

Press statement

Universal access 2010 remains priority for G8 leaders

Geneva, 9 July 2008 – The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) welcomes the decision reached by the Group of Eight (G8) leaders at the Summit in Hokkaido, Japan to honour in full their commitments to continue working towards the goal of universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010.

In particular, UNAIDS welcomes decision to establish a mechanism to monitor G8 progress on meeting its commitments.

UNAIDS also notes that the current level of resources pledged for AIDS falls short of what is needed to achieve universal access by 2010. Of the US\$ 18 billion required in 2007, a total of US \$10 billion was made available, of which US\$ 6.6 billion was committed by donor governments. Despite annual increases in funding, the gap between needs and resources continues to grow. Enhancing accountability for the disbursement of funds, improving monitoring systems to track progress and ensuring that resources reach those in need are vital to reaching universal access and the Millennium Development Goals.

Countries have repeatedly identified predictable levels of funding as one of the main obstacles for scaling-up towards 2010. Recent achievements in providing antiretroviral treatment to nearly 3 million people demonstrate what can be accomplished when financial and political commitments are put into action.

AIDS must remain a global priority, one that deserves continuous leadership and receives predictable levels of funding. G8 leaders and their counterparts have used this year's Summit to heighten awareness of HIV and other infectious diseases and to reaffirm their commitments to AIDS.

For more information on the G8 decision on development and Africa, visit:

http://www.mofa.go.jp/u_news/2/20080708_173847.html

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The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (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. www.unaids.org