

August 04<sup>th</sup> 2011

**Dr. Margaret Chan**  
**Director-General of WHO**  
**Avenue Appia 20**  
**Geneve 27**  
**1211 Geneve**  
**Switzerland**

Dear Dr. Chan,

We appreciate your expression of support for nursing and midwifery, and your strong belief in the “critical role that nurses and midwives play in supporting individuals, families and communities to fulfill their right to the highest attainable level of health”.

What concerns us, however, is your last paragraph, stating that the vacant position of Chief Nursing Scientist post may not be filled due to financial constraints. In view of WHO's priority given to primary healthcare and widely available evidence on the paramount role of nurses and midwives in the cost-effective organization of health services, we believe that strong leadership from WHO headquarters is fundamental to enhance these professionals' potential contribution to the advancement of health care for the needy public.

Therefore, we respectfully consider that budgetary constraints should be weighed against the benefits the critical leadership of the Chief Nursing Scientist represents for the Nursing and Midwifery workforce around the world. We thank you in advance for your reconsideration of our request.

Sincerely,



**Isabel Amélia Costa Mendes**  
**Secretary-General**  
**Global Network of WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing and Midwifery Development**