

MESSAGE FROM JULIO FRENK , INCOMING CHAIR, PMNCH BOARD

FRIDAY, 30 APRIL

Dear PMNCH Board, it is with great regret that I was not able to join you today. Everything was ready for a remote connection, but unfortunately my flights got delayed and I will not have arrived to Boston, where the videoconferencing equipment was all ready for our videolinked encounter.

I would have very much enjoyed conveying to you what an honour it is to join the Partnership at these very exciting times - you have discussed extensively these three last days the UN Secretary-General Joint Action Plan and the important year this is for maternal, newborn and child health. The data released by the Lancet was very encouraging, there is no better time to continue with the work.

I participated in the Senior Strategy Retreat in New York on 14-15 April, and I was very pleased to see the level of commitment and engagement from all the different constituencies.

I was particularly pleased to see the level of recognition The Partnership received - Julian was there, as you well know, representing you: the Board and the partners.

This Partnership is central to this effort - this initiative will only be fruitful, we will only deliver, if partners continue working together - thus the crucial value of the Partnership in its convening role, which no doubt must continue.

Becoming the Chair of the Partnership is a big challenge which I am very eager to take on, as I am sure it will be an extremely rewarding one.

I am very aware that the challenges this year go well beyond the UN SG Joint Effort. The Workplan of the Partnership lays out very clearly the work in the different priority areas which will bring many opportunities to advance the mandate of the Partnership and the progress on the MDGs.

I look forward to working closely with Julian as he takes the role of leading the work of the advisory group for the Forum of Partners. The Forum is another great challenge and opportunity - creating and using innovations for partnerships to improve MNCH.

My vision is to see this Partnership build on the progress done so far, continue bringing the partners together and see global resources for MNCH multiply. I also see The Partnership forging partnerships beyond the ones already created, as it works with other alliances to achieve more progress on all MDGs, beyond 4&5 AND 6, and contributes widely to development in general through the improvement of health systems and improved human resources for health.

My official duties start on the 1st of June. I have discussed with Julian and the Secretariat to join therefore officially the activities of the Board and committees on that date, and we are exploring having the meeting of the Executive Committee of June face-to-face in Washington, alongside the Countdown and Women Deliver Conferences. It will be a real pleasure to meet with you then, and start taking about our joint vision and more practically how we get there.

And, if not before, I very much look forward to seating with you next time, as we have the 9th meeting of the PMNCH Board in India in November.

Congratulations on what I hear has been a very successful meeting. Thank you.