

UNAIDS welcomes US proposal to remove entry restrictions based on HIV status of individuals

Geneva/Washington, July 7, 2009 — UNAIDS welcomes the notice from 2 July 2009, issued by the US Government of a proposed rulemaking to remove entry restrictions based on HIV status of individuals. UNAIDS is opposed to restrictions on entry, stay and residence based on an individual's HIV status. Such restrictions are discriminatory, and there is no evidence that they protect the public health. Some 60 countries have some form of such restrictions. One hundred and eight countries have no such restrictions.

In its rulemaking notice, the US government concludes “maintaining HIV infection on the list of excludable conditions for entry into the US would not result in significant public health benefits. Further, this approach is not in line with current international public health practice. This approach continues discriminatory practices and contributes toward the stigmatization of HIV-infected persons.”

The announcement of the proposed rulemaking by the US Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is a positive step toward removing such restrictions in the United States.

The US Government is soliciting public comment on the proposed rule change over the next 45 days. UNAIDS will follow the situation closely and provide comments to the US Government in an effort to encourage positive developments.

The proposed rule can be found at: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/E9-15814.htm>

The public can file electronic comments by e-mail to: Part34HIVcomments@cdc.gov

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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