

MEDIA ADVISORY

**Countdown to 2015 partners launch 2008 report
on *Tracking Progress in Maternal, Newborn & Child Survival*
in cooperation with Inter-Parliamentary Union**

16 APRIL 2008 | CAPE TOWN – Leading global health experts, policy-makers and parliamentarians will gather in Cape Town, South Africa from 17-19 April for the Countdown to 2015 conference and launch of the 2008 report, *Tracking Progress in Maternal, Newborn and Child Survival*. The report documents the latest health coverage trends in countries striving to reduce maternal and child deaths.

According to new findings, few of the 68 developing countries that account for 97% of maternal and child deaths worldwide are making adequate progress to provide critical health care needed to save the lives of women, infants and children. Parliamentarians attending the 118th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Cape Town will join global health experts and policy makers to discuss the role they can play in accelerating action to achieve Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5 on reducing child and maternal mortality. Over 10 million women, newborns and children under five still die each year from causes which are largely preventable and treatable.

The Countdown to 2015 conference will take place at the same time as the 118th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (www.ipu.org), and in advance of G8 Summit discussions on this topic which will be held in Japan in July 2008.

WHAT: Press Conference on *Countdown to 2015 for Maternal, Newborn & Child Survival: The 2008 Report and International Conference*

WHO: Dr Richard Horton, Editor-in-Chief, The Lancet
Graca Machel, International Advocate for Women's and Children's Rights
Daisy Mafubelu, Assistant Director General, WHO
Dr Peter Salama, Chief of Health, UNICEF
Anders B. Johnsson, Secretary General, Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)
Dr Francisco Songane, Director, The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health

WHEN: Wednesday, 16 April 2008, 13:00 pm

WHERE: Conference Room, Cape Town International Convention Center, South Africa

Note for editors: *Countdown to 2015 for Maternal, Newborn & Child Survival* is a collaboration among individuals and institutions to track coverage for health interventions needed to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 4 & 5. For more information, visit <http://www.countdown2015mnch.org>.

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Countdown to 2015 partners are: Aga Khan University, Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), The Basic Support for Institutionalizing Child Survival (BASICS) Project, USAID, Bellagio Child Survival Group, Department for International Development, UK (DfID), Family Care International, International Paediatric Association, Johns Hopkins University, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), Save the Children, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, The Lancet, The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health, The World Bank, University College London Centre for International Health and Development, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Universidade Federal de Pelotas, University of Aberdeen, USAID and the World Health Organization.