

Statement

UNAIDS supports countries' efforts to scale-up access to HIV treatment

Geneva, 30 April 2007 – The goal of universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support is a top global priority and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) supports countries' efforts to ensure access to high quality and affordable medicines.

During recent years, a number of governments have used the flexibilities provided by the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) to expand access to affordable HIV medicines.

UNAIDS fully adheres to the General Assembly Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS of June 2006 which echoed the WTO Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health ("Doha Declaration") reaffirming that the TRIPS Agreement should be implemented in a manner that supports access to affordable medicines, including generic antiretroviral drugs and other essential drugs for AIDS-related illnesses.

In the Political Declaration on AIDS of June 2006, the United Nations General Assembly called specifically for support to developing countries to enable them to employ the flexibilities outlined in the TRIPS Agreement and the Doha Declaration, which include the right to grant compulsory licenses and the freedom to determine the grounds upon which such licenses are granted. Thus UNAIDS fully supports all such efforts, consistent with international law, to scale up access to HIV medicines and move towards universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010.

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UNAIDS is an innovative joint venture of the United Nations, bringing together the efforts and resources of the UNAIDS Secretariat and ten UN system organizations to respond to AIDS. The Secretariat headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland with staff on the ground in more than 80 countries. Coherent action on AIDS by the UN system is coordinated in countries through the UN theme groups, and the joint programmes on AIDS. Cosponsors include UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank. Visit the UNAIDS Web site at www.unaids.org