

Canadian Organization – SOGC- Calls Government to Action, 27 June 2008

Canadian Leaders told to place MNCH on the 2008 G8 Agenda by Canadian medics

OTTAWA, June 27 /CNW Telbec/ - This coming July 7-9, 2008 will see the world's most powerful leaders convene in Hokkaido, Japan. The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) call on Canada's representatives to ensure that Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5, focused on reducing child and maternal mortality and improving maternal, newborn, and child health, receive the much needed attention they deserve.

The Issue: Every year, over 560,000 women die during pregnancy and childbirth. Over 99% of these preventable deaths occur in the developing world. For each woman that dies, 30 women suffer a debilitating injury due to complications in pregnancy and childbirth. When women die, children, families, communities, and nations suffer.

"Millennium Development Goal No.5, to improve maternal and newborn health, is the only MDG that has not seen any significant progress. It is also critical to progress in MDG No.4 especially in newborn health. The time to act is now," said Dr. Dorothy Shaw, President of the International Federation of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

The Call to Action:

Canada's government is making a difference. Through the Catalytic Initiative to Save a Million Lives the Canadian government has demonstrated commendable initiative in responding to the needs of women and children worldwide. We encourage the Canadian government to further increase their historical leadership role and ensure that maternal newborn and child health take their rightful place on the agenda at the upcoming G8.

While the SOGC volunteers its time, knowledge, and expertise in Canada and abroad, Canadian political leaders must now increase the amount of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to 0.7% of GDP in order to reach the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. These funds must be directly attributed to health programs for women, not initiatives with an indirect link to women's health (e.g. national defense).

It has been determined that 10.2 billion dollars a year will save over 6 million lives and allow us to reach MDG's 4 and 5 by the target date of 2015. The upcoming G8 meeting in Japan provides a perfect opportunity for Canada to take responsibility as a leader and to ensure that maternal, newborn and child health and the Millennium Development Goals are a key priority to be discussed.

"The SOGC is willing to collaborate, using its international expertise to

work with the Canadian Government to make the Catalytic Initiative to Save a Million Lives a success", said Dr. André Lalonde, Executive Vice President, The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG's):

In the year 2000, international leaders agreed to support eight MDG's to improve the lives and health of the world's most destitute. They aim to combat poverty, improve health and education, and fight gender discrimination and disease as well as climate change and to demonstrate significant progress in the development of nations. While all 8 goals are worthy and interconnected, MDG's 4 and 5 are of particular interest to the SOGC as they are focused on reducing child and maternal mortality and improving maternal, newborn and child health.

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) has over 3,000 members including obstetricians, gynaecologists, family doctors, nurses and midwives who acknowledge their obligation to contribute to delivering a better world for women and encourage Canadian political leaders to do the same. Now is the time to take greater responsibility and make a difference in the lives of women and children around the world. Canada has not done enough. The health of tomorrow depends on the actions of today. Investing in women pays.

For further information: http://www.sogc.org/index_e.asp

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