

## World Malaria Day Working Lunch Buffet

23 April 2008

European Parliament, Strasbourg

### PRESS RELEASE

On the 23 April 2008, on the occasion of the first World Malaria Day, EPF organised a working lunch buffet in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, hosted by EPF's Malaria Taskforce member **Hon. Thierry Cornillet, MEP** (ALDE, FR). Gathering about 20 participants, MEP Thierry Cornillet reminded his colleagues that *"every year, Malaria causes more than one million deaths worldwide, touching particularly young children and pregnant women"* and that it is Parliamentarians' responsibility to urgently address this issue.

The guests included **Dr Jan Van Erps**, Senior Adviser to the Executive Director Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM) who stressed the necessity to scale-up malaria efforts and introduced *'the Global Malaria Business Plan'*, a longer-term RBM Partnership strategy coordinating partners' activities and responsibilities towards the progressive eradication of malaria. Highlighting that the European Union is a major contributor to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis (GFATM), Dr Jan Van Erps emphasised the importance for the European Commission to obtain a seat at the RBM Board.

**Dr. Mark Grabowsky**, Malaria Coordinator at the GFATM presented the role and the achievements of the Global Fund in terms of malaria control. Dr Mark Grabowsky highlighted that in 2007, the Global Fund provided 64% of international funding for malaria control in developing countries and mentioned that *"for the period of intense scale-up, 2008-2010, a total of US\$ 9.3 billion will be required, or around US\$ 3 billion per year"*. The international community will need to intensify efforts and contributions in order to reduce malaria burden around the world.

**M. Gerald M. Walterfang**, Chief Executive Officer of the Kenya NGOs Alliance against Malaria (KeNAAM) gave a general overview of successful malaria control efforts and achievements in Kenya. M. Gerald M. Walterfang emphasised that thanks to international aid, 3.4 million bed nets had been distributed leading to 44% of malaria reduction. Working closely with the public authorities, the main challenges are to make sure that people have access to nets and treatments on a long-term basis and therefore, KeNAAM is advocating for the creation of a specific budget line for malaria as it already exists for HIV/AIDS. One of the main challenges highlighted is the urgent need for technical assistance at country level in order to have access to GFATM grants.

**Hon. Anne van Lancker, MEP** and EPF's President, emphasised that *"World Malaria Day should give us, parliamentarians around the world, the opportunity to raise awareness and to mobilise the resources that are needed to eradicate this disease. Malaria is the number one killer disease in Africa. But fighting the disease receives too little attention from donor governments in Europe, even if we know that investing in malaria pays. So let's mobilise and convince our*

*governments to put the money where the mouth is!"* MEP Anne van Lancker invited her colleagues to join EPF Taskforce on malaria.

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*EPF is a Brussels-based Parliamentary network that serves as a platform for cooperation and coordination for the 25 all-party groups in Parliaments throughout Europe that focus on improving sexual and reproductive health and rights at home and abroad through national and regional health and foreign aid budgets. EPF believes that parliamentarians have a duty and a responsibility to promote and defend the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all individuals; to defend and advance gender equality, gender equity and women's empowerment; and to eliminate all forms of discrimination, coercion and violence against women. Parliamentarians play a crucial role in making sure international funding commitments are met and programmes are available where they are needed the most.*

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*EPF is also a member of the 'European Alliance against Malaria' which is a committed group of civil society organisations from Brussels, France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom working for a malaria-free world. Focused on European action in a global context, we aim through advocacy to increase funding and improve programming for malaria, demanding concrete and resolute action as part of global efforts to reduce poverty and meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).*

**[www.europeanallianceagainstmalaria.org](http://www.europeanallianceagainstmalaria.org)**