

**U.S. Intervention at the Annual Ministerial Review  
Substantive Meeting of the Economic and Social  
Council  
Geneva, Switzerland  
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**John F. Sammis, U.S. Deputy Representative**

It is my honor to address the Economic and Social Council at its Annual Ministerial Review focusing on the importance of implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health.

Health ministries and the health sector around the world are struggling to manage and respond effectively to the economic crisis. Tax revenues are down in many countries. Poverty and hunger have risen in some. We are working in many venues to respond to the economic crisis -- stabilizing

markets, strengthening regulations so this will not happen again, and restoring economic growth.

President Obama has emphasized that this is a unique moment in our history, a moment when we must unite to improve the health of all our nations, and protect the health of the most vulnerable among us. We are committed to partnering with the UN and member states to work toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals, to advance the cause of social justice, to expand access to health care and to reduce health disparities. And we know that working together, we will achieve the goals that we all share.

The United States has an important role to play in our shared work to improve the health of our people and our nations.

We are working closely with international partners to address new threats, such as H1N1, as well as continuing our long-term global efforts to deal with persistent diseases such as polio.

U.S. government agencies are engaged in cooperative efforts with WHO and FAO in more than 80 countries to assist them in responding to H1N1 and other influenza outbreaks and to take preventive measures.

As President Obama announced in his recent speech in Cairo, the United States will

cooperate closely with the members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on implementing the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.

The U.S. Government is the largest donor to the Global Fund -- with more than \$2.5 billion in contributions to date. Our contributions have helped create innovative public-private partnerships that support local leadership in building a sustainable response to these pandemics.

The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) takes a multi-sectoral approach to fighting HIV/AIDS, engaging not only the health care sector, but also the educational and agricultural sectors, among



others. PEPFAR partnered with more than 2,200 local organizations in 2007.

The President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) works within national health programs, partnering with local organizations and bringing in substantial private sector support. PMI programs its resources to strengthen the capacity of national health care systems to implement malaria control programs.

In 2007 PMI supported more than 70 nonprofit organizations. In partnership with Malaria No More and others, PMI distributed free insecticide-treated nets through national campaigns in Uganda, Madagascar and Mali. In Zambia, PMI and

PEPFAR joined with the Global Business Coalition to distribute more than 500,000 insecticide-treated nets through home-based care programs serving people affected by AIDS. In total, more than 6.5 million nets have been distributed through public-private partnerships. Our efforts have saved over a million lives in countries around the world.

But today alone, 26,000 children will die from poverty and preventable diseases.

HIV/AIDS infection rates remain unacceptable – both in the United States and in countries across the globe – and the AIDS pandemic has a woman's face. Diseases that we know how to treat still take the lives of millions every year.

We can and must do more.

## **Holistic Approach in New Global Health Initiative**

The Obama administration is committed to ushering in a new era in global health, an era that no longer tackles disease and illness in isolation.

Our world demands instead a new, integrated approach to public health – one that seeks to understand and target the many factors that that can threaten the lives and livelihoods of all our citizens.

The President has requested \$63 billion over six years to support a holistic approach. In

addition to combating infectious diseases, this initiative will work to reduce the mortality of mothers and children and avert millions of unintended pregnancies. It also will address previously neglected tropical diseases.

And it will focus on vulnerable groups such as women and families. We know that every minute of every day, a woman dies from complications related to pregnancy or childbirth. This is unacceptable. President Obama's agenda will help improve maternal and child health, and support a full range of family planning and reproductive health services for women.

The President's new initiative will expand



our efforts to fight AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and will build on what we know works.

It will also use new resources to make new smart, cost-effective investments in programs that make whole communities healthier. It will emphasize disease prevention and seek out strategies that do not battle one disease, but rather, battle the conditions that allow many diseases to thrive. And it will help to strengthen health systems so more people have access to the health care they need.

### **U.S. Leadership and International Cooperation**

As we implement this new initiative, we will seek

out your advice and expertise. We will support the important work that is already underway in so many of your countries. The hallmarks of our approach will be partnerships at every level – global, national and local – based on cooperation and consultation.

The United States would like to express its appreciation to the Economic and Social Council for devoting this year's High Level Segment to the critical issue of global health.

Together, all our nations can build on our current efforts to save lives around the world. We can tackle decades-old challenges that continue to plague our planet. And we can implement a comprehensive strategy that will improve global health in decades to come.