

### **UNAIDS WELCOMES THE UK GOVERNMENT'S CALL FOR ACTION ON AIDS**

#### **UK Funding to UNAIDS Doubled**

**Geneva, 1 December 2003** – UNAIDS strongly welcomes the “Call for Action” made today by the UK Secretary of State for International Development, Hilary Benn, in which the UK pledges to strengthen its political commitment, to improve the way its development assistance is made and to promote greater donor coordination to combat the global AIDS epidemic.

“The UK’s Call for Action exemplifies the kind of informed political leadership which is as crucial to mounting an effective response to this growing epidemic as increased resources,” said Dr Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director. “Particularly welcome is the UK’s commitment that every donor harness their respective expertise under one overall strategy led by the government of every country affected by HIV. UNAIDS is honoured to be working with the UK to establish an annual donor coordination forum, the first of which will take place in early 2004.”

The United Kingdom, the second largest bilateral donor on HIV/AIDS, has also doubled its bilateral assistance to UNAIDS. “The increased funding will strengthen our coordination role in developing countries, vital to scaling up an effective AIDS response,” said Dr Piot.

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