

## PRESS STATEMENT

### **UNAIDS congratulates Michel Sidibé on his appointment as Minister of Health and Social Affairs of Mali**

*UNAIDS extends its heartfelt thanks to the Executive Director of UNAIDS for his outstanding contribution to the global response to HIV*

**GENEVA, 8 May 2019**—UNAIDS congratulates Michel Sidibé on his appointment as the Minister of Health and Social Affairs of Mali. Mr Sidibé served as the Executive Director of UNAIDS for more than 10 years after being appointed as the second Executive Director of UNAIDS and Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations in January 2009.

A true champion for a people-centred approach to health and development and a strong advocate for social justice, Mr Sidibé has made a remarkable contribution to the AIDS response, helping to save and improve the lives of millions of people around the world.

Since Mr Sidibé took up his position as Executive Director of UNAIDS, there has been a 170% increase in the number of people accessing antiretroviral therapy, from 8 million in 2010 to 21.7 million in 2017. There has also been a 45% drop in AIDS-related deaths—from 1.7 million in 2008 to 940 000 in 2017—and new HIV infections have been reduced by 22%—from 2.3 million in 2008 to 1.8 million in 2017.

“It has been an honour for me to serve UNAIDS as its Executive Director and contribute to the global AIDS response,” said Mr Sidibé. “I would like to thank all UNAIDS partners and staff and especially community members affected by HIV, who have made our successes possible. With their steadfast commitment and resolve, we have been able to bring life-saving services to millions of people. If we stay the course and do the right thing, always—putting people first and delivering results for people—we will succeed in ending AIDS.”

Mr Sidibé’s vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths, and his tireless advocacy to ensure that all people have access to health services, have kept HIV at the top of the global agenda. His calls for global solidarity and shared responsibility have seen resources for HIV increase by more than one third, from US\$ 15.9 billion in 2010 to US\$ 20.6 billion in 2017 in low- and middle-income countries. His advocacy for country ownership helped to ensure that 56% of HIV resources in low- and middle-income countries now come from domestic sources, promoting long-term sustainable responses to HIV.

His commitment to the concept of universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support meant that the goal of reaching 15 million people living with HIV with antiretroviral therapy by 2015 was achieved seven months ahead of schedule. His focus on the most vulnerable and marginalized has given a voice to the voiceless, including gay men and other men who have sex with men, sex workers, transgender people, people who inject drugs, prisoners and other incarcerated people, and people on the move.

A strong believer that no child should be born with HIV, his leadership in calling for the elimination of new HIV infections among children contributed to a 60% reduction in new paediatric HIV infections since 2009 in the 21 priority countries of the *Global Plan towards the elimination of new HIV infections among children by 2015 and keeping their mothers alive*.

During his tenure, Mr Sidibé spearheaded two of the most successful United Nations General Assembly political declarations on HIV, which named key populations and included ambitious regional and global Fast-Track Targets. He has successfully advocated to take AIDS out of isolation, encouraging a holistic human-rights based approach to include HIV as part of sexual and reproductive health and integrate responses to interlinked diseases, including tuberculosis and cervical cancer.

“I would like to thank United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres for his long-standing support to UNAIDS,” said Mr Sidibé. “I am also grateful to the United Nations system for allowing me to develop my career, from when I started as a short-term junior professional in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the United Nations Children’s Fund in 1987 to becoming Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations some 20 years later—I am eternally thankful for the opportunities I have been given.”

The countries most affected by HIV have rallied behind Mr Sidibé’s call to reach the 90–90–90 targets, whereby 90% of people living with HIV know their status, 90% of people who know their status are accessing treatment and 90% of people on treatment have a suppressed viral load. Some 75% of all people living with HIV now know their HIV status, and focus has been increased on HIV testing and expanding antiretroviral therapy.

His call with partners to establish an HIV prevention coalition led to a new HIV Prevention 2020 Road Map to strengthen and sustain political commitment for primary HIV prevention and establish accountability for delivering services at scale in order to stop new HIV infections.

His commitment to improving the lives of women and girls galvanized action for Security Council resolution 1883 in 2011, which focused on ensuring access to HIV prevention and treatment for women and girls, on the prevention of, and response to, sexual violence related to conflict and on post-conflict peacebuilding.

Mr Sidibé’s strong belief in the power of communities has paved the way for community-led responses to HIV, which have proved to be a gamechanger in increasing the uptake of HIV services and in creating support networks to improve adherence to treatment and quality of life for people living with HIV.

His undeterred commitment, dedication and passion has allowed Mr Sidibé to engage heads of state, people living with HIV, affected communities, donors, first ladies, parliamentarians, Mayors, civil society, scientists, young people and HIV programme leaders alike, bringing everyone around the same table to galvanize action to end AIDS by developing focused and sustainable solutions that leave no one behind.

Mr Sidibé has been an inspirational leader of UNAIDS and for the global response to HIV, and UNAIDS extends its heartfelt thanks for his years of dedicated service. Mr Sidibé will take on his new role as Minister of Health and Social Affairs of Mali with immediate effect and will be replaced ad interim by UNAIDS Deputy Executive Director, Management and Governance, Gunilla Carlsson.

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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.