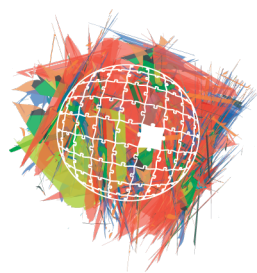


## First announcement



# PRIMARY HEALTH CARE in Times of Globalisation

## 'Alma Ata, back to the future'

26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of November 2008, at the Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp

In 2008, the world celebrates the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Declaration of Alma Ata. The commemoration provides an ideal opportunity to share experiences and evidence on Primary Health Care as a strategy to reach the declared goal of "Health for All", and to redefine its position in the global health arena of today. The colloquium is organised jointly by the Antwerp Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM), the Direction-General for Development Cooperation (DGDC), the Belgian Development Cooperation Agency (BTC) and the Belgian Platform for International Health (Be-cause Health). The venue is at the ITM on 26-27 November 2008, and the colloquium language will be English, with simultaneous translation to French.

## Background

In September 1978, the World Health Organisation organised a historical international conference on 'Primary Health Care' in Alma Ata (Kazakhstan, then the USSR). Representatives from almost all UN members gathered with main international organisations to define a framework for promoting 'Health for all', with special emphasis on poor communities in developing countries. The conference resulted in the legendary Alma Ata Declaration, which called for 'a publicly funded, comprehensive system approach to ensure the right of health for all'. The Primary Health Care referred to in the Declaration did not only include the public health sector, but 'all related sectors and aspects of national and community development, in particular agriculture, livestock, food, industry, education, housing, public works, communications and other sectors'. As a result, 'Health for all' was generally accepted as a broad social objective and not just as a narrow medical goal.

During the Belgian presidency of the European Union in 2001, the Belgian Development Cooperation and the Institute of Tropical Medicine organised an international colloquium on 'Health Care for All', a translation of one of the most probing components of the Alma Ata message i.e. accessible quality health care as a fundamental human right.

In addition, the ensuing "Health Care for All Declaration" ([www.itg.be/hca](http://www.itg.be/hca)) pointed to the essential role of comprehensive health care systems for effective and sustainable disease control, at the very moment that the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis was founded.

Fully in the spirit of the 'Health Care for All' principles, the WHO recently reaffirmed the Alma Ata Declaration as a standing principle and driving force of global health development. The international community has found itself in the Paris Declaration (2005), calling for donor harmonisation and country leadership, with the fragmented health aid sector as a priority and tracer area for new financing mechanisms.

The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Alma Ata Declaration sets the scene for a number of international meetings, and reflects on updated primary health care concepts in the contemporary, globalised setting.

The Antwerp colloquium thus comes at the end of a year of celebration, reflection and reorientation. It is an ideal opportunity to take stock of the results of all these efforts, to summarize the state of the art and to explore the road ahead for research, development and advocacy of primary health care. The colloquium will link up specifically with similar events this year (Geneva, London, Basel, etc.)



## Objectives

The main objectives of the colloquium are:

- to summarise and analyse the results of the international efforts to rethink the Alma Ata Declaration in 2008
- to review a wide variety of scientific evidence and experiences from the field on primary health care as a strategy to reach health for all
- to discuss the challenges ahead in a changing and dynamic global environment
- to reaffirm the commitment to the principles of Primary Health Care and Health Care for All by all stakeholders
- to sensitise Belgian and international policymakers and stakeholders
- to promote interaction between scientists, experts, advocates and organisations

## Participants

We expect about 250 participants, representing:

- public, private, academic and non-governmental stakeholders from across the globe
- students in Public Health and Disease control at Belgian Universities and at the ITM
- European and international networks
- International, European and Belgian authorities and policy makers

### Scientific Committee

Mariano Bonnet  
(National Institute of Hygiene, Epidemiology and Microbiology, Cuba)

Luk Cannoodt (Catholic University Leuven, Belgium)

Jan De Maeseneer (Ghent University, Belgium)

Narayanan Devadasan (Institute of Public Health, Bangalore, India)

Bruno Dujardin (Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium)

Bruno Gryseels (Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp, Belgium)

Guy Kegels (Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp, Belgium)

Jean Macq (Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium)

André Meheus (University of Antwerp, Belgium)

Edgar Paryio (Makerere University, Kampala)

Francisco Songane  
(Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, WHO, Switzerland)

Marleen Temmerman (Ghent University, Belgium)

### Organizing Committee

Peter Decat  
(International Centre for Reproductive Health, Ghent, Belgium)

Wim De Ceukelaire (International Action for Liberation, Belgium)

Maaïke Flinkenflogel (Ghent University, Belgium)

Karel Gyselinck (Belgian Technical Cooperation, Brussels, Belgium)

Bruno Marchal (Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp, Belgium)

Francis Monet (Direction-General for Development Cooperation, Belgium)

Carole Schirvel (Cemubac, Belgium)

Martine Vandermeulen (Health Research for Action, Belgium)

Dirk Van der Roost (Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp, Belgium)

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