

Statement

Statement from Dr. Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director, on Signing of the “Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hyde Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008”

Washington DC 30 July 2008--This signing is a historic event. The world is beginning to see positive results in the AIDS response. We have seen a substantial increase in HIV prevention and treatment efforts. As a result, fewer people are dying of AIDS and fewer people are becoming newly infected with HIV.

That's a real tribute to the significant domestic investments by countries and global investments from the US and other donor countries in HIV prevention, care and treatment. The generosity of the US government has helped to truly transform the global response to AIDS and the course of the epidemic. It has enabled all of us to make a qualitative and quantum leap forward.

We are at a turning point in the world's response to AIDS. AIDS is not just a short-term emergency, but also a long-term crisis that will require a serious commitment and serious resources for decades, not years, to come. However with an estimated 33 million people living with HIV and some 7,500 new infections every day, the AIDS epidemic is not over in any part of the world. I am a big believer in the fact that while we cannot predict the future, we can create it. We have a roadmap for the fight against AIDS. And thanks to the leadership of the President of the United States and the US Congress we can look forward with great hope and knowledge that investments made will save lives.

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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