

Press release

The V Central American Congress on STI, HIV and AIDS opens in Nicaragua

Managua, 4 November 2007—Central America is preparing to host the V Central American Congress on STI, HIV and AIDS, to be held in Managua, Nicaragua from 4 to 9 November 2007 under the theme 'For Equality, Diversity and Non-Discrimination'. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) is providing technical and financial support for the meeting and welcomes the congress' efforts to advance scientific and technical responses to AIDS in the region.

The response to HIV calls for joint efforts by both Governments and society as a whole. The commitments made by countries at the United Nations Millennium Summit and at the Special Session on HIV/AIDS in 2001 call for a broad response to the epidemic in order to achieve the goals set by Governments.

Some 30 experts from the United Nations will be contributing to the scientific debate on AIDS at the congress in Managua including Dr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS and Under Secretary-General of the United Nations and regional directors of the World Food Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and UNAIDS.

UNAIDS Special Representative, HRH the Crown Princess of Norway will also be participating in the Congress to highlight the feminisation of the epidemic and also to help focus efforts on eliminating the widespread stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV in the region.

A range of events will be taking place during the six day meeting including round tables, workshops, panels on human rights and HIV, children, stigma and discrimination, gender, sexual diversity, nutrition, communication, ethics, Central America's indigenous peoples and ethnic communities and gender violence.

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UNAIDS is an innovative joint venture of the United Nations, bringing together the efforts and resources of the UNAIDS Secretariat and ten UN system organizations in the AIDS response. The Secretariat headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland—with staff on the ground in more than 80 countries. Coherent action on AIDS by the UN system is coordinated in countries through UN theme groups, and joint programmes on AIDS. UNAIDS' Cosponsors include UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank. Visit the UNAIDS Web site at www.unaids.org