

## PRESS RELEASE

### **UNAIDS and PEPFAR spotlight global progress in eliminating new HIV infections among children**

**WASHINGTON DC, 24 July 2012**— Speaking at a satellite session today at the XIX International AIDS Conference, Ambassador Eric Goosby, the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, and Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), commended countries and their international partners for recent progress in preventing new HIV infections among children and saving mothers' lives.

“The latest data is encouraging and a testament to the dedication and tireless work under way to virtually eliminate new paediatric infections,” said Ambassador Eric Goosby, who leads the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). “The United States is committed to working with countries to succeed in this mission and achieve the goal of an AIDS-free generation.”

#### **A steep decline in new HIV infections among children**

According to a new report from UNAIDS, there were an estimated 330 000 new HIV infections among children globally in 2011—a 24% reduction since 2009, when about 430 000 children were newly infected with HIV. Among 21 *Global Plan* priority countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the estimated number of children newly infected with HIV fell by 25%, from 360 000 in 2009 to 270 000 in 2011.

Progress has been made possible through rapid improvement in access to services that prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT). There was a dramatic increase in coverage of PMTCT services in the 21 priority countries between 2009 and 2011: from 34% to 61%. HIV transmission rates from mother-to child have also declined since 2010 with the introduction of more effective prophylaxis regimens.

“We know how to get to zero—science has shown the way,” said the UNAIDS Executive Director. “The only thing that can stop us now is indecision or a lack of courage. Through strengthened political will and financial resources, we can reach our twin goals of zero new HIV infections among children and zero AIDS-related maternal deaths.”

#### **AIDS-related maternal deaths also on the decline**

The estimated number of pregnancy-related deaths among women living with HIV fell from 46 000 in 2005 to 37 000 in 2010—a 20% reduction. Among 21 high-priority countries, pregnancy-related deaths among women living with HIV fell from 41 500 in 2005 to 33 000 in 2010.

Despite significant progress, challenges remain. In sub-Saharan Africa, AIDS continues to be the leading cause of maternal death. And among children born to HIV-positive women, one in five was infected with HIV through pregnancy or breastfeeding in 2011.

### **The *Global Plan***

Spearheaded by UNAIDS and the U.S. Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator, the *Global Plan towards the elimination of new HIV infections among children and keeping their mothers alive* was unveiled in June 2011 at the UN General Assembly High Level Meeting on AIDS. It has two main targets for 2015: a 90% reduction in the number of children newly infected with HIV and a 50% reduction in the number of AIDS-related maternal deaths.

Reaching these targets will require accelerated action across a number of key areas including: preventing HIV infections among women of reproductive age; avoiding unintended pregnancies; reducing HIV transmission from mother to child; and providing treatment, care and support to mothers living with HIV and their families.

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### **UNAIDS**

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](http://unaids.org) and connect with us on Facebook and Twitter.

### **PEPFAR**

The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is the U.S. Government initiative to save the lives of those affected by 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 about PEPFAR, visit [www.PEPFAR.gov](http://www.PEPFAR.gov), <http://twitter.com/uspepfar>, or [www.facebook.com/PEPFAR](http://www.facebook.com/PEPFAR).