

## DPM Address to UNSG event on Women's and Children's Health

22 September 2010, 2.30 – 4.00pm

Thank you, Secretary General.

The UN's Global Strategy for Women's and Children's health addresses one of the gravest problems the world faces today.

In Britain, a woman has a one in 8,000 chance of dying in pregnancy or childbirth. Even that is too high. But in Sierra Leone and Afghanistan, the risk is one in eight.

It is good news that global maternal mortality has dropped by one third since 1990, as UN estimates suggest. But our progress in this area is nothing like good enough. We are off track on MDGs 4 and 5, on maternal health and child mortality. We're making the least progress in the area where we need to make the most.

The UK is proud to be part of the new Alliance described by Secretary Clinton a few minutes [check] ago, along with the US, Australia and the Gates Foundation. This is exactly the kind of initiative we need if we are to do better as a world community.

I am also proud to announce that the UK is redoubling our efforts on maternal and children's health. Building on our commitment made as part of the G8 Muskoka Initiative, our goal is to double the number of maternal, newborn and children's lives saved. Our new commitment means we will be saving the lives of at least 50,000 women in pregnancy and childbirth, and of a quarter of a million babies – as well as enabling 10 million couples to access modern family planning.

Those are the outcomes we are aiming for. Of course, this means putting money on the table. And the UK will be making the additional financial contribution necessary to achieve them, doubling the resources we devote to this from within our ring-fenced budget as it rises to 0.7 per cent of national income from 2013

We know that for many developed nations, money is tight. But time is getting tight for meeting the promises we made to the world.

And we also know that unless we reach this goal, there will be less hope of reaching some of our other Goals. Development starts with healthy mums and healthy kids.

We now have five years to deliver on the promises we made in the year 2000. Let's get on with it.