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Press Release

Roll Back Malaria calls for G8 attention

Health leaders urge G8 parliamentarians to deliver healthcare in Africa

Tokyo, 2 July, 2008: Roll Back Malaria Partners called on Members of Parliaments from G8 countries meeting today to invest in one of the top 5 most cost-effective health interventions - malaria control. Doing so, they argued, reaps tangible rewards, generating nearly US\$ 20 in benefits for every invested dollar.

Parliamentarians, international organisations and NGOs focused their discussions on the link between health and development to secure funding at the upcoming G8 Summit for stopping the three big global killers - HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

In 2007, the G8 promised US\$ 60 billion to strengthen health systems and reach the Millennium Development Goals. A fraction of this funding, an estimated US\$ 3 billion a year, can put every person at risk of malaria under a protective bednet and provide universal access to effective treatment.

"Investing in malaria - a disease that stalls Africa's economic and social development - can draw the world closer to achieving 6 of the 8 Millennium Development Goals," said Dr. Coll-Seck, Executive Director of the RBM Partnership in her address to over 70 representatives of G8 country parliaments, international organisations and governments.

Reducing malaria cases will free as much as 40% of current public health expenditures and improve economic growth by up to 1.3% per year in endemic areas. Lower infection rates will diminish school absenteeism and improve children's learning capacity. Controlling malaria in Africa will clear the way to eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality, combating major disease and achieving universal primary education.

A 300% increase in funding for malaria over the last 3 years has enabled a number of endemic African countries to mark significant successes against the disease. Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Rwanda have reduced dramatically malaria incidence and mortality in target areas. Sustaining and building on these results, however, will require significantly more funding than the US\$ 1,3 billion that is currently available for malaria control.

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The Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM) is a public-private venture, providing cohesive and comprehensive support to countries burdened by malaria. The RBM mobilises a formidable assembly of expertise, infrastructure and funds for effective malaria control through partnering with malaria-endemic countries, international organisations, the private sector, nongovernmental and community-based organizations, foundations, and research and academic institutions.

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