

# World AIDS Day

STOP AIDS. KEEP THE PROMISE.

1988-2008



## World AIDS Day – Monday, 1 December 2008 Media Fact Sheet

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### Theme

**Leadership** is the theme for World AIDS Day 2007 and 2008, promoted with the campaigning slogan, "Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise."

Leadership encourages leaders at all levels to stop AIDS. Building on the 2006 theme of accountability, leadership highlights the discrepancy between the commitments that have been made to halt the spread of AIDS, and actions taken to follow them through. Leadership empowers everyone – individuals, organisations, governments – to lead in the response to AIDS.

In 2007, people around the world were encouraged to *take the lead* to stop AIDS. Campaigns took the shape of marches, leadership discussions, public awareness events and pledges from leaders. These events all helped to put leadership in the spotlight.

People have offered their leadership – now it is time to deliver. Promises must be kept, and people must feel empowered to act.

### Why is 2008 important?

2008 marks the 20th anniversary of World AIDS Day. Since 1988, the face and response to AIDS has greatly changed. While many of these changes are positive, this anniversary offers us an opportunity to highlight how much more still needs to be done.

For example:

- Leaders in most countries from around the world now acknowledge the threat of AIDS, and many have committed to do something about it. As of 2007, nearly all countries have national policies on HIV. However, despite these policies, most have not been fully implemented and many lack funding allocations.
- While treatment for HIV and AIDS has improved and become more widespread since 1988, many still do not have access to it – in 2007 only 31% of those in low- to middle-income countries who need treatment received it.
- Despite HIV awareness now reaching nearly all areas of the globe, infection rates are still happening 2.7 times faster than the increase in number of people receiving treatment.
- While the number of countries protecting people living with HIV continue to increase, one third of countries still lack legal protections and stigma and discrimination continues to be a major threat to universal access.
- More broadly, real action on HIV and AIDS and human rights remains lacking. Legal barriers to HIV services still exist for groups such as women, adolescents, sex workers, people who use drugs, and men having sex with men, and programmatic responses promoting HIV-related human rights have yet to be prioritised.

Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise

[www.worldaidscampaign.org](http://www.worldaidscampaign.org)

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World AIDS Day began in 1988 when health ministers from around the world met and agreed on the concept of the day as an opportunity for all of us to come together to demonstrate the importance of AIDS and show solidarity for the cause. In 2008, this underlining principle of solidarity and awareness remains the same.

We have **only two years** to go for “the goal of universal access to comprehensive prevention programmes, treatment, care and support by 2010”[2006 Political Declaration on AIDS].

To achieve this goal, leadership and action is needed now. Governments must deliver on the promises they have made. Communities must encourage leadership of its members. Individuals must feel empowered to access treatment, to know their rights and take action against stigma and discrimination, and to know and use methods of prevention against receiving and transmitting HIV.

**Now, more than ever is the time to lead – empower – deliver.**

## Brief History

World AIDS Day was first declared by the World Health Organisation and the United Nations General Assembly (Resolution 43/15) in 1988. Since then, it has progressively become one of the most successful “international days” for raising awareness on a global issue.

Past themes:

- 1988** – Communication
- 1989** – Youth
- 1990** – Women and AIDS
- 1991** – Sharing the Challenge
- 1992** – Community Commitment
- 1993** – Act
- 1994** – AIDS and the Family
- 1995** – Shared Rights, Shared Responsibilities
- 1996** – One World, One Hope

**1997** – Children Living in a World with AIDS

**1998** – Force for Change: World AIDS Campaign with Young People

**1999** – Listen, Learn, Live: World AIDS Campaign with Children and Young People

**2000** – AIDS: Men make a difference

**2001** – I care. Do you?

**2002** – Stigma and Discrimination

**2003** – Stigma and Discrimination

**2004** – Women, Girls, and HIV and AIDS

**2005** – Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise

**2006** – Accountability – Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise

**2007** – Leadership – Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise

**2008** – Leadership – Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise

## About the World AIDS Campaign

The first year-long World AIDS Campaign was launched by UNAIDS in 1997. The objective of the ‘Campaign’ was to substantially extend the impact of World AIDS Day by involving more partners and translate increased global awareness of AIDS into a more sustainable programmatic response.

The World AIDS Campaign became an independent organisation in 2004 in order to strengthen and enhance collaboration amongst various national and constituency efforts.

“Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise” is the World AIDS Campaign’s overarching theme from 2005 through 2010. The World AIDS Campaign supports, strengthens and connects campaigns that hold leaders accountable for their promises on HIV and AIDS.

The World AIDS Campaign Support Team is based in Amsterdam and Cape Town.

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## Stop AIDS Leadership Pledge

To celebrate the 2007 and 2008 World AIDS Day theme of leadership, the World AIDS Campaign launched the Stop AIDS Leadership Pledge in November 2007. In collaboration with national, regional, global and constituent partners, this initiative asks people from all over the world to pledge their leadership to help stop AIDS. These pledges collected online, by mail and at events, will be used to create exhibitions, banners and other visibility actions during major events in 2008 and 2009.

With a goal of at least 100,000 signees, these pledges serve as a persuasive tool for leveraging greater political leadership on universal access to AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support and act as a visual example for key national and international decision-makers to follow.

Pledges can be viewed at <http://pledges.worldaidscampaign.info>

Videos of pledges made during the International AIDS Conference in Mexico City can be viewed at [www.worldaidscampaign.org](http://www.worldaidscampaign.org) and on the World AIDS Campaign youtube page: [www.youtube.com/worldaidscampaign](http://www.youtube.com/worldaidscampaign)

## Promises on HIV and AIDS

An index of major governmental agreements over the past seven years can be found at <http://www.worldaidscampaign.org/en/Media2/Media-for-World-AIDS-Day/Promises-on-HIV-and-AIDS>

## World AIDS Day Resources for Media

Media alerts, articles, and resources for World AIDS Day:

<http://www.worldaidscampaign.org/en/Media2/Media-for-World-AIDS-Day>

List of World AIDS Day events around the world:

<http://www.worldaidscampaign.org/en/Key-events/World-AIDS-Day/World-AIDS-Day-2008/WAD-2008-Events-Calendar>

Current statistics on HIV and AIDS: UNAIDS issued the 2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic on 29 July 2008:

[http://www.unaids.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/HIVData/GlobalReport/2008/2008\\_Global\\_report.asp](http://www.unaids.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/HIVData/GlobalReport/2008/2008_Global_report.asp)

Graphic images and photos available for free for use in publications:

<http://www.worldaidscampaign.org/en/Key-events/World-AIDS-Day/World-AIDS-Day-2008/2008-WAD-Resources>

### For more information

Official World AIDS Day website:

[www.worldaidscampaign.org](http://www.worldaidscampaign.org)

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