

## New Regional Director for Africa nominated



Dr Luis Gomes Sambo nominated as new Regional Director for Africa.

Dr Luis Gomes Sambo of Angola, who has held senior WHO posts for the last 15 years, has been nominated as the new Regional Director for Africa.

He was elected by the Regional Committee for Africa, which represents 46 governments, on 2 September and his nomination will be submitted to the WHO Executive Board for confirmation in January 2005.

The former Angolan health minister pledged to work towards a more efficient WHO Regional Office for Africa, promising to motivate staff more and provide technical support to Member States in a more efficient way.

In August, outgoing regional director, Dr Ebrahim Samba, who is from the Gambia, dismissed a scathing editorial published in the *Lancet* medical journal on 7 August criticizing the work of the regional office during his 10-year term.

Samba, who retires at the end of the year, defended his record saying that despite widespread poverty and instability in the region his office had achieved unprecedented success (*Bulletin* 2004:82(9)).

Incoming director Sambo is currently Director of Programme Management in the African Region, where he is responsible for designing strategies and coordinating technical support programmes for all 46 countries in the region. ■

## Survey finds up to 10 000 died each month in Darfur

At least six thousand and as many as 10 000 people died in Sudan's Greater Darfur region every 30 days between 15 June and 15 August, according to estimates based on the initial results of a survey of internally displaced people in western and northern Darfur.

The survey, which is being conducted by WHO, Sudan's Ministry of Health and the European Programme for Intervention Epidemiology, found that half to three-quarters of the deaths of children aged less than five years were linked to diarrhoea. WHO said that these could easily be prevented by simple cost-effective measures, such as providing improved access to clean water and better sanitation.

The initial findings of the survey, which was released on 13 September, also found that an estimated 15% of all deaths were linked to injuries and violence. The survey among internally displaced people in southern Darfur was interrupted in early September but has since been resumed. The full results are not yet available, WHO said.

"This survey confirms what the humanitarian community has suspected for some weeks. The results, along with the other information gathered by our staff, tell us that the people in Darfur need more assistance," said Dr LEE Jong-wook, WHO's Director-General.

An estimated 1.2 million Sudanese have fled their villages, which were under attack by militias, and have taken refuge in 129 camps across Darfur. Their displacement has triggered one of the world's greatest humanitarian disasters and a major international relief effort is underway to help them.

In western Darfur which has an estimated 498 500 internally displaced people, the study found a crude mortality rate — the mortality rate from all causes of death for a population — of 2.9 displaced people per 10 000 per day during the eight-week period.

In northern Darfur with an estimated 382 600 internally displaced people, the figure was lower with a crude mortality rate of 1.5 displaced people per 10 000 people per day.

Both surpassed the threshold of one death per 10 000 people a day that defines a humanitarian emergency.

WHO said the findings underscore the urgent need to scale up humanitarian assistance in Darfur and, in particular, to improve access of all internally displaced people to drinking-water, water and soap for washing, sanitation, and quality health care. ■

## Danzon re-nominated as WHO Regional Director for Europe



Marc Danzon re-nominated as WHO Regional Director for Europe.

Dr Marc Danzon, a French national, has been nominated as the WHO Regional Director for Europe and is due to start this — his second five-year term — on 1 February 2005.

His nomination was uncontested and will be submitted to the WHO Executive Board in January for confirmation.

Danzon said his priorities were to help the region's 52 Member States address public health issues, such as non-communicable diseases and HIV/AIDS, as well as to provide policy-makers and

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