

PRESS RELEASE

UNAIDS Executive Director appoints Monica Geingos, First Lady of Namibia, as a UNAIDS Special Advocate

NEW YORK/GENEVA, 22 September 2016—The Executive Director of UNAIDS, Michel Sidibé, has appointed the First Lady of Namibia, Monica Geingos, as UNAIDS Special Advocate for Young Women and Adolescent Girls. She will champion the newly launched Start Free, Stay Free, AIDS Free agenda.

Mr Sidibé met with the First Lady on the sidelines of the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, United States of America. Madame Geingos will use her position as a UNAIDS Special Advocate to improve the health of adolescent girls and young women.

“I am delighted that Madame Geingos has accepted this position. She will be using her platform to find partners and solutions to some of the difficult health issues facing young women and adolescent girls today, including HIV prevention and sexual and reproductive health, as well as access to education,” said Mr Sidibé. “Young women and adolescent girls around the world have a new champion and we look forward to supporting her work.”

Madame Geingos has spoken out for young women and adolescent girls in Namibia and on the world stage. At the 2016 United Nations High-Level Meeting on Ending AIDS, she was praised for her honest and direct observations on how the world is failing to meet the needs of young women and adolescent girls and on what practical steps are needed to close the critical gaps.

“Young Women and adolescent girls face the conflicting realities of a world that is increasingly recognising gender equality while living in societies that continue to deny them the attainment of this shared right. While I am excited about the encouraging signs to rid the world of its patriarchal cloak, the risks faced by our young women and adolescent girls remain disproportionately and unacceptably high. It is an honour to team up with UNAIDS to work towards a generation that starts free and stays free from AIDS,” said Madame Geingos.

Madame Geingos is a champion of Start Free, Stay Free, AIDS Free, an agenda to put the world on a Super-Fast-Track to end AIDS among children, adolescents and young women by 2020.

START FREE

Eliminate new HIV infections among children (aged 0–14) by reducing the number of children newly infected annually to less than 40 000 by 2018 and 20 000 by 2020. Reach and sustain 95% of pregnant women living with HIV with lifelong HIV treatment by 2018.

STAY FREE

Reduce the number of new HIV infections among adolescents and young women (aged 10–24) to less than 100 000 by 2020. Provide voluntary medical circumcision for HIV prevention to 25 million additional men by 2020, with a focus on young men (aged 10–29).

AIDS FREE

Provide 1.6 million children (aged 0–14) and 1.2 million adolescents (aged 15–19) living with HIV with antiretroviral therapy by 2018. Provide 1.4 million children (aged 0–14) and 1 million adolescents (aged 15–19) with HIV treatment by 2020.

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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. Learn more at unaids.org and connect with us on Facebook and Twitter.