

Speech

by

Hon. Dr. Christine Ondo

Uganda's Minister of Health

at the

Africa Regional Consultation on

Achieving MDG 5:

Challenges, Opportunities and Lessons Learned

at

Speke Resort Munyonyo, Kampala

March 27, 2012

- **Hon. Janet K. Museveni, M.P., Uganda’s First Lady and Minister for Karamoja Affairs**
- **Hon. Members of Parliament**
- **Commissioner Gawanas of the African Union**
- **Ms. Jill W. Sheffield, President, Women Deliver**
- **Dr. Jotham Musinguzi, Regional Director, PPD Africa Region**
- **Ms. Janet Jackson, UNFPA Representative in Uganda**
- **Hon. Martin Chungong, Director, Inter- Parliamentary Union (IPU)**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen.**

On behalf of the Ministry of Health of Uganda, I wish to thank the organizers for inviting us to participate in this important meeting whose theme is “**Achieving MDG 5: Challenges, Opportunities and Lessons Learned.**”

As you are all aware, since the year 2000 when the United Nations family met at a Summit in New York, we agreed to a set of 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be achieved by 2015. As we approach the target year of 2015, it is only pertinent that we review the progress we have made, but also look at the challenges and opportunities as well as lessons learnt. For all these reasons, this meeting is, therefore, very timely.

Ladies and gentlemen

Here in Uganda but also in many of the other African countries, some progress has been made towards improvement on maternal health. However, the progress made so far is not enough. In Uganda, our target on MDG 5 is to have lowered maternal mortality ratio from 505 per 100,000 in 1990 to 131 per 100,000 by 2015. So far, Uganda's maternal mortality reduced only slightly to 435 per 100,000 in 2006. With the new Uganda DHS results, we hope to see better indicators on maternal mortality. However, you can already see this is going to be an uphill task. Nonetheless the Government of Uganda is committed to do all it can to improve the health of women in the country. On a rather happier note, Uganda has made good and commendable progress on reducing infant mortality rate in the whole country.

As you are aware, Uganda and other African countries are signatory to the Maputo Plan of Action. Maputo Plan of Action is Africa's most comprehensive strategy to achieve universal access to reproductive health on the continent. It is my sincere

hope, therefore, that this consultative meeting on MDG 5 on women's health will also link with Maputo Plan of Action and its implementation on the continent.

In addition, it must be underscored that Uganda's and Africa's efforts to improve women's health status continue to be challenged by a weak health systems coupled by the human resources crisis. Key interventions to address these twin problems need our concerted efforts.

It is against such background that a meeting like this which brings stakeholders to learn more about the challenges of improving women's health in Africa and the lessons learnt is very commendable indeed. We at the Ministry of Health of Uganda hail your laudable efforts and I wish you the very best in your consultative meeting.

It is now my singular honour and privilege to invite Hon. Janet Museveni to address the meeting. **Thank you.**