

PRESS RELEASE

Top world personalities join UNAIDS' High Level Commission to bring about a prevention revolution

GENEVA, 21 July 2010—The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) launched today a new UNAIDS High Level Commission on HIV Prevention, which includes more than 15 world renowned leaders. Commissioners will use their unique authority and influence to lead a social and political action campaign over the coming year aimed at galvanizing support for effective HIV prevention programmes.

The Commission is co-chaired by **Professor Françoise Barré-Sinoussi**, Nobel Laureate in Medicine for her role in the discovery of HIV, and **Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu**, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.

“Today, for every 2 persons starting treatment, 5 new infections occur,” said Professor Barré-Sinoussi. “The growing curve of the epidemic cannot be stopped without a strong and global commitment to combined HIV prevention measures, including treatment.”

Archbishop Tutu said, “The only way to be cured of HIV is not to be infected. For the sake of the future, and for the sake of those currently living with HIV, we must take the path to zero new HIV infections.”

“We have received amazing leadership support for the UNAIDS High Level Commission on HIV Prevention,” said UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé. “The greatest successes in the AIDS response have been achieved in countries where the leadership has mobilized and made reducing new HIV infections a top priority. With the backing of these celebrated personalities, we can bring about a prevention revolution and reverse the AIDS epidemic.”

The members of the Commission are:

- **Dr Michelle Bachelet**, Former President of Chile;
- **Mr Jacques Chirac**, Former President of France;
- **Ms Vuyiseka Dubula**, Secretary-General of the Treatment Action Campaign;
- **Dr Mohamed ElBaradei**, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate;
- **Ms Elena Franchuk**, Ukrainian businesswoman and founder of the Elena Franchuk ANTIAIDS Foundation;
- **Mr Pau Gasol**, Spanish professional basketball star;
- **Mr Nizan Guanaes**, leading Brazilian communications entrepreneur, Chairman of Grupo ABC de Comunicação;
- **Mr Chris Hughes**, Executive Director of Jumo, International, co-founder of Facebook;

- **Mr Magic Johnson**, Former basketball star, business entrepreneur and philanthropist;
- **Ms Irene Khan**, Human rights activist and former Secretary-General of Amnesty International;
- **Mr Robin Li**, Entrepreneur and co-founder of China's most popular independent search engine, Baidu, Inc.;
- **H.E. Festus Mogae**, Former President of Botswana;
- **H.E. Jean Ping**, Chairman of the African Union;
- **Professor Peter Piot**, Former Executive Director of UNAIDS and incoming Director of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine;
- **Mr Vladimir Vladimirovich Pozner**, celebrated Russian journalist;
- **Ms Rita Süßmuth**, former President of the German Federal Parliament and former Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Women, Youth and Health;
- **Mr Mechai Viravaidya**, Thai entrepreneur and activist, famous for popularising condoms in Thailand.

A Scientific Advisory Panel chaired by **Ms Laurie Garrett** of the Council on Foreign Relations will assist the High Level Commission by using state-of-the-art scientific research to develop a road-map incorporating the best strategies in HIV prevention.

“We will look at what works in HIV prevention, drawing attention to country level successes and elaborating actions needed to overcome current failures and deficiencies,” said Garrett.

Thirty years into the AIDS epidemic, the world has made unprecedented progress in the treatment of people living with HIV. But over 7,000 new HIV infections occur every day. While treatment has grabbed the limelight as a key strategy in the AIDS response, prevention has often been neglected. The Commissioners will take the message of a recommitment to HIV prevention to their circles of influence, swaying public opinion to support the implementation of effective HIV prevention programmes.

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UNAIDS

UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, is an innovative United Nations partnership that leads and inspires the world in achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. Learn more at www.unaids.org.