

**Aktionsbündnis gegen AIDS e.V.**

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Bundeskanzleramt

Bundeskanzlerin Dr. Angela Merkel

Willy-Brandt-Straße 1

10557 Berlin

European Commission

President Ursula von der Leyen

Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels

 Berlin, June 27th, 2021

**Open letter**

**Ongoing negotiations at the United Nations General Assembly on the 2021 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: political leadership and strong language on TRIPS flexibilities more important than ever!**

Dear Madam Chancellor,

Dear Madam President,

We are writing you as members of the civil society from Germany and various other European Countries. The UN HLM on HIV requires your political leadership and responsibility with the aim to make an appropriate contribution to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030, as defined as one of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goal 3 to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

Even if the pathology and the ways of transmission of HIV and SARS-CoV-2 are quite different, both global health threats undoubtedly demonstrate that socioeconomic inequality and discrimination on the worldwide and the local level impede the effective control of the pandemics and its tragic consequences. The UN Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS to be adopted during the UN High-level Meeting (HLM) on HIV/AIDS represents a crucial chance to lead the way of the global community aiming to construct a response grounded in the principles of human rights and solidarity as well as scientific evidence. Priority must be given to the protection of the life and health of every human being. This requires taking all necessary measures to overcome economic and legal barriers that obstruct the access to essential health services, medicines and other medical products. The extremely unjust distribution of financial and technical resources as well as the monopolistic control of the results of scientific progress in the field of medical research represent the main obstacles for achieving better and more sustainable health outcomes. Therefore, the Declaration may only be recognized as a fundamental and forward-looking document if it encompasses concrete and appropriate commitments to mobilize the urgently needed resources and guarantees the access to essential medical products.

We are aware that a considerable number of national governments intend to negatively influence the outcome of the negotiations giving precedence to the vested interests of powerful pressure groups to the detriment of human well-being and weakening previously agreed goals. In this situation the eyes of the world are turning upon the European Union and its most influential member states with the expectation that its political leaders stand behind the basic principles of human rights and international cooperation.

In order to demonstrate this position and advance multilateral solutions in this vital area for the future of humankind, we kindly ask you for the following:

* Please make sure that the declaration contains a strong commitment to respect the right of WTO member states to make use, to the full, of the Flexibilities provided in the TRIPS Agreement and confirmed in the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health in order to protect public health and, in particular, to promote access to medicines. Health is a human right and access to life saving medicines as well as essential diagnostic, preventive and therapeutic health technologies must be made available for everyone, as a global public good. Furthermore, it is necessary to revive the acknowledgement formulated in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted in June 2001 that “the impact of international trade agreements on access to or local manufacturing of essential drugs and on the development of new drugs needs to be evaluated further”.
* Please make sure that the declaration addresses the need to secure sufficient public resources for research and development of medical technologies and health strategies that address essential global health needs and threats causing the highest disease burdens. This needs to be internationally coordinated, in a transparent way, with democratic participation and with the aim to treat essential medicines and medical products as global public goods. In the frequent cases where medical research is financed with budgetary resources, access by all people in need must be secured according to the principle of public return on public investments.
* Please support the target to fully fund the resource needs of $29 billion per year for ending AIDS in low-income and middle-income countries and underpin this through the commitment to develop, adopt and implement a global financing plan that establishes clear principles and realistic goals for domestic resource mobilization, taking into account the structural limitations of fiscal spaces in lower income and economically disadvantaged countries, and that determines concrete financing commitments for the cooperation of economically advanced countries in order to fully close the funding gap of the HIV response with a view of global solidarity and shared responsibility as well as a wider perspective to meet the financing needs for reaching SDG 3 and universal health coverage.
* Please make sure that the declaration commits to close the financing gap through official development assistance (ODA) in the form of grant transfers and reconfirm the UN financing target for total ODA that shall be provided by all economically advanced (high-income) countries in line with the goal adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1970 that reads “Each economically advanced country will progressively increase its official development assistance to the developing countries and will exert its best efforts to reach a minimum net amount of 0.7% of its gross national product at market prices by the middle of the Decade.”

Agreeing and implementing these commitments will constitute a cornerstone not only to end the AIDS Epidemic by 2030, but also to set the stage for overcoming the COVID-19 crisis and to successfully tackle future pandemics.

Dear Madame Chancellor and Madame President we trust in your leadership in global health policy and welcome your further support

Yours sincerely,

*Action against AIDS, Germany*

*Association SKUC, Slovenia*

*European AIDS Treatment Group, Belgium*

*Czech AIDS Help, Czechia*

*HIV Justice Network, Netherlands*

*Center for Supporting Community Development Intiatives, Vietnam*

*Vietnam Community Platform to Support Vulnerable People (VCSPA)*

*Cooperazione Paesi Emergenti(COPE), Italy*

*Prekursor Foundation for Social Policy, Poland*

*Lanka Fundamental Rights Organization*

*International Developement  Leadership & Learning Corporation*

*Deutsche Aidshilfe e.V., Germany*

*Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+), global*

*Friends of the Global Fund Europe*

*Grupo de Ativistas em Tratamentos*

*Aidsfonds, the Netherlands*

*STOPAIDS, UK*

*Health GAP (Global Access Project), global*

*Salamander Trust*

*AHF (AIDS Healthcare Foundation) Europe, the Netherlands*

*Seres (con) viver com o VIH, Portugal*

*MPact: Global Action for Gay Health & Rights*

*Women in Europe and Central Asia Regions*

*Fundacion Huesped, Argentina*

*Hiv Vereniging (Dutch Association of People with HIV)*

*Medical Mission Institute Würzburg, Germany*

*PharmAccess Group, The Netherlands*

*AIDS Action Europe*

*Rural Infrastructure and Human Resource Development Organization (RIHRDO),Pakistan*

*Global Fund Advocates Network (GFAN), Global*

*Life Quality Improvement Organisation FLIGHT (Croatia)E*

*Eurasian harm reduction association (EHRA)*

*HIV Scotland*

*National Coordinator NGO on HIV and AIDS(CESIDA),Spain*

*Peoples Health Movement (PHM), Deutschland*

*GAT Treatment Activist Group, Portugal*

*International Community Women living with HIV (ICW)*

*NGO HELP - Split, Croatia*

*Fondazione LILA Milano, Italy*

*LILA - Italian League for Fighting AIDS*

*Positiivisetry, HivFinland*

*Eurasian Women’s network on AIDS*

*Sidaction, France*

*Global Health Advocates France*

*UNAD (Unión de Asociaciones y Entidades de Atención al Drogodependiente)*

*BUKO Pharma-Kampagne, Germany*

*National AIDS Trust, UK*

*AGIHAS, Latvia*

*ARAS - Romanian Association Against AIDS, Romania*

*HIVNorway*

*Aids Hilfe Wien, Austria*

*Partnership in Health, Bosnia and Herzegovina*

*Open Group Italy*

*International Network of People who use Drugs (INPUD), Global*

*Grupo de Trabajo sobre Tratamientos del VIH (gTt; Spain)HPLGBT,UkraineCentre for Environment, Human Rights & Development Forum- CEHRDFCEHRDF GERMANYWomen & Life Foundation Climate Refugees Network- CRNMd. Ilias Miah Foundation Kenya Legal & ethical Issues Network on HIV & AIDS Wote Youth Development projectsECOM - Eurasian Coalition on Health, Rights, Gender and Sexual DiversityInteragency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD), CanadaPUBLIC HEALTH INTERNATIONAL CONSULTING CENTER (PHICC) Kuboresha - Africa, UgandaInternational Tuberculosis Foundation (LHL), NorwayHIV-SAM (Sexual health promotion and HIV prevention for sub-Saharan African migrants), Antwerp, BelgiumQueere Seelsorge, Ev.-luth. Landeskirche Hannover, Deutschland Kenya AIDS NGOs ConsortiumGive to Life CBOALLIANCE.GLOBAL, Public Organization, Ukraineaction medeor e.V. GermanyMSF Deutschland*

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