



**Note for the press WHO/UNAIDS/OHCHR N°25
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NEW CARTOON FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO RAISE AWARENESS AND MOBILIZE ACTION TO TACKLE HIV/AIDS

Geneva - Today, on Human Rights Day, three UN agencies are launching a colourful, interactive cartoon booklet called *"HIV/AIDS Stand Up for Human Rights"*. The cartoon is part of a global campaign to tackle HIV/AIDS-related stigma and discrimination and other human rights violations.

The cartoon, launched by the United Nations Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Joint Programme for HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organization (WHO), is designed to empower young people to promote human rights in relation to HIV/AIDS, to raise awareness of the key linkages between HIV/AIDS and human rights, to demystify the disease and to combat the myths and taboos associated with HIV and AIDS.

The promotion and protection of all human rights is essential to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care programmes.

Using language for younger people, the cartoon explains how HIV is transmitted, and how individuals can protect themselves. It sets out to combat HIV/AIDS-related discrimination by illustrating how lack of awareness about HIV/AIDS can contribute to stigma, discrimination and human rights violations against people affected by HIV/AIDS, for example by their peers and health professionals. It shows how discrimination based on gender can hinder people's ability to protect themselves from HIV infection and also prevent people from accessing the needed treatment, care and support.

The cartoon complements ongoing work. On World AIDS Day, 1 December 2003, WHO and UNAIDS launched the "3 by 5" strategy. The strategy is the roadmap for providing three million people living with AIDS with antiretroviral therapy by the end of 2005. WHO, UNAIDS and OHCHR are committed to addressing stigma and discrimination as a contribution to the new 3 by 5 initiative. There is good evidence that the provision of antiretroviral therapy helps address these issues, as people who have the possibility for treatment are more likely to come forward and be tested, and promote more openness about HIV/AIDS.

The cartoon is written in a language accessible to children and young people all over the world. WHO, UNAIDS and OHCHR will distribute the cartoon widely and encourage its use as a tool for education and training.

The cartoon can be viewed at the following web sites: <http://www.unhchr.ch>, <http://www.unaids.org>, <http://www.who.int>

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