

## **General Assembly Informal Commemorative Meeting to mark World AIDS Day 2021**

### **“End Inequalities. End AIDS. End Pandemics”**

**Tuesday, 30 November 2021 - 3:00 p.m. - General Assembly Hall - UNHQ**

### **Concept Note**

#### **Background**

Every year, on 1<sup>st</sup> December, the world commemorates World AIDS Day, to pay tribute to the memory of those lost due to the AIDS pandemic, as well as to raise awareness about the disease and to reinvigorate efforts for its prevention and treatment.

This year, World AIDS Day comes at a special juncture in time, marking several important milestones in the history of the AIDS pandemic and the global response:

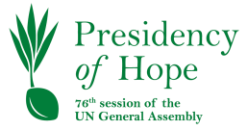
- forty years since the first cases of AIDS were reported;
- twenty-five years since the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) was established by the Economic and Social Council; and,
- twenty years since the landmark 2001 UNGA Special Session on HIV/AIDS, the first ever on a health issue, was held and its Declaration of Commitment, which decided to establish the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, was adopted.

This commemoration also comes in the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which has taken a great toll on people living with HIV and those most vulnerable to infection, creating significant setbacks in the AIDS response.

#### **Objective**

The President of the General Assembly for the seventy-sixth session affirmed in his vision statement “A Presidency of Hope, delivering for people, for planet & for prosperity” that recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, vaccine equity and addressing inequalities and injustices would be at the core of the General Assembly deliberations and actions.

The commemorative meeting to mark 2021 World AIDS Day, under the theme “End inequalities. End AIDS. End Pandemics”, is in line with the objectives of the Presidency of Hope and will provide a platform to:



- Reflect on forty years of the AIDS pandemic and honour the memory of the millions of lives claimed, recognize the global solidarity and shared responsibility that has enabled progress to date and reiterate the importance and urgency of addressing the remaining gaps and challenges through an “inequalities” lens, in order to get back on track towards achieving the commitment of ending AIDS by 2030, as set out in the Sustainable Development Goals. Addressing the inequalities that drive AIDS will also help tackling other pandemics.
- Strengthen the continued partnerships and dialogue with stakeholders, especially Member States, civil society and communities, including people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV, to build on the momentum of the 2021 High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS and its Political Declaration and stress the urgency of action to tackle inequalities, HIV and COVID-19 and the imperative of increasing investments for public health systems and pandemic responses, including responses to HIV and other diseases.
- Draw on lessons learned from the fight against HIV/AIDS in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and promote better understanding of the inter-linkages between the AIDS response and broader health, human rights and development issues, and how these can be effectively leveraged for tackling COVID-19 and strengthening resilience and pandemic preparedness (including equitable access to vaccines and other diagnostics and medicines as a global public good); building back better and accelerating the achievement of the SDGs.

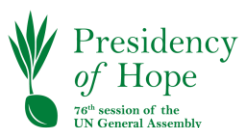
### **Format**

The event will be organized in collaboration with UNAIDS and held on Tuesday, 30 November 2021, from 3 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. in the General Assembly Hall at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

The event will consist of opening and keynote statements by the President of the General Assembly, President of Economic and Social Council, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, Executive Director of UNAIDS, and other keynote speakers, including a representative of civil society.

Due to the limited time available for the event, and to keep with the format of such meetings, Member States are encouraged to deliver regional group statements.

The meeting will be open and webcast.



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### **Provisional Programme**

#### **3.00 p.m. - Opening**

- H.E. Mr. Abdulla Shahid, President of the General Assembly
- H.E. Mr. Collen Vixen Kelapile, President of the Economic and Social Council
- H.E. Ms. Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations (TBC)
- H.E. Ms. Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of UNAIDS

#### **3.20 p.m. - Keynote speakers**

- Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) and Chief Medical Advisor to the President of the United States
- H.E. Henrietta Fore, UNICEF Executive Director (TBC)
- Ms. Valerie Reyes-Jimenez, Housing Works, U.S.A, long-term HIV survivor
- Ms. Joy Oboyi, Association of Positive Youths Living with HIV, Nigeria, young person living with HIV
- Eminent person engaged in the AIDS response (TBC)
- H.E. Mr. Mitchell Peter Fifield, Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations, cofacilitator of the 2021 High-Level Meeting on HIV/ AIDS
- H.E. Mr. Neville Gertze, Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations, cofacilitator of the 2021 High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS

#### **4.00 p.m. – Statements by the Regional Groups**

#### **4.30 p.m. – Closing**