



Press release

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND CLINTON FOUNDATION SIGN AGREEMENT TO SCALE UP HIV CARE AND TREATMENT

New Delhi, 29 September 2004 -- The Government of India and the Clinton Foundation HIV/AIDS Initiative have agreed to collaborate on the development and implementation of the Government's plans to scale-up integrated HIV care, treatment, and prevention programmes. Dr S Y Quraishi, Project Director of India's National AIDS Control Organization (NACO), and Ira C. Magaziner, Chairman of the Clinton Foundation HIV/AIDS Initiative, signed a Memorandum of Understanding today in New Delhi.

Former President Bill Clinton said, "I am very pleased that the Indian government is demonstrating bold leadership in the fight against AIDS. Since India is one of the world's most populous nations, it is vitally important that we stem the spread of the disease as soon as humanly possible."

India's Honorable Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Mr A Ramadoss, welcomed the support of the Clinton Foundation to NACO and remarked that this partnership may prove to be a milestone in India's effort to fight AIDS.

"This partnership between the Clinton Foundation, Government of India, and UNAIDS will go a long way in our efforts to prevent AIDS in India and strengthen the care and support programme for people living with HIV," said Dr S Y Quraishi.

Under the partnership, the Clinton Foundation will assist NACO with providing effective care and treatment for people living with HIV. It will help develop and implement a uniform patient information system, resistance monitoring capabilities, accreditation standards for HIV care and treatment facilities and providers, programme monitoring and evaluation, and laboratory testing capabilities for antiretroviral treatment. It will also assist with training health professionals in high-quality HIV care and treatment, and support community mobilization efforts to decrease stigma and discrimination surrounding AIDS and to increase the availability and utilization of treatment.

The AIDS epidemic in India has grown rapidly in recent years. Recognizing the urgency of the problem, the Government of India has made AIDS a top priority. "India's new agreement with the Clinton Foundation reflects the government's commitment to take action against AIDS," said Dr Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director. "By scaling up access to HIV care and treatment, India will be one step closer to turning the tide on AIDS."

The Clinton Foundation and NACO will carry out this partnership in collaboration with UNAIDS, WHO, WFP, UNICEF, UNDP, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, and the World Bank.

The **Clinton Foundation HIV/AIDS Initiative** is at work helping countries in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean dramatically increase the number of people with HIV/AIDS receiving high-quality care and treatment. It assists governments in developing operational plans for integrating care and treatment into public health systems. Implementation support in program management, monitoring and evaluation, training, and procurement planning is also provided. Additionally, the Clinton HIV/AIDS Initiative is working to change the economics of HIV/AIDS care and treatment. www.clintonfoundation.org.

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.

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