

PRESS STATEMENT

UNAIDS congratulates Professor Quarraisha Abdool Karim on being awarded the 2020 Christophe Mérieux Prize

GENEVA, 2 June 2020—UNAIDS congratulates Quarraisha Abdool Karim, the Associate Scientific Director of the Centre for the AIDS Programme of Research in South Africa (CAPRISA), for being awarded the prestigious Christophe Mérieux Prize for 2020. Bestowed by the Christophe and Rodolphe Mérieux Foundation to support research into infectious diseases in developing countries, the award is chosen by the Institut de France, based on proposals from the foundation, and comes with a 500 000 euro prize to support further research.

“I am proud to congratulate Professor Quarraisha Abdool Karim, a vital member of the UNAIDS family, on this incredible achievement,” said Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of UNAIDS. “This award recognizes the vital work that Professor Abdool Karim and her team have been doing over many years of the AIDS response. That work has led to a better understanding of what women and adolescent girls need to protect themselves against HIV, bringing hope for an AIDS-free generation.”

Professor Abdool Karim is one of the world’s leading AIDS researchers, with pioneering contributions in understanding the evolving HIV epidemic among young women while also advocating for the rights of people living with and affected by HIV. She has a long history of engagement with UNAIDS, is the UNAIDS Special Ambassador for Adolescents and HIV and is a Co-Chair of the UNAIDS Advisory Group, which is providing support to the UNAIDS Executive Director on the future of the AIDS response and the role of UNAIDS within it.

Professor Abdool Karim, who is a professor of clinical epidemiology, was the principal investigator in the landmark CAPRISA 004 tenofovir gel trial, which in 2010 provided proof of concept for microbicides as a tool for preventing HIV among women.

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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.