

**U.N. High Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS
New York, 2 June 2006
Address to the General Assembly
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UNAIDS Ambassador**

Infra

- During this **High Level Meeting, 43,000** more people globally have been **infected**.
 - **More than half** of those new infections will be among **young people**, ages 15-24.
 - **More than half** will be among women.

- ⁴¹ If they'd been **chickens** with **Bird Flu**, it would **dominate** the **media**.
 - **But because HIV and AIDS is still** considered to be a disease of the marginalized - it is **treated** differently.

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- **Media** has a **powerful** role to play in educating the world.
 - I believe that **HIV and AIDS programming** needs to become part of the **DNA** of media companies **globally**.

- Earlier today a report of the **Global Media AIDS Initiative was** presented to **Secretary-General Annan**.
 - The GMAT involves **140 media companies** around the world;
 - **Creating** HIV and AIDS programming
 - **Challenging** stigma.
 - **Committing** specific airtime (or inventory).

- **The breadth of collaboration is inspiring.**
 - **In Asia, 14 broadcasters developed World AIDS Day programming**
 - **In Africa, a 20-nation broadcast partnership has been formed.**
 - **In Russia, 40 media firms united in a public health campaign.**
 - **Indeed, media can be a force for change in the world.
It can save lives.**

[Testing]

- **But with 40 million people infected, our response has not kept pace with the disease.**
- **Our dread of HIV and AIDS is so strong we are challenged by:**
 - **the Fear of being informed**
 - **the Stigma surrounding the disease**
 - **widespread Resistance to testing**
- **That resistance is why the vast majority of infected people don't know they are carrying the virus.**
 - **Stigma prevents people getting tested and getting treated.**
- **We need to encourage HIV testing. There are two ways to do this.**
 - **Mandatory or voluntary.**
- **Let's be clear: mandatory testing is NOT an option.**
- **I believe that everyone should be tested. BUT testing must be:**
 - **Voluntary**
 - **Accessible**
 - **Confidential**
 - **supported with Counseling**

o and accompanied by access to **Treatments** wherever possible.

- Testing **must** be **anchored** in an approach which **respects**:
 - **Human rights**
 - **Dignity**
 - and **Privacy**
 - ~ **Especially** for young girls and women.
- The whole **fabric** of **testing** needs to become **normal** and **accepted** by all - from health care workers, religious leaders, village elders, the business sector and everyone in between - rather than be **bound** in myth and fear and **prejudice**.

[Summina up]

- The great anthropologist Margaret Mead once said:

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

- We citizens of the world, sitting in this room today, have that power.
- We ALL must act.
- It's up to the **generation** living **NOW** to **defeat this disease**, and change the world.

[Ends]