



Andris Piebalgs
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049, Brussels
Belgium

15 April 2011

Dear Mr Piebalgs,

Malaria continues to be a major threat for health and development in endemic countries, particularly those in sub-Saharan Africa where the disease is the leading cause of death for children under five.

On 25 April, the international community is commemorating the fourth World Malaria Day, marking a vital opportunity for the European Union and its member states to scale up measures to reach the WHO targets by 2015, thereby reducing the malaria burden by 75% compared to 2000 rates.

Despite progress, targets were not reached. 781,000 people died of malaria worldwide in 2009 compared to about one million in 2000. This is a reduction of about 20%, achieved only through a vast increase in international funding for malaria control. The WHO 2010 goal to halve the malaria burden was not achieved. Global estimates indicate that USD 5.1 billion are needed each year to fully fund the fight against malaria, but only USD 1.5 billion were globally disbursed in 2009.

More funding alone for procurement of current tools is not the solution to the problem. Today, malaria can be prevented, diagnosed and treated with a combination of existing tools, but given the threat of drug resistance, new, affordable, effective and innovative health tools urgently need to be developed. In addition, currently available interventions are not easily available to the affected population. Accessibility, acceptability and affordability of control interventions remain major problems that can only be fully addressed once countries develop stronger health systems..

More broad-based, holistic support is required. In its malaria control efforts the international community should include support to strengthening of local health systems. Only with a functioning and locally accepted health infrastructure in place, can access to prevention, diagnosis and treatment of malaria be ensured for all people in need. Interventions aiming at improving use rates of general health services combined with improvement of professional case management and a proven set of malaria control measures will have a much deeper impact on cure rates than malaria interventions on their own. Strengthening local health systems therefore significantly contributes to reducing the malaria burden, offering a viable and sustainable option for development at the same time.

We appreciate the support the European Commission has given to the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria as well as the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership. On the occasion of the fourth World Malaria Day STOP MALARIA NOW! calls urgently on the European Commission to continue this support and broaden its malaria control efforts by:

- Supporting the development of strong local health systems and community-based health-services.
- Addressing the weaknesses in health service delivery caused by huge shortages in the health workforce, financial resources and drug stock-outs.
- Scaling up efforts to remove the social, cultural and financial barriers that prevent many people in low and middle-income countries from accessing the healthcare they need.
- Increasing the necessary financial resources to respond to the health needs of the world's poorest countries, making sure, at the same time, that EU member states devote 15% of their ODA to health and urge African countries to allocate at least 15% of their national budget to health as pledged in the Abuja Declaration (2001) in order to reach the health MDGs.
- Improving donor coordination in line with the principles of the Paris Declaration (2005) and Accra Agenda for Action (2008) making sure that aid is impact-oriented and filters down to the poor.
- Strongly supporting the research and development of new medicines, diagnostics and vaccines for malaria.
- Promoting the implementation of the EU Program of Action to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria by getting EU Action Teams involved, encouraging other member states to get on board, and ensuring the preparation of an Action Plan beyond 2011.

STOP MALARIA NOW! sincerely hopes that the European Commission will show leadership in this area and contribute towards the global move to stop disease-endemic countries from spiralling deeper into poverty and ill-health. Millions of lives can be saved through your support.

Yours sincerely,

Antje Mangelsdorf

Coordinator of the STOP MALARIA NOW! campaign

STOP MALARIA NOW! is a consortium of nine health and development NGOs¹ from Europe and Africa. Our aim is to raise public awareness of malaria and mobilize respective support for stronger political, financial and strategic commitments of European governments in order to achieve internationally-agreed malaria-related targets. STOP MALARIA NOW! represents our contribution to global civil society efforts to reduce poverty in line with the MDGs.



STOP MALARIA NOW! is organised with financial assistance of the European European Union. The contents of this letter are the sole responsibility of action medeor e.V. and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

¹ Deutsches Medikamentenhilfswerk action medeor e.V., Federación de Asociaciones Medicus Mundi España, Fundacja Pomocy Humanitarnej „Redemptoris Missio- Medicus Mundi Poland, Eine Welt Netz NRW e.V., Stowarzyszenie Polska Misja Medyczna , Medici con l'Africa Cuamm, Medicus Mundi Italia, Medicines for Malaria Venture, Kenya NGOs Alliance Against Malaria