



Media Advisory

7th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific 1-5 July 2005, Kobe, Japan

Bridging Science and Community

The 7th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (7th ICAAP) will be taking place in Kobe, Japan from 1-5 July 2005. The theme of this year's conference is 'Bridging Science and Community'.

Around 3,000 participants are expected to attend from over 60 countries. They will include people living with HIV, scientific researchers, community activists, health workers, and government and international agency representatives.

The opening ceremony will feature prominent speakers including Mr Yoshiro Mori, former Japanese Prime Minister; Japan's Health Minister Hidehisa Otsuji; Dr Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director; and Dr Richard Feachem, Executive Director of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria.

Sessions will be held under five main themes -- Basic and Clinical Sciences; Treatment, Care and Support; Prevention and Epidemiology; Culture, Gender and Sexual Issues; and Political and Social Contexts. These sessions are expected to cover a range of topics such as cross border strategies and increased political commitment.

UNAIDS will launch a new report on the epidemic in the Asia-Pacific region ahead of the conference opening on 1 July, entitled '**A Scaled Up Response to AIDS in Asia and Pacific**'. The report will provide an overview of the epidemic in the region, an update on the AIDS response to date, and an analysis of what is needed to prevent the further spread of the epidemic in Asia-Pacific. The report is under embargo until 0500 GMT, 1 July 2005.

The numbers of people living with HIV are rapidly growing in the Asia-Pacific region, and East Asia is experiencing the fastest-growing epidemic worldwide, mainly due to the rapid spread of HIV in China, Indonesia and Viet Nam. In Japan, UNAIDS estimates that 12,000 people were living with HIV in 2003. However, some studies show that that figure could increase to around 50,000 by the year 2010 if prevention efforts are not scaled-up.

For more information on the 7th ICAAP or on the launch of the UNAIDS report:

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UNAIDS is the leading advocate for worldwide action against AIDS, bringing together ten United Nations organizations. It leads, strengthens and supports an expanded response to the epidemic that will prevent the spread of HIV, provide care and support for those infected and affected by the disease, reduce the vulnerability of individuals and communities to AIDS, and alleviate the impact of the epidemic. www.unaids.org