



## JOINT PRESS RELEASE

### THE AFRICAN UNION (AU) AND ROLL BACK MALARIA PARTNERSHIP (RBM) URGE INCREASED AFRICAN COMMITMENT FOR FIGHT AGAINST MALARIA



*Groups Convene African Ministers of Health on World Malaria Day*

**Addis Ababa 25 April 2013**-In celebration of World Malaria Day, which is commemorated annually around the world on 25 April, the Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM) and the African Union Commission (AUC) co-hosted a high-level breakfast session with African Ministers of Health to

celebrate the continent's gains against one of its leading killers: malaria. The breakfast discussion, which included remarks by Dr. Mustapha Sidiki Kaloko, AU Commissioner for Social Affairs, Dr. Fatoumata Nafo-Traoré, Executive Director of RBM and Dr. Luis Gomes Sambo, Regional Director of the World Health Organisation, as well as various Ministers of Health, came just as the African Union's Sixth Conference of the Ministers of Health Meeting kicked-off in Addis Ababa. Leveraging the convening power of this conference, RBM and the AU called participating Ministers of Health to increase political commitment, action and domestic funding for malaria control efforts.

*"This is a watershed year for Africa for Africa, which marks 50 years of the Organisation of African Unity and 10 years since the launch of the African Union. The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary is observed under the theme 'Pan Africanism and African Renaissance', providing us with opportunities to take stock of the key milestones of the past 50 years and to project to the future," said Dr. Kaloko, Commissioner of Social Affairs at the African Union Commission. "As we project into the next 50 years in the fight against malaria, we as Africans must create innovative domestic and national health financing models. We cannot and should not continue to rely on external funding for health. The experience of the last few years has shown that external funding is neither predictable nor assured."*



A top priority of the United Nation's Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, the fight against malaria has forged one of the most effective initiatives in global public health, with the RBM Partnership

successfully coordinating efforts and directing resources to where the need is greatest.



Between 2000 and 2010, greater coordination and significant increases in funding resulted in a 25% decrease in global malaria deaths, including a 33% decrease in Africa alone. During that same time period, at least ten endemic countries in Africa reported declines in new malaria cases and steep falls in child mortality of up to 80%.

*“With stronger coordination among partners and increased funding, we have made tremendous progress against malaria since 2000. But the recent global economic downturn has left us with funding gaps that threaten to reverse the gains we’ve made,” said Dr. Fatoumata Nafo-Traoré, Executive Director of the Roll Back Malaria Partnership. “In Africa alone, where the burden is highest, we now face an estimated funding gap of US \$3.6 billion through 2015 to achieve universal coverage of the cost-effective, life-saving interventions for all those in need. We must come together to invest our resources more effectively – including international aid and domestic financing for malaria.”*

Global financing for malaria has grown sharply in recent years, peaking at US \$1.8 billion in 2010 – up from US \$200 million in 2004 – and highlighting the cost-effectiveness of malaria interventions. Investments in malaria have proven to save lives and advance progress against other health indicators across the board. New data suggests that for every US \$1 invested in malaria in Africa, an estimated US \$40 GDP is generated in return. But recent economic crises have left an estimated annual funding gap of US \$3 billion, with an immediate gap of US \$3.6 billion through 2015 in Africa alone that threatens to unravel the gains made against this preventable and treatable disease.

Despite advances in prevention, diagnostics and treatment, malaria continues to infect approximately 219 million people around the world each year, killing an estimated 655,000. 90% of all cases occur in Africa, where the disease kills a child every minute and costs the continent an estimated minimum of US \$12 billion each year in lost productivity alone.

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#### **About the Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM)**

The Roll Back malaria Partnership was founded by UNICEF, WHO, UNDP and the World Bank in 1998 as a global framework to coordinate global action against malaria. Today, RBM is a global public-private partnership made up of more than 500 organizations across sectors that provides a neutral platform for consensus-building, developing solutions to challenges in the implementation of malaria control interventions and strategies, promotes high-level political commitment to keep malaria at the top of the global agenda, and monitors progress towards universal goals.

#### **About the African Union (AU)**



The African Union Commission is the Secretariat of the African Union whose vision is that of “An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena.” The mission of the Commission is to become “An efficient and value-adding institution driving the African integration and development process in close collaboration with African Union Member States, the Regional Economic Communities and African citizens”. Guided by its values and principles, the Commission will endeavour to achieve its mission through implementation of clear goals and strategies and by committing the requisite resources for effective discharge of its mandate. This would require the AUC presenting specific proposals to give full effect to its texts, and bring new possibilities and benefits to the citizens of Africa.