

## Global Political and Scientific Leaders Celebrate Innovation Accelerating Malaria Elimination in the Americas

*Members of the scientific, technical, and private sector communities convene at ASTMH  
Annual Meeting on Malaria Day in the Americas*

**Baltimore, MD (November 6, 2017)** – Today, more than 100 scientists, government officials, and technical partners of the global health and development community convened to honor country programs of Haiti, Dominican Republic, and Brazil for their progress toward eliminating malaria, a preventable yet deadly disease that threatens half the world and kills a child every two minutes. The event, commemorating Malaria Day in the Americas, was held in conjunction with the 66th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH).

Recently recognized by the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) and the Malaria Champions of the Americas Secretariat as the 2017 Malaria Champions, the honored programs were selected based on innovative efforts that demonstrated success in malaria prevention, control, elimination, or prevention of re-establishment, and significantly contributed to overcoming the challenges of malaria-endemic communities, countries, and the region. This year's honorees were:

- The Binational Plan for Malaria Elimination in Hispaniola Island, which includes the Ouanaminthe-Dajabon Project from the Programme National de Contrôle de la Malaria (Haiti) and the Centro Nacional para el Control de las Enfermedades Tropicales (Dominican Republic).
- The Jaú National Park Amazonas Project from the Instituto Oswaldo Cruz (Brazil).
- The Eirunepé Project: "From Chaos to Surveillance" from the Eirunepé Municipal Health Department in Amazonas (Brazil).

Each year, one winner is chosen from among the Champions, but the program from Haiti and Dominican Republic – partners of the Malaria Zero Alliance – and the Eirunepé Project from Brazil were both named official winners of this year's ceremony in a tie.

"The collaborative effort of Haiti and the Dominican Republic to eliminate not one, but two mosquito-borne diseases from their shared island shows that improving public health transcends cultural differences, even in historically and politically sensitive situations," said former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, whose Carter Center in 2008 helped launch the binational effort to eliminate malaria and lymphatic filariasis, a disfiguring neglected tropical disease. "Continued hard work, political commitment, and support from the international community are critical to wiping out these diseases of poverty once and for all."

According to PAHO/WHO, malaria is endemic in 21 countries of the Americas, with the majority of cases concentrated in the Amazon. Latin America and the Caribbean have made significant progress in curbing the burden of malaria since 2000, and currently 19 of the 21 malaria endemic countries have indicated commitment toward ending this disease for good. Today, 102 million people are still at risk of contracting the disease, and 28 million are at a high risk.

Today's event was co-hosted by United Nations Foundation's *Nothing But Nets* campaign and Malaria No More, in close collaboration with PAHO/WHO and the Malaria Zero Alliance. *Nothing But Nets* and Malaria No More have partnered with the Malaria Zero Alliance to mobilize additional resources and momentum to ending malaria in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

“We have the power to end malaria in this generation,” said Margaret Reilly McDonnell, Director of the United Nations Foundation’s *Nothing But Nets* campaign. “We hope these efforts shine a bright light on the need for continued resources to eliminate malaria in the Americas, as it is critical part of the global fight.”

“We are honored to recognize all of the 2017 Malaria Champions of the Americas for their efforts to dramatically reduce malaria incidence in their countries,” said Malaria No More’s Managing Director for Policy and Advocacy Josh Blumenfeld. “Their leadership and commitment have made a remarkable impact, contributing to saving lives, increasing economic prosperity and putting the Americas and the world on the path to eliminating the disease within our lifetimes.”

Private sector representatives also participated in the event, showcasing their innovative solutions to combat malaria worldwide. New tools and technologies are accelerating progress against malaria by lowering cost, increasing efficiency, and addressing risks. As the Americas aim to eliminate this disease from the region, further innovations will be necessary to finish the job. Guest speakers from Sumitomo Chemical, BASF, TANA Netting, TropiQ Health Sciences, Abbott, and Novartis addressed the need for these tools, strategies, and sharing of best practices to end this treatable and preventable disease.

More partnerships and resources are required to end malaria for good. For more information about malaria elimination efforts in the Americas, visit [www.paho.org/malaria](http://www.paho.org/malaria).

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#### **About *Nothing But Nets***

*Nothing But Nets* is the world’s largest grassroots campaign to save lives by preventing malaria, a disease which claims the life of a child every two minutes. Inspired by sports columnist Rick Reilly, hundreds of thousands of people have joined the campaign that was created by the United Nations Foundation in 2006. *Nothing But Nets* has raised over \$65 million to help deliver 12 million bed nets to families in need, along with other crucial malaria interventions. In addition to raising funds for its UN partners, *Nothing But Nets* raises awareness and voices to advocate for critical malaria funding for the U.S. President’s Malaria Initiative and The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. It only costs \$10 to help save lives from this deadly disease. Visit [www.NothingButNets.net](http://www.NothingButNets.net) to defeat malaria.

#### **About The United Nations Foundation**

The United Nations Foundation builds public-private partnerships to address the world’s most pressing problems, and broadens support for the United Nations through advocacy and public outreach. Through innovative campaigns and initiatives, the Foundation connects people, ideas, and resources to help the UN solve global problems. The Foundation was created in 1998 as a U.S. public charity by entrepreneur and philanthropist Ted Turner and now is supported by global corporations, foundations, governments, and individuals. For more information, visit [www.unfoundation.org](http://www.unfoundation.org).

**About Malaria No More**

Malaria No More envisions a world where no one dies from a mosquito bite. More than a decade into our mission, our work has contributed to historic progress toward this goal. Now, we're mobilizing the political commitment, funding, and innovation required to achieve what would be one of the greatest humanitarian accomplishments – ending malaria within our generation. For more information, visit [www.malarienomore.org](http://www.malarienomore.org)

**About Malaria Day in the Americas**

Malaria Day in the Americas is commemorated annually on November 6 to promote awareness, recognize past and current efforts to prevent and control malaria in the region of the Americas, build commitment, and to mobilize action to advance malaria goals and targets as the region works towards elimination. For more information, visit [www.paho.org/hq/](http://www.paho.org/hq/)

**About Malaria Champions of the Americas**

Malaria Champions of the Americas is the region's platform or mechanism for identifying, celebrating, and providing avenues to emulate best practices and success stories in malaria prevention, control, elimination and prevention of re-establishment. This award honors innovative efforts that have significantly contributed to overcoming the challenges of malaria in communities, countries, and the region. Since 2009, 27 Champions have been recognized and include Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Suriname. For more information, visit <http://www.paho.org/campeonesmalaria/?lang=es>.