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27 November 2008

World AIDS Day – Monday 1 December 2008
An appeal to South Africa: Make history!
LEAD AND UNITE TO STOP HIV AND AIDS!

Statement by Mark Heywood, the Deputy Chairperson of SANAC

The South African National AIDS Council (SANAC), with representation from all sectors of government and civil society, together with NEDLAC, have agreed that at 12.00 noon on World AIDS Day, Monday December 1st, the Deputy President will ask all people in South Africa to **stop and observe and act on World AIDS day**. From individuals to organisations, from government departments to schools, all people will be called on to stop what they are doing so that the country can come together to focus on how we are going to **stop the HIV epidemic, stop new HIV infections and stop deaths**.

World AIDS Day 2008 will embody the collective commitment of our government and society to adopting a bold and brave new approach to HIV and TB.

We urge you to join us on this day. Don't wait to be asked. Talk to your organisations about what you are going to do. Act now. Forward this message. Spread the word!

Under the theme of *'Leadership and Unity to stop HIV, AIDS and TB'* the 15-minute national stoppage is an opportunity for all South Africans to think and talk about HIV and AIDS. People are encouraged to hold discussions in workplaces and school, in homes and in the streets. SANAC has produced a 'Key Messages' document to guide these discussion (attached or download it from the website below).

World AIDS Day 2008 will be unprecedented and historic in the global history of AIDS and will inspire people in South Africa and across the world. Our vision is to use this day to promote actions that will stop HIV and to start a truly national social mobilization on HIV, AIDS and TB.

Events of World AIDS Day

At midday the church bells of St George's Cathedral in Cape Town will be rung to mark the start of a national minute of silence. The Minister of Health will then address the nation, followed by the Deputy President. They will be joined by the Executive Director of UNAIDS (Dr. Peter Piot) and a person from civil society living with HIV.

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These speeches, will be covered live on SABC2, as well as many SABC and independent radio stations. They will be made from the Sahara Stadium in Durban where the country's senior leaders - from government, civil society, business and labour - will assemble to demonstrate unity.

Simultaneously around the country there will be thousands of other events. A list will soon be available on the websites provided below:

Some of the Endorsements and Actions to support World AIDS Day

- Current and former Archbishops of Cape Town, Thabo Makgoba, Njongonkulu Ndungane and Desmond Tutu have all endorsed the mobilisation. They are calling on other religious leaders to do the same. They have called on churches to integrate messages about HIV into their services on Sunday November 30th and for all churches to ring their bells to start the minute's silence on December 1st;
- The Archbishop of Cape Town, Thabo Makgoba, will hold a special service at St Georges Cathedral in Cape Town on WAD. HIV counsellors will be on hand to provide information and will also offer testing for HIV;
- A specially prepared sermon will be given in all mosques, and a special message will be sent to all Muslim schools, Muslim-owned businesses, and Muslim-run e-mail lists in South Africa;
- Former president Nelson Mandela will release a statement through his organisation 46664; www.46664.org.za, will carry key messages and actions and will be a portal where organisations and individuals can find out what they and their companies/ organisations can do during the 15-minute *'Focus on AIDS'*;
- Khomanani, SANAC, NEDLAC will run national media campaigns that will reach 29 million people in the days before WAD and on WAD itself;
- Members of COSATU Central Executive Committee have voluntarily tested for HIV. COSATU will also distribute 2 million pamphlets to its members encouraging VCT and prevention of mother to child HIV transmission.
- COSATU and Anglocoal will hold a large workplace event in Witbank offering testing for HIV. COSATU President Sidumo Dlamini will publicly test for HIV at the event;
- Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi has endorsed the campaign;
- Business Unity South Africa (BUSA) has issued a circular to all member organisations encouraging them to participate in the events of World AIDS Day. The Banking Association of South Africa will hold a minute's silence.
- All CCMA offices will observe the 15 minutes and will send a circular to staff.
- MxiT, will send messages to 5 million members, and have offered to donate all proceeds from its World AIDS Day wallpaper downloads;
- Judge Navi Pillay, UN High Commissioner on Human Rights, will issue a statement in support of South Africa on WAD

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- The Proteas, South Africa's cricketers, will wear red ribbons during the test match with Bangladesh;
- All Primedia radio stations, with 3.2 million listeners, will observe the 1 minute silence before the news at midday on December 1st. Radio shows will also integrate the theme of WAD into their programming and some DJs will undergo HIV testing on air;
- A comprehensive and widely consultative plan for a national social mobilization around PMTCT will be announced by the Minister of Health;
- A week long community mobilization is taking place in 3 districts in KZN;
- The UK development Minister, Ivan Lewis, is visiting South Africa over the 28th - 30th November to recognize South Africa's efforts;

This is a lot. But it is not enough! We call on everyone to take action!

More information about events, as well as key documentation, will be posted on the following websites www.46664.org.za and www.sanac.org.za including:

- The growing *list of endorsements*;
- *Key messaging* for World AIDS Day;
- The *announcement* of the SANAC World AIDS Day Plan;
- The *Programme* for World AIDS Day, issued by the Department of Health;
- The SANAC and NEDLAC *Media Campaign materials*;
- *Contact details* of the SANAC Sectors;
- Other useful materials and information;

For more information, please contact Paul Booth, Tel: 011 356 4112 or Cell: 082 881 7361.

At last we are united to stop HIV, AIDS and TB. With leadership and unity we will stop this epidemic!

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