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Argentina

REUNION DE ALTO NIVEL SOBRE VIH/SIDA

**Intervención del Dr. Ginés González García,
Ministro de Salud y Ambiente de la República Argentina**

**Nueva York, 2 de junio de 2006
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HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON HIV/AIDS

**Statement by Dr. Ginés González García,
Minister of Health and Environment of the Argentine Republic**

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Permanent Mission of the Argentine Republic to the United Nations
One United Nations Plaza 25th Floor
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Mr. Chairman,

In the subject of HIV/AIDS, the Governments and civil society have given some responses, however, efforts must be redoubled.

In order for the policies to be efficient, all sectors need to be included, even those who prefer not to talk about this issue.

The actions must synthesize an agreement where all levels of government work together coordinating with international agencies and the community at large.

In Argentina there are quite a few who resist, however there is a strong commitment towards this mission. It is expressed in the coordination with Civil Society and the active and highly visible participation of all social actors, especially representatives of vulnerable sections of the population and through programs of facilitators who include, with special emphasis, young people and women.

It is necessary to guarantee universal access to the promotion, prevention and treatment by 2010 in all countries.

In spite of the fact that Latin America and the Caribbean is the region that has the least access to international resources, important efforts have been made and this region might be the first to reach the goal of universal treatment. In Latin America there are already countries who provide 100% coverage, among them Argentina.

This is why we request support here so that Latin America be not discriminated against neither in the access to resources of the Global Fund nor at the price level of the means of medical care and medication for this disease. No country of Latin America and the Caribbean should be excluded since this is an epidemic that needs constant care at the highest level.

Another challenge is to continue with price negotiation strategies. Thanks to those our region has achieved very important discounts that allow the widening of coverage in treatment by antiretroviral medication.

Also, we have made important advances in an investigation project together with Brazil, regarding the development and production of tools, medication and diagnostic resources.

This is the road to which we have committed ourselves to guarantee better conditions of access for all countries of the region, primarily to tests and antiretrovirals.

Regarding prevention, it is necessary to continue with the focused and massive campaign and intensify efforts so that our brothers all over the world should know what to do and have the means to avoid the infection.

With this goal we favor the access to tools for prevention, such as condom use and the damage reduction kit for drug users.

The problem of HIV/AIDS must be made sensitive to those sectors which today do not require services, facilitating changes in the conducts of high risk factor people and favoring universal access to testing for HIV/AIDS.

Special attention must be given to the prevention of transmission from mother to child and the children who are affected by HIV/AIDS. Argentina is on the road towards eradication of vertical transmission and is in full appliance of the National Law on Sexual Health and Responsible Procreation.

The full promotion of human rights must be guaranteed for all those living with and in vulnerable situations such as gays, lesbians, transgender people, gays in the closet, sex workers, drug users and those living under the line of poverty and enclosure, women, young girls, boys and adolescents.

All responses to this epidemic must be circulated among countries since health is a right of all humanity. Within this right access to treatment must be guaranteed.

To achieve this, it is necessary that the United Nations give decisive support to recuperate and make effective the flexibilities of the TRIPS agreements in the framework of the Doha Declaration.

As countries of South America, we agree in a common position on Intellectual property, Health and Innovation of WHO. We agreed in a Joint Declaration which was presented last week at the World Health Assembly.

Some multilateral organizations and some of the most powerful countries in the world defend the ultimate right to intellectual property. This position strongly limits the availability and access to medication and vaccines. No matter how much they want to hide it, the result is an elevated number of deaths.

IT IS OUR MISSION TO IMPEDE THAT.

Thank you very much.