



With breaking stories and
newswire products from

UN NEWS CENTRE



NEWSMAKER: UN envoy for malaria optimistic on reaching near-zero deaths by 2015



Ray Chambers, UN Special Envoy for Malaria

14 April 2010 – Malaria, which causes an estimated one million deaths around the world every year, will cease to be a killer by 2015 if the world can keep up its current momentum in efforts to combat the disease, the official spearheading United Nations efforts against malaria says.

Ray Chambers, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Malaria, says the most effective way to reach the goal of zero or near-zero deaths by 2015 is to strive to provide bed nets to all people who live in malaria-endemic countries by the end of this year, a milestone he is hopeful will be reached provided that donors continue funding the 'Counting Malaria Out' campaign.

The two-year campaign is designed to intensify global efforts to make mosquito nets available for all populations at risk and to reduce the number of malaria cases and deaths by 50 per cent by the end of 2010. Malaria, which is caused by a parasite transmitted to humans through the bites of infected mosquitoes, kills an estimated one million people around the world every year with most of these deaths occurring in Africa.

Malaria, which is caused by a parasite transmitted to humans through the bites of infected mosquitoes, kills an estimated one million people around the world every year with most of these deaths occurring in Africa.

“Once we reach that goal we must be ever diligent and vigilant after 2010. We have to keep replacing bed nets and we have to be aware of the malaria parasites developing resistance to the medication or the mosquito developing resistance to the insecticide on the net,” Mr. Chambers told the UN News Centre in an [interview](#) ahead of World Malaria Day on 25 April.

“If we stay vigilant, if we accomplish our goal this year, we are predicting zero deaths from or near-zero deaths from malaria by 2015,” says Mr. Chambers, who was appointed by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in February 2008 to help raise awareness of the global malaria problem and to lead efforts to raise funds to fight the disease.

Malaria is caused by a parasite transmitted to humans through the bites of infected mosquitoes. The disease is a major health problem in Africa where most of the deaths occur.

“I believe very strongly and with heartfelt passion that if we keep working all together as hard and as cooperatively as we’ve been working, we will have taken a disease that had become a ‘genocide’ and virtually eliminate deaths from it until a vaccine comes along,” says Mr. Chambers.

“This is really unprecedented in our lifetimes and it should encourage us with regard to maternal health, child mortality, HIV/AIDS, TB [tuberculosis] and other diseases. I think malaria can stand up as an example of just what progress we can make by all working together,” he adds.

News Tracker: [past stories on this issue](#)

Social media envoys to post and tweet for malaria control, UN official says