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SOURCE: PCO

DATE: JANUARY 26, 2011

REFERENCE/ RÉFÉRENCE: 2601doc2

LOCATION/LIEU: GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

TIME/ HEURE: 10:101

LENGTH/DURÉE: 4:17 MINUTES

PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH AT WORLD HEALTH

ORGANIZATION

(APPLAUSE)

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER (Prime Minister of Canada): Bon matin, good morning, and greetings, fellow commissioners.

Je suis honoré d'être ici avec le Président Kikwete qui préside avec moi la Commission des Nations Unies pour la santé de la femme et de l'enfant. Depuis que le Canada a proposé une stratégie mondiale pour améliorer la santé des mères, des nouveau-nés et des enfants dans les pays en développement, ici il y a un an nous avons réalisé des progrès substantiels.

At last year's World Economic Forum here in Switzerland, Canada proposed a global strategy to improve maternal, newborn and child health in developing countries. World leaders endorsed this strategy, now called the Muskoka Initiative, at last summer's G8 summit hosted by Canada. Governments and prominent philanthropic organizations like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation have committed nearly seven and a half billion dollars to our objectives, the United Nations has launched a global strategy for women and children's, and our Commission on Information and Accountability has been established to develop an oversight framework to ensure pledges are honoured, money is spent wisely, and desired results are achieved.

Dans toute l'histoire de l'aide et du développement, jamais n'a-t-on porté une telle attention à la santé des mères et des enfants.

The urgent need for such an initiative measured in millions of preventable deaths, debilitating diseases and unrealized social and economic potential is beyond question, and I believe our unprecedented focus on child, newborn and maternal health will significantly accelerate progress towards the UN's Millennium Development Goals. This is about the future, the future of families, of communities, countries, and indeed, ultimately, of humanity. Improvements to the health, education and living condition of millions of women and children will mean a wave of hope that will ripple throughout the developing world, lower maternal infant and child mortality rates, less disease, less unnecessary suffering, longer, better lives, greater social progress, and real...real progress for all of humanity.

Je dois rappeler cependant que ce vent d'espoir ne pourra se concentrer que si nous accordons à la surveillance et à la responsabilisation, la même attention sans précédent que nous portons à la santé maternelle et infantile.

As we begin our meetings, we understand that we must strive to continue to build support, not just for our noble objectives, but also for our commitment to the highest standards of oversight and accountability for the dollars that we are dedicating to them.

Nous tous, commissaires, sommes unis dans notre détermination à améliorer la vie des mères et des enfants, et nous sommes convaincus que notre succès repose sur la responsabilisation.

I look forward to working with President Kikwete, my co-chairman, in pursuit of these noble and necessary goals, also with our vice-chairs, Monsieur Hamadoun Touré, secrétaire général de l'Union internationale des télécommunications, and of course Dr. Margaret Chan, director general of the World Health Organization, a fellow Canadian, I might add, of whom we

are all very proud, and whose organization has had much to do with assembling all of you, this incredibly diverse and distinguished group of commissioners who have been brought together from all over the world. I look forward to working with all of you. Merci. (APPLAUSE)

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