
Your Excellency Ban Ki-moon,

Secretary-General of the United Nations;

Honourable Nick Clegg,

Deputy Prime Minister of the United Kingdom;

Mr. Ray Chambers,

Secretary-General’s Special Envoy on Malaria;

Excellencies;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of His Excellency Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania and Chair of the African Leaders Malaria Alliance (ALMA), I have the distinct honour and privilege to welcome you all to this event that ALMA is co-hosting with the United Kingdom and the Office of the Special Envoy on Malaria.

I thank the Secretary-General for his remarks, and for his able leadership of the United Nations. I thank him especially for his enduring commitment to Africa’s development. Mr. Secretary-General, having a partner like you, energises those of us devoted to ensuring a healthy and decent existence for every human being in every corner of the planet we share.

Unfortunately, and quite unnecessarily, Malaria continues to be a cause of great misery, debilitation, death, and poverty. We all know the numbers, and we all know the challenges, one of which is how to get global attention, and the attention of the media, focussed on Malaria against many competing stories.

In July this year, we in Tanzania were truly saddened to hear that the British celebrity, Cheryl Cole, got Malaria while vacationing in our Country. Fortunately, she got the best medical care in her country and has fully recovered.

But of the many stories in the Media about her plight, hardly any focussed on the fact that unfortunately Malaria is a way of life for millions of people in Tanzania and around the world. Malaria is a cause of death for almost 70,000 Tanzanians each year. It is disturbing that 90 percent of the World’s Malaria deaths occur in Sub-Saharan Africa. The millions who get sick never have the chance to access anything close to the medical care that saved the life of Ms. Cheryl Cole. If the Media worldwide would focus on how many people are dying every minute because of Malaria as they did for Ms. Cole, this disease would get the attention and resources it deserved and therefore the efforts to eradicate it would be harnessed.
Yet we all know from experience and science, and from knowledge of what works and has been tested, that Malaria-related ill health and death can be substantially reduced with political commitment and leadership, and with commensurate resources to implement known cost effective Malaria prevention and treatment interventions and sensitisation.

Zanzibar in Tanzania is a case in point, where under the able leadership of the Zanzibar Government, and with the support of partners, the prevalence of Malaria was effectively reduced from 49.2 percent in 2000 to 0.8 percent currently. These experiences and successes are now helping us to roll out a major offensive against malaria on the Mainland where already we have seen significant decline in Malaria-related hospital admissions and deaths, and consequently a decline in under-five child mortality.

Like a number of other African countries, Tanzania has waived taxes and tariffs on commodities, raw materials, drugs and other consumables needed in the war against Malaria. I would like to urge all Countries which are still taxing goods and services aiming to fight Malaria to follow suit.

Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar aim to achieve universal long-lasting insecticide treated nets coverage in line with UN Secretary General’s target. I am informed that 23 other African Countries, namely Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Comoro, Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo and Uganda, many of them ALMA members, will likewise attain universal coverage by the end of the first quarter of 2011. We are beginning to see progress, but we have to ensure we maintain the momentum within Countries, and among our Partners. Gains must be secured, and the frontier in the war on Malaria must be intensified and extended.

In that connection, we have to address the challenge of the large financing gap. We are thankful for the increase in resources in support of global health from some of our Development Partners, including Governments, the World Bank, the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Regional Development Banks, Foundations, the Private Sector and even individuals. But we have no option except to appeal to our Traditional and Emerging Partners to continue financing Malaria prevention, treatment and control. I believe that many Countries are determined to stay the course and for that they need and deserve more and sustained support. We especially call for the replenishment of the Global Fund, a major partner in this struggle against Malaria in the World.

Given the advancement of technologies and sciences and the abundant resources available globally, Malaria can be eradicated. We must all have the courage to say no more Malaria, and no more deaths caused by Malaria in this World we all live in. It is possible. Let every one of us show the will and play his part.

I thank you for your attention.