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## STATEMENT

**by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the UN Office and other  
international organizations in Geneva**  
**H.E. Mr. Valery LOSCHININ**  
**at the general debate of the High-level segment of the 2009 ECOSOC substantive session**  
*(Geneva, 9 July 2009)*

Madam President,

At the outset I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the UN Secretary General for his detailed and informative report on the theme of today's discussion, and indicate our support to the recommendations contained therein.

Millennium Development Goals are at the heart of the global healthcare agenda for the period till 2015. The results of the UN interagency monitoring indicate that in general the situation in this field is worrying though we can see certain progress in infant health care and in combating malaria.

Our major concern is the lack of sustainable trends in reducing maternal mortality. Maternal and infant mortality rates should be decreasing by 5,5 % annually to achieve the MDGs. Unfortunately no region in the world has reached these results so far.

Despite substantial increase in Official Development Assistance for improving healthcare, most countries will fail to achieve health related MDGs due to slow progress in their implementation.

A major obstacle on the way to achieve the MDGs is insufficient investment in healthcare, especially in developing countries. External financial support is lagging behind commitments declared by major donors. Domestic investment in public health also remains at a low level.

Madam President,

At a time of global financial and economic crisis it is extremely important to provide adequate social protection for every population group. We should concentrate our efforts not only on overcoming the crisis, but rather on shaping a new set of values for our societies. Evidently those values must be aimed at uniting us, not separating.

We believe that measures to support health care systems should not be limited to tackling the crisis. We should not hide ourselves behind the crisis and take it as an excuse for our failure to respond to global development challenges. We must instead make full use of the opportunities

emanating from the crisis. Economic growth in itself – without addressing urgent social problems – is not a remedy for tackling public antagonisms, inequality, poverty and instability.

In Russia budget expenses have been restructured because of the crisis, but we still manage to safeguard our national social protection programs. Not a single national health related Priority Project was either canceled or underfinanced. We will further promote efficient medical assistance, based on modern technologies, and stable supply of pharmaceutical products, as well as implement priority healthcare programs in such spheres as oncology, tuberculosis and cardiovascular pathology.

Madam President,

While national healthcare systems are primary responsibility of respective governments, the UN and its specialized agencies, funds and programs - WHO, UNAIDS, UNICEF and others - must be actively involved in global health agenda. WHO, which has enormous experience and capacity in healthcare, is undoubtedly playing a leading role in strengthening global health security.

Madam President,

The Russian Federation has been consistently promoting public health as one of its policy priorities at the national level as well as on the global development agenda.

During our presidency in the G-8 in 2006 Russia contributed to the adoption of an Action Plan on combating the most dangerous infectious diseases.

In 2007 our President endorsed the Concept of Participation of the Russian Federation in the International Development Assistance. Healthcare issues are among key priorities outlined in this Concept. We intend to further provide development assistance to ensure the implementation of the health related MDGs. Some of these efforts are reflected in the Framework partnership agreement between the Russian Federation and the WHO signed in Moscow during the recent visit of the WHO Director-General Mme. M.Chan. This document reflects our plans to provide financial support to implement global programs and initiative of the WHO. We believe that this a solid basis for enhancing our cooperation in the future.

Russia attaches great importance to combating non-communicable diseases. We believe it is essential to find immediate and adequate response to this global threat. This November we'll host The First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety organized with the assistance of the WHO and the UN Regional Commissions. One of its top priorities is to address and prevent traffic injuries which in the developing countries alone cost 100 billion dollars a year. This figure is actually equal to the annual world ODA. We are grateful to the WHO and the UN Regional Commissions, in particular UNECE and UNESCAP, for their support in preparation of this forum and look forward to active participation of all States and specialized international organizations in the Conference.

Furthermore we would be ready to organize in Russia in 2011 a special international conference on non-communicable diseases and injuries.

Thank you.