

OPENING REMARKS

ON THE OCCASION OF THE AFRICAN UNION HIGH-LEVEL SIDE EVENT ON SHARED RESPONSIBILITY AND GLOBAL SOLIDARITY FOR AIDS

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26 September 2012
Sidelines of the 67th Session of the United Nations
General Assembly
**African Union High-Level Side Event on Shared
Responsibility and Global Solidarity for AIDS**

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By: Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS

Date: 26 September 2012

Place: Sidelines of the 67th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Occasion: African Union High-Level Side Event on Shared Responsibility and Global Solidarity for AIDS

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It is my honour to welcome African heads of state, Secretary of State Clinton and so many partners to this special event on shared responsibility.

I want to begin with a moment of silence in honour of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. He was a pioneer for leadership in Africa. As chair of NEPAD, he initiated this debate on shared responsibility. The issue of sustainable development was close to his heart. Without his vision and leadership, we could never have convened so many heads of state today to discuss this pivotal issue.

It is an honour to ask President Boni Yayi, the Chairperson of the African Union and the President of Benin, to open this meeting.

Mr President, as Chairperson of the African Union, you have made it a priority for Africa to lead and own its own AIDS response.

Under your leadership, the African Union adopted its new roadmap for AIDS, TB and malaria this July.

It is also my pleasure to introduce US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, representing the United State, the host country of this event.

Madame Secretary, you are the first Secretary of State use global health as a tool for foreign policy. You are a friend of Africa, and a champion of development, social justice and women's empowerment. President Obama's support for shared responsibility and an AIDS-free generation provide an example to the world.

Your speech at the AIDS Conference in Washington electrified the audience. We welcome you as a key leader in our journey on the road to zero.