

NEW YORK | 8–10 JUNE 2021



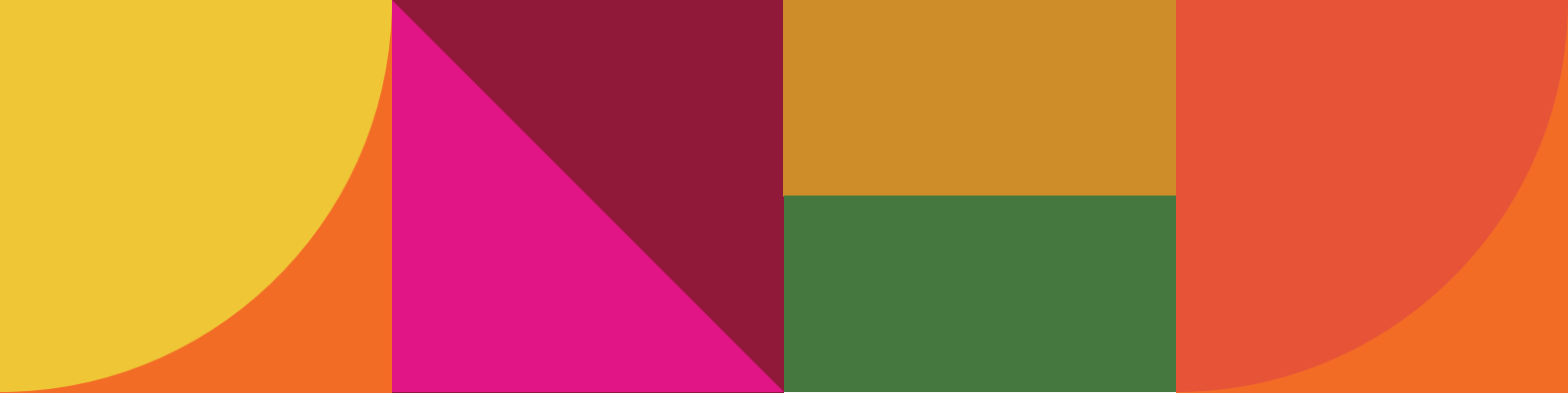
High-Level Meeting on AIDS

END INEQUALITIES. END AIDS.

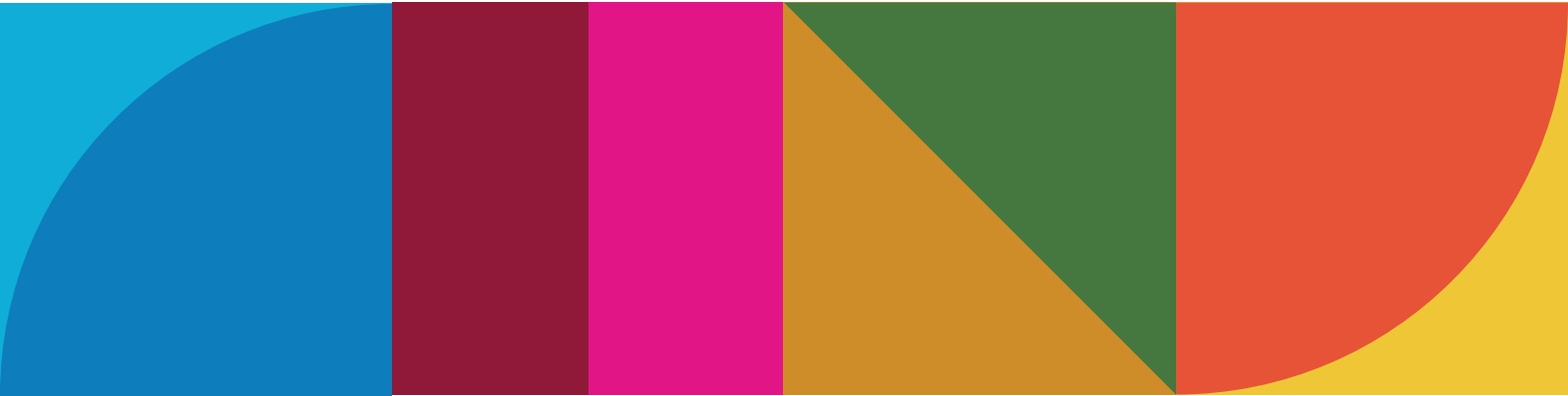
FAITH TO END AIDS

REMARKS BY WINNIE BYANYIMA HLM SIDE EVENT
UNAIDS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 7 JUNE 2021

#HLM2021AIDS



WE HAVE TRAVELLED A LONG WAY TOGETHER.
WE STAND TOGETHER FIRMLY AGAINST THE USE
OF FAITH AS AN EXCUSE TO DISCRIMINATE AND
STIGMATIZE AGAINST PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV AND
GROUPS AT RISK OF HIV WE PROUDLY RECOGNIZE
THE POSITIVE RESULTS OF OUR PARTNERSHIP AND
YOUR RECENT FRONTLINE ACTIVITIES IN THE AREAS
OF ADDRESSING HIV-RELATED DISCRIMINATION, ACTING
AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, AND IN BRINGING
QUALITY CARE AND SUPPORT TO ALL PEOPLE LIVING
WITH HIV, EVEN IN HUMANITARIAN SETTINGS.



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UNAIDS EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

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Thank you Reverend.

I am honoured and happy to open this event. Faith partners – religious leaders, FBOs and faith communities world over – play a key role in many areas of our life, including in the HIV response. I salute you

UNAIDS' partnerships with you, our valued faith partners; and with political leaders, have made us stronger together for the communities of people living with and affected by HIV- the people who need us most.

Allow me to also recognize the joint efforts and excellent collaboration within the UNAIDS-PEPFAR faith initiative, and the personal commitment of Acting U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, my friend, Angeli Achrekar.

We are in the second year of a pandemic that has affected us in more ways than we could have ever imagined. The outbreak of COVID-19 and its consequences overshadowed many other existing humanitarian, environmental, health and other challenges. Some of these challenges have worsened. We must adapt to new realities caused by this pandemic and we are doing so.

Now is not the time to drop the ball on HIV. AIDS remains a global crisis fuelled by inequalities that demands that we double down, build on the successes so far and act with greater urgency to reach the millions of people who are still being left behind. We can and must close the gaps.

I am pleased to have so many faith partners, champions of the HIV response from different religious groups with us today. Your presence confirms your commitment to the response. You have been part of the response since day 1 and your role has been iconic.

We have travelled a long way together. We stand together firmly against the use of faith as an excuse to discriminate and stigmatize against people living with HIV and groups at risk of HIV. We proudly recognize the positive results of our partnership and your recent frontline activities in the areas of addressing HIV-related discrimination, acting against gender-based violence, and in bringing quality care and support to all people living with HIV, even in humanitarian settings.

Let me also recognize your Commitment to Action approved by more than 1000 participants at the 2020 HIV Interfaith Conference on Resilience and Renewal, as well as the 12 Million Campaign. I am glad to see faith groups joining forces to advocate for the 12 million children, women and men living with HIV who are not yet receiving life-saving HIV treatment.

Your work formed a key input to the new AIDS Strategy. We are looking forward to working with you in the implementation of the Strategy and taking forward the Political Declaration during these crucial next five years.

Thank you for being with us now and until we declare victory against AIDS.

Thank you.

