

PRESS STATEMENT

Prasada Rao appointed as UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for AIDS in Asia and the Pacific

GENEVA, 1 May 2012—United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon has appointed J.V.R. Prasada Rao as his Special Envoy for AIDS in the Asia-Pacific region. Mr Rao will take over the position in July this year from Dr Nafis Sadik who served in the role since 2002.

“Mr Rao has demonstrated his strong leadership of the AIDS response for 14 years,” said Mr Ban. “I am confident that as my Special Envoy he will help to achieve an HIV-free generation in the region.”

Mr Rao began his engagement with HIV issues when he became Director of India's National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) in 1997. During his time with NACO he successfully made India's response to the epidemic truly multi-sectoral by engaging a broad range of international partners. Later he became India's Secretary for Health and Family Welfare, where he played an instrumental role in drafting India's AIDS Prevention and Control Policy.

His experience and contribution to the AIDS response led him to being appointed as the Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS' (UNAIDS) Regional Support Team in Asia-Pacific and subsequently as Special Advisor to the Executive Director of UNAIDS.

Mr Rao served as Member Secretary of two independent commissions on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific. He is currently also a Commissioner of the Global Commission on HIV and the Law.

“Prasada is an excellent and experienced champion for the AIDS response,” said Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS. “He has an expert understanding of the dynamics of the epidemics in the region and we look forward to working with him in his new role and combining our efforts to end AIDS in Asia and the Pacific.”

The UN Secretary-General announced the appointment in Mr Rao's home country, India, where he was on an official visit to further his efforts to improve women and children's health around the world.

Contact

UNAIDS Geneva | Sophie Barton-Knott | tel. +41 22 791 1697 | bartonknotts@unaids.org

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