

## PRESS RELEASE

### President of Gabon to push AIDS agenda forward at the UN

*President of the Republic of Gabon to contribute to efforts in finding effective solutions to HIV and announces support to refocusing efforts on AIDS as a priority issue during UN High Level Meeting on AIDS*

**Geneva, 4 April 2011**— The Gabonese President, Mr Ali Bongo Ondimba, has announced his commitment to play a key role in efforts to scale-up the AIDS response at the High Level Meeting on AIDS, taking place at the UN in New York from 8-10 June.

“It is a critical time in the AIDS response and more important than ever that we put the focus back onto HIV,” said President Ali Bongo Ondimba. “It is irresponsible to think that AIDS is under control when 10 million people are in need of treatment and more than 7000 people are becoming infected with HIV every day.”

In recent years, Gabon has made real progress in its HIV response, new HIV infections have reduced by more than 25% since 2001 and access to antiretroviral therapy has increased.

During a meeting with UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé, President Ali Bongo Ondima expressed his support to the AIDS response and his willingness to bring discussions on HIV to the forefront of the June 2011 UN Security Council meeting, the month that Gabon takes over as President.

“HIV remains one of the major concerns of our time, and must stay at the very top of political agendas,” said Mr Sidibé. “President Ali Bongo Ondimba’s commitment and leadership on HIV are commendable and his engagement in the June meeting will play a major role in securing the future of the response.”

President Ali Bongo Ondimba also expressed his interest in engaging in a special Heads of State session, hosted by the President of Rwanda, which will take place during the High Level Meeting on AIDS. The session will unite leaders in shaping the future of AIDS, health and development.

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#### 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).