

PRESS RELEASE**Global leaders commit to ending the AIDS epidemic in cities by 2030**

MELBOURNE, 20 July 2014—In a meeting initiated by UNAIDS and hosted by the city of Melbourne, Australia, global leaders agreed that cities and local leadership are the key to ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030. The inaugural Cities for Social Transformation meeting took place on the sidelines of the 20th International AIDS Conference. Mayors and representatives of 18 cities, governors, senior members of parliament, health ministers, a Head of State and senior health professionals attended the event.

The leaders committed to a rapid scale-up of prevention, treatment, care and support programmes, as well as addressing the needs of people at higher risk of HIV infection.

“It’s time to focus on local epidemics and city governments will be the driving force for change. They have the resources and the architecture to deliver essential social and health services,” said Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS. “They are the catalyst for forging new partnerships between communities, civil society and government. We will not end the AIDS epidemic without harnessing the power of cities.”

Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, the President of Fiji, Nafsiah Mboi, the Health Minister of Indonesia, Powes Parkop, the Governor of Papua New Guinea’s capital Port Moresby, Dhlomo Sibongiseni, the Health Minister of KwaZulu-Natal Province in South Africa, and Robert Doyle, Lord Mayor of Melbourne, shared their experiences.

“It’s an honour to be hosting this inaugural cities initiative mayors’ meeting. This is an important moment because I believe the world’s cities—our cities—have a pivotal role to play in leading the HIV response ... and fulfilling the vision of an HIV-free generation,” said the Lord Mayor of Melbourne.

Current data show that 15 countries account for 75% of global HIV infections, with the majority found in urban centres. It is estimated that 220 cities globally account for over a third of HIV prevalence. In the Asia and the Pacific region, 30 cities account for over a million people living with HIV.

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The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) leads and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths. UNAIDS unites the efforts of 11 UN organizations—UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UN Women, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank—and works closely with global and national partners to maximize results for the AIDS response. Learn more at unaids.org and connect with us on Facebook and Twitter.