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## **MDG6 Target to Reduce Malaria Burden Achieved**

*Leaders & Health Experts Gather in New York to Celebrate Success against Leading Killer under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)*

**(19 November 2015; New York)** With roughly six weeks left under the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – a set of eight universally-agreed goals adopted in 2000 to rid the world of extreme poverty and disease by 2015 – H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, President of the 70<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly, and the Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Partnership Secretariat will gather global leaders, diplomats and health experts at the UN in New York this evening to celebrate the progress made against one of the world’s leading killers: malaria.

*"The world's success in rolling back malaria shows just what can be achieved with the right kind of determination and partnerships. It provides bold inspiration to all nations that seek to create a healthy environment for their children and adults," said H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, President of the 70<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly. "We can and we must eliminate malaria by 2030. This will require full implementation of the new strategy developed by the Roll Back Malaria Partnership and the World Health Organization. In it, we have the path forward – I urge all member states to fully support implementation of this strategic plan."*

Thanks to collective efforts and increased financing, the world has met and surpassed MDG6 targets to halt and begin reversing malaria incidence by 2015. Progress in the fight against malaria since 2000 averted more than 6.2 million malaria deaths, some 97% of which have been among young children. In Africa alone – where some 90% of all malaria-related deaths still occur – an estimated 69% reduction in malaria mortality among children under the age of five over the past fifteen years has helped to improve overall child survival rates and has directly contributed to MDG4.

Today, over 100 countries are already free of malaria, and at least 55 countries are on track to reduce malaria case incidence by 75% by the end of the year. For the first time in history, fewer people than ever are getting infected with malaria in Africa, and many countries around the world are focusing on elimination targets, with new regional commitments announced in the Americas, Eastern Mediterranean, Asia Pacific, and Africa.

*"Today, we celebrate major advances in our fight against malaria," United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, said in a message. "With stronger coordination by the Roll Back Malaria Partnership and increased financing, global mortality rates have decreased by more than half since 2000, and the global MDG target for malaria has been achieved."*

Despite unprecedented advancements, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates approximately 214 million cases of malaria infection in 2015, claiming the lives of approximately 472,000 people, the majority of them African children under five years of age. With more than half of the world’s population at risk of malaria infection, malaria remains a major cause and consequence of poverty and inequity worldwide. It impedes economic development, undermines food security, stops children going to school, and absorbs the capacity of national systems to respond effectively to health security threats.

Lives saved from effective malaria interventions have been linked to a 20% reduction in all-cause child mortality in sub-Saharan Africa since 2000, while efforts to prevent malaria in pregnancy have averted nearly 95,000 newborn deaths between 2009 and 2012. As the world transitions to a new set of 17 comprehensive Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recently

adopted by world leaders during the UN General Assembly in September – that will build on the MDGs, the Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Partnership urges continued commitment will be critical to achieve malaria elimination by 2030 and help advance broader development efforts across sectors.

In order to continue guiding multisectoral commitments and further expand progress, the RBM Partnership's *Action and Investment to defeat Malaria 2016-2030 (AIM) - for a malaria-free world* and the WHO's World Health Assembly endorsed *Global Technical Strategy (GTS) for Malaria 2016-2030* provide technical guidance and a framework for action and investment to achieve the ambitious malaria elimination targets. Together, the complementary documents outline the technical strategies required to continue driving down the burden of malaria, while charting the investment and collective actions needed to reach the 2030 malaria goals of reducing global malaria case incidence and deaths by 90% - compared to 2015 - and eliminating the disease in an additional 35 countries.

Launched by the UN Secretary-General and several heads of state during the 3<sup>rd</sup> *International Conference on Financing for Development* in Addis Ababa earlier this year and referenced by UN member states as the strategic framework to guide efforts toward the 2030 malaria elimination targets in the recent General Assembly Resolution A/RES/69/325, *Consolidating Gains and Accelerating Efforts to Control and Eliminate Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa, by 2015 and beyond*, the AIM and GTS will be highlighted among the diplomatic community in New York during this celebratory event.

Adequate and predictable financing and innovations for new tools will be critical to scale-up interventions and reach malaria elimination targets. In RBM's AIM document, experts outline that over US \$100 billion is needed to achieve 2030 target of reducing the malaria burden by 90%, with an additional US\$ 10 billion needed to fund research and development of new tools, including new drugs and insecticides. To achieve the first milestone of reducing malaria incidence and mortality rates by 40%, annual malaria investments will need to rise to US\$6.4 billion by 2020.

While total international and domestic funding peaked at US \$2.7 billion in 2013, current declines in international development financing is impacting the world's ability to maintain progress against malaria. Acceleration toward malaria elimination will require increased financing by the international donor community, as well as increased domestic financing by affected countries.

In 2012, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon named malaria as a top priority of his second mandate. At a cost of US \$5-8 per case averted, malaria has continually proven to be one of the most cost-effective investments in public health, with relatively low investments yielding high results even beyond the health sector, and experts estimate that the return will only continue growing as countries begin focusing on elimination targets. Impacting all 8 of the MDGs and spanning across the 17 SDGs, malaria prevention and treatment serves as an entry point to help advance progress against other health and development targets across the board by reducing school absenteeism, fighting poverty, and improving maternal and child health.

*“Under the MDGs, we have seen what can be achieved when we join our efforts and come together in a coordinated fashion. Thanks to our collective efforts, we have achieved the MDG for malaria and unlocked economic potential in communities around the world,” said Mr. Hervé Verhoosel, Representative of the Roll Back Malaria Partnership Secretariat in New York. “As we set our sights on elimination, we stand to avert nearly 3 billion cases of infection and generate some US \$4 trillion in additional economic output over the next 15 years. But we must ensure political commitment and predictable financial resources necessary to carry us over the finish line.”*

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**The Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM)**

RBM is the global framework for coordinated action against malaria. Founded in 1998 by UNICEF, WHO, UNDP and the World Bank and strengthened by the expertise, resources and commitment of more than 500 partner organizations, RBM is a public-private partnership that facilitates the incubation of new ideas, lends support to innovative approaches, promotes high-level political commitment and keeps malaria high on the global agenda by enabling, harmonizing and amplifying partner-driven advocacy initiatives. RBM secures policy guidance and financial and technical support for control efforts in countries and monitors progress towards universal goals.