



## PRESS STATEMENT

### UNAIDS and PEPFAR welcome the launch of the Business Leadership Council to end new HIV infections among children by 2015

*Top business leaders unite behind the global goal of a "Generation Born HIV Free"*

**Davos, Switzerland, 27 January 2012** — UNAIDS and PEPFAR welcome the launch at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland of two new initiatives by business leaders—the Business Leadership Council for a "Generation Born HIV Free" and the Social Media Syndicate to end new HIV infections in children.

The Business Leadership Council was started as part of the private sector's contribution to the Global Plan towards elimination of new HIV infections among children and keeping their mothers alive (Global Plan). The Global Plan was launched in 2011 at the United Nations High Level Meeting on AIDS and focuses on 22 countries, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, that make up nearly 90% of all new HIV infections among infants.

"We will not reach our goal of zero new HIV infections among children without the passion and determination of the world's business leaders," said Michel Sidibé, UNAIDS Executive Director. "The private sector not only brings financial resources, but also their expertise in management, marketing and connecting with people at the grassroots."

Ambassador Eric Goosby, U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, participated in today's announcement and stated, "I commend these business leaders for their commitment and partnership. The launch of the Business Leadership Council (BLC) and the Social Media Syndicate is a clear sign that the private sector is ready to step up." He added, "By working together, I believe that we will soon see a day when no baby is born with HIV, when many more mothers are kept healthy and alive to raise their families, and communities have more hope for a brighter future."

In 2010, an estimated 390 000 children were newly infected with HIV. Most of the new HIV infections were in low- and middle-income countries. In high-income countries the number was close to zero. HIV infections among children can be easily averted if mothers living with HIV are provided optimal antiretroviral drugs during pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding. Protecting a child from HIV can cost as little as US\$300 and saves at least three times more in health care costs alone for a child living with HIV.

The Social Media Syndicate will coordinate the most influential, individual publishers on the Social Web to share messages and actions needed to welcome a "Generation Born HIV Free" and to achieve all the health-related Millennium Development Goals.

Getting to zero new HIV infections among children and keeping their mothers alive requires political will, community support and health services that are tailored to meet the needs of women and children.

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

There has been significant progress in reducing the number of children born with HIV. There was a 30% reduction in the number of children infected with HIV between 2002 and 2010. Since the launch of the Global Plan most of the priority countries have embarked on accelerated efforts to reach pregnant women with HIV services. In Botswana, the percentage of infants born with HIV declined to 4% in 2010. Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland have all reached more than 80% of pregnant women with HIV prevention services.

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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 [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org).

### **PEPFAR**

The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is the U.S. Government initiative to help save the lives of those suffering from HIV/AIDS around the world. This historic commitment is the largest by any nation to combat a single disease internationally, and PEPFAR investments also help alleviate suffering from other diseases across the global health spectrum. PEPFAR is driven by a shared responsibility among donor and partner nations and others to make smart investments to save lives. For more information visit [www.pepfar.gov](http://www.pepfar.gov), <http://twitter.com/pepfar> or [www.facebook.com/PEPFAR](http://www.facebook.com/PEPFAR).