



**Statement by Medicus Mundi International
to the 130th Session of the Executive Board
on Agenda Item 6.6 Social Determinants of Health**

Thank you, Chair, for giving me the opportunity of addressing the distinguished Members of the WHO Executive Board on behalf of Medicus Mundi International and the group of WHO Watchers following the work of the current EB session.

We would like to place our views as regards the report on the World Conference on Social Determinants of Health held in Rio de Janeiro in October 2011. We believe that the conference was an opportunity to purposively build upon the valuable report of the Commission on Social Determinants of Health.

However, in many ways, the Conference missed this opportunity. The political Declaration does not break new ground and does not chart out a fresh approach to problems that are widely acknowledged as pervasive, acute and requiring urgent attention.

We urge Member Countries to consider the following as imperatives while addressing the social determinants of health:

1. Building and strengthening of equity-based social protection systems and effective publicly provided and publicly financed health systems.
2. Use of progressive taxation, wealth taxes and the elimination of tax evasion to finance action on the social determinants of health.
3. Use of health impact assessments to document the ways in which unregulated and unaccountable transnational corporations and financial institutions on the one hand, and the global trading regime on the other, constitute barriers to Health for All.
4. Reconceptualisation of aid for health as an international obligation and reparation, that is legitimately owed to developing countries under basic human rights principles.
5. Development and adoption of a code of conduct in relation to the management of institutional conflicts of interest in global health decision making.
6. Development of monitoring system that provide disaggregated data on a range of social stratifiers as they relate to health outcomes.

We remain hopeful that the powerful possibilities of addressing the fundamental roots of ill health, by paying attention to its social determinants, can still be realized. But for that to happen we believe a bold approach is necessary that targets the up-stream structural determinants.

Thank you.