

PRESS RELEASE

UNAIDS presents UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon with leadership award for his commitment to the response to HIV

UNAIDS recognizes Mr Ban for his outstanding efforts to ensure access to HIV services for all and for speaking out for the most marginalized in society

NEW YORK/GENEVA, 30 November 2016—UNAIDS has honoured the United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, for his unfaltering commitment to ending the AIDS epidemic and for acting as a voice for the voiceless to ensure access to HIV services for the key populations most affected by HIV.

Under the leadership of the Secretary-General, the world reached the AIDS targets of Millennium Development Goal 6 and moved to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. Exceptional progress has also been made towards a shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths.

“Together, we have worked for a world where more people than ever are on treatment. Half as many children are infected through mother-to-child transmission. And double the number of people have access to medicines. I am calling for action to get on the Fast-Track to our target of 30 million people on treatment by 2020,” said Mr Ban.

Mr Ban has consistently spoken out on behalf of gay men and other men who have sex with men, sex workers, people who inject drugs, prisoners and transgender people in order to ensure that they have access to life-saving HIV prevention and treatment services. He has been a longstanding supporter of an evidence-informed approach to the epidemic that puts people’s needs at the centre of the response to HIV.

“We are motivated to fight AIDS because we know that every child deserves care, every person deserves treatment and all vulnerable groups deserve protection from stigma and abuse,” said Mr Ban. “Tolerance and awareness help stop AIDS. Speaking out protects life.”

Mr Ban was presented with the Award for Leadership by the Executive Director of UNAIDS, Michel Sidibé, at a special World AIDS Day event held in his honour at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, United States of America, on the eve of World AIDS Day 2016.

“The progress the world has made in reducing the impact of HIV and expanding access to health for millions of people would not have been possible without the determined leadership of my friend, Ban Ki-moon,” said Mr Sidibé. “He has been consistent in his support for the most vulnerable in the world and remains a staunch human rights defender for the people most affected by the epidemic. His sense of service, commitment and compassion will continue to be a source of inspiration.”

Mr Ban has strongly supported the ambitious targets set by UNAIDS and its partners. In 2011, he participated in the launch of the *Global Plan towards the elimination of new HIV infections among children by 2015 and keeping their mothers alive*, which prioritized more than 20 countries that, in 2009, accounted for 90% of the global number of pregnant women living with HIV who were in need of services to prevent mother-to-child transmission. New HIV infections among children in the 21 countries most affected by the epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa decreased from 270 000 [230 000–330 000] in 2009 to 110 000 [78 000–150 000] in 2015. AIDS-related deaths among children in the priority countries fell by 53% in those six years as their access to treatment tripled.

In July 2015, Mr Ban participated in an event in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, to mark the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal 6 target of 15 million people gaining access to life-saving antiretroviral medicines. The “15 by 15” target set in 2011 and championed by Mr Ban was achieved several months ahead of schedule. Access to antiretroviral treatment continues to expand, to 18.2 million [16.1 million–19.0 million] people as of June 2016. Treatment access has grown six fold since Mr Ban took up office in 2007.

His bold and visionary leadership will continue to inspire the world to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030 within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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.

The physical award was created by celebrated artist Jamie Harris and is made of infused glass. It has a blue orb to represent the United Nations delivering as one and a red flame to embody the global solidarity to end the AIDS epidemic.

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Contact

UNAIDS New York | Sophie Barton-Knott | tel. +41 79 514 6896 | bartonknotts@unaids.org

UNAIDS Geneva | Alasdair Reid | tel. +41 79 594 1923 | reida@unaids.org

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 and connect with us on Facebook Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.