



**Embargoed until Wednesday 26 March 2008
11:00 am New York time**

MEDIA ADVISORY

NEW INDEPENDENT REPORT ON AIDS IN ASIA CALLS FOR TOUGH, TARGETED MEASURES TO CURB THE EPIDEMIC

An independent Commission report containing strong recommendations to improve national responses to AIDS across Asia, entitled “Redefining AIDS in Asia – Crafting an effective response”, will be presented to United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon on 26 March at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The report was prepared by nine leading economists, scientists, policy-makers and civil society representatives from across the region under the leadership of Professor C. Rangarajan, Chief Economic Adviser to the Prime Minister of India.

The report highlights shared characteristics of the epidemic across Asia, where the epidemics are mainly driven by unprotected paid sex, sharing injecting equipment by people who inject drugs, and unprotected sex between men; urges Asian government to pragmatically focus HIV prevention programmes on the sex industry and on drug use; and calls for national political leadership to overcome structural and social factors such as criminalization and marginalization of certain groups; human rights violations; and discrimination, which hinder effective national responses.

The Commission’s work is based on an 18-month study of the Asian epidemic and responses, five sub-regional and regional consultations, meetings with more than 30 experts and 200 individuals, governmental and civil society groups, and a review of 5,000 published and unpublished studies.

The Commission believes that countries in Asia can meet the ambitious global targets contained in the 2001 Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and Millennium Development Goal 6 to halt and reverse the epidemic by 2015 – if the governments take the decisive steps set out in this new report.

Date 26 March 2008

Time 11.10 a.m.

Venue UN Press Conference Room

Speakers Dr. Chakravarthi Rangarajan,
Chairman of the Commission on AIDS in Asia and Chairman of the Economic
Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India

Dr. Peter Piot
Executive Director, UNAIDS

Ms. Frika Chia Iskandar
Coordinator, Asia Pacific Network of People Living with HIV and AIDS (APN+)

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