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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***Tanzania's President Kikwete and CCBRT CEO urge development community to invest now in maternal and newborn care to prevent death and disabilities***

June 14, 2010: Mr. Erwin Telemans, CEO of CCBRT, one of Tanzania's leading disability organizations, has called on the development community to add their financial support now to ensure that Dar es Salaam's planned Baobab Maternity Hospital becomes a reality. The comments were made at an event held Friday, June 11, and attended by H.E. President Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete; Mrs. Blandina S.J. Nyoni, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare; and Hon. Dr. Willibrod Slaa MP, President of the Board of CCBRT.

Tanzania's President also called for additional support, while acknowledging those companies that already have pledged funds toward the construction of the main hospital facility. "I would like to thank all of you who are here today for assisting CCBRT to build the new maternity hospital. Also, I would like to give my heartfelt thank you to all the organizations that are helping CCBRT in one way or the other to enable them to provide services to Tanzanians. I plead with the organizations that have started to help CCBRT to build a hospital that will provide maternal and neonatal health services, to continue to do so that the hospital becomes a reality within the planned set time," he said.

Also present at the event, which was held at the Movenpick Hotel in Dar es Salaam, were Hon. Mr. William Lukuvi, MP, Regional Commissioner of Dar es Salaam, and Mr. Bakari Kingobi, Director of Dar es Salaam City Council, along with representatives from some of the 17 Tanzania-based companies that have pledged a total of nearly \$350,000 to help build the Baobab Maternity Hospital. Companies who have made commitments to this initiative thus far include: Songas, Vodacom Tanzania Ltd., Standard Chartered Bank Tanzania, Twiga Cement, Zain Tanzania, Barclays Bank Tanzania Ltd., Aluminum Africa, NMB, Heritage Oil Tanzania Ltd., BOA Bank Tanzania, Synarge Group, Dominion Oil & Gas Limited, Africa Life Assurance, Alexander Forbes, CFAO DT Dobie Tanzania. The Karimjee Jivanjee Foundation and Mr. Mustafa Jaffer Sabodo, and the Tanzanian Ministry of Health and Social Welfare also made pledges toward the cause.

CCBRT CEO Mr. Erwin Telemans commented: "It is inspiring to see the corporate community coming together to help build a new maternity hospital for Dar es Salaam in this way and my deepest appreciation goes to all of those companies who have supported this initiative so far.

"But each year there are an estimated 13,000 women die unnecessarily in pregnancy and childbirth. Indeed, now is the time to act and, together with the government, we have part of the solution right here – the very real prospect of a new hospital offering comprehensive services to future generations of mothers and their families. But to make this happen and raise the 30 billion shillings (USD \$22 million) we need just to construct and equip the hospital we urgently need the commitment of development partners alongside that of CCBRT, the government, and Tanzania's corporate sector."

**KUPONA MEANS *TO HEAL***

CCBRT's new maternity facility, the Baobab Maternity Hospital, is being developed as part of a public-private partnership with the Government of Tanzania. It is planned to open in 2012, provided funding is secured.

During her speech, Mrs. Blandina S.J. Nyoni, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare commented: "Services that will be given in the new maternity hospital will help increase the pace of Tanzania reaching Millennium Development Goals 4, 5, and 6. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare maintains that CCBRT has the capacity contribute to the success of government efforts to upgrade maternal and neonatal health services. This includes also the rehabilitation services that CCBRT offers at the moment."

The 210-bed hospital, which will be constructed next to CCBRT Disability Hospital in Msasani, Dar es Salaam, on land provided by the Government of Tanzania, will save thousands of lives and prevent thousands of women and children from developing disabling conditions each year. It also will offer services to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and will be a training center to build expertise in providing maternal and infant health care.

The European Union, CBM, and Light for the World also have already added their support for the new hospital. The Kuponu Foundation is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization that has been created to gain private support in the United States for this important project of CCBRT.

For more information, visit: [www.kuponafoundation.org](http://www.kuponafoundation.org) or [www.baobabhospital.or.tz](http://www.baobabhospital.or.tz).



H.E. President of the United Republic of Tanzania Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete speaking at the CCBRT event.



Representatives of the companies who have made donations to the new maternity hospital with President Kikwete and members of CCBRT's Board.



H.E. President Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete with Mrs. Blandina S.J. Nyoni, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, and Hon. Dr. Willibrod Slaa MP, President of the Board of CCBRT.