

Statement

UNAIDS welcomes Elizabeth Mataka as Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for HIV/AIDS in Africa

Geneva, 21 May 2007 – The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) welcomes the appointment of Elizabeth Mataka as the new Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General for HIV/AIDS in Africa. Ms Mataka is the first Special Envoy appointed from civil society.

Ms Mataka has been working in the field of HIV for the past 16 years and has been involved in all aspects of the response to the AIDS epidemic. She has experience working in government, the private sector and non-governmental organizations. She has provided leadership in prevention, clinical treatment for opportunistic infections, care and support at community and national levels. She has broad experience in policy development, having been a member of the Zambia National AIDS Council since inception and serving on various other Boards. She currently serves as Executive Director of the Zambia National AIDS Network (ZNaN). Last April, Ms Mataka was elected as Vice-Chair of the Board of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

“Elizabeth is a long time friend and advocate for a stronger AIDS response in Africa. I am extremely pleased that she will now serve as Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa and I look forward to working even more closely with her against the epidemic in this continent,” said Dr Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS.

Elizabeth Mataka joins Dr Nafis Sadik, Sir George Alleyne and Prof. Lars O. Kallings as Special Envoys of the Secretary-General for HIV/AIDS respectively in Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean region, and in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

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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 in the AIDS response. 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 UN theme groups, and joint programmes on AIDS. UNAIDS’ Cosponsors include UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank. Visit the UNAIDS Web site at www.unaids.org