Dr Mirta Roses Periago  
WHO Director of the  
Pan American Health Organization  

October 2, 2012  

Dear Dr Roses Periago,  

As you know, in 2010, the UN Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health was established by WHO at the request of the United Nations Secretary-General to accelerate progress on the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health. The Commission was chaired by H.E. Jakaya Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania and Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada, with the Director-General of WHO and the Secretary-General of ITU as vice-chairs.  

The Final Report of the Commission proposed an accountability framework and ten recommendations. The full Report is available online at www.everywomaneverychild.org/accountability_commission . One of those recommendations was the creation of an independent Expert Review Group (iERG). We are writing to you as co-chairs of the iERG, a 7-person body. Our task is to serve as the principal global review group on accountability for the Global Strategy on Women's and Children's Health, "Every Woman, Every Child". We report to the UN Secretary-General, through WHO's Director-General. We are tasked with producing annual reports on accountability for women's and children's health, released in September (2012-2015) at the UN General Assembly.  

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The enclosed report, our first, was submitted to the UNSG on 26th September 2012. It is a progress report on the UN Secretary-General's Every Woman, Every Child initiative, together with our assessment of progress on the recommendations of the Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health. We make 6 specific recommendations on improving accountability for women's and children's health, recommendations that we believe, if implemented, could accelerate progress towards MDGs 4 and 5. We are sharing our first report with you in the hope that you would be able to review its contents from your position as Regional Director and identify how our work might interact with yours. There is a stock-taking meeting convened by WHO on November 19-20, 2012. We would be most grateful if we could receive your response before that meeting so that it could inform our discussion.

In addition, in order to inform our report for next year, we would be delighted to receive evidence around women’s and children's health from your region. Next year’s annual report will also be submitted in September. We would therefore, be grateful if you could submit any evidence to us by end of May 2013.

We look forward very much to hearing from you soon.

Yours faithfully,
The Members of the iERG

Richard Horton (Co-Chair)
Joy Phumaphi (Co-Chair)