



**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION **
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR AFRICA

PRESS RELEASE

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**Let's make our children's dream for a malaria free
future a reality – Dr Samba's**

Brazzaville, 23 April 2004 - Dr Ebrahim Malick Samba, WHO Regional Director for Africa has urged Member States to intensify anti-malaria activities, in order to achieve the objectives of the Abuja Declaration adopted in April 25, 2000 by the African Heads of State.

"Malaria control efforts have shown substantial progress and achieved significant results at country level, but we should not lose sight of our goal: halving the malaria burden by 2010".

Dr Samba made this declaration in a message delivered on the occasion of Africa Malaria Day (25 April 2004). He said he's confident that "Africa will succeed in attaining that goal. By doing this, we can guarantee that the African child's dream for a malaria free future will be a reality".

The theme of the Day is "*A malaria free future*", and the slogan "*Children For Children to Roll Back Malaria*" provides African Children the opportunity to campaign and raise awareness among themselves and adults in malaria-endemic countries and elsewhere.

"Countries should continue their efforts to scale up malaria control activities as we commemorate this year's Africa Malaria Day, with less than a year to the Abuja intermediary targets". These targets emphasize the following:

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- At least 60% of people suffering of malaria need prompt access to a cost effective treatment;
- At least 60% of children under 5 years of age and pregnant women who are exposed to malaria need access to insecticide-treated nets;
- At least 60% of pregnant women who are exposed to malaria need access to intermittent preventive treatment

Dr Samba stressed that malaria continues to affect people in the malaria-endemic region, particularly children. He pointed out that this year's event holds a special place in his heart. This will be the last time he will have the opportunity to celebrate Africa Malaria Day as WHO Regional Director as he will be retiring at the end of the year. He paid tribute to the efforts carried out in the last ten years:

- Scale up in the implementation since 1995 of malaria control activities,
- Funding by WHO of \$US 20 million in 1997-1998;
- Launching in 1998 of the African Initiative for Malaria Control (AIM) which has become part of the Global Roll Back Malaria Initiative;
- Signing in 2000 of the Abuja Declaration which committed African Governments to halve the burden of malaria;
- Institutionalisation in April 2000 of the Africa Malaria Day (AMD).

AMD is commemorated each year since 2001 with the support of the Global Partnership to Roll Back Malaria. The aim of this Initiative is to support countries put in place partnerships in order to strengthen malaria control activities.

All the 42 malaria-endemic countries in the African Region have developed programmes and 31 countries have submitted projects that have been approved by the Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

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