

**Speech to be addressed by Victoria Kimotho, AMREF, on behalf of the
Global Call to Action Against Poverty**

G8 Development Ministerial Meeting

Rome, 9th June, 2009

At this time of economic crisis, wealthy nations including the G8 may be tempted to limit increases to or even cut development assistance. It is only through continued support for global public health for the poorer countries that we can avert a global health crisis. A Health crisis will undermine economic growth. People in Africa, and other regions of the developing world, that had escaped poverty are now falling back in the cycle of poverty and poor health. Which means that poorer nations will require more assistance for a longer period of time from wealthier nations, and will forestall the other benefits of economic growth. Increased poverty will increase reliance on the public sector of their health systems, including health workers.

- Most people in the wider developed countries will be able to survive this economic crisis, but if G8 countries reduce investments in global public health the poorest will suffer. The absence of functioning health systems will lead to needless, avoidable, and extensive loss of life. The poorest and most vulnerable including mothers and children already struggling will suffer more. Macro-economic stability cannot and should not be restored at the expense of the health and life of the world's poorest and marginalized citizens, who have done nothing to contribute to this crisis. It is crucial that the G8 countries ensure policy coherence and instruct the International Financial Institutions to cease obstructing public spending on healthcare. The G8 must ensure that the agreement on intellectual property rights protects access to affordable medicines.

We therefore are asking for the following

- In order to meet health MDGs by 2015 and the G8 HIV Universal Access to treatment commitment by 2010, we ask that the G8 set out how the \$60 billion by 2011 for major infectious diseases and health system

strengthening and the \$1.5 billion for maternal and child health care and voluntary family planning will be delivered. This needs annual commitments by country.

- the Global Fund to fight against AIDS TB and Malaria was launched in 2001 at the Genoa Summit so we are asking which role does Italy should play in continuing the success of the GFTAM considering its current estimated 5 billion \$ financial gap for 2009-2010
- We ask the G8 to address the \$10.2 billion annual shortfall for maternal, newborn and child health, including sexual and reproductive health and to reverse the lack of progress on maternal mortality, and set out plans to fully fund this shortfall.

• The future of Global health and specifically health in Africa and other developing countries will be defined by the decisions made by you the G8 development ministers.

We require a political commitment for investment in global health during this economic crisis.