

ICASO Update



April 2008

High-level meeting for a comprehensive review of the progress achieved in realizing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS on 10 - 11 June 2008

The Office of the President of the General Assembly has just released its latest update ('Information Note') on the arrangements for the high-level meeting (HLM) on HIV/AIDS, to be convened on 10 - 11 June 2008. As a reminder: the meeting is aimed at reviewing the progress achieved in realizing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS.

To following are important key points:

The high-level meeting

1. The high-level meeting will be held on 10 and 11 June 2008 in New York, U.S.A.
2. A list of civil society representatives who will need accreditation to participate in the high-level meeting was drawn up by 31 March 2008, and was circulated to Member States for consideration on a no-objection basis, and for a final decision by the General Assembly (to be finalized in April).
3. Member States are encouraged to include parliamentarians and representatives of civil society in their national delegations to the high-level meeting.

The plenary meetings

1. Plenary meetings will take place on 10 and 11 June.

ICASO note: we expect that these sessions may run over into 12 June, given the number of governments that will want to speak.

2. A person openly living with HIV will speak at the opening plenary.
3. Representatives of civil society - accredited- may attend the plenary.

ICASO note: please note that the space is very limited. A process is still to be worked out for making these limited seats/badges available.

Thematic panel discussions

1. There will be five (5) thematic panel discussions. These will focus on selected areas that require special attention to advance the AIDS response. The panels will also consider cross-cutting issues, including human rights and the urgency in meeting commitments set out in the 2001 Declaration of Commitment and the 2006 Political Declaration.

ICASO note: although not included in the OPGA Information Note, we have listed the chairs of each of the panels, consisting of the regional groups with the GA and selected in a draw.

2. The following themes are proposed for the panel discussions:

Panel 1: *How do we build on results achieved and speed up progress towards universal access by 2010 - moving on to reach the MDGs by 2015?*

Chair: Group of Asian States

The panel will take stock of results and focus on remaining gaps and key decisions that need to be taken, along with actions at country, regional and global levels. The panel will examine specific findings from country progress reports.

Panel 2: *The challenges of providing leadership and political support in countries with concentrated epidemics.*

Chair: Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC)

The panel will focus on the various drivers of the epidemic, HIV and human rights and how to reach stigmatized, hard to reach and vulnerable populations. What specific actions are needed to overcome socio-economic barriers and other obstacles to access to prevention, treatment, care and support?

Panel 3: *Making the Response to AIDS Work for Women and Girls - Gender Equality and AIDS.*

Chair: Group of Eastern European States (EEG)

The panel will review findings from country reports on the progress, or lack thereof, with regard to the feminization of the epidemic and gender equality; remaining barriers and proposed actions to overcome these.

Panel 4: *AIDS: A Multi-generational Challenge - Providing a Robust and Long Term Response.*

Chair: Group of African States

The panel will examine critical linkages between the response to AIDS and long-term development, health system strengthening, social protection, scientific innovation and the lethal combination of HIV and Tuberculosis. The UN Special Envoy to Stop TB will present the outcome and recommendations of the "HIV-TB Global Leaders' Forum". What more can be done to ensure a robust, sustainable and multi-generational response?

Panel 5: *Resources and Universal Access: Opportunities and limitations.*

Chair: Group of Western European and Other States (WEOG)

The panel will examine aspects of financing of the response to AIDS, including sources of funding, resource allocation, and spending, "making the money work", accountability and predictable and multi-year funding. How can sustainable funding be assured at country level for the long-term?

3. Background notes will be prepared for each panel discussion.
4. Each panel will comprise three panelists with a thorough knowledge and expertise of the subject. They will include national, United Nations and civil society representatives.

ICASO note: an open call for applications for the civil society speaker closed at the end of March and the Civil Society Task Force is currently finalizing the recommendations for each panel to be sent to the OPGA.

Informal interactive civil society hearing

1. The hearing will provide an informal civil society hearing, which will be convened on 10 June for two (2) hours.

ICASO note: similarly to the panels, the Civil Society Task Force is finalizing the recommendations for the hearing, which will be announced within the next few weeks.

2. An opportunity for an exchange of views between civil society (including the private sector) and Member States and observers on various issues, including those arising from the report of the Secretary-General and with a particular focus on key priority issues for civil society in achieving universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010.

For the full version of the OPGA Information Note, including the draft programme, visit:

<http://www.un.org/ga/president/62/letters/letter110408.pdf>

For further information, please send an email to: universalaccess2010@icaso.org to join the mailing list and receive up-to-date information.