

**INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE – WORKING GROUP**

**XXXVII<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

**New York, 8 June 1999**

**Days of Tranquillity for Polio Eradication**

Days of Tranquillity are truces negotiated to immunise children. Days of Tranquillity offer both the opportunity to both protect the health of vulnerable women and children living in war zones and to build peace by focusing attention of parties in conflict on a common issue. UNICEF and WHO's global polio eradication initiative offers an opportunity for Days of Tranquillity in conflict countries where polio remains endemic. At the request of Dr. Brundtland and Ms. Bellamy, Secretary General Annan has initiated efforts to negotiate Days of Tranquillity for polio eradication in DR Congo.

The recent resolution of the IASC calls for ERC to work with WHO and UNICEF in exploring the need for and feasibility of Days of Tranquillity for Polio Eradication in Afghanistan, Angola, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Sudan.

At the present time, the UN Special Representative for Afghanistan is working with the support of the WHO Representative and the UNICEF Representative to negotiate Days of Tranquillity for the upcoming campaign in Afghanistan.

A recent epidemic of polio has highlighted the urgent need to immunise children in both government and UNITA-controlled areas of Angola. The epidemic and the need for polio immunisation campaign in all areas of the country are among the items being discussed with both the government and UNITA.

In order to organise and conduct the most effective immunisation campaigns, the situation in Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Sudan should be reviewed expeditiously.

**Recommendations:**

1. The IASC working group supports the efforts of the UN Special Representative for Afghanistan, WHO and UNICEF to negotiate Days of Tranquillity for polio immunisation in Afghanistan.
2. The IASC working group supports ongoing approaches to Government of Angola and UNITA for opening of humanitarian corridors including need for Days of Tranquillity for polio immunisation.

3. The IASC working group supports the ongoing effort to plan and implement polio immunisation campaigns in DR Congo and to negotiate Days of Tranquillity for those campaigns.
4. The IASC working group requests ERC, WHO and UNICEF to urgently review of countries in conflict resolution to determine where Days of Tranquillity would be feasible and necessary. Formal contact should be made with Humanitarian Coordinator, WHO Representative and UNICEF representative in each of the countries. A formal report should be made at the next meeting of the working group.
5. ERC, WHO and UNICEF should explore the feasibility of obtaining a peace-building grant from the Canadian International Development Agency to directly support the costs of negotiating Days of Tranquillity for polio eradication.