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DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

MEDIA ADVISORY

COMMEMORATION OF WORLD AIDS DAY AT THE AFRICAN UNION, 1ST DECEMBER:



**PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE ELIMINATION OF NEW HIV INFECTIONS
AMONG CHILDREN BY 2015 AND KEEPING THEIR MOTHERS ALIVE**

Theme: "Getting To Zero"

INVITATION TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MEDIA

When: 1ST DECEMBER 2011

The Panel will be an opportunity for the resource persons and expert in the domain to debate and exchange views on the theme of the 2011 World Aids Day: "Getting to Zero".

Slogans: *"No baby will be born HIV positive, No more orphan victim of HIV/AIDS, No More death due to lack of access to treatment "*

Where: The African Union Headquarters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Who: Jointly organized by the Department of Social Affairs and Medical Services Directorate of the African Union Commission (AUC) in collaboration with UNAIDS and other partners dealing with HIV-AIDS issues.

Theme: World AIDS Day this year is about "Getting to Zero." Zero New HIV Infections, Zero Discrimination and Zero AIDS Related Deaths
The theme signifies a push towards greater access to prevention and treatment for all; a call for governments to act now to own and sustain the HIV/AIDS response,

Why: Regardless of the commitments by African leaders there is still a lot to be done to achieve universal access to services, reduce incidence and the like. What lessons learned? Where are the gaps? That is why the theme is focused on Getting to Zero, with particular attention on Africa toward the elimination of new pediatric HIV infection and keeping mothers alive.

Objectives: The World AIDS Day (1st December) will be an opportunity to popularize the commitment to eliminating new HIV infections (especially among Children) and to disseminate the information about the New Global principle of three Zeros.

It will be an occasion to further:

- Remind and raise awareness among African Union Member States of the achievements and challenges in the fight against the Epidemic.
- Greater understanding of the three Zeros by African policy makers and to own the vision
- Obtain commitment to eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV

Structure: The panel discussion shall be a moderated session in which each panelist will briefly speak to or shade some light on the issues below followed by a question and answer session from the audience.

Discussion: The panelist will discuss the major reasons why an Africa plan is required; the peculiarity of Africa as far as the incidence of HIV/AIDS is concerned; and Africa's approach to eliminate new infections.

Challenges: Panelists will highlight some of the major challenges Africa has been facing in general in trying to address the HIV pandemic.

Way Forward: Panelists will suggest some recommendations for action but the final set of recommendations will emanate from the discussions that will ensue from the floor.
The final recommendations will be specifically directed to the various stakeholders including AU and its organs, governments, RECs, UN agencies, CSO's and Development Partners.

Participants: Participants will include:

- Staff of the African Union Commission;
- Representatives of AU Member States;
- Representatives of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs);
- Diplomatic Corps;
- Representatives International Organisation;
- Representatives UN Agencies;
- Civil Society
- NGOs dealing with HIV-AIDs ; and other invited guests.

Background:

The year 2011 marks the 30 years of AIDS epidemic and ten years of high level commitments made by African leaders which have marked a turning point in the continental response to the epidemic.

During the 15th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly held in Kampala in July 2010, the theme of the summit was “Maternal, Infant and Child Health and Development”. AU Heads of States and Government adopted decisions Assembly/AU/Dec.291 (XV) and Assembly/AU/Dec.320 (XV) on the Five-year Review of the Abuja Call and Eradication of mother to child transmission of HIV.

In April 2011, an African Common position on HIV/AIDS to the UN High Level Meeting on AIDS was adopted by the 5th Session of the AU Conference of the Ministers of Health (CAMH5), and endorsed by the AU summit in Malabo, in July 2011, urging AU Member States to implement the AU initiatives and decisions and urging them to step up leadership and ownership by enhancing appropriate responses to HIV and AIDS for implementation of the campaign of zero new infection, zero discrimination and zero death related to AIDS.

On 9 June 2011, World leaders gathered in New York for the 2011 United Nations High Level Meeting on AIDS during which a Global Plan that will make significant strides towards eliminating new HIV infections among children by 2015 and keeping their mothers alive was launched.

This plan covers all low and middle-income countries, but focuses on 21 African countries¹ with the highest estimated numbers of pregnant women living with HIV.

The world has an unprecedented opportunity to make new HIV infections among Children history. Currently nearly every minute, a child is born with HIV.

Providing pregnant women living with HIV with antiretroviral prevention and treatment reduces the risk of a child being born with the virus to less than 5%—and keeps their mothers alive to raise them.

Preventing new HIV infections among children across the globe is truly a smart investment that saves lives and helps to give children a healthy start in life.”

What is needed is leadership, shared responsibility and concerted action among donor nations, recipient countries and the private sector to make an AIDS-free generation a reality.

Journalists are invited to cover opening ceremony of the Panel Discussion and participate at the Press Conference immediately after the opening.

Attached is the program of event on 1st December at the African Union Headquarters.

For Further Information consult the AU website: www.au.int

Interview requests should be directed to **Mrs. Esther Azaa Tankou**, Senior Editorial Officer, Directorate of Information and Communication, African Union Commission, Tel: +251 911 3611 85, e-mail: yamboue@africa-union.org.

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DRAFT PROGRAM

World Aids Day Commemoration 2011
PANEL DISCUSSION

December 1st, 2011, 2:00-5:30pm African Union Commission Conference Center

- 2:00 Introductions from Meeting Chairperson: **H.E. Commissioner Bience Gawanas**
- 2:15 World Aids Day Commemoration Speech: **MrsJan Beagle UNAIDS Deputy Executive Director**
- 2:30 ECA World Aids Day Commemoration Speech: **H.E. AbdoullieJanneh**
- 2:45 World Aids Day Commemoration Speech: **H.E. Chairperson Jean Ping**
- 3:00-3:30 **Joint Press Conference-** Media Room
Group Photo
Tea Break- Congo Hall

3:30-5:00

Panel Discussion on the Elimination of Mother to Child Transmission

Chaired by **H.E. Commissioner Bience Gawanas**

Presentation on Draft African Plan: **Dr Benjamin Djoudalbaye**

Panelists

UNAIDS: Deputy Executive Director, **MrsJan Beagle**

Minister of Health of Chad, **Honorable Dr. TouptaBoguena**

UNICEF Representative to the AU & ECA, **Mrs. AkilaBelembaogo**

SADC: **Doreen SANJE**

CSO/HIV Burundi : **Mme. Consolée Kamaro,**

5:00-5:30

Question & Answer Session

5:30-7:00

Reception by invitation