

## Press release

### **H.S.H. Princess of Monaco accepts appointment as UNAIDS Special Representative**

**Geneva, 6 October 2006** – Her Serene Highness Princess Stephanie of Monaco has accepted the appointment of Special Representative for the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

Princess Stephanie of Monaco, who is well known for her passionate engagement in AIDS issues, has been President of 'Fight AIDS Monaco' since 2004. The organisation has three main focus areas: information, HIV prevention and support to people living with and affected by HIV.

The princess represented Monaco at the United Nations General Assembly High Level Meeting on AIDS, which took place in New York in June 2006 where she expressed her personal commitment to the AIDS response.

In her new role as UNAIDS Special Representative she will be focusing particularly on raising awareness about HIV prevention and discrimination issues. "I have lost friends to this epidemic – and I want to underline that AIDS is preventable and treatable and we must unite to get ahead of the epidemic and break down stigma and discrimination. I am personally committed to make my contribution count."

"I am delighted to appoint H.S.H. Princess Stephanie as UNAIDS Special Representative," said Dr Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director. "I am confident that she will make a difference in the AIDS response as a strong advocate for increasing HIV prevention efforts and raising awareness on the stigma and discrimination surrounding people living with HIV."

"With over 4 million new infections in 2005, intensifying HIV prevention needs to be at the forefront of the response. At the same time, we must address the drivers of the epidemic, of which HIV-related stigma and discrimination continues to have devastating effects," Dr Piot said.

The Princess is visiting the UNAIDS Secretariat in Geneva on Friday 6 October 2006 to learn more about the work of UNAIDS and meet its Executive Director, Dr Peter Piot. During her visit, she will meet with UNAIDS officials and representatives from the UN Positive Staff Group, a recently formed group of people living with HIV working at the United Nations.

According to the UNAIDS an estimated 38.6 million people worldwide were living with HIV in 2005. An estimated 4.1 million became newly infected with HIV and an estimated 2.8 million lost their lives to AIDS in 2005.

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