

PRESS STATEMENT

UNAIDS saddened by the death of social justice activist Renate Koch

GENEVA, 7 July 2020—UNAIDS is deeply saddened by the death of Renate Koch, a campaigning pioneer for social justice, feminism and equal rights.

Originally from Germany, she made the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela her home. Together with her partner, Edgar Carrasco, she worked tirelessly for the Citizen Action against AIDS nongovernmental organization. That people living with HIV in her adopted home country can now obtain antiretroviral therapy for free can in part be attributed to her dogged campaigning.

“Renate Koch was a tireless advocate for human rights and equality,” said Winnie Byanyima, UNAIDS Executive Director. “She will stay in the memory of the UNAIDS family forever.”

She made sure that women’s voices could be heard. She opened spaces for women to be listened to and helped women to amplify their ideas and vision on public health, human rights and diversity. Her voice had a global reach and made change happen.

Her passion was ever-present—in her work, in her life and in every word she said. Global activism has lost a great defender, but we celebrate her life and remember her exceptional achievements.

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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.