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For Immediate Release

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**Doctors Without Borders Brings the
“Access to Essential Medicines EXPO” Exhibit to Ann Arbor**

Traveling Exhibit To Raise Awareness of the Need for Medicines in Poor Countries

September 19, 2002, Ann Arbor - The international humanitarian organization Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) today opened a three-day tour of the Access to Essential Medicines EXPO in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The interactive exhibit, housed in a 48-foot tractor-trailer, is traveling to 30 cities across the nation to highlight the lack of essential medicines in developing countries. Experienced MSF aid workers will be on hand at each exhibit site to inform visitors why millions die each year from treatable diseases like malaria, kala azar, tuberculosis, sleeping sickness, and HIV/AIDS.

“Most of us can’t imagine not being able get medical treatment if we get sick,” says Nicolas de Torrente, Executive Director of Doctors Without Borders USA. “Yet in poor countries, people are dying every day because the medicines used to treat the diseases are too expensive, no longer effective, or are not currently being produced. Doctors Without Borders is bringing the Access EXPO to the United States to show visitors why this fatal imbalance in access to medicines is unacceptable and must be changed.”

The World Health Organization estimates that 14 million people die each year from communicable diseases. Yet of the 1,393 total new drugs developed in the past 30 years, only 16 were specifically for tropical diseases. Research and development for drugs to treat the world’s poor has come to a virtual halt compared to more profitable treatments for non-life-threatening conditions such as impotence, hair loss, and sleep disorders.

Upon entering the Access EXPO, visitors spin a Wheel of Misfortune and are assigned one of five diseases highlighted in the exhibit: malaria, tuberculosis, sleeping sickness, kala azar, or HIV/AIDS. Through photographs, audiovisuals, and personal testimonies, they learn about the symptoms of the diseases and the people most afflicted by them. At the end of the exhibit, MSF medical volunteers provide a “diagnosis” for the visitors’ disease, and estimate their chances of receiving proper treatment.

The Access EXPO will complete its U.S. tour in Washington, D.C. in March 2003, where MSF plans to deliver petitions to the U.S. government and the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America. Signed by people across the country, the petitions will request that more be done to stimulate the research and development of treatments for neglected diseases.

The Access EXPO is free, wheelchair accessible, and open to the general public. Visit our website for tour schedule, locations, and list of special events: www.doctorswithoutborders.org.

To arrange for a media walk-through and interviews with Doctors Without Borders medical volunteers, please call Amelia Pan at (212) 655-3779 (office) or (917) 862-9921 (cell).

Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is an independent, non-governmental international humanitarian organization that delivers emergency medical care to people in over 85 countries. MSF treats victims of armed conflict, epidemics, natural and man-made disasters, and others who lack health care due to social or geographic isolation. Each year, more than 2,500 volunteer doctors, nurses, other medical professionals, logistics experts, water/sanitation engineers, and administrators join more than 15,000 locally hired staff to provide medical aid in more than 85 countries.

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