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(As Delivered)**

Thank you for the opportunity to share some thoughts with you today. It's a pleasure to join my friend and partner in the fight against HIV/AIDS, Dr. Peter Piot, here at the Wilson Center. The sentiments he has expressed this morning are very consistent with my own. Your remarks simply reinforce my enthusiasm for working with you, Peter.

I would also like to say a special thank you to my long time friend Lee Hamilton for inviting me to be here today – and for his exemplary service to our nation.

This has been an extraordinary year. It was less than a year ago that the President's Emergency Plan received its initial funding from Congress. Let me take a moment to briefly recap some of the basic facts about the President's Emergency Plan, and tell you something about our progress to date.

It is the largest commitment ever by a single nation toward an international health initiative for a single disease – a five-year, \$15 billion, multifaceted approach to combating the disease in more than 100 countries around the world.

Placing a special emphasis on 15 focus nations in Africa, the Caribbean, and Asia, representing approximately half of the world's infections, in its first five years, the President's Emergency Plan expects to support treatment for 2 million HIV-infected people, prevent 7 million new infections, and support care for 10 million individuals, including orphans, infected and affected by the disease in the 15 focus nations.

In 2004, we contributed about as much as the rest of the world's donor governments combined -- \$2.4 billion. And we have requested, and expect to receive even more for this coming year.

But the President's Emergency Plan was not just a historic financial commitment, it was also a radically innovative change in the way the U.S. government would move forward to employ those funds.

With so many U.S. agencies deeply involved in the global fight, the President recognized that redundancy and a lack of communication and coordination were hindering the overall American effort.

The President's Emergency Plan established the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator to oversee all HIV/AIDS programs the American people are funding overseas.

I am responsible for bringing all our U.S. agencies together, asking them to leave their agency uniforms at the door, and synergizing their expertise and talents to implement the President's strategy on a global level.

Believe it or not, this effort is easy compared to amazing work being done on the ground. In each of our focus nations, our Ambassadors have replicated this multi-agency model. Each United States ambassador chairs a country team, which has representatives from each of the relevant agencies.

Working with our host nations, these country teams are working with our partners in-country, supporting national strategies and building on more than 20 years of work by America to fight HIV/AIDS to develop single country strategies to implement a unified U.S. response.

I think it is exactly right to expect a focus on the bottom line - in this case, providing treatment, preventing infections, providing care for those who need it.

In short, the bottom line for the President's Emergency Plan is saving the lives of men, women and children. Already, we have thousands of programs up and running around the world, and we have, in fact, just received our first broad-based data from the field on treatment numbers. We are currently working with staff at the Global Fund, as well as The United Nations Joint Programme on AIDS and the World Health Organization, to calculate and announce comprehensive, accurate and coordinated treatment numbers at the end of January.

This level of close cooperation on common data between the bilateral and international partners is without precedent.

We are very excited by what we have seen in our reported numbers, which we believe put us on track to meet the President's expectations that the Emergency Plan will be supporting treatment for over 200,000 people in the 15 focus nations by June, 2005--the end of the program's first year of full implementation.

In meeting this interim goal, we will not only contribute to more than doubling the number of persons receiving treatment in all of sub-Saharan Africa within a one-year period, but we will be on track to meet the goal of supporting treatment for over 2,000,000 people in the 15 focus nations by the end of 2008.

This is another value of the more coordinated U.S. strategy made possible by the President's Emergency Plan—it eases the way for real cooperation with the many other donors and international organizations who have joined with us in this work. This global cooperation is crucial to defeating HIV and fostering that cooperation is the centerpiece of the most important conversations between Peter and myself.

One thing we both strongly believe is that we are responsible for ensuring that the world's contributions to this cause are used in the most effective way possible.

Just as we have made it a priority to avoid wasteful duplication or counterproductive effort in the President's Emergency Plan, we are working with our fellow donors and the international organizations to ensure the same in the global effort.

Just as accountability is a fundamental principle in our strategy, the world community must insist on the greatest possible degree of accountability for each dollar spent by all donors.

In this emergency, spending money in ways that make us feel better but don't get results is not only ineffective – it is simply immoral.

In April, UNAIDS spearheaded an historic global agreement on three key principles for supporting country-driven action against AIDS. The support of the U.S. and the United Kingdom were instrumental in bringing the agreement about, and our respective national efforts remain central to its implementation.

The President's Emergency Plan is working with these organizations to implement the "Three Ones," as the agreement is known, in each of the host countries where we work.

As I discuss them, please keep in mind that they are not meant to be a prescriptive global blueprint, applied in a "one size fits all" fashion. They are, rather, principles that we apply with sensitivity to the circumstances in each host nation.

We have long recognized that donors bring a range of comparative advantages to the HIV/AIDS cause. In the case of the U.S., for example, we believe that prevention, care, and treatment are areas in which our long experience gives us a comparative advantage, so we have focused on them.

Rather than mandating that we all do the same things in the same ways, the Three Ones help us ensure that our efforts are complementary in each host nation.

The Three Ones are:

- One National Plan;
- One National Coordinating Authority, and;
- One National Monitoring and Evaluation System.

Let me take a few minutes to explain their significance for what we do. Rather than just describe the principles, I'll try to give a sense of what they mean for our U.S. efforts in certain nations.

The first principle, "One agreed HIV/AIDS Action Framework that provides the basis for coordinating the work of all partners," strives to bring donors, stakeholders on the ground, and national leadership onto the same page.

We want to make sure that all resources in the nation, certainly including indigenous ones, are fully utilized.

For example, Vietnam's National Strategy for HIV/AIDS was adopted just this year. We have worked with stakeholders, including the government, civil society groups, other donors, foundations, UNAIDS and other UN entities to develop programs consistent with this framework.

We participate in the international HIV Technical Working Group, and in the Community of Concerned Partners, a committee of donors working to harmonize support organized through the auspices of UNAIDS and UNDP.

Our U.S. agencies worked on this committee with other international donors and UNAIDS in providing support and feedback during development of the National Strategy. And these groups provide us forums in which to discuss both policy and technical issues.

These coordinating activities are supported, not only with our participation, but with Emergency Plan funds. As we move forward, we'll seek opportunities to further refine the national action framework, for example by encouraging openness to NGOs that have not previously been engaged, and by seeking communication and transparency among all parties involved in HIV/AIDS activities in Vietnam.

The second of the Three Ones is "One National AIDS Coordinating Authority, with a broad based multi-sector mandate."

All 15 of our Emergency Countries now have such national authorities. But there's still a crucial role for the U.S., UNAIDS, and other donors to play in contributing to a national AIDS authority's ability to set priorities and policies, and helping it monitor progress fully, inclusively and transparently.

That might mean supporting broad partnership forums where all stakeholders, including people living with AIDS, can participate in the national AIDS coordinating authority's work.

Within the Government of Namibia, one of our focus nations, the National Multi-sectoral AIDS Coordinating Committee is responsible for the coordination and overall implementation of the national response.

It brings together the policy and programmatic offices within government, donors, NGOs, and other stakeholders. To support this national authority, the U.S. has an office within the Ministry of Health and Social Services, where the authority is housed, enabling us to provide technical support in a very direct and efficient fashion.

The third of the Three Ones is "One agreed country level Monitoring and Evaluation System."

There's no real accountability without solid monitoring and evaluation, which is why our bilateral plan emphasizes strategic information systems so strongly.

Under this principle, we are committed to support national efforts to establish a single, functional data collection and analysis system at country level that meets the needs of both donors and program implementers.

We're helping national institutions build capacity to track, monitor, and evaluate results. And, as I mentioned before, we're working to harmonize national and international indicators to minimize management and reporting burdens for the host nation.

Rwanda provides an example of our commitment to this principle. We are providing substantial support to the two governmental entities that oversee strategic information around HIV, enabling them to plan, coordinate and monitor the national response.

The U.S. is funding an update of the national Monitoring and Evaluation plan, financial management training for government and NGO personnel, and enhanced capacity for program evaluation and production of progress reports for international donors.

America is also providing information technology equipment, staff training, and connectivity at decentralized sites across Rwanda.

I hope these examples help give a sense of the practical meaning of the Three Ones. Making them a reality on the ground is, of course, a lot harder than agreeing to them in the first place was. But I'm encouraged at the progress we're making.

In a spirit of partnership, we are building a more coordinated and effective global effort to achieve our common objective of defeating HIV/AIDS.

Let me turn to another shared project of the U.S. and UNAIDS: galvanizing a more forceful response to this emergency on the part of the entire world.

Resource-poor countries like many of those in Africa are generations from having the wherewithal to meet the human needs they face. If this HIV/AIDS challenge is to be met, we in the developed world will have to meet it. If we fail to rise to the occasion, there's really no Plan B.

The American people's \$15 billion commitment is simply unprecedented. Of course, a commitment on that scale, or large bilateral programs such as America operates, may not be feasible for smaller nations.

But that's one reason why international organizations such as UNAIDS and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria must be central to the world's strategy. They offer other donors a vehicle to sharply increase their commitment, as America has done.

With respect to the Global Fund, in 2001, President Bush provided the founding contribution to the Fund, and we have remained by far its largest donor nation. And Secretary Tommy Thompson has been the Chairman of the Fund's board during these initial years.

The Fund has been an important element of our overall approach to this pandemic. And I want to make it clear that the Fund will remain a crucial piece of our HIV/AIDS strategy in the President's second term, as it was in the first. I'm grateful that Jack Valenti is here this morning. His work on behalf of Friends of the Fight will be of enormous value not only to the future success of the Global Fund, but also to all of our efforts.

I am going to state a simple truth—the Global Fund must succeed in order for the world to defeat AIDS.

From the Global Fund's inception the U.S. Government has seen the Fund not only as an important partner and an opportunity to make U.S. funds go further, but also as a vehicle to encourage greater investment from other donor countries, the private sector and individuals in the fight against HIV and AIDS.

If the Global Fund stumbles or fails or does not earn and receive the support it requires, then it could prove nearly impossible to inspire the creation of a replacement mechanism.

We must do everything necessary to ensure its success.

It is because the U.S. feels so strongly about the Global Fund's success that we ask the same important questions there that we ask of ourselves.

If those of us involved with the President's Emergency Plan approved did not periodically challenge our own assumptions, questioned nothing about our progress, or expected less than total accountability for the resources we have been given, we would be shirking our responsibilities.

Peter has spoken this morning about the importance of implementation. He is right. Because, in the end, implementation is the only thing that is important.

As the world's largest donor, as a co-founder of the Global Fund and as a Global Fund Board Member, we have been working very hard with our fellow board members and donors and with the leadership of the Fund to live up to these same responsibilities.

Beyond the operational challenges, it is imperative that we get more nations involved with, frankly, bigger numbers.

America calls on our fellow donor nations, and potential donor nations, to meet this moment with true leadership.

Of course other nations have competing budgetary priorities, and domestic commitments.

So do we.

But this is a human crisis, and we must respond to this suffering with human compassion.

Let the world take the opportunity of World AIDS Day to redouble its commitment to this mission.

For America's part, I pledge that we will continue to work for a coordinated, worldwide response, and we will continue to ask the tough questions, of ourselves, and of all those who are committed to defeating this horrible disease. It is the only way we can win this fight.

Thank you very much.