



## UNAIDS, Universal Postal Union, UNI Global Union and ILO launch global HIV prevention campaign

**GENEVA, 7 July 2009** - The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNI Global Union are launching a global HIV prevention campaign in post offices around the world.

In an initial roll out, the campaign is being launched in some 16,000 post offices in seven pioneering countries: Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, China, Estonia, Mali and Nigeria. The campaign materials provide both visitors and employees with important information about how to prevent HIV through a series of eye-catching posters and hand-outs. The materials also give the address of a multi-language website on HIV prevention, hosted by UNAIDS, which provides detailed information about how to prevent infection.

“With more than 7,400 new infections occurring every day it is clear that HIV prevention efforts need to be stepped up urgently,” said Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS. “The postal network has an extremely wide outreach; it is open to everyone from the young to the old and is an excellent and innovative way to raise awareness about how to prevent HIV”.

Over the next three years, the campaign will be expanded globally, potentially making its way into 600,000 post offices worldwide. This would mean that millions of people who use postal services every day as well as the 5.5 million postal employees would receive important information about how to prevent HIV transmission.

UPU Director General Edouard Dayan said, “With 600,000 post offices around the world, the postal network is a natural partner for this HIV-prevention awareness campaign. It is the single largest health-awareness initiative ever launched globally by the postal sector, demonstrating the huge outreach and value of the universal services it provides.” He added that, “The campaign is a strong example of what one industry can do to help achieve the important Millennium Development Goal of halting and beginning to reverse the spread of HIV by 2015.”

Among the pioneer countries, the Cameroonian postal operator is hoping that running the campaign through its 250 outlets will make an impact on the country’s HIV prevalence rates, which according to the latest data is at around 5% of people aged between 15 and 49. “Raising awareness on HIV is crucial,” said Abraham Sizimboue, Campost’s Acting Director General. “HIV touches the lives of a very large part of our population so we are very pleased to be running such an important campaign in our post offices here.” It is the first time that the postal system in Cameroon has participated in a health campaign.

Assane Diop, Executive Director of the International Labour Organisation’s Social Protection Sector, said: “The campaign promotes the development of a workplace policy for postal workers everywhere, as well as creatively using the opportunities of the postal network and its structures in each country to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS and counter stigma and discrimination. The ILO works actively with its partners to promote a fair globalization. This includes ensuring that responses to the economic crisis are informed by the ILO’s goals of decent work based on social justice and take an integrated approach that includes factoring in the implications of HIV/AIDS.”

Together with the campaign partners, the ILO will prepare a toolkit to guide the development of workplace policies and the implementation of programmes on HIV prevention, care and support for workers and managers.

UNI Global Union's General Secretary Philip J. Jennings said, "Postal Workers and their families are also touched by HIV and AIDS. Healthy employees contribute to the decent living of their families as well as the good functioning of the company and the postal network as a whole. Furthermore, postal workers contribute fundamentally to the universal service, which represents an important mean to outreach to communities and support them. This joint campaign and the toolkit prepared by UNI post & Logistics Global Union and the ILO is also an opportunity to have employees and employers discuss and prevent HIV as well dialogue on broader issues such as health and safety. "

The campaign will culminate in 2011, with the UPU encouraging its member countries to issue postage stamps that year to commemorate the discovery of AIDS thirty years earlier. It was in 1981 that the disease was first discovered.

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UNAIDS is an innovative joint venture of the United Nations, bringing together the efforts and resources of the UNAIDS Secretariat and ten UN system organizations in the AIDS response. The Secretariat headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland—with staff on the ground in more than 80 countries. The Cosponsors include UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank. Contributing to achieving global commitments to universal access to comprehensive interventions for HIV prevention, treatment, care and support is the number one priority for UNAIDS. Visit the UNAIDS Web site at [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org)

Located in Berne, Switzerland, the Universal Postal Union is an intergovernmental organization of 191 member countries and the primary forum for cooperation between governments, Posts and other stakeholders of the worldwide postal sector. In 2007, 5.5 million employees processed and delivered 433 billion domestic letter-post items, 5.5 billion international items and 6 billion ordinary parcels. Some 660,000 postal establishments make the postal network the largest physical distribution network in the world. The UPU is a specialized agency of the United Nations. [www.upu.int](http://www.upu.int)

The ILO, founded in 1919, became the first specialized agency of the UN in 1946. It is devoted to advancing opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Its main aims are to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue on work-related issues. ILO action on AIDS links to governments, employers and workers in 183 countries; to workplaces where action can be taken for prevention and care; to its experience in protecting workers rights, opposing discrimination, and improving occupational safety and health; and to its global network of field offices. [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)

Created on January 1, 2000, UNI Global Union provides a voice and a platform for workers at the international level in jobs ranging from the night janitor in your office block to the big-time Hollywood director of your favorite movie. With 20 million workers in 900 unions worldwide, UNI fosters international solidarity and provides a voice at the international level for all its members. UNI works with its member unions to ensure that union organizing and bargaining rights are enshrined in law. In countries where these laws do not exist, UNI is joining the fight to get them on the books. Where these laws do exist, UNI works with unions, the ILO and other groups to sure that they are enforced. UNI also works in developing countries to build trade unions. For more information about UNI, please visit [www.uniglobalunion.org](http://www.uniglobalunion.org)