

**NOTE FOR THE PRESS**

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**Note for the Press WHA.56/1  
8 May 2003****56<sup>th</sup> WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY  
19-28 MAY 2003****SCHEDULED PRESS BRIEFINGS AND OTHER INFORMATION FOR MEDIA**

The 56th World Health Assembly (WHA) will take place from 19-28 May 2003 at the Palais des Nations, 8-14 Avenue de la Paix, Geneva, Switzerland. The WHA is the annual meeting of the World Health Organization's (WHO's) 192 Member States. Highlights of this year's WHA include the appointment of a new WHO Director-General, and the possible adoption of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, WHO's first global treaty. WHO is scheduling a series of daily media briefings on key global public health issues throughout the WHA, including the latest on SARS and emerging global epidemics, tobacco control, the post-conflict health challenges in Iraq and violence prevention.

**Accreditation procedures:**

Correspondents wishing to cover the WHA must be accredited by the UN or by the WHO Press Accreditation Office at the Palais des Nations, Room A 631. Those applying for accreditation must be from news or information outlets in press, radio, television or photo. Prior to the WHA, correspondents can obtain accreditation from Mrs Lorna Wieteska, Office E112, at WHO Headquarters; Tel. + 41 22 791 2599; email: wieteskaa@who.int.

**Please note** that all correspondents wishing to cover the WHA will be required to complete a Health Declaration Form on arrival at the Palais des Nations. Any correspondent who has, in the last ten days, been in close contact with a SARS case and/or has visited a hospital known to have treated SARS patients, should not travel to the WHA. Copies of the Health Declaration Form can be obtained from Mrs Wieteska.

**Press Office**

During the WHA, the WHO Press Office will be located on the eighth floor of the Palais des Nations, Room A 817. A full list of WHO staff serving the press, their offices and phone numbers will be available just prior to the WHA.

**Media and Technical Briefings (see attached schedules)**

Throughout the WHA daily lunchtime media briefings will take place in Press Room I (Door 6) in the Palais des Nations. Press are also welcome to attend six technical briefings during the WHA. These briefings are presentations by WHO technical experts on various public health topics. Interpretation for technical briefings will be provided in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

**Press Announcements**

Announcements will be made in the press rooms of the Palais des Nations via the loudspeaker system regarding the issuance of important documents and press releases, the scheduling of press conferences and briefings, and other items of interest to correspondents.

**Daily Journal of the World Health Assembly/Press Releases/Other documents**

Press materials and official documents will be available in the WHO Press Office and in Press Room I. The Daily Journal of the WHA contains the day's agenda. The Daily Journal and all WHA

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documentation will also be available online at [www.who.int/gb/](http://www.who.int/gb/) in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

#### **WHO Director-General's Speech**

Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland will address the plenary on the afternoon of Monday, 19 May. Copies of her speech will be available for the press in Press Room I on Monday morning, embargoed until delivery.

#### **Advance texts: material under embargo**

Some texts of speeches, statements and other materials will be issued under embargo. **Please respect the release date and hour indicated.**

#### **Access to meetings**

Most WHA meetings are open to the press and can be covered from special designated press areas in the meeting rooms. Correspondents should consult the Daily Journal of the World Health Assembly for information on whether meetings are "open" or "closed".

To avoid access problems, journalists, including those normally based at the Palais des Nations, must wear their badges visibly.

Correspondents may enter the floor of the Assembly Hall and committee rooms before or after meetings, but **must** return to the press areas promptly when the meeting is about to begin.

#### **Photographs**

Information on the WHO Photo Service can be obtained from Mr Pierre Virot, Room A 827, Tel. (+41 0) 79 354 8212.

#### **Information for photo and film correspondents**

- WHO requests that photo journalists respect the rules set out by Security and Protocol Officers at the Assembly.
- Flash units may be used, but photographers are encouraged to use telephoto lenses and avoid grouping around delegations or speakers so as not to disturb their work.
- Filming of interviews can be arranged through the WHO Audio-visual Service (Office A 827, Tel. (+41 22) 917 6945). Video coverage of the proceedings of the WHA and the delegates' speeches in the Assembly Hall may also be obtained from the same office. Filming and videotaping of the WHA is limited to news, documentary and educational coverage of the meetings.
- Accredited photo and film correspondents may cover all "open" meetings of the Assembly and move around freely on the floor of the Assembly Hall and the main committee rooms before a meeting is called to order. Photographers are NOT allowed on the podium in any of the meeting rooms, including the Assembly Hall. Correspondents are reminded that it is imperative to avoid congestion near the podium, especially during debates.

#### **Information for radio correspondents**

Radio correspondents may use the WHO temporary facilities at the Palais des Nations for interviews of dispatches pertaining to WHO and the WHA. Studio facilities can be reserved through the WHO Audio-visual Service, Room A 827, Tel. 022 917 6945 or the radio technician's office N°10 (Building E), Emmanuel Hengrecker, Tel. (+41 22) 917 6283, Mobile: (+41 0) 79 440 1148.

**Media Briefings (Press Room I)**

**Thursday, 15 May:**

14:00-15:00    **“Towards WHO’s first global treaty: Framework Convention on Tobacco Control”**  
Dr Derek Yach, Executive Director, Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health, WHO

**Monday, 19 May:**

11:30-12:30    **“Setting the stage for managing new, infectious diseases of the 21<sup>st</sup> century”**  
Press Room III Dr David Heymann, Executive Director, Communicable Diseases, WHO  
Dr Mike Ryan, Coordinator, Global Alert and Response, WHO

**Tuesday, 20 May:**

12:00-13:00    **“Iraq: the post-conflict health challenges”**  
Dr David Nabarro, Executive Director, Sustainable Development and Healthy Environments, WHO

**Wednesday, 21 May:**

12:00-13:00    **“Tobacco Control: WHO’s first global treaty”**  
Dr Derek Yach, Executive Director, Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health, WHO  
(NB: this press conference will follow the closure of the Tobacco agenda item, where the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control is scheduled to be adopted)

16:00 (tbc)    **Press conference: Director-General Election**  
Dr Jong-Wook Lee (tbc)

**Thursday, 22 May:**

12:00-12:30    **“Preventing 750,000 Measles Deaths”**  
Dr Daniel Tarantola, Director, Vaccines and Biologicals (VAB), WHO  
Dr Brad Hersh, Medical Officer, VAB

12:30-13:30    **Launch of new TDR\*/Gates Foundation Diagnostics Initiative**  
Dr Carlos Morel, Director, TDR, WHO  
Dr Giorgio Roscigno, Executive Director, Foundation for Innovative New Disease Diagnostics (FIND)  
Dr Mark Perkins, Scientific Director, FIND

**Friday, 23 May:**

12:00-13:00    **“New Initiative: The Global Council for Mental Health”**  
Dr Benedetto Saraceno, Director, Mental Health and Substance Dependence, WHO

**Tuesday, 27 May:**

12:00-13:00    **“Violence: WHO scales up its response”**  
Dr Derek Yach, Executive Director, Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health, WHO  
Dr Etienne Krug, Director, Injuries and Violence Prevention, WHO

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\* UNDP/World Bank/WHO Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases

**Technical Briefings**

**Tuesday, 20 May:**

13:00-15:00 **Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)**  
Speakers to be confirmed  
Room XIX

**Wednesday, 21 May:**

13:00-14:00 **Pro-poor health policies towards the Millennium Development Goals: Country evidence and tools**  
Dr Chris Murray, Executive Director, Evidence and Information for Policy, WHO  
Room XVI

**Thursday, 22 May:**

13:00-14:00 **Adolescent health and development**  
Dr Hans Troedsson, Director, Child and Adolescent Health, WHO  
Ms Jane Ferguson, Coordinator, Adolescent Health and Development, WHO  
Room XVI

**Friday, 23 May:**

13:00-14:00 **Strengthening national regulatory capacity to ensure safety, efficacy and quality of medical products**  
Speakers to be confirmed  
Room XVI

**Monday, 26 May:**

13:00-14:00 **Tobacco Control**  
Dr Douglas Bettcher, Coordinator, Framework Convention on Tobacco Control  
Room XV1

**Tuesday, 27 May:**

13:00-14:00 **WHO Country Focus- strengthening WHO performance in countries**  
Dr David Nabarro, Executive Director, Sustainable Development and Healthy Environments  
Room XVI

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For information on WHA accreditation, please contact Lorna Wieteska, Tel:(+41 22) 719 2599, Fax: (+41 22) 791 4858; email: wieteskaa@who.int

Rebecca HARDING, Communications Officer, Director General's Communications Office, Tel. (+41 22) 791 3229; email: hardingr@who.int

Melinda HENRY, Communications Officer, Director General's Communications Office, Tel: (+41 22) 791 2535; email: henrym@who.int