

## PRESS RELEASE

### **UNAIDS Board approves efforts to accelerate progress towards 2015 targets**

**GENEVA, 15 December 2011**—The Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) convened from 13-15 December to review and follow up on recommendations of the 2011 UN General Assembly High Level Meeting on AIDS. The Board took note of the progress made by countries and civil society organizations in implementing the *2011 Political Declaration on AIDS* as well as the support provided by UNAIDS.

In his report to the 29th Board meeting, UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé noted that leaders around the world are joining the call for an AIDS free generation and endorsing the UNAIDS vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths.

“A year ago, skeptics said that getting to zero was just a slogan. But countries, partners and people around the world have embraced the vision and are now working to translate it into reality,” said Mr Sidibé. “Failure to scale up to the targets of the Political Declaration would not only be ethically wrong, but shortsighted and unacceptable. Now is not the time to halt our investments. If we do not seize the opportunity now, costs will simply escalate and the zero will cease to be viable as a vision.”

A report from civil society delegates, the UNAIDS results, accountability and budget matrix, progress made on implementation of the Second Independent Evaluation and the technical support provided by UNAIDS was welcomed by the delegates. The Board requested the establishment of a time-limited, consultative process to better define UNAIDS’ technical support, as well as areas of core competency and strengths.

UNAIDS also presented a progress report on the Global Plan towards the elimination of new HIV infections among children and keeping their mother alive. Eleven countries have launched national plans towards the global targets of a 90% reduction in new HIV infections among children and a 50% reduction in AIDS-related maternal deaths by 2015.

During the three-day meeting, Professor Salim Abdool Karim presented the results of a study that has offered new hope for a female-controlled HIV prevention tool. Conducted by researchers at the Centre for the AIDS Programme of Research in South Africa (CAPRISA), the study found the antiretroviral medicine tenofovir, when applied consistently, is effective in reducing HIV infections in women by up to 54%. Prof. Karim stressed the need for a female-controlled HIV prevention option to address the vulnerabilities and inequities facing women and girls in protecting themselves against HIV.

A thematic segment on HIV and enabling legal environments provided an opportunity for delegates to exchange developments and perspectives on the role of law in the AIDS

[Zero new HIV infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS-related deaths.](#)

response. Moderated by journalist Riz Khan, interventions from countries and civil society organizations focused on national situations in the application of law, law enforcement and access to justice for people living with or vulnerable to HIV. In the closing session, Justice Michael Kirby urged the audience to turn 'words into actions'.

Several hundred participants and observers from UN Member States, international organizations, civil society and non-governmental organizations attended the meeting, which was chaired by El Salvador with Poland acting as Vice-Chair and Egypt as Rapporteur. In 2012, Poland will assume the role of Chair, and the Board elected India as Vice-Chair and the United States of America as Rapporteur. The UNAIDS Executive Director's report to the Board, decisions, recommendations and conclusions from the meeting can be found at: [unaids.org](http://unaids.org).

### **Contact**

UNAIDS Geneva | Sophie Barton-Knott | tel. +41 22 791 1697 | [bartonknotts@unaids.org](mailto:bartonknotts@unaids.org)

### **UNAIDS**

UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, is an innovative United Nations partnership that leads and inspires the world in achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. Learn more at [unaids.org](http://unaids.org).