

WEBSITE

www.who.int1211 GENEVA 27 SWITZERLAND - TELEPHONE: (41) 22.791.21.11 - FAX: (41) 22.791.31.11 - E-MAIL: inf@who.int

Note for Media WHO/11
11 May 2005

PROFESSOR LINCOLN CHEN APPOINTED AS SPECIAL ENVOY FOR WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Geneva - Professor Lincoln Chen has been appointed as the World Health Organization (WHO) Special Envoy on Human Resources for Health (HRH).

Professor Chen is a distinguished professional in international public health and development. He founded the Global Equity Initiative at Harvard University and has co-chaired the Joint Learning Initiative on Human Resources for Health, with its landmark report entitled *Human Resources for Health: Overcoming the crisis*.

Human resources - the people who work in health including doctors, nurses, laboratory technicians, researchers and administrators - are key to strengthening health systems and to achieving the health-related UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, WHO estimates that at least one million more workers are needed to meet the minimum required to achieve the MDGs. The issues are complex, and include working conditions for people, the availability of adequate training, pay scales, and the emigration of highly trained and skilled health professionals from poorer areas to wealthier ones.

A resolution adopted at the World Health Assembly in 2004 calls attention to the challenges related to the global movement of the workforce, and as a result, WHO has designated Human Resources for Health to be the subject of both World Health Day and the World Health Report in 2006.

"Dr Lincoln Chen is a leader in his field. With his guidance, we can make important advances on this urgent issue. I am very pleased to appoint him as Special Envoy on Human Resources for Health," said Dr Lee Jong-wook, Director-General of WHO.

As WHO Special Envoy, Professor Chen will guide the research and production of the 2006 World Health Report, help develop and launch World Health Day 2006 on the same topic, and work to involve concerned stakeholders at all levels in shaping the HRH agenda.

"It's an honour and opportunity to be able to join WHO in working with partners to catalyze policies and programmes which will strengthen health workers, who are the backbone of equitable health systems in all societies," said Dr Chen upon accepting the appointment.

For further information, journalists may contact: Christine McNab, Communications Officer, Director-General's Office, Tel: +41 22 791 4688, mobile: +41 79 254 6815, email: mcnabc@who.int

For more information please consult the following website: <http://www.who.int/hrh/en/>

All fact sheets, media releases and other WHO information can be found at <http://www.who.int>.