

## Media advisory

### **First ever regional AIDS conference planned in Moscow**

**MOSCOW, 25 January 2006** – The first regional AIDS conference ever to bring together countries and organizations from Eastern Europe and Central Asia has been scheduled for 15-17 May 2006, the conference organizers announced today.

The conference's theme is "Facing the Challenge". For the first time, communities of leaders, scientists, government and non-governmental organizations, and people living with HIV will meet to share experiences and develop common approaches to fighting AIDS in what promises to be a milestone in the region's response.

Eastern Europe and Central Asia share a number of common challenges and opportunities in the AIDS response. Across the region, injection drug use is a main driver of new infections. Sexual transmission is increasing and there is a growing feminization of the epidemic.

The epidemic in the region is also changing rapidly as the number of new HIV infections increases. Infections have risen 20-fold in less than ten years to 270,000 in 2005. Most of these new infections are among the young.

The three-day Eastern European and Central Asian AIDS Conference will include a number of sessions featuring plenaries, poster presentations, best practice, skills-building workshops and satellite events.

Potential delegates or participants should visit the official website of the conference at [www.eecaac2006.org](http://www.eecaac2006.org), available in Russian and English. Scholarships will also be made available through the website.

The Eastern European and Central Asian AIDS Conference is organized by:

- Federal Service of the Russian Federation for Surveillance in Consumer Rights Protection and Human Welfare
- AIDS Infoshare
- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
- International AIDS Society (IAS)

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