

**High Level Taskforce on  
Innovative International Financing for Health Systems**

**International leaders call for more investment  
in global health**

**Press Statement: 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008**

A new high-level Taskforce to identify and promote innovative financing mechanisms for health results in poor countries, held its inaugural meeting in Doha at the UN Financing for Development Conference. This builds on substantial experience gained since the first conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey in 2002.

*"This is a unique moment for us all. These are extraordinary, challenging times for the global economy. Yet we know they are also extraordinary, challenging times for the millions of poor. For the tragic truth remains that a child dies every three seconds, a mother dies in pregnancy or childbirth every minute and there are around 7,000 new HIV infections every day"* said the UK Secretary of State Douglas Alexander in Doha at the first meeting of the Taskforce on Innovative International Financing for Health Systems.

The Taskforce brings together international leaders to identify new funding measures which will increase resources to improve the health of people in developing countries in keeping with the Millennium Development Goals. Specifically, the Taskforce's efforts will strengthen health systems and recruit and train health workers to prevent avoidable deaths and provide quality healthcare for the world's poorest people.

Mobilizing additional funds at a time when the global economy is in turmoil is a major challenge. Yet, reducing health spending will have long term consequences for developing countries. It is estimated that at least 100 million people will fall back into poverty as a result of the fuel, food and financial crises.

*"We need to innovate and hold ourselves accountable for raising the funds that are desperately needed to alleviate such widespread human suffering and distress"* said World Bank Vice-President for Human Development, Joy Phumaphi.

The Taskforce will submit a report to the G8 summit in 2009. The report will recommend a mix of innovative international financing mechanisms to mobilize the extra resources required to achieve the health MDGs. The Taskforce will promote international support for these recommendations to ensure their implementation. Taskforce members agreed that this is the time to work harder, think creatively and show that in times of crises the international community does not respond as many, but as one.

More information is on: <http://www.internationalhealthpartnership.net/taskforce.html> and the Taskforce Communications & Media Adviser Colleen Harris can be contacted on **+44 780 229 6737**, email [colleen@harrisprivate.com](mailto:colleen@harrisprivate.com) .

## **High Level Taskforce on Innovative International Financing for Health Systems**

Notes to editors

- 1) On 25 September 2007, in New York a group of world leaders met to launch the Global Campaign for the Health Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Global Campaign aims to give renewed impetus to the health MDGs 1c, 4, 5 and 6. These MDGs focus on the urgent need to improve nutrition, maternal, newborn and child health and to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, TB and other diseases.
- 2) One year after the Global Campaign was launched, the Taskforce was announced at the High Level Event in New York as part of the commitment to accelerate progress towards achieving the MDGs.
- 3) The Taskforce is co-chaired by UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown and President of the World Bank, Robert Zoellick and comprises 9 additional members:
  - President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (Liberia)
  - Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg (Norway)
  - Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (Health Minister, Ethiopia)
  - Bernard Kouchner (Foreign Affairs Minister, France)
  - Stephen Smith (Foreign Affairs Minister, Australia)
  - Giulio Tremonti (Finance Minister, Italy)
  - Heidemarie Wierczorek-Zeul (UN SG Special Envoy for Finance for Development Conference & Development Minister, Germany)
  - Margaret Chan (Director-General of the World Health Organisation)
  - Graça Machel (President and Founder, Foundation for Community Development, Mozambique)

Philippe Douste-Blazy, the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Innovative Financing will serve as a Special Adviser to the Taskforce.

- 4) The Taskforce will convene 4 times over the next 12 months, with a start-up meeting at the Financing for Development Conference in Doha in November. It will have final recommendations in time for the Italian G8 summit in July 2009 and a final report will be completed by the UN General Assembly. It will be supported by a Secretariat hosted by the World Bank and the WHO.
- 5) Taskforce recommendations will be implemented in line with the recent Accra Agenda for Action and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.
- 6) More information can be obtained on the web-site: <http://www.internationalhealthpartnership.net/taskforce.html> and from the Taskforce Communications and Media Adviser Colleen Harris on +447802296737 email [colleen@harrisprivate.com](mailto:colleen@harrisprivate.com) .