

## PRESS RELEASE

### **UNAIDS presents Kofi Annan with prestigious Award for Leadership**

*Former United Nations Secretary-General recognized for his outstanding and remarkable contributions to the AIDS response*

**GENEVA, 13 June 2016**—UNAIDS has honoured former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan with the UNAIDS Award for Leadership in recognition of the outstanding and remarkable contributions he has made to the global response to HIV. Mr Annan was presented with the award by the Executive Director of UNAIDS, Michel Sidibé, at the 2016 UNAIDS fundraising gala, held in Basel, Switzerland.

“On behalf of UNAIDS I would like to recognize all you have done and continue to do to restore the dignity and improve the lives of people around the world,” said Mr Sidibé. “You have helped to build a fairer, more peaceful world.”

When Mr Annan began his tenure as the new United Nations Secretary-General in 1997, the outlook for the AIDS epidemic was bleak. Some 23.9 million [21.7 million–26.6 million] people were living with HIV, there were 3.5 million [3.2 million–3.8 million] new HIV infections and 1.1 million [890 000–1.3 million] AIDS-related deaths, and access to life-saving treatment was only available to a privileged few.

The response that ensued changed the course of history. Under his leadership, in 2000 the United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 1308, identifying AIDS as a threat to global security. In 2001, Mr Annan held the first United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS and called for a global fund and “war chest” to respond to HIV and other infectious diseases. His call led to the creation of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which today is supporting 8.6 million of the 17 million people who are accessing antiretroviral treatment.

Mr Annan’s efforts to improve the lives of people living with and affected by HIV have been instrumental in driving down the numbers of new HIV infections, which have declined by 40%, and in increasing the number of people on treatment from just a few thousand to more than 17 million in 2015. However, less than half of all people in need of treatment have access and new HIV infections are increasing in some parts of the world.

“Today we see tremendous progress, but the fight is not over,” said Mr Annan. “We must continue the struggle and wake up each morning ready to fight and fight again, until we win.”

#### **2016 UNAIDS LEADERSHIP AWARD**

The UNAIDS Award for Leadership recognizes a person or an organization that has made a major and lasting contribution to restoring dignity and improving people’s lives. UNAIDS recognizes the key role leadership plays in creating an environment for positive social change and accelerating progress in the AIDS response and beyond.

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## **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 towards ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. Learn more at [unaids.org](http://unaids.org) and connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.