

## PRESS RELEASE

### **UNAIDS Board discusses UNAIDS' work on COVID-19 and HIV and UNAIDS' next strategy and its transformative agenda**

**GENEVA, 26 June 2020**—The 46th meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) has concluded in Geneva, Switzerland. The PCB, which met from 23 to 25 June 2020, was held for the very first time as a virtual meeting because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The PCB, chaired by the United States of America, had decided that it would be important to demonstrate that the intergovernmental process can continue to work effectively during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the meeting, a series of crucial decisions were taken on the future of the HIV response and on the transformation of UNAIDS, while the interconnectedness between the twin pandemics of HIV and COVID-19 was discussed and reflected upon.

“I thank the Programme Coordinating Board for the trust it has given us to take forward our ambitious agenda,” said Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of UNAIDS. “I am excited that further work towards a new global HIV strategy for an HIV response that incorporates the COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 realities, and for a fitter and more responsive UNAIDS, has been given the green light. I’m looking forward to putting this work into action.”

The three-day meeting opened with an overview given by Ms Byanyima on the HIV/COVID-19 landscape in mid-2020, which stressed that the HIV epidemic is urgent and very much unfinished business and that the world is off course to meet the 2020 HIV targets. She urged countries to leverage the decades of investment in the HIV response and to learn the lessons from a history of unequal access to HIV services and apply them to the fight against COVID-19, including by supporting a People’s Vaccine.

The critical nature of the next UNAIDS strategy—a strategy that it was acknowledged must be ambitious, visionary, data-driven, evidence-informed, well resourced and well received—was discussed by the participants. The PCB laid out a timeline of milestones for the development of the bold new strategy and decided that UNAIDS would present a report on the outcome of the ongoing review and consultations on the strategy for approval by the end of October 2020. A draft of the strategy will be discussed at the next PCB meeting, in December 2020.

The PCB also debated the transformation of UNAIDS. The PCB heard an update on the implementation of the Management Action Plan, which was set up to ensure a healthy, equitable and enabling workplace for all UNAIDS staff. It welcomed the progress made so far and called for faster progress, particularly on strengthening systems of internal justice and redress. The PCB working group on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) also gave an update on its work to ensure that the JIU’s recommendations are acted upon.

When discussing the UNAIDS Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework, the PCB recognized that UNAIDS delivers on its core mandate, leads in reaching the people who are

being left the furthest behind and targets inequalities. UNAIDS' strengthened work at the country level was welcomed.

Reports on performance monitoring of UNAIDS, UNAIDS' finances and strategic human resources management issues were examined at the meeting. The PCB welcomed the reported accomplishments of the Joint Programme in strengthening joint and collaborative action at the country level but expressed concern about the forecast US\$ 15 million shortfall against the core budget. The announcement by the Government of Germany that it had contributed a further €20 million to UNAIDS in 2020 was welcomed, however. The PCB also welcomed that the reports of the external and internal auditors were discussed in a distinct agenda item, where PCB members engaged with the auditors.

The planned thematic segment on cervical cancer that was due to be held on 25 June will now be held during the December PCB meeting.

Representatives of United Nations Member States, international organizations, civil society and nongovernmental organizations attended the three-day meeting, which was chaired by the United States of America, with Namibia serving as Vice-Chair and India as Rapporteur.

The report to the Board by the UNAIDS Executive Director and the PCB's decisions can be found at <https://www.unaids.org/en/whoweare/pcb/46>.

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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](https://unaids.org) and connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.