



## Second Meeting of the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health

SEA/PR/1304

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**Geneva and New Delhi, 12 April 2000:**

**What:** The Second Meeting of the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health

**Where:** Hosted by ICRIER (Indian Centre for Research on International Economic Relations), India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, India

**When:** 14-17 April 2000

In January 2000 Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), launched the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health (CMH). Thirteen years after the Brundtland Commission established the indisputable link between environment and development, this new expert Commission was launched to clarify the economic links between health and poverty reduction. Over a two-year period it will produce a series of studies on how concrete health interventions can lead to economic growth and reduce inequity in developing countries. The Commission will recommend a set of measures designed to maximize the poverty reduction and economic development benefits of health sector investment.

The CMH is now meeting for the second time with the aim of fleshing out the workplans of its six working groups: Health, Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction; Public Policies to Stimulate Development of Drugs and Vaccines for the Poor; Mobilization of Domestic Resources for Health; Health and the International Economy; Improving Health Outcomes of the Poor; Development Assistance and Health.

Much of the CMH's work and discussion during the New Delhi meeting will be with reference to India. A highlight of the four-day meeting will be the public lecture by the CMH's chair, Harvard Professor Dr Jeffrey Sachs, at 17h30 on Friday 14 April at the India Habitat Centre. He will speak on "Health as a Crucial Factor in Economic Growth".

This is probably one of the most important Commissions on development established in recent years. On the occasion of its launch, WHO Director-General, Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland had said, "Issues such as debt relief, trade negotiations, the AIDS crisis, essential drug availability and the spiralling of health care costs have left no doubt that health plays a central role in the world economy. Yet, few finance officials and development economists have so far explored the potential importance of health investment as an instrument for

reducing poverty. The goal of this Commission and its pre-eminent thinkers is to show once and for all that health must be at the heart of development linkages”.

According to Professor Sachs, the Commission Chairperson: “There remains significant disagreement as to what are the best investments in health in terms of poverty reduction and economic development. The Commission is designed to provide some powerful answers to many of these questions.”

The CMH brings together 15 of the world’s leading economists and economic policy makers, including two from India, former Finance Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh and Dr Isher Judge Ahluwalia, Director and Chief Executive, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER). [Full list of the members of the Commission is enclosed.](#)

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