

Civil Society Declaration on the UN High Level Meeting on AIDS (UNGASS-AIDS 2008)

As civil society participants to the 2008 High Level Meeting on AIDS, we came here to review progress in implementing the 2001 Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the 2006 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS. We were disappointed that few heads of state chose to attend this meeting and many governments, from both resource-rich and resource-poor countries, failed to report the reality on the ground.

None of the UNGASS goals were achieved in 2003 or 2005, despite the efforts of some governments and key stakeholders. We are deeply concerned that given the current rate of progress, due to a lack of commitment and the ever-increasing funding gap, universal access will not be achieved by 2010, perpetuating the cycle of underdevelopment and poverty.

We urge governments to fulfil their commitment, human rights obligations and ensure the implementation of universal access to the treatment, prevention, and care for all by 2010. We raise the attention of governments, the UN system and all stakeholders to the following issues:

Universal access by 2010 requires comprehensive, non-discriminatory access to prevention, treatment, care and support, including nutrition, for all people affected by HIV in high and low prevalence countries, including women, girls, children, young people, transgender, men who have sex with men, sex workers, documented and undocumented migrants and refugees, prisoners and those who are institutionalized, older people, lesbians, bisexuals, disabled people, care givers, people who use drugs, indigenous people and other groups marginalized because of their ethnicity, religion, legal and economic status, or gender identity, regardless of their geographic location (rural/urban). Universal access includes comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services and treatment for all co-infections, including TB.

Human rights must be at the centre of all responses to HIV.

The criminalization of HIV transmission and population behaviours marginalizes the vulnerable and affected groups (mentioned above). It is a violation of human rights and is a barrier to accessing prevention, treatment, care and support. All laws criminalizing transmission and behaviours must be abolished. We urge all governments to abandon travel restrictions that block people living with HIV/AIDS to move freely across the world, as well as all coercive measures such as mandatory testing and deportation.

It is critical that women's, especially young women and girls', human rights are central to the goals of halting this pandemic.

The parallel 2009 High Level Meeting on Drugs must reflect commitment to public health and human rights as championed by the High Level Meeting on AIDS.

Resourcing the response to HIV/AIDS. We are concerned about the shift of financial priorities from AIDS to other issues, and the lack of transparency and meaningful participation of civil society in decisions about funding allocation and priorities. Therefore we urge the governments of high-income countries, especially the G8, to fulfil their commitment of contributing 0.7 percent

of their gross national product to official development assistance*. In order to achieve universal access by 2010, 42 billion USD is needed. There should be sufficient support for the development of long-term solutions including research, vaccines and microbicides.

Access to treatment: Countries should be enabled to use the full safeguards enshrined in the TRIPS agreement and confirmed in the Doha declaration of 2004, such as compulsory licensing. The impact of international trade agreements needs to be evaluated further, as set out in the 2001 UNGASS Declaration of Commitment (para 26).

Involvement of Civil Society: Greater involvement of civil society has been identified by the UN as a critical strategy to combat AIDS. In a resolution tabled late in 2007, civil society was specifically encouraged to be involved in this year's high-level meeting. The involvement of civil society in official national delegations must be effective, not just tokenistic.

We join the three excluded organizations; Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe, Jamaica Forum for Lesbians, All-Sexuals and Gays, and the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights; from this year's meeting in appealing to the UN General Assembly to ensure that the rhetoric of "universal access" is matched with participation and inclusion of all voices. It is necessary to develop a mechanism to monitor accountability that ensures meaningful participation of civil society, especially people living with HIV and marginalized groups (as listed above), in country level and international processes.

Accountability: Many countries have failed to report the realities on the ground to this assembly, almost forty countries did not report at all. There is a need to address the discrepancies between the official country reports and the civil society reports, by strengthening accountability mechanisms at all levels. Indicators against which reports are prepared must include qualitative dimensions, and governments should report data disaggregated by age, gender and sub-population (as a minimum requirement).

We call on UNAIDS to adequately and effectively monitor and evaluate the national response with full participation of all civil society, particularly people living with HIV.

We have come to this high level meeting to demand your partnership and renewed commitment to achieving the goals set at the UNGASS 2001 and the high level meeting in 2006. Real partnership between donors, governments, civil society, UN agencies and affected populations requires a balance of power in making decision. Only through genuine partnership can we overcome the challenges to and achieve universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support for all people by 2010.

This statement supports further recommendations from the women's caucus statement "Women Demand Action and Accountability Now!" and the Youth caucus statement. It draws on the positions developed by each regional caucus for the High Level Meeting on AIDS.

* This target is to be reached without the inclusion of debt relief in official development assistance as well as other items that do not include real resource transfers.

Organizations supporting the Civil Society Declaration:

ABRASGAY – Brazil
ACCSI – Venezuela
ACF – El Salvador
Action Against AIDS – Germany
Action Aid International
Act Up Hella – Greece
Act Up Paris – France
Africa Japan Forum
African HIV Policy Network
African Services Committee, USA
Aid for AIDS International
Aid for AIDS Peru
AIDS Action Foundation
AIDS and Rights Alliance for Southern Africa
Aids for AIDS – Peru
Alliance Against AIDS – Belize
All-Ukrainian Network of PLWH
Amigos Contra el SIDA – Mexico
Amigos Siempre Amigos – Dominican Republic
Amnesty International
APROASE A.C. - Mexico
Asia Pacific Alliance New Zealand
Asia Pacific Council of AIDS Service Organizations
ASEPO-Uruguay
Miluska Vida y Dignidad Sex Workers Civil Association - Peru
Association IDEI – Guatemala
Association de Lutte contre le SIDA (ALCS), Morocco
Association of Women Living with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria
Athena Network
Ave de Mexico – Mexico
Bolivia IPH – Bolivia
Calcsicova – Spain
Canadian AIDS Society
Cambodian Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS – Cambodia
CAPPSIDA – Mexico
Caribbean Regional Network, Trinidad and Tobago – Trinidad and Tobago
Caribbean Vulnerable Communities (CVC)
CESIDA - Spain
Coalition of Asia Pacific Regional Network on HIV/AIDS
Coalition Ecuatoriana de Puus
COASE Argentina
Colectivo Sol – Mexico
Colectivo TTT – Honduras
Consultation of Investment in Health Promotion – Vietnam
Derechos Habientes Viviendo con VIH del IMSS (DVVIMSS) - Mexico
EANNASO

East Europe and Central Asia Union of PLWH Organisations
 Eurasian Harm Reduction Network
 Family Planning Association of Trinidad and Tobago – Trinidad and Tobago
 Federacion Argentina LGTB - Argentina
 FEIM
 Foro ONGs que Luchan contra el VIH-SIDA - El Salvador
 Foundation for Integrative AIDS Research - Zimbabwe
 International Women Communication Center - Nigeria
 IWAC
 Foundation for AIDS Rights – Thailand
 Fundacion Huesped – Argentina
 Fundacion REDVIHDA - Bolivia
 Fundacion Buenos Aires SIDA
 GAPA Network Brazil
 GAT - Grupo Ativistas Tratamento - Portugal
 Gestos – Brazil
 Grupo de Mujeres Observatorio de Prisiones – Argentina
 Grupo Efecto Positivo - Argentina
 Guyana Human Rights Association – Guyana
 Help Age International
 ICW Latina
 IDH – Bolivia
 Intercambios Asociacion Civil - Argentina
 India HIV/AIDS Alliance – India
 International Coalition of AIDS and Development (ICAD)
 International Council of AIDS Service Organisations (ICASO)
 International Treatment Preparedness Coalition
 International of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW)
 Intilla Asociacion Civil – Argentina
 International Women’s Health Coalition
 Jamaica AIDS Support for Life (JASA) – Jamaica
 Jamaica Forum for Lesbians, Bisexuals and Gays (JFLAG) – Jamaica
 Janghamintia Iyegor
 La Manta de Mexico A.C. – Mexico
 LACCASO – Latin America and the Caribbean Council of AIDS Services Organizations
 Lesotho Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS – Lesotho
 Liga Bonaerense de Diversidad Sexual - Argentina
 International Council of AIDS Service Organization (ICASO)
 Mexico Cappsida – Mexico
 MGM – Brazil
 Mongolian Family Welfare Association – Mongolia
 Mosaic Training, Service and Healing Coalition for Women – South Africa
 Movimiento Latino Americano y del Caribe de Mujeres Positivas
 Mujeres Unidas por la Salud (MUSAS) – Venezuela
 MYSU – Uruguay
 Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS – Brazil
 NSW
 Pastoral Ecumenica VIH/SIDA – Argentina
 Positivo - Grupos de Apoio e Auto-ajuda
 Positive Women Inc. – New Zealand
 Raks Thai Foundation – Thailand

Red Argentina de Mujeres Viviendo con VIH-SIDA
Red Colombiana de Personas con VIH/SIDA
RedTrasex LAC
Red 2002
Red Nacional de PVVS de Bolivia (REDBOL)
Red Bonarense de PVVS – Argentina
Red de PVVS de Mar del Plata – Argentina
RedLACTRANS – Latin America and the Caribbean
REDSIDA A.C. – Mexico
Red SIDA Peru
Red Transex - Peru
Results Education Fund, USA
SAATHI – India
Samaksha
SASOD
Scarjov/ Angola – Angola
Sector de las ONGSs VIH/SIDA CONAMUSA - Peru
Simao Cacumba Faria – Angola
SWAPOL
TANEPHA
Tenemos Sida
Thai Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS – Thailand
Thai NGO Coalition on AIDS
The Finnish AIDS Council
The Women’s Collective – United States
Treatment Action Campaign – South Africa
United and Strong Inc St Lucia MSM – St Lucia
UNYPA – Uganda Network of Young People Living with HIV/AIDS
Vivir Participacion, Incidencia y Transparencia, AC – Mexico
VSO – UK
World AIDS Campaign
World Vision International
World YWCA
YMCA – El Salvador
Youth Coalition – Canada
Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights
Youth Empowerment Against HIV/AIDS – Australia
Youth Network on HIV/AIDS – Thailand