

2006 High Level Meeting on AIDS Civil Society Participation Information Note

(Please check <http://www.un.org/ga/aidsmeeting2006/>
and www.ungasshiv.org for further information)

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations welcome civil society organization participants to the 2006 High Level Meeting on AIDS. The meeting sets out to review the progress and reaffirm commitment to decisive action on AIDS and towards realising the targets set out in the 2001 Declaration of Commitment on HIV and AIDS.

One of the major objectives outlined in the General Assembly's Resolution (A/RES/60/224) adopted by Member States in December 2005 that describes the 2006 High Level Meeting is for the meeting to ensure maximum active participation of civil society.

More than 1,400 individuals from civil society have been accredited or have pre-registered to attend the meeting. On 27 March 2006, an unprecedented number of almost 800 civil society organizations received special accreditation by UN Member States to attend the Review. ECOSOC accredited organizations pre-registered more than 600 individuals. In addition many national delegations include representatives of civil society and people living with HIV.

The decision by UN Member States to accommodate such a high number of organizations marks a critical moment in the history of the AIDS response underlining the commitment from many corners of the world to work on AIDS across sectors and in partnership. The Review promises a unique level of involvement for civil society, including presentation slots in plenary, roundtable and panel sessions.

These roles are described in a series of organizational notes available on the UNAIDS website: www.unaids.org

To best understand how the arrangements for the meeting this document should be read alongside the organizational notes from the Office of the President of General Assembly which provide details of the formal events, times, locations and formats. These are found on the UNAIDS web pages through the following links:

<http://www.unaids.org/en/AIDSreview2006/AIDSReview2006/default.asp>
http://www.unaids.org/unaid_resources/images/UNGASS/20060403_PGA_Info_note_en.pdf

CIVIL SOCIETY TASK FORCE

In February 2006 the Office of the United Nations General Assembly President convened a Task Force of 12 civil society representatives to help ensure effective and active participation of civil society organizations in the 2006 High Level Meeting on AIDS.

The Civil Society Task Force offered support and advice to the Office of the General Assembly President and to UNAIDS in key decisions relating to the participation of civil society organizations in the Meeting.

Individuals were selected for the Task Force by UNAIDS following consultation and advice from PCB NGOs, the UNGASS Civil Society Steering Committee/Coalition and the Civil Society representatives of the Universal Access Steering Committee. The Task Force assisted in:

- Shaping the design for the Civil Society Hearings on the first day of the Review, including format, topics, messages and key speakers
- Advising on the civil society participation of the Roundtables
- Working with broader civil society groups identifying key civil society speakers for all formal the sessions including the Plenary Session
- Communicating key issues to broader civil society to keep them informed of pertinent developments
- Preparation and briefing for the civil society participants and speakers

The Task Force offered advice on:

- Input on the themes for the roundtables
- Input on the panels and aspects of the High Level event on 1 June
- Logistical issues and needs for civil society attending the Review

Task Force members (Georgia Arnold, Mary Balikungeri, Mabel Bianco, Lucy Cheshire, Beri Hull, Alan Leather, Linda Hartke, Rachel Ong, Marcel van Soest, Raminta Stuikyte, Prateek Suman, and Zonny Woods) will take active roles in the pre-meeting orientation sessions and daily briefings as described later in this note.

RESTRICTIONS DUE TO CAPACITY AND SECURITY CONCERNS

Due to the large numbers of both government delegations and civil society organizations participating in the 2006 High Level Meeting on AIDS, access to certain meeting rooms will be restricted for space and security reasons. Please note that access will be managed through passes, invitations and tickets – described in the next section. Due to space limitations there will be no guarantee that all civil society participants will be able to gain access to meeting rooms.

Please note that this arrangement means that ECOSOC accredited organizations with year-long ECOSOC passes who have not pre-registered for the meeting will not be offered full access to restricted rooms.

The opening plenary, the informal interactive civil society hearing, the panel discussions, the second plenary and the High Level Meeting will be transmitted by live web cast. This will be accessible from the front page of the UNAIDS website.

GROUND PASSES FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ACCESS TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Civil society organization representatives may pick up their UN ground passes at the United Nations Visitor's Lobby of the UN Secretariat in New York (First Avenue and 46th Street). The United Nations grounds passes are to be worn visibly at all times.

Civil society organizations should enter via the Visitor's Entrance in the General Assembly Building, at all times, and will be required to pass through the security scanners.

The Grounds Pass will be valid for the three days of the meeting only.

The civil society registration desk will be located under the Foucault's Pendulum in the General Assembly Visitor's Lobby. A pass will be issued to each participant. The pass will be issued only once and cannot be replaced in the event of loss. The Registration Desk will be open on:

- Monday 29 May 9.00 am - 4.00 pm with **no** lunch break
- Tuesday 30 May 8:00am – 4:00 pm closed for lunch 12.45-2 pm
- Wednesday 31 May 7:00 am - 4:00 pm closed for lunch 12.45-2 pm
- Thursday 1 June 9.00 am – 4.00 pm closed for lunch 12.45-2 pm
- Friday 2 June 9:00am - 12:45 pm

Accredited and pre-registered representatives are strongly encouraged to register on May 29 and 30 to avoid queues.

Registration will take place at five computer terminals. One terminal will give priority to speakers; a notice will be displayed above the line.

Civil society organizations will need to present their **letter of Invitation** and passport, or ID card with photo, at the Registration Desk. **No pass will be issued without the presentation of a passport or ID card with photo.** UN Staff will staff the registration desks and will confirm the participant's registration and then complete and print a security form which will then be presented to security staff.

A security officer at adjacent photograph booths will photograph the participant and issue the grounds pass. This pass will identify each individual as having been accredited or pre-registered for the 2006 High Level Meeting on AIDS.

Many ECOSOC NGOs already have a brown badge that normally allows them to access the Secretariat building which includes the Conference Rooms, the ECOSOC chamber and the exhibition area. Because of capacity constraints passes will be distributed to pre-registered and specially accredited participants only.

A small number of Secondary Passes will be held at registration to be issued on a one per organization only basis in the event that ECOSOC delegations arrive without pre-registration. The Secondary Passes are exchangeable to allow group members to share amongst themselves and contain only the name of the NGO group represented.

There will be Special Passes for speakers which are colour coded for the Civil Society Hearing, Round Tables and Panels. Plenary Speakers will have exceptional passes giving access to the restricted second floor. Plenary Speakers can only be accompanied by UN staff members who will also be issued with special access passes for this area. Speaker access passes may be collected from 29 May 2006.

Volunteers, from different language groups, will be on hand to help with registration and support to civil society delegates. Volunteers will be drawn from UNAIDS Cosponsors, UN+ group, and accredited civil society members.

BE PREPARED TO QUEUE OUTSIDE

Please note that there might be long queues for registration and those might stretch outside. Check the weather reports and bring either umbrellas or sun screen. Also bring water as it might be difficult to leave the queue and come back. Long queues for registration can be frustrating. Rest assured that the people staffing the registration will do what they can to make it as smooth as possible, within the security constraints. Some of the people managing the registration process will come from UNAIDS office in Geneva so you will see familiar names and faces there. Do not hesitate to contact them about registration procedures and the volunteers on other issues. The volunteers are there to ensure that you get to the right places at the right time and will be able to direct you and give useful information.

TICKETS FOR PLENARY AND PANEL SESSIONS

In addition to the Grounds Passes access tickets for the gallery of the GA Hall for plenary sessions will be on issued on a **first-come first-served basis** to individual pass-holders from 7am on Wednesday 31 May and from 9am on Thursday 1 June and from 9am on Friday 2 June.

A limited number of tickets will be made available on each of the registration days. Since seats are limited, only one ticket will be issued per registrant for the plenaries. Each ticket will be valid for only one Plenary Session.

To accommodate those who do not have access to the Panel Discussion and the gallery of the GA Hall for the plenary sessions, Conference Room 3 will act as an overflow room with monitors provided for both delegates and civil society organizations for key sessions. Seating in the overflow room is also on a first-come first-served basis.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION PARTICIPATION IN ROUNDTABLES

Between five-10 civil society representatives and a number of alternates have been selected in advance as Round Table participants. A special booth will be set up in the registration area with information for all Round Table participants.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION PARTICIPATION IN PANELS

During the Panel Discussions civil society delegates have been selected by the Task Force to make presentations. Those are described in the organizational note issued by the Office of the General Assembly President available at <http://www.un.org/ga/president/60/summitfollowup/060511b.pdf>

Each Panel includes representatives from civil society. Civil society delegates selected to intervene in the discussion will be seated in a designated area and will be expected to keep their interventions brief, exceeding no more than four minutes.

CIVIL SOCIETY HEARING

A three hour informal civil society hearing is planned for the first day of the meeting starting at 10am. This will include remarks by the President of the General Assembly who will chair the session and remarks by the UN Secretary General. A civil society representative will then address the session before introducing a video presentation

showing civil society perspectives from four different regions of the world. Following there will be 12 four minute long interventions from civil society speakers on the following themes: the greater involvement of people living with HIV and AIDS; addressing the needs of marginalized groups; gender equality, women's empowerment, human rights of women and girls in the context of AIDS; sexual and reproductive health and rights; research and development; the private sector and labour: the workplace role and response to AIDS; trade; resources for health ; children and AIDS; the role of religion and AIDS; demonstrating commitment and accountability; and, human rights.

The session will then open up for interaction between civil society and member states before concluding remarks from civil society.

ORIENTATION AND BRIEFING FOR CIVIL SOCIETY PRESENTERS

Tim Thomas, Executive Director of the Staying Alive Foundation, will offer coaching and advice to civil society speakers at a special orientation session run by the Civil Society Task Force on Monday 29 May.

Speakers are asked to contact Zonny Woods of the Civil Society Task Force at zonnyw@yahoo.co.uk or events@iwhc.org for further information about this session.

Other members of the Civil Society Task Force will also be on hand during the session to offer an overview on civil society interventions and presentations through the High Level Meeting and to offer advice on how to maximize impact with the presentation slots.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORIENTATION AND STRATEGY MEETING

A Civil Society Orientation and Strategy meeting will take place on May 30 from 9am to 5pm at the Great Hall of the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in Cooper Square in New York's East Village. The venue can be reached conveniently by taxi, bus and subway.

By bus: Take any of the following buses and ask the driver to let you off nearest Astor Place or Cooper Square: The M1 (5th and Madison Avenues), the M15 (First and Second Avenues), the M6 (7th Avenue/Broadway and Avenue of the Americas), the M101 or M102 (Third and Lexington Avenues).

By subway: Take the R or W (BMT Lines) subway to 8th Street, or take the No. 6 (IRT Lexington Avenue Local) to Astor Place.

The meeting will be run for and by civil society – through a collation of organizations set up to support civil society preparations for the meeting. The meeting is open to Civil Society Representatives attending the UNGASS review, both as part of civil society and government delegations, that:

- are committed to and fully support full implementation of the Declaration of Commitment;
- are also committed to the principle of non-discrimination with regard to people living with HIV/AIDS and all groups most vulnerable to the epidemic.

Individuals interested in attending this meeting please send a message to events@iwhc.org with the title May 30 meeting with name and contact details.

The agenda will seek to cover:

- an overview of the UNGASS Review
- Outcome of Universal Access Process
- Global Fund
- Abuja
- Political Declaration

It will also create opportunities for regional caucuses and a political strategy session.

CIVIL SOCIETY CAUCUS ROOM

Conference Room B in the basement of the building has been reserved for civil society delegates to hold caucuses and workshops. A photocopier has been set up in that room for the use of delegates attending the High Level Meeting. Civil society delegates are requested to bring their own paper for the photocopier in letter size (American size) since any other size will jam the machine. The photocopier, computers and printers provided are not to be used while the room is being used for caucuses and workshops.

A schedule of events to take place in the Caucus Room will be posted on the notice board inside Conference Room B. A daily schedule of events will be distributed at the registration desk and at the morning briefings in Conference Room 2. Only those scheduling changes received by 1:00 pm each day will be reflected in the next day's schedule.

Marcelle Rin of UNAIDS will keep a booking system for the room and can be contacted on rinm@unaids.org

DAILY BRIEFINGS FROM THE CIVIL SOCIETY TASK FORCE

There will be **Daily Briefings** for civil society organization participants in Conference Room 3. These will take place from 8:00 to 8:45am and on Wednesday 31 May and from 9:00 am to 9:45 am on Thursday 1 June and Friday 2 June.

TIMING

Individuals facilitating workshops or co-organizing events on United Nations premises are requested to keep strictly to the scheduled time so that the next programme may start promptly. Likewise, the daily morning briefing must end promptly at 9:45a.m and the room cleared in time for the next official meeting. Any lunchtime events must end promptly at 2:45 pm

DOCUMENTS

Limited copies of official documents for the High Level Meeting have been reserved for civil society delegates. Those documents will be kept in Conference Room B where meeting documents will be available. Civil society representatives are requested to take only one copy of each official document per organization. Delegates are requested not to ask for official documents at the documentation

booths in the Conference Room area, as distribution of documents to civil society delegates in these areas is not authorised.

HIV POSITIVE PARTICIPANTS AND TRAVEL TO THE UNITED STATES

Laws in the United States restrict entry for people living with HIV on the grounds that people living with HIV are considered to have "a communicable disease of public health significance."

The law can be relaxed in some circumstances and allow entry for specific events such as the High Level Meeting on AIDS. Special arrangements have been made to relax entry restrictions for this meeting however people living with HIV are still urged to find out as much information in advance of traveling to the United States.

A useful background note prepared by New York-based Gay Men's Health Crisis is posted on the UNAIDS website offers further information.

http://www.unaids.org/unaids_resources/UNGASS/20060508_HLM_Waiver_en.pdf

Any person living with HIV who experiences difficulties while entering the US is encouraged to contact the Civil Society Partnerships team on +1 917 385 6039 and they will be put in touch with legal advisers.

UNITED NATIONS HIV POSITIVE STAFF TO SUPPORT CIVIL SOCIETY

UN+, the United Nations HIV Positive Staff Group, has offered to support civil society representatives throughout the High Level Meeting. This support has been made possible through agreement at heads of UN agency level. The role of UN+ members at the meeting will be to:

- Act as a civil society focal point/liaison for their agency. This would include attending daily civil society meetings and other key events and meetings and reporting back to both their individual agency and UN+
- Participate in the meeting between the Secretary-General and people living with HIV
- Participate in a meeting of UN+ that will take place during the three days
- Support registration and orientation processes for civil society
- Volunteer for duties in the PLHIV lounge and other locations/events

LOUNGE FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV

A lounge will be available for people living with HIV to use throughout the three days of the High Level Meeting. There will be comfortable seating and a rest area. Light refreshments will also be available. Volunteers will be based in the lounge at all times to assist participants with problems and to ensure an HIV-only door policy is maintained. Chris Mallouris of UNESCO will have overall responsibility as Coordinator of the PLHIV lounge, working closely with Kate Thomson of UNAIDS. Other UN+ members will act as volunteers.

MEDICAL SERVICES

UN medical services will offer an on-site first aid clinic. In addition, participants will be able to access medical services at Bellevue Hospital which is a short distance from

the UN. More details can be obtained from the Civil Society Partnerships team and an information sheet will be available at registration and in the PLHIV lounge.

Details of syringe exchange locations and hours can be found at <http://www.harmreduction.org/resources/usnep/newyork/NYC.html>.

TRAVEL INFORMATION FOR VISITORS TO NEW YORK

May is a good month to visit New York with comfortable temperatures. Visitors are still advised to pack an umbrella and carry a light sweater or jacket as evenings can be cool. May Weather: Average High: 71°F (22°C) Average Low: 55°F (13°C)

For information on transport in and around New York:

<http://www.panynj.gov/>

<http://www.nycsubway.org/maps/>

<http://manhattan.about.com/od/gettingaround/>

For visitor information on New York

<http://www.nycvisit.com/home/>

For gay and lesbian visitors

<http://www.nycvisit.com/content/index.cfm?pagePkey=168>

IMPORTANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The following links offer essential background information for civil society representatives planning to take part in the High Level Meeting.

List of pre-registered ECOSOC accredited civil society participants:

http://www.unaids.org/unaid_resources/UNGASS/20060508_HLM_ECOSOC-List_en.pdf

List of accredited civil society organizations:

http://www.unaids.org/unaid_resources/images/UNGASS/20060328_CS0accreditationList_en.pdf

Organizational notes issues by the Office of the President of the General Assembly:

http://www.unaids.org/unaid_resources/images/UNGASS/20060403_PGA_Info_note_en.pdf

Draft Declaration for the 2006 High Level Meeting on AIDS and civil society comments:

http://data.unaids.org/pub/Report/2006/20060324_SGReport_GA_A60737_en.pdf

National reports (by country) and shadow reports by civil society:

<http://www.unaids.org/en/Publications/2005ungassreporting/default.asp>

Information note for people living with HIV travelling to the United States:
http://www.unaids.org/unaids_resources/UNGASS/20060508_HLM_Waiver_en.pdf

UNAIDS Report Towards Universal Access:
http://data.unaids.org/pub/InformationNote/2006/20060324_HLM_GA_A60737_en.pdf

Secretary General's Report:
http://data.unaids.org/pub/Report/2006/20060324_SGReport_GA_A60737_en.pdf

UNAIDS FOCAL POINTS

The following UNAIDS staff will be present throughout the High Level Meeting to support civil society:

Andy Seale	Overall coordination and Task Force Liaison
Caroline Manlan	Support to speakers
Kate Thomson	Side events and PLHIV liaison
Sally Smith	Registration and coordination of volunteers
Marcelle Rin	Registration
Bernadette Cloete	Registration

For any enquiries on arrival in New York please call the New York cell phone of the UNAIDS Civil Society Partnerships Team +1 917 385 6039. The team can be reached by email up until 26 May on csp@unaids.org