



REPUBLIC OF SAN MARINO

**STATEMENT**

By

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To the

HIGH LEVEL MEETING AND COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW  
OF THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN REALIZING THE TARGETS  
SET OUT IN THE  
DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT  
ON HIV/AIDS

June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2006

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Mr. President,

I remember the day, 25 years ago, when I was reading about a new mysterious incurable disease that killed its first victim. Thereafter, many more articles and reports were written about HIV/AIDS focusing on the ravaging nature of this sickness, the inevitable fatal ending, the non-existence of appropriate medicines to prevent or cure it, and the correlation with sexual and drug abuse behaviors. The stigma around HIV/AIDS unfortunately grew as fast as the pandemic and even today it makes this killer more formidable.

Since then, unfortunately, HIV/AIDS spread like a wild fire in so many countries and continents; it is quite appalling that in 2006 despite the vast resources employed and success in discovering new powerful medicines, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has grown to the point of decimating entire generations and creating social collapses especially, in developing countries and worst of all targeting children.

2000 children are getting infected every day and if we do not fight this scourge with a global alliance, AIDS orphans will amount to 100 million in 2010. Most

of them will be subject to neglect, abuse, stigma, and some of them may become prostitutes, child soldiers or suicidal terrorists. We have to reach the goals stated in the **2001 Declaration of commitments on HIV/AIDS** and in the MDGs.

This disease, prevalent among the most productive portion of the population, creates major economic chaos in developing countries, in particular, and especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. The idea of making the impact of HIV/AIDS as a core indicator for poverty is a very sensible one because the two things are deeply interrelated.

In the meantime, the gap between who can access the necessary treatments and who cannot is still too wide despite the efforts of international organizations, NGOs and Governments. All countries must act - fast - to remove barriers in pricing, tariffs, trade, regulatory policy, procurement and supply chain management, research and development of the anti-HIV medicine. The more accessible the diagnosis and the treatment are, less deadly is the disease.

We - as UN Member States - must face AIDS as we would fight a war.

We have to give the right weight to preventive measures: education and information are very powerful weapons. We must combat ignorance, stigma, fear, and on the other hand vulnerability.

Continuous education and prevention are paramount against the spread of HIV/AIDS. In fact, even in the developed world in the last few years, due to a more relaxed approach to the problem, we have witnessed a fresh outburst in

the spreading of HIV. We must act on the young generation and promote information and the use of condoms, we must be able to count on mass media to disseminate information and we must create youth friendly infrastructures to provide assistance and support.

Since the beginning, San Marino has been very active at the national level, with educational and preventive measures in the school system. Our national health system provides free treatment to all infected people. Our Country has always been very sensitive to the global size of the problem and in fact we decided to participate, together with Andorra, Liechtenstein and Monaco to a UNICEF initiative called "Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS". We jointly financed a program to fight HIV/AIDS mother to child transmission and educational activities on AIDS in Africa (PMTCT and pediatric AIDS).

We are firmly convinced that the work done by UNICEF and UNAIDS is of vital importance to say the least and should surely be supported, encouraged and expanded.

Mr. President,

We are very encouraged by the enthusiasm and the commitment shown at this High level Conference and we are sure that the global community will take a final and definite step to defeat, once and for all, this terrible disease.

I thank you, Mr. President.