

FACT SHEET

HIV/AIDS AND SECURITY



Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNAIDS
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AIDS today is a threat to security.

In regions where HIV/AIDS has reached epidemic proportions, it destroys the very fabric of what constitutes a state: individuals, families, communities, economic and socio-political institutions, and the military and police forces which guarantee the protection of state institutions.

AIDS and global insecurity coexist in a vicious cycle. Civil and international conflict help spread HIV as populations are destabilized and armies move across new territories. AIDS contributes to national and international insecurity, from the instability of societies whose future has been thrown into doubt to the high levels of HIV infection experienced among military and peacekeeping personnel. HIV/AIDS is both cause and effect, initiator and beneficiary, of instability and conflict.

As the millennium unfolds, the impact of AIDS on international, national and community security has become significant, with many more people dying of AIDS than as a result of war or conflict. The AIDS epidemic is claiming not only human lives, but destroying structures of governance that ensure human security.

“The HIV/AIDS pandemic is exacerbated by conditions of violence and instability, which increase the risk of exposure to the disease through large movements of people, widespread uncertainty over conditions, and reduced access to medical care... If unchecked, the HIV/AIDS pandemic may pose a risk to stability and security.”

UN Security Council Resolution 1308 (17 July 2000)

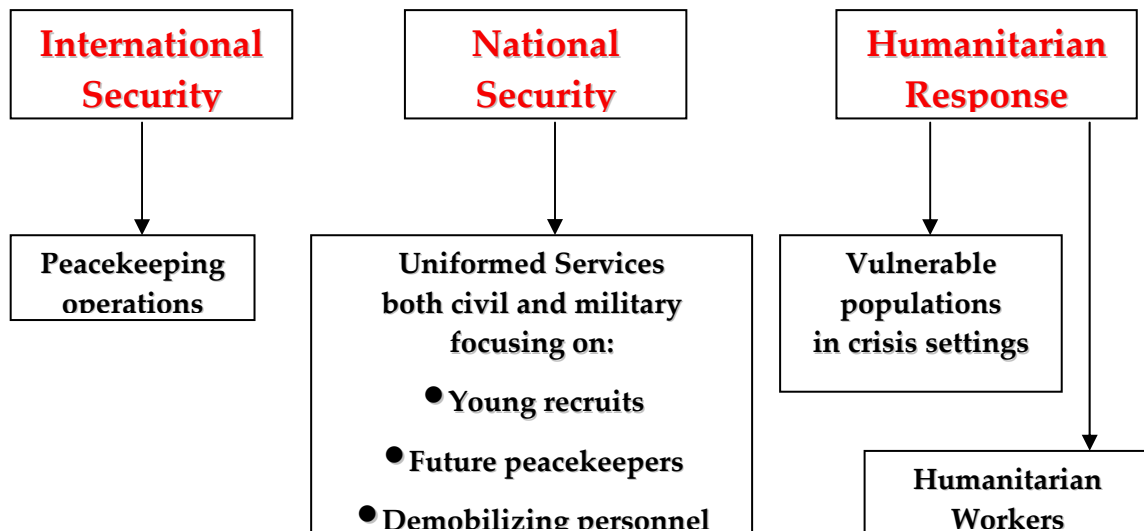
The 1994 UNDP Human Development Report

introduces a new concept of human security, which equates security with people rather than territories, with development rather than weapons. It examines both the national and the global concerns of human security.

“There is a world of difference between the root causes of terrorism and the impact of AIDS on security. But at some deep level, we should be reminded that in many parts of the world, AIDS has caused a normal way of life to be called into question. As a global issue, therefore, we must pay attention to AIDS as a threat to human security, and redouble our efforts against the epidemic and its impact.”

Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director

Recognizing the security implications of HIV/AIDS, the UN Security Council made history in January 2000 when for the first time it debated a health issue. By subsequently adopting Resolution 1308 (2000), it highlighted the potential threat the epidemic poses for international security, particularly in conflict and peacekeeping settings.



In response to this growing concern, the UNAIDS Secretariat established the Office on AIDS, Security and Humanitarian Response, with a global strategy focusing on some key areas, following the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted by the UN General Assembly Special Session on 27 June 2001:

- (1) International security including peacekeeping operations;
- (2) National security including defence and civil defence personnel;
- (3) Humanitarian response including humanitarian workers and vulnerable populations affected by conflict.

Through strong leadership and key partnerships, the UNAIDS Office on AIDS, Security and Humanitarian Response seeks to respond to HIV/AIDS in the context of security and stability by strengthening capacity building and encouraging cooperation among developed and underdeveloped countries.

**International Crisis Group (ICG):
HIV/AIDS as a Security Issue**

HIV/AIDS must be viewed as a security crisis with the potential to affect peoples, states and the international community in a similar fashion to more traditional forms of conflict. This is the message of a special ICG report, HIV/AIDS as a Security Issue, published in advance of the UN General Assembly Special Session on AIDS on 25 June 2001.

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