee concerning the international spread of poliovirus. She was a member of the IHR Review Committee on the Role of the International Health Regulations (2005) in the Ebola Outbreak and Response, tasked with making recommendations to WHO about steps required to improve the global response to public health emergencies. She was a member of the IHR Emergency Committee on Yellow Fever in 2016 having chaired the WHO Consultation on the Elimination of Yellow Fever Epidemics. She is the Co-Chair of the WHO SAGE Working Group on Ebola Vaccines, and Co-chaired the WHO 'High Level Meeting' on Ebola vaccines

with WHO's Director-General. She is also a member of the WHO SAGE Committee evaluating progress towards the Decade of Vaccines.

Professor Rees is a member of the GAVI Board and the GAVI Programme and Policy Committee, and chairs the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's Committee on Single Dose HPV vaccines. She chairs the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovation (CEPI) and serves on the CEPI Board. She chairs the Scientific Advisory Board of the Child Health and Mortality Prevention Surveillance study.

Professor Rees has won many international and national awards for her contribution to global health and to science, including being made an Officer of the British Empire (OBE) by Queen Elizabeth II and being awarded one of South Africa's highest awards, the South African National Order of the Baobab, for her contribution to medicine and to medical research.

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### **Professor Samba Sow**



Professor of Medicine, Directeur général, Centre pour la mise au point de vaccins du Mali, Centre National d'Appui à la Lutte contre la Maladie, Djicoroni para Bamako, Mali.

Professor Samba Sow is a Director General of the Center for Vaccine Development, Ministry of Health, Mali. He also holds faculty appointments as a Professor at the University of Maryland, Division of Geographic Medicine. He has been Director of the CVD-Mali since its inception in 2001. He received his B.S. from the Lycee Askia Mohamed, Bamako, Mali, M.D. from the Ecole Nationale de Medecine et Pharmacie du Mali (ENMP), and his MSC., from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

During his career, he has made substantial contributions to basic vaccinology, bacterial pathogenesis, clinical research, field epidemiology and public health policy in Mali and in Sub-Saharan Africa. Dr Sow currently serves as an alternate board member of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI). He is an Honorary International Fellow of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH).

Dr Sow is the recipient of the "Prix L'Avion de Medecine Tropicale", the Commemorative Fund lecture of ASTMH, and has been awarded the rank of "Officer of the National Order of Mali" (presented by the President of Mali, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, for efforts in controlling outbreaks in Mali). He has authored and co-authored more than 90 scientific articles and chapters.

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### **Dr Marsha Vanderford**



Former WHO Director of Communications and former Associate Director for Communications for the Center for Global Health at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, USA.

She provided headquarters communication coordination between CDC and other international responding agencies and was deployed to Sierra Leone during the West African Ebola outbreak (2014). She led CDC's Emergency Communication System during the H1N1 outbreak and several other international disease outbreaks. She served as the Chief of the Emergency and Risk Communication Branch at the CDC Emergency Operations Center; the Associate Director for Communication Science at the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control; and as a Professor at the University of South

Florida, for the Departments of Communication and Family Medicine.

Dr Vanderford trained in Preparedness and Crisis Management at Harvard University's JFK School of Government and in Incident Management through the Federal Emergency Management Agency. She has received awards, including the WHO Director-General's Team Award for Excellence for the Zika Virus Emergency Response, CDC Honor and Merit Awards, the Outstanding Health Marketing Scientist of the Year award, the DHHS Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service, and an Honor Award for an outstanding health communication book.

Dr Vanderford has published in a number of health and communication journals, and regularly represented the CDC at international, national, and regional meetings.

Dr Vanderford earned an M.A. in Communication at the University of Minnesota in 1978, and a Ph.D., also in Communication, from the same university in 1982. Her communications education focused on public communication campaigns, persuasion, intercultural communication and communication research methods.

Dr Vanderford was previously a Member of the IHR Emergency Committee for Polio and participated as a Member of the 2018 IHR Emergency Committee for Ebola Virus Disease which took place in October 2018.

## Advisers

### Dr Chikwe Ihekweazu



National Coordinator/ Chief Executive Officer of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, Nigeria's National Public Health Institute, Nigeria.

Dr Chikwe Ihekweazu is the Director General of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and was until January 2018, the Acting Director of the Regional Centre for Disease Control for West Africa.

Dr Ihekweazu trained as an infectious disease epidemiologist and has over 20 years' experience working in senior public health and leadership positions in several National Public Health Institutes, including the South African National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD), the UK's Health Protection Agency, and Germany's Robert Koch Institute (RKI).

Dr Ihekweazu has undertaken several short-term consultancies for the World Health Organisation (WHO), mainly in response to major infectious disease outbreaks (including two Ebola outbreaks) taking him to work in Geneva, Liberia, Malawi, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Turkey and Nigeria. He is widely published in medical peer review journals in his areas of expertise.

Dr Ihekweazu is on the board of the NGOs: Public Health Foundation of Nigeria, Society for Family Health, Education as a Vaccine and on the Africa Policy Advisory Board of ONE. Dr Ihekweazu is a graduate of the College of Medicine, University of Nigeria and has a Masters in Public Health (MPH) from the Heinrich-Heine University, Dusseldorf, Germany. In 2003, he was awarded a Fellowship for the European Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training (EPIET) and subsequently completed his Public Health specialisation in the UK. He is widely published in medical peer review journals. He is a TED Fellow and co-founder TEDxEuston and TEDxAbuja.

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## **Dr Rinat Maksyutov**



Director General, State Research Center of Virology and Biotechnology VECTOR, Federal Service for Surveillance on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Well-being, Russian Federation

Dr Maksyutov is currently leading the Institution's vaccine development research related to Ebola virus disease (EVD) that resulted in developing and licensing (2018) the Russian Federation's vaccine for EVD prevention, based on peptide antigens. Dr Maksyutov has also played a leading role in coordinating the Institution's technical assistance to the Republic of Guinea in combating the EVD outbreak (2014-2016) and during the post-epidemic period, as part of wider response and assistance provided by the Russian Federation to the Republic of Guinea.

Dr Maksyutov is currently leading the Russian Federation's research efforts focused on the development of safer, more effective vaccines, diagnostics and antivirals against smallpox. These efforts are coordinated with and approved by the WHO Advisory Committee on Variola Virus Research (ACVVR). Dr Maksyutov is the Head of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Orthopoxvirus Diagnosis and Repository for Variola Virus Strains and DNA at FBRI SRC VB VECTOR and a Member of ACVVR since 2016.

Dr Maksyutov's recent engagement with WHO includes consultancies and active participation as a WHO expert in several international meetings on high threat pathogens, smallpox vaccine stockpile policies, and implications of synthetic biology as it relates to smallpox research, preparedness and control.

Previously, Dr Maksyutov was the Head of the Laboratory of Diagnosis of and Repository for Variola Virus DNA, and then Deputy Director General for Research at VECTOR, Rospotrebnadzor.

Dr Maksyutov participated as a Member of the 2018 IHR Emergency Committee Ebola Virus Disease which took place in May 2018.

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## **Dr Carlos Navarro Colorado**



Principal Advisor, Public Health Emergencies on behalf of UNICEF's Executive Director (by delegation)

Dr Navarro has previously worked at CDC as an emergency epidemiologist (2010-2017), as an independent consultant on health and nutrition in emergencies (2005 -2010), and in a number of field assignments and coordination positions for ACF and MSF (1994-2004).

He has completed dozens of field emergency and outbreak assignments in field and leadership positions. His research work in emergency response has focused on outbreak response and on the treatment and prevention of acute malnutrition. He started the research department of ACF in 2000, and has been involved in the design and implementation of operational research in emergency settings since 1997, obtaining an MSc from LSHTM and PhD from Aberdeen University.

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## David Gressly



### UN Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator (EERC)

Mr David Gressly has broad experience working in peacekeeping missions, humanitarian assistance and development across the United Nations system. He was recently appointed as the UN Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He has most recently served as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Operations and Rule of Law for the United Nations peacekeeping mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) and previously as the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Stabilisation and Rule of Law and Humanitarian Coordinator in the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

Prior to that, Mr Gressly served for more than 20 years with the United Nations system, including as Assistant Secretary-General and Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Sahel for the 2012 food crisis and as Regional Coordinator covering South Sudan providing political and security support for the implementation of the comprehensive peace agreement leading to the independence of South Sudan. He has also served as Deputy Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan, covering South Sudan, implementing a comprehensive program of stabilization, recovery and development after the signature of the peace agreement.

Mr Gressly holds a Master of Business Administration in international finance from the American Graduate School of International Management in Phoenix, Arizona (United States)