

25 April 2014

**Message of H.E. John W. Ashe
President of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,
for World Malaria Day**

Approximately half of the world's population is at risk of malaria. This disease kills an estimated 627,000 people every year, mostly children under 5 years of age in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2013, 97 countries had ongoing malaria transmission. Each year, more than 200 million cases occur; most of these cases are never tested or registered.

On this day, it is important for the international community to recognize that we have made great strides in our efforts to eradicate the disease, but we still have more work to do, and those living in the world's most vulnerable regions are at greatest risk.

Although malaria mortality rates among children in Africa have been reduced by an estimated 54% since 2000, the disease continues to kill throughout the region, taking the life of one African child every minute.

Malaria is preventable and curable and enhanced prevention and control measures are dramatically reducing the malaria burden in many places. Investment in proven methods – such as sleeping under long-lasting insecticidal nets and spraying interiors with insecticides - are key to protecting people from the illness.

Prevention alone is not enough: early diagnosis and treatment reduce the spread of the disease and prevent deaths. Tracking progress is also key. Stronger malaria surveillance systems are urgently needed to enable a timely and effective malaria response in endemic regions, to prevent outbreaks and resurgences, and to hold governments and global communities accountable.

On this World Malaria Day, I encourage Member States to invest in the future and support advances in malaria mitigation. Our effort must be a global one. We know what it takes to stop this disease, and now we must work to make that knowledge universal.