



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

12 December 2005

Dear Colleagues,

The 2005 World Summit in September reaffirmed the urgency of intensifying the response to the Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) by endorsing the recommendations of the Global Task Team on Improving AIDS Coordination among Multilateral Institutions. The Heads of State and Government have called for greater cohesion and effectiveness in our response to AIDS at the country level through the establishment of joint United Nations' teams on AIDS with joint programmes of support.

While acknowledging the ongoing efforts of the United Nations Country Teams, we have to make even more determined efforts in responding effectively to one of the most serious challenges facing the world. Therefore, I am directing you to establish a joint United Nations Team on AIDS with one joint programme of support.

The Team should consist of the operational level staff working on AIDS, including those currently working at the Technical Working Group. The Team would work under the authority of the United Nations Resident Coordinator System and the overall guidance of the United Nations Country Team, and be facilitated by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Country Coordinator. The Theme Group should continue to function, focusing on ensuring policy coherence and strengthened advocacy for national efforts.

The joint programme should include a defined United Nations technical support plan with a clear set of deliverables and detailed collective and individual accountability of the United Nations Country Team to enhance national responses to AIDS. It should also reflect the recent agreements made on the division of labour among United Nations Agencies, Funds and Programmes. All members of the United Nations Country Team and the AIDS Team should expect to be appraised on their performance as members of these teams in accordance with the broader accountability frameworks efforts that are being set up to encourage United Nations Country Teams to work more cohesively.

United Nations Resident Coordinators

Further guidance on the creation of joint United Nations Teams on AIDS will be forthcoming from the UNAIDS Secretariat and the United Nations Development Group Office, building on the note of 19 November 2003 by the Chair of the United Nations Development Group on operationalizing a strengthened United Nations System response to HIV/AIDS at the country level, as well as the UNDG guidance note on joint programming issued on 19 December 2003.

AIDS must remain a top priority on all of our agendas and our daily work must reflect this through results that support national efforts to combat AIDS.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Annan', written in a cursive style.

-Kofi A. Annan