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2008 HIV/AIDS IMPLEMENTERS' MEETING OPENS IN KAMPALA 70 COUNTRIES GATHER TO DISCUSS AIDS PROGRAMMING

Kampala, Uganda – The 2008 HIV/AIDS Implementers' Meeting opened on June 3 in Kampala, drawing more than 1,700 HIV/AIDS implementers from Uganda and throughout the world. More than 70 countries are represented at the meeting, a testament to the global partnerships to fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and a reflection of the conference theme, "Scaling Up Through Partnerships: Overcoming Obstacles to Implementation."

H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, opened the meeting noting "I would like to salute the human race who have confronted AIDS and scored some achievements." He added, "Here in Uganda, we were able to analyze this sickness in the early years and came to the conclusion that it was stoppable."

"You, the global implementers of HIV/AIDS and your partners, have proven the skeptics wrong," said Ambassador Mark Dybul, PEPFAR Coordinator. "You knew what the skeptics did not – that seemingly ordinary people who appear to be without hope can do extraordinary things with a little support. As we step forward to meet the challenges before us, let's do so with even more enthusiasm and hope."

The meeting is being hosted by the Government of Uganda and co-sponsored by the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR); the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; UNAIDS; UNICEF; the World Bank; the World Health Organization (WHO); and the Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (GNP+).

"All partners present here in Kampala are driving a quiet revolution in the fight against AIDS," said Dr Michel Kazatchkine, Executive Director of the Global Fund. "Through our collective work, millions of people have been reached with effective treatment and care and are alive today thanks to this effort. Prevention activities are helping millions more to avoid HIV infection. By sharing lessons and coordinating our work better, we will eventually be able to control this pandemic."

"In recent years, there has been significant progress and real results in scaling up HIV prevention, treatment, care and support," said Dr Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS. "But for every two people starting treatment another five are newly infected with HIV. We must work in partnership to scale up this response, continuing to strengthen progress in treatment, as well as focusing attention upon the critical need to prevent new infections."

During the five-day conference, more than 200 abstracts will be presented by representatives from governments, non-governmental organizations including faith- and community-based

groups, multilateral organizations, the private sector, and groups of people living with HIV/AIDS. Through presentations, dialogue and networking, participants will discuss critical barriers and share information that will directly impact HIV/AIDS program implementation in the coming years.

“We already know some of the difficulties in bringing to scale the prevention strategies necessary to reach an AIDS-free generation, provide treatment for children who need it, and care for those who have lost parents to AIDS,” said Jimmy Kolker, Chief of the HIV/AIDS Section at UNICEF. “But there are some outstanding examples of overcoming the obstacles and bottlenecks in order to reach our ambitious targets. By integrating services that benefit children and by acting together at the community as well as national level, we can ensure that children are no longer the invisible face of the HIV epidemic.”

Recognizing the rapid expansion of HIV/AIDS programs worldwide, the focus of this year’s meeting is on building the capacity of local HIV prevention, treatment, and care programs; enhancing program quality; and promoting coordination among partners.

An archived webcast of sessions from the meeting will be provided by kaisernetwork.org, a free service of the Kaiser Family Foundation. The webcast and related online resources will be available following the meeting at: <http://www.kaisernetwork.org/hivimplementers2008>.

For more information on the meeting, please visit www.hivimplementers.org.

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Information about the host of the meeting:

The Government of Uganda through the Ministry of Health and the Uganda AIDS Commission (UAC) ensures a focused and harmonized response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic by the Government of Uganda. UAC provides strategic leadership by ensuring effective harmonization of the HIV/AIDS-related activities of the various players within agreed policy and program parameters. For more information about UAC, please visit www.aidsuganda.org/.

Information about the sponsors of the meeting:

The U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) employs the most diverse prevention, treatment and care strategy in the world, with an emphasis on transparency and accountability for results. The goals of the Emergency Plan’s first five years include support for treatment for two million HIV-infected people, support for prevention of seven million new infections, and support for care for 10 million people infected or affected by HIV/AIDS. For more information about PEPFAR, please visit www.PEPFAR.gov.

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is a unique global public/private partnership dedicated to attracting and disbursing additional resources to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. This partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector and affected communities represents a new approach to international health financing. The Global Fund works in close collaboration with other bilateral and multilateral organizations to supplement existing efforts dealing with the three diseases. For more information about the Global Fund, please visit www.theglobalfund.org.

UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, is an innovative joint venture of the United Nations, bringing together the efforts and resources of the UNAIDS Secretariat and ten UN system organizations in the AIDS response. The Secretariat headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland—with staff on the ground in more than 80 countries. Coherent action on AIDS by the UN system is coordinated in countries through UN theme groups, and joint programmes on AIDS. UNAIDS' Cosponsors include UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank. Visit the UNAIDS website at www.unaids.org.

UNICEF is on the ground in over 150 countries and territories to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence. The world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations, and governments. For more information, please visit www.unicef.org.

The World Bank is engaged in the fight against AIDS, which is threatening to reverse the gains of development, to further its mission of fighting poverty. The World Bank provides comprehensive and sustainable financing for AIDS programs worldwide and to date has committed more than US \$3.7 billion since 1988. For more information on the World Bank's response to HIV/AIDS, please visit www.worldbank.org/aids.

The World Health Organization is the directing and coordinating authority on international health work and takes the lead in the United Nations system in the global health sector response to the AIDS epidemic. For more information, please visit www.who.int.

The Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (GNP+) is a global network for and by people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV). Its overall aim is to improve the quality of life of PLHIV. The work of GNP+ is guided by the Global Advocacy Agenda, which consists of three key areas: (i) Promoting universal access to HIV/AIDS care, treatment and prevention; (ii) Combating stigma and discrimination; and (iii) Promoting the greater and more meaningful involvement of PLHIV. GNP+ is the only international network representing the diverse voices of all PLHIV. As a network based on emancipation and self-determination, GNP+ nurtured the development of six fully independent regional networks of PLHIV covering Africa (NAP+), Asia (APN+), the Caribbean (CRN+), Europe (GNP+ Europe), Latin America (REDLa+) and North America (GNP+ NA). Elected representatives from these networks form the GNP+ Board. For more information, please visit www.gnpplus.net.

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