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The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Turkey to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other international organizations in Switzerland presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and referring to the Latter’s Note No: ID/LOH/Res/18/12, dated 22 November 2011, concerning the Resolution 18/12 entitled “Preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights” adopted by the Human Rights Council, has the honour to enclose herewith an information note and the “Health Transformation Program Evaluation Report” received from the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Turkey respectively.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Turkey avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Encl: As stated

High Commissioner for Human Rights,
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 GENEVE 10

27 January 2012
With reference to the Note of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights concerning the questions regarding to the preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Turkey wishes to submit the following information based on the “Health Transformation Program Evaluation Report”:

Ministry of Health of the Republic of Turkey introduced the “Health Transformation Program-HTP” in 2003 with a view to coordinate and finance national health services in an efficient and equitable manner. The attached HTP evaluation report of the period of 2003-2010 is also available on the Ministry of Health website:


According to the “WHO Trends in Maternal Mortality 1990 to 2008”, Turkey is among the 10 countries that achieved the highest rate of decline in maternal mortality. The successful implementation of the HTP program has been particularly decisive in that respect. The following programs are one of the few elements of the HTP that are covered in the report.

**Family Physician Program:** (pg. 78)

Within the scope of HTP, a Family Physician designated for each individual. Family physician is responsible for the health status and health problems of all members of the family ranging from the fetus to the eldest individual. The physician takes precautionary measures to prevent the individuals under his/her responsibility from diseases.

The family physician is generally inhabited close to the households of families and is easily accessible. The family physician is duly informed of the population that he/she provides services.

The Law on Family Physician entered into force in 2004 and the first Family Physician Implementation started in Düzce in September 15, 2005. The said program was expanded country wide in December 13th, 2010.

**Expanded Immunization Program (EIP):** (pg. 96)

The main objective of EIP is to get every infant immunized against major diseases. The term of “expanded” refers to the on the field vaccination of children and adults with a view to achieve universal implementation throughout the country. While the vaccination rate of the targeted child population was 78% across the country in 2002 and was even below 50% in some provinces of Southeastern Anatolia, HTP attained a vaccination level of 97% across the country in 2010.

**Intensive Care of Newborns:** (pg. 93)

The number of newborn intensive care beds, which was 665 in 2002, increased to 2,544 by the end of 2010 in Public Hospitals. In the same period, the number of transport incubators rose from 158 to 540 and the number of ventilators rose from 252 to 684. While almost one fourth of the deliveries used to be performed in the household in 2003 under unhealthy conditions, according to the Ministry of Health data, hospital delivery rate
increased to 93% in 2010. The objective is to increase the rate of hospital delivery to 99% by 2015. WHO officially announced in May 2009 that maternal and neonatal tetanus was eliminated in Turkey as a result of the deliveries at hospital environment and in compliance with hygiene rules.

"Conscious Mother, Healthy Baby Program" was introduced in 2004 to appeal to all the mothers who give birth at inpatient treatment facilities. One of the objectives of this program is to increase health related awareness. Mothers are given basic information on baby care and health just after delivery, and they receive "Guide for Conscious Mothers and Healthy Babies". So far, almost five million mothers have been contacted.

Another initiative under the HTP is the "Guest Mother Project". Within the scope of this initiative, women with risky pregnancies are hosted in safe environments. Under this project, pregnant women living in regions with risky climatic conditions are invited to "Guest Mother Hotels/Guesthouses" for medical care and sheltering for a period of 4 weeks before delivery. The mothers who accept the invitation receive care before, during and after the delivery and are transferred to their homes. 6,229 mothers had access to this service in 2010.

The infant mortality rate has significantly decreased in Turkey. According to the results of Turkey Demographic and Health Survey, infant mortality rate of 28.5 per thousand in 2003, was reduced to 17 per thousand in 2008. According to the data provided by the Ministry of Health data, while it was 13.1 per thousand in 2009, decreased to 10.1 in 2010.

**Emergency Health Care Services: (pg. 136)**

Medical Evacuation in case of emergency (diseases or injuries) are provided through "112 Emergency Health Care" services around the country. Emergent and/or intensive service including the air ambulance is provided free-of-charge. Capabilities to transport emergency patients have improved by six folds in the recent years. Currently the reaction time in case of emergency is 10 minutes for the 93 % of the cases occurred in the urban areas and 30 minutes for the 96 % of the cases occurred in the rural areas.

The number of fully equipped ambulances for 112 Emergency Health Care, which was 618 by the end of 2002, reached to 2547 by the end of 2010. Ambulances have improved not only quantitatively but also qualitatively as all ambulances comply with the EU standard TS-EN 1789. The number of emergency stations which was 481 by the end of 2002 reached to 1460 in 2010.