

**Statement by Mr. Salman Ahmed, UNAIDS Special Representative**  
**1<sup>st</sup> December 2006**

Having trained as a doctor before I came into music, I know that a small infection in any part of the human body if not treated with care and urgency can easily threaten the whole body. In an inter-connected world we no longer have the luxury to ignore HIV and AIDS. The world that we live in is like the human body, if one region is affected by HIV & AIDS it poses a danger to all of humanity, regardless of gender, religion, national or ethnic identity.

Everybody has a role to play and as an artist and UNAIDS Special Representative I promise that I will make sure that through my music and words I will try to shine a light on the heroic lives of People living with HIV. Music and video can help humanize the face of HIV, as I tried to do in Al-Vida, a music video which is about HIV & AIDS as much as it's about women's empowerment in South Asia.

We have to remind ourselves to see with the heart and to think beyond borders because it is only compassion and knowledge which can fight the stigma and discrimination associated with HIV & AIDS.