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## **STATEMENT**

**BY**

**HONOURABLE DR. RICHARD NCHABI KAMWI, MP  
MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**AT**

**THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
MEETING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT ON HIV/AIDS**

**NEW YORK, 02 JUNE 2006**

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,

Allow me at the outset to express my government's deepest sympathy to the people of the Republic of Indonesia on the earthquake that has wreaked havoc on that country.

Mr. President,

This High-level meeting offers all of us an important opportunity to assess progress and to set priorities to further expand and strengthen the response against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In this regard, we thank the Secretary-General for his thought provoking report, which indeed sets the tone for this very important gathering.

In line with the Declaration of Commitment, Namibia introduced a Programme for the Prevention of Mother to Child HIV transmission using antiretroviral medicines. All thirty-four public hospitals are implementing this programme. We have also introduced a programme for antiretroviral therapy. This programme has been rolled out to 90% of state hospitals and which together with the private sector provide treatment to 50% of those eligible.

We are implementing a comprehensive prevention strategy that goes far beyond the ABC approach. It includes life skills education for in and out of school youth, the promotion of the rights of women, children, vulnerable groups and of people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, and the provision of comprehensive work place programmes. In addition, we implement a broad health sector response that incorporates voluntary and routine counseling and testing services, prevention of mother to child transmission, diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, safe blood and safe injections programmes.

We are currently in the process of implementing a national coverage and sentinel survey, which will give us a better understanding of progress being made towards reaching our target populations across all the regions of the country. This will enable us to identify areas where progress is slow and where we need to redouble our efforts.

This information will also enable us to mobilize further resources for our expanded national response, both from within the country and from additional sources, such as the Global Fund, President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and others. We intend to strengthen integrated community responses, workplace programmes and specific response strategies in those regions and for those specific target groups where access to a comprehensive service package remains inadequate.

Mr. President,

Strong partnership is key to a successful expanded response. I therefore, would like to express our appreciation on the active participation of civil society in our meeting. In my country, we value the important difference that civil society can make in our response to the epidemic. We therefore intend to enhance and facilitate the resourcing of all our important players over the coming five years. We are, however, confronted with inadequate resources, both human and financial. These remain our challenge. We therefore need external support.

Finally, Mr. President, Namibia remains firmly committed to the implementation of the African Common Position adopted at the Special Session of the AU in Abuja 2006 as well as the 2001 Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS.

I thank you.