

### **UNAIDS WELCOMES US PRESIDENT'S EMERGENCY PLAN FOR AIDS RELIEF FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY**

**Washington, DC, 23 February 2004** -- The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) applauds the United States government for developing a detailed five-year strategic plan to intensify U.S. action in the global battle against AIDS.

The U.S. government is to be commended for both seeking to enhance and coordinate its own AIDS efforts, and affirming that the AIDS fight can only be won through a concrete partnership between the international community, national governments, the private sector and people living with HIV/AIDS. UNAIDS stands ready to work with Randall L. Tobias, the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, and U.S. country teams to scale up the AIDS response on the ground in the 15 target countries worldwide.

The U.S. global AIDS initiative presents a historic opportunity to expand access to HIV treatment, prevention, and support services in developing countries. The funding announced today, totalling US\$350 million, is the first in a series of essential steps towards the U.S. government's five-year US\$15 billion plan for AIDS relief. At the upcoming G8 Summit this June, UNAIDS urges key donor nations to commit the urgently-needed resources to effectively fight AIDS worldwide – and we welcome the continued leadership of the U.S. in this effort.

While prevention remains a mainstay of the global response, the U.S. plan is the first ever by a donor government to lay out an ambitious strategy for providing antiretroviral therapy and care and support on a scale that contributes substantially to meeting the global need. UNAIDS looks forward to working closely with the U.S. government on implementation, including an even greater emphasis on women and girls and the strategies needed to address their vulnerability and their unequal access to services.

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