

UNAIDS WELCOMES UNITED KINGDOM'S NEW £1.5 BILLION AIDS STRATEGY

London, 20 July 2004—UNAIDS welcomes the new initiative announced by the United Kingdom's Prime Minister, Tony Blair. This commitment, to spending at least £1.5 billion over the next three years on HIV-related programmes, represents a tremendous step forward in the global effort to combat AIDS. UNAIDS also applauds the strategy's strong focus on women, young people and orphans; often the most vulnerable groups. The UK is once again showing the importance of directed and informed leadership.

"UNAIDS welcomes the UK's new strategy on AIDS. This is a qualitative step forward, and demonstrates the scale of leadership needed if we are to turn this crisis around," said Dr Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS. "With its significantly increased financial contribution, the strategy reinforces the United Kingdom's position as a pre-eminent global AIDS funder."

The unveiling of the £1.5 billion initiative will add significantly to the growing pool of international funding aimed at challenging HIV. A critically important component of the new UK Strategy is the recognition of the need for greater harmonisation of AIDS funding by donors. The UK co-hosted a meeting with UNAIDS and the USA in April this year to reach a groundbreaking agreement among the world's leading donors on the basic principles that underpin AIDS funding. UNAIDS looks forward to working with the UK to turn this approach - known as the "three ones" into reality at country-level.