

## PRESS STATEMENT

### **UNAIDS welcomes new paediatric HIV treatment license for the Medicines Patent Pool**

*ViiV Healthcare signs agreement to help bridge a critical gap in HIV treatment for children*

**GENEVA, 28 February 2013**—The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) welcomes the new collaboration between the Medicines Patent Pool and ViiV Healthcare to increase access to antiretroviral therapy for children. The new agreement is a significant step forwards in HIV treatment for children as very few antiretroviral drugs are formulated for paediatric use. In 2012 UNAIDS estimated that 72% of children living with HIV who were eligible for treatment did not have access.

Under the collaboration, ViiV will allow the paediatric formulation of the antiretroviral medicine abacavir to be supplied to 118 countries under a license agreement. The 118 countries are home to more than 98% of all children living with HIV. ViiV have also agreed to negotiate further licences that will allow the manufacture of low-cost versions of promising new, better adapted paediatric medicines that ViiV is currently developing. Once approved for safety and quality, the new medicines could also be supplied to the 118 countries.

“The agreement between the Medicines Patent Pool and ViiV promises to narrow a substantial gap in access to HIV treatment and offer new hope for children,” said Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS. “I strongly urge other pharmaceutical companies, especially companies holding antiretroviral therapy patents, to join the Pool and help improve the lives of children and adults living with HIV around the world.”

ViiV has also pledged to work with other stakeholders to develop additional abacavir-based products for children and bring them quickly to market in developing countries. This is an important affirmation of the Medicines Patent Pool’s role in facilitating faster introduction of new, better-adapted and affordable medicines, particularly for developing countries.

The Medicines Patent Pool was founded in 2010 with the support of the innovative financing mechanism UNITAID to increase access to antiretroviral treatment. It works by creating a pool of patents that can be licensed by generic producers, thereby facilitating competition, fostering innovation and driving down prices. The United States National Institutes of Health and Gilead Sciences have previously contributed voluntary licenses to the Medicines Patent Pool.

#### **Contact**

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

#### **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.