

**PRESS RELEASE N°198/2016****Africa agrees on common position to the United Nations High-Level Meeting on Ending AIDS**

Geneva, Switzerland, 21 May 2016- Ministers of Health meeting ahead of the World Health Assembly on Saturday deliberated and agreed on a Common African Position (CAP) to the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Ending AIDS that will be taking place in New York from 8 to 10 June 2016.

“The Common Africa Position is critical in the political declaration negotiations that are ongoing. It is imperative that Africa negotiates as one block, highly impacted by AIDS, and demand a political declaration that commits to bold strategies that aim to end the AIDS epidemic as a public health threat by 2030”, said Dr. Mustapha Sidiki Kaloko, the Commissioner for Social Affairs at the African Union Commission.

Africa has made remarkable progress in the AIDS response

Through sustained leadership and political commitment at various levels Africa has made significant progress in responding to the AIDS as a public health threat. The world achieved the UN General Assembly Political Declaration target of having 15 million people on treatment by 2015, nine months ahead of schedule, with 10.7 million people on ART in Africa alone, up from fewer than 100,000 in 2002. As a result, AIDS-related deaths decreased by 48% between 2005 and 2014. New HIV infections in Africa declined by 39% between 2000 and 2014, and since 2009, there has been a 48% decline in new HIV infections among children in the 21 priority countries of the Global Plan Towards the Elimination of New HIV Infections in Children by 2015 and Keeping their Mothers Alive. TB-related deaths in people living with HIV have fallen by 36% since 2004.

Despite the unparalleled progress, the AIDS epidemic is an unfinished business

At the end of 2014, there were 25.8 million people living with HIV in Africa South of the Sahara. Approximately 800,000 people died of AIDS-related causes in Africa south of the Sahara in 2014. TB remains the leading cause of death among people living with HIV. In 2014, there were an estimated 1.4 million new infections, approximately 70% of the global total of new infections. New infections have not declined fast enough in

recent years, facilitated by the insufficient scale of prevention programmes and inadequate investments. While much progress has been made in financing the AIDS response, the resources required for the AIDS response by all African countries will need to increase to a projected US\$12.2 billion by 2020, then gradually decrease to US\$10.8 billion by 2030.

Common position to the United Nations High-Level Meeting on Ending AIDS

As the continent heavily impacted by AIDS, the Common Africa Position demands a political declaration that commits to bold strategies that aim to end the AIDS epidemic as a public health threat by 2030. It seeks to commit to a Political Declaration that has global targets and strategies, as well as Africa-specific targets. The proposed targets for Africa are to reduce AIDS-related deaths to less than 375,000 per year by 2020, and less than 150,000 per year by 2030; reduce new HIV infections to less than 375,000 per year by 2020, and less than 150,000 per year by 2030 and end HIV-related discrimination by 2020.

The CAP provides concrete recommendations in eight broad areas that include Africa specific targets in the political declaration negotiations, treatment, stopping new HIV infections, human rights, gender and social protection, sustainable financing, strengthening health systems, access to affordable and quality assured medicines, commodities and technologies and leadership and accountability.

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