

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Welcome to Part II (12 – 26 February) of the e-discussion on '**Emerging and future health challenges**', a contribution toward the 2009 ECOSOC [Annual Ministerial Review](#) process. As Guest Moderators, we will guide and contribute to the second half of the discussion.

The first part of this e-discussion focused on 'Strengthening health systems' and discussed how to overcome health inequities, achieve universal coverage, renew primary health care (PHC) and overcome the shortage of health care workers. Your contributions of ideas and concrete country experiences have enriched the debate outlined in the [Background Paper](#).

Building on the first part of the e-discussion we would like to highlight three essential public health challenges: (i) the growing magnitude of noncommunicable diseases, (ii) the challenges to achieve public health goals in the wake of the financial crisis, and (iii) innovative partnerships for a more effective health sector.

More specifically, in the interest of providing Member States with tangible suggestions on what the global community can do to strengthen public health systems, we seek your experience and views on the following:

- 1. What are the essential elements of national strategies to address the growing magnitude of noncommunicable diseases (cardiovascular diseases, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes) and their modifiable risk factors (tobacco use, unhealthy diets, physical inactivity and harmful use of alcohol) and social determinants? What sectors besides the health sector must be involved in designing and implementing the strategies? How can we raise the priority accorded to noncommunicable disease in development work at global and national level?**
- 2. In the wake of the financial crisis, how can we maintain and enhance the favourable policy and resource trends for global health of the recent past? How can we better define the roles different stakeholders can play, including through collaborative inter-sectoral efforts, towards the achievement of public health goals?**
- 3. What further innovations should be incorporated into global health partnerships and collaborative arrangements to improve their performance, reduce transaction costs and increase synergy of action aligned to country priorities? What other innovative ways of working can be considered that strive for greater coordination and collaboration of all actors in health?**

We encourage you to be creative, to take this special opportunity to make suggestions that may be considered for action by the Economic and Social Council. In addition, the 2009 AMR has the potential to catalyze initiatives to be launched by groups of governments, the United Nations system or multi-stakeholder partnerships, so do think beyond the intergovernmental process. Achieving global public health, after all, requires the cooperation of all stakeholders.

We look forward to your ideas and suggestions. We wish you all the best for a productive and action-oriented discussion.

Warm Regards,

Dr. Ala Alwan
Assistant Director-General,
Noncommunicable Diseases
World Health Organization (WHO)

Mr. Alex Ross
Director, Programme on Partnerships and UN
Reform
Director-General's Office
World Health Organization (WHO)