

PRESS RELEASE

**UNAIDS and Lancet
Commission address strategic challenges for the future of AIDS and
global health**

Commissioners conclude that defeating the AIDS epidemic and delivering good health and rights are non-negotiable pillars in the post-2015 development agenda

Lilongwe/Geneva, 1 July 2013—Strategic challenges for the future of the AIDS response and global health were discussed at the first meeting of *The UNAIDS and Lancet Commission: Defeating AIDS – Advancing global health*, which was held in Lilongwe, Malawi from 28 – 29 June 2013.

Three main issues were debated during the two days: the need to harness shifting global and domestic resource flows for health; trade, innovation and commodity security; and the democratization of global health.

President Joyce Banda of Malawi and Co-chair of the Commission said, “I call upon my fellow leaders in Africa, and indeed the world, to unite and work together to realize our goal of moving from AIDS to sustainable health.”

The meeting brought together prominent leaders, thinkers, and activists to identify lessons learned from the AIDS response to advance the future of global health and development, while ensuring that AIDS remains a top priority in the post-2015 agenda.

“I see two major opportunities: first galvanizing political and moral commitments, particularly from rich countries, to overcome the global commercial barriers for generic production and second, to link the AIDS movement with efforts to end hunger and poverty,” said the former President of Brazil Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. “I want the Commission to draw on the lessons we have learned in Brazil in seizing these opportunities.”

The AIDS response has been a leading force in expanding access to affordable, quality-assured medicines. The commissioners recognized the importance of price reductions of AIDS medicines and the production of cheaper generic versions as critical to health advances in low- and middle-income countries. They also underscored the need to stimulate innovation in production and delivery of medicines.

The First Lady of Gabon, Sylvia Bongo Ondimba, said, “We must reflect and act with bold determination so that health is a right for everyone.”

“We must be remembered as the generation that gave its all so that everyone that comes after us will be spared the stigma and anguish of AIDS,” said the First Lady of Rwanda, Jeanette Kagame.

Solidarity, participation, equality and sustained support have transformed the AIDS response into a global movement for universal access to HIV treatment. The AIDS response has also drawn attention to social and legal issues, including sexuality, gender inequality, violence against women, drug use and the use and misuse of criminal law.

"Sustaining and expanding the progress made in the AIDS response will require new implementation and political strategies, countering complacency, and continuous investment in research and innovation," said Professor Peter Piot, Director of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Commission Co-chair.

Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator said, "The UNAIDS and Lancet Commission will play a key role in feeding into the debate on the shape of development goals beyond 2015."

Commissioners stressed that the current global health architecture must adapt to a changing world. They outlined the need for an informed and empowered constituency as well as a grass-root led demand for services. They also acknowledged need to address social and legal barriers to health and discrimination and the need to ensure inclusive systems for priority-setting and accountability.

"Over the next six months, the UNAIDS and Lancet Commission can play a key role in complimenting high level strategy with concrete recommendations," said Sir Andrew Witty, CEO of GlaxoSmithKline. "It's ultimately about helping the on-the-ground healthcare workers, people in communities, people at risk, to really get into a better position so that we can truly take another step forwards in stopping HIV."

Commissioners also looked at the need for redistribution of opportunity through human rights, gender equality and focusing on youth.

"Today's HIV-positive youth need to have an active role formulating and implementing policy that will lead the world toward a dynamic, sustainable and AIDS-free tomorrow," said Cristina Jade Peña, Ambassador for the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation.

Commissioners agreed that the opportunity must be seized to protect and accelerate progress towards ending the AIDS epidemic, and that a new era of social justice, health and sustainable development must be ushered in.

"The bold, out-of-the-box ideas debated by these exceptional global leaders give the world hope we will defeat the AIDS epidemic and deliver on global health," Michel Sidibé, UNAIDS Executive Director. "The Commissioners have planned concrete steps to ensure that AIDS and global health are at the core of post-2015 agenda."

The next meeting of *The UNAIDS and Lancet Commission: Defeating AIDS – Advancing global health* will be held in London on 13-14 February 2014.

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UNAIDS and Lancet Commission: *Defeating AIDS – Advancing global health*

The UNAIDS and Lancet Commission: Defeating AIDS – Advancing global health was launched in May 2013 and is co-Chaired by President Joyce Banda, Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma and Professor Peter Piot. Drawing from the pioneering experience of the global AIDS response, the Commission brings together heads of state, policy makers, people living with HIV, development experts, young people and private sector leaders. The Commission aims to catalyze expertise and political momentum to shape the debate on the future of health in the post-2015 development agenda and accelerate progress towards the end of AIDS.

Learn more at unaids.org