



# Call to Action

We the Participants of the 9th International Rotavirus Symposium  
Johannesburg, South Africa  
2 – 3 August, 2010

## *Considering that:*

- Diarrhea is the second greatest killer of children under five worldwide, killing 1.33 million children under five each year;
- Rotavirus is the leading cause of severe diarrheal disease;
- Rotavirus-related diarrheal disease takes the lives of more than 500,000 children under five every year and is responsible for the hospitalization of millions more around the world;
- 85% of rotavirus deaths occur in low income countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia;
- A growing body of evidence attests to the safety, efficacy, effectiveness and lifesaving potential of rotavirus vaccines;
- In light of the demonstrated burden of rotavirus disease and the evidence supporting the use of vaccines to reduce that burden, there is a need to increase access to affordable rotavirus vaccines in the developing world;
- In 2009 WHO recommended that rotavirus vaccines be included in every nation's immunization program;
- Adding rotavirus vaccination in national immunization programs and combining it with appropriate diarrhea control interventions as part of a package of strategies to prevent diarrheal diseases-related deaths would be critical to achieving Millennium Development Goal 4 (MDG 4);
- Prevention and control of diarrheal disease requires collaborative action by national governments, industry, civil society organizations, and international health agencies.

## *Therefore, We Agree to:*

- Continue to support immunization as a common public good worldwide, an economic necessity and a vital political priority;
- Encourage increased vaccine research and expanded surveillance for vaccine preventable diseases;
- Encourage the joint collaboration of national governments, health professionals, bilateral and multilateral agencies, the GAVI Alliance, and the manufacturers of vaccines to facilitate and accelerate the introduction of affordable rotavirus vaccines worldwide;
- Advocate for and raise awareness among public and policy makers of the burden of rotavirus-related diarrheal disease and the value of vaccination;
- Call upon political leaders and decision-makers from developing countries to increase financial support to their national immunization programs;
- Call upon political leaders and decision-makers from developed countries and global immunization partners to scale-up financial support to the GAVI Alliance.