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Our Common Vision: Delivering Health and Development for
Women and Children beyond 2015

(Please check against delivery)

Excellencies, Honorable Ministers, Distinguished Guests, Colleagues and Friends,

As our third Partners’ Forum comes to an end, I want to reflect on three main points: what we’ve done in the last two days, and in the lead up to it; to mention some points from the communiqué and to express our sincere thanks for the tremendous commitment from everyone here, and millions others who are not here.

We arrived in Johannesburg, about 1200 of us from 60 or more countries. This is the first time in nearly four years that our seven constituency groups have met on a large scale in nearly four years, since India kindly hosted our last Partners’ Forum in 2010.

Uniquely, this Partners’ Forum included more than 60 youth participants from around the globe, who have developed a Youth Outcome Document from this meeting.

What has also been unique this time is that we co-hosted this Forum together as five partners – PMNCH together with the Government of South Africa, Countdown to 2015, the Independent Expert Review Group, and A Promise Renewed.

The timing for this meeting has also been important to our collective drive in these last 550 days and as the post 2015 negotiations reach a critical point. This has truly been an extraordinary few months for women’s and children’s health.
We have travelled from the Toronto Summit (where Canada pledged $3.5 billion to women’s and children’s health) to the “Acting on the Call” event last week in Washington DC; now we come to Johannesburg this week.

There is no doubt- there is fresh momentum for our work. There have been significant domestic and other international commitments. Like we just heard from the Prime Minster of Norway, we need to forge even stronger links between health and education and to quote, to do this ‘swiftly, smartly, and jointly’

Finally, this Forum has also been a platform to launch some important reports, The Every Newborn Action Plan (40 commitments, including yet another today from the Prime Minister of Norway), the Countdown to 2015 report and the Success Factors report.

Through the Success Factors report and during this conference, we have highlighted the importance of working with sectors beyond health.

Girl’s education remains the strongest method of family planning and to quote from Minster Tedros Ghebreyesus of Ethiopia, “our health facilities will only be as strong as the road that lead people there.”

In the past two days, your voices, your data, and your commitments are being heard here in Johannesburg and around the world!

Media coverage has appeared all over the world from including on CNN, the Guardian, The Hindu, the Citizen (Tanzania), Daily Star (Bangladesh), Estado de Sao Paulo and other countries.

We also used the power of digital engagement to open our conversation to the world

- PMNCH live , our daily e-newsletter, is has been received by 40,000 readers per day
- The Plus Social Good summit yesterday reached an audience of 1.5m by webcast
- AND here in Johannesburg, we hit the mark of 250 million Twitter impressions for Every Newborn since last month.
Now – as we consider the next 550 days and the post-2015 development framework – we must work together and use our voices to ensure that women and girls at the centre.

Investment not only helps us realize the rights of women and children as the highest level, but can increase socio-economic benefits up to nine times over the investment.

UN Secretary Ban-Ki Moon said it best when he reminded us that “Success beyond 2015 depends on us working together and forging partnerships.”

I would now highlight some points from the Forum Communiqué and share with you some of its key aspects.

The Forum communiqué is a product of a lot of hard work by many of you here, and many more not here.

As many of us heard earlier today at the MDG Advocates session, the forum communiqué reaffirms that the health of women, newborns, children and adolescents is a human right.

As Bono said in the opening ceremony of this conference, it’s not fate, it’s a choice’. People have inalienable rights, so denying these rights is not an option.

It outlines our priorities for collective action to accelerate progress for women and children’s health over the next 550 days.

The communiqué endorses a stand-alone health goal that maximizes health, access and wellbeing, ends preventable mortality and morbidity, and meets individual demand for sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, including access to family planning.

It endorses strong, ambitious and measurable global targets to save lives. Specifically (by 2030) on child mortality, there should be 25 or fewer deaths per thousand live births. Newborn
mortality should be dramatically reduced to 12 or fewer deaths per thousand live births. Stillbirths need to be there.

On maternal mortality, we strive to ensure that there are no more than 70 deaths per hundred thousand, and protect, if not improve on, Millennium Development Goal 5b, to achieve universal access to reproductive health, a minimum of 75 percent of demand for contraceptives must be met by modern methods.

And we should set a target for reducing the proportion of adolescents giving birth each year. We must promote universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and associated services, goods and education.

Children marrying children, let alone marrying the elderly, is an outrage. Children having children is a tragedy. Apart from robbing them of their rights, child marriage places their lives are at risk.

The communiqué also highlights the importance of investing in poor and marginalized populations, including newborns and adolescents. No one should be left behind.

We must commit ourselves to investing in high-impact interventions, supporting good governance and leadership, and investing in capacity development for partnerships, reaching beyond the health sector.

And as WHO Director General Margaret Chan reminded us yesterday, “What gets measured gets done.” We must commit to reviewing our progress regularly, sharing lessons learned and making adjustments accordingly to maximize our impact.

Before I conclude, I must first give my thanks to an incredible group of people who made this forum a success.
First, to our hosts, the Government of South Africa, with open arms, you have welcomed us and we are grateful.

To all ministers and Prime Ministers, Excellencies, Archbishop Tutu and the many experts who lent their voices and expertise to our panels and plenaries, and receptions: we are truly inspired by your vision and commitment to your countries.

To our international partners and leaders: we are empowered by your leadership and commitment to the promise of a stable, secure world where women and children can realize their potential.

To the Forum co-hosts: your continuing guidance, insight, and expertise helped make this convening a watershed moment for our community.

To the PMNCH staff and board, particularly our inspiring Board Chair, Mrs. Machel: even in these last two days, it is clear to all that you will take PMNCH to new heights. Without your endless effort, ongoing guidance and dedication, this Forum would have not been possible.

I have been humbled and privileged to have felt the energy at this venue.

I've been inspired by your leadership— and motivation to engage and learn.

I truly believe we can achieve our ambitious goals if we continue to work in together.

In the words of Mrs. Machel: "We must do more, and we must do better. We must push and push, and then push some more.

Every day counts, every action counts and every life counts. And when we care enough to act together, we can achieve greater results and better impact.
And, finally to ‘Mama’ Machel for opening her, sharing her wisdom, and reminding of what we’re working toward: “A social pact … to save every single possible life … in every single country. No one should be left behind.”

Until our next meeting, I wish safe travels and good health.