



## Action against AIDS Germany

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To  
UNAIDS  
Attention: Mr. Michel Sidibé  
20 Avenue Appia  
CH-1211 Geneva 27  
Switzerland

Tübingen, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009

Dear Mr. Sidibé,

Congratulations on your appointment as Executive Director of UNAIDS and Under Secretary-General of the United Nations! We are so glad to see an African at the head of UNAIDS and look forward to your leadership in making Universal Access a reality for many people globally but also in the African context.

Action against AIDS Germany is a German network of more than 100 non-governmental organizations and over 280 grassroots groups engaged in HIV/Aids activities and development cooperation with the overall goal to convince and pressurize decision-makers in government, parliament and pharmaceutical corporations to fulfil their obligations laid down in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and other international agreements. You have met the coordinator of our alliance Ms. Beate Ramme-Fülle in Berlin at the "Deutsche-Aids-Hilfe" meeting on 13 February 2009. Since 2008, Action against AIDS Germany has been represented in the NGO Delegation to UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board by Dr Sonja Weinreich.

Action against Aids is genuinely concerned that the global community is not on track in the realization of the fundamental goals agreed on by the United Nations in response to the HIV epidemic. Concretely, we demand from our Government that Germany should contribute via bilateral and multilateral channels not less than 10% of the total volume of international cooperation needed to reach universal access to comprehensive prevention programmes, treatment, care and support by 2010. This should also include stronger financial support to UN organizations such as UNAIDS and the World Health Organization, arguing their essential role they play in confronting this health crisis in a coordinated and effective manner.

For us the reports on the estimated resource needs published by UNAIDS and its partners represent an indispensable source for establishing the annual funding targets, which we demand in our advocacy efforts. Previous analysis by UNAIDS was based on the best available estimates on populations in need, required coverage rates for universal access, and unit costs for essential services. These estimates were based on objective data produced by epidemiological and socio-demographic studies as well as other factual information. This initial report issued in September 2007 estimated that financial resources required for achieving universal access by 2010 amounted to roughly US\$ 42 billion. The report indicated that major adjustments in estimated HIV prevalence and other epidemiological parameters, notably in India and a number of sub-Saharan African countries, were already incorporated in this financial needs analysis.

We are aware that some further revisions of epidemiological estimates were made after September 2007, and additional corrections became necessary as a result of intended task-shifting between different categories of health workers.

However, we are deeply concerned that UNAIDS recently published a report with the heading "Investments needed for 2010 targets" which is based on completely different reference data, i.e. the so-called country-defined targets. We agree that the definition of national targets with the effective participation of all relevant stakeholders and based on adequate scientific information is a fundamental step for reaching universal access. However, we believe that universal access can only be achieved if targets are based on needs in countries and not just on strategic plans or political will. Therefore, the targets set in the current national plans cannot be definite and valid endpoints geared towards universal access. The commitment stipulated in the Political Declaration through inclusive, transparent processes, to set ambitious national targets was not accomplished in a number of countries. In many cases, national strategic plans do not adequately involve the key populations, which are suffering from social prejudice and exclusion as partners and target groups for programmatic actions. A simple comparison of the expected outcomes by 2010 shows the huge gap between the scenarios presented in the recent and the former report. The original document of 2007 estimated that the number of people on antiretroviral treatment must increase to 13.7 million, while the recent publication gives the figure of 6.7 million. The number of orphans who shall receive support is reduced from 19 million in the 2007 estimate to 6.7 million in the recent paper. Looking at these examples it is evident that country-defined targets are not congruent with the goal of achieving universal access as defined by need.

Therefore, and in accordance with the specific responsibilities and tasks of UNAIDS, we urge you to take the following actions:

- To complete and publish as soon as possible an updated resource needs estimate that is based on the best available data and scientific criteria regarding populations in need and access targets for key interventions and describes the principal gaps in relation to country-defined targets.
- To make available in a transparent and systematic way, for instance in the form of an open database accessible by internet, the country-specific information on target figures as derived from technically sound estimation processes on the one hand and as defined in current national plans on the other hand.
- Derive estimates on costs needed in strengthening national health systems in order to deliver universal access for all those who need it.

These outcomes are urgently needed to enhance the advocacy efforts aiming at the mobilization of the financial resources required to reach effectively the goal of universal access. Failure to fulfil this fundamental commitment would spell humanitarian disaster.

In the confidence that you share this understanding and looking forward to receive your early reply, we remain

Yours sincerely,



Beate Ramme-Fülle  
Coordinator, Action against AIDS Germany



Joachim Ruppel  
Sociologist Consultant, Medical Mission Institute  
Expert Group Lobby, Action against AIDS Germany

CC: Merle Wangerin, External Relations Officer UNAIDS  
Sonja Weinreich, NGO Delegation to UNAIDS Programme Coordination Board