



Press announcement

HEAL takes part in ministerial talks on children's health in Parma

Brussels, 8 March 2010 - The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) is leading a delegation of non-governmental organisations to the 5th Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health of the WHO European Region, which will take place in Parma, Italy, 10-12 March 2010.

HEAL and other not-for-profit representatives (1) will be among about 600 participants brought together to review progress on agreements by European ministers of health and environment, and make new pledges to improve people's health and the environment. The cornerstone document is the Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE), which was adopted at the last ministerial conference in 2004 and has four priority themes:

- ***Reducing gastrointestinal disorders with safer water and adequate sanitation***
- ***Protection from injuries and adequate physical activity to combat obesity and reduce accidents***
- ***Cleaner air to reduce asthma and respiratory diseases***
- ***Protection from hazardous chemicals to reduce disease.***

HEAL will be urging ministers to take action against emerging health and environment threats such as climate change, pesticides, hazardous chemicals and nano materials; highlighting areas where progress is slow; awarding winners of a non-governmental good practice in children's environment and health competition; and highlighting why youth participation is so important in environmental health.

MEDIA EVENTS and PRESS RELEASES

Press briefing "Acknowledging good practice in improving children's environmental health" *Competition organised by HEAL and NGO partners where eight winning awards will be presented. A booklet and press release about the winning projects will be available at www.env-health.org from early morning on the day.*

When and where: Thursday 11 March, 10.00-10.30 in Media Centre (to right of the plenary room), Auditorium Niccolò Paganini, Parma Municipality Congress Centre, Viale Barilla 29/a, 43100 Parma.

DAILY UPDATES: HEAL will also provide regular press releases and updates, which will be available on our website www.env-health.org. You can also join our Twitter news feed to be alerted on all developments (twitter.com/HealthandEnv).

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION programme of media events and registration is available at http://www.euro.who.int/parma2010/media/20090311_1 (2)

The WHO European Region Environment and Health process with a series of ministerial meetings over the past 20 years, is coordinated by a steering group brought together by the World Health Organization. Genon Jensen, Executive Director, HEAL has represented the health non-governmental sector in this process for the past 10 years.

For more information (and to be added to the press mailing list), please contact:

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Notes to journalists

1. Many HEAL members and partners are attending the meeting including Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF), International Society of Doctors for the Environment Austria, European Respiratory Society (ERS), European Child Safety Alliance (ESCA), International Network on Children's Health, Environment & Safety (INCHES), Health Care Without Harm Europe amongst many others.
2. Briefings include a media workshop on 9 March, a curtain raiser press conference organized by WHO/Europe and the Italian government on Wednesday 10 March at 12:30 in the Auditorium Niccolò Paganini of the Parma Municipality Congress Centre, Parma Municipality Congress Centre, Viale Barilla 29/a, 43100 Parma. Regular press briefings will be held throughout the Conference after each plenary session, and a closing day news conference is planned for Friday 12 March.

***The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)** is a leading non-governmental and not-for-profit advocacy group focusing on health and environment at the European level. It aims to raise awareness of how environmental protection improves health. Its membership brings together 60 organisations working to promote and protect health at the European level. Our membership includes medical, health and patients' associations, environmental organisations, consumer and women's groups, many of which are themselves European networks. HEAL websites: www.env-health.org and cehape.env-health.org*