**HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**31st session**

**Panel discussion on the progress in and challenges of addressing human rights issues in the context of efforts to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic by 2030**

**CONCEPT NOTE *(as of 11 March 2016)***

**Date and venue**

**Friday, 11 March 2016, 9:00 a.m. – 12 p.m., Palais des Nations, Room XX, Geneva**(will be broadcast live and archived on <http://webtv.un.org>)

**Background**

Since 1990, the Commission on Human Rights[[1]](#footnote-1), followed by the Human Rights Council[[2]](#footnote-2), has adopted numerous resolutions on the protection of human rights in the context of HIV/AIDS. In past resolutions, the Human Rights Council has reaffirmed that the full realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all is an essential element in the global response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, including in the areas of prevention, care, support and treatment, with a view to reducing vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and preventing stigma and related discrimination against people living with or at risk of HIV/AIDS.

The Council has also called upon States, United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies and international and non-governmental organizations to assist developing countries, upon their request, in their efforts to prevent the spread of the epidemic and alleviate and control the detrimental impact of HIV/AIDS.

In the past decades, important progress has been achieved at national, regional and international levels. In 15 years, the annual number of people newly infected by HIV has dropped from 3.1 million to 2.0 million. Globally between 2000 and 2014, the number of children acquiring HIV fell by 58 per cent to 220 thousand per year. The target of 15 million people receiving HIV treatment by 2015 was reached nine months before the deadline[[3]](#footnote-3).

Despite such achievements, HIV/AIDS remains an urgent global health and development challenge. Even though the push towards universal access to treatment has transformed the HIV/AIDS response between 2000 and 2014, only about 40 per cent of all people living with HIV globally were receiving antiretroviral therapy by 2014. Multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination, stigma, violence and abuses continue to affect the enjoyment of human rights and often lead to particular targeting of people living with, presumed to be living with or affected by HIV/AIDS and members of key populations, as well as to increased vulnerability to HIV.

The current year will be a critical milestone in the global response to the AIDS epidemic. It marks the beginning of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which established the target to end the epidemic of AIDS by 2030. It also marks the 20th anniversary of the International Guidelines on HIV and Human Rights, contained in the annex of resolution 1997/33 of the former Commission on Human Rights, which provide guidance to ensuring the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights in the context of HIV/AIDS.

In this context, a high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS will be organized in June 2016 in New York[[4]](#footnote-4). As the Secretary-General of the United Nations stated, “ending the AIDS epidemic will be an historic global achievement for the entire human family, one that will, in the process, also enhance gender equality, promote human rights and address the determinants of inequity and exclusion”.[[5]](#footnote-5)

**Mandate**

In its resolution 30/8, adopted on 1 October 2015, the Human Rights Council decided to convene a panel discussion at its thirty-first session on the progress in and challenges of addressing human rights issues in the context of efforts to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic by 2030, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the International Guidelines on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights. The Human Rights Council invited the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to liaise with States and all stakeholders, including relevant United Nations bodies, agencies, funds and programmes, treaty bodies, special procedure mandate holders, national human rights institutions and civil society, with a view to ensuring their participation in the panel discussion.

**Objective**

Based on the request of the Human Rights Council, the panel discussion will provide a platform for experts and affected populations to undertake a comprehensive review of the progress achieved in addressing human rights issues in the context of efforts to end the epidemic of AIDS by 2030, including successes, best practices and lessons learned. It is expected that the panel will reflect on the full realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all as an essential element in the global AIDS response, including in the areas of prevention, care, support and treatment. During the discussions, panellists will be able to shed light on challenges that still remain, such as eliminating HIV-related stigma, discrimination and violence, with a focus on addressing the human rights of key populations; promoting rights-based health services as a means of ensuring the availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of treatment without discrimination; ensuring access to medicines; and enabling legal and policy environment for ending AIDS.

**Panel**

*Chair*

**H.E. Mr. Bertrand de Crombrugghe**, Vice-President of the Human Rights Council

*Opening statement*

**Ms. Kate Gilmore**, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights

*Video screening*

**15 Years of the AIDS Response 2000 - 2015***,* UNAIDS [3 minutes]

*Keynote speaker*

**Dr. Luiz Loures**, Deputy Executive Director, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

*Moderator***H.E. Mr. Pedro Afonso Comissário**, Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

*Panelists*

* **Ms. Ayu Oktariani**, Public Campaign Officer, Indonesia AIDS Coalition
* **H.E. Ms. Nana Oye Lithur**, Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection of Ghana
* **Dr. Jorge Bermudez**, Vice-President of Health Production and Innovation, Fiocruz, Ministry of Health of Brazil and member of the United Nations Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Access to Medicines
* **Dr. Mark Dybul**, Executive Director, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
* **Mr. Dainius Pūras**, Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health

**Format**

The panel discussion will be interactive. The session will be chaired by the Vice-President of the Human Rights Council. The Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights will deliver an opening statement, followed by the keynote speaker. The moderator will present the scope of the discussion and introduce the panellists. The panellists will be given 5 minutes each to make their initial statements, guided by the moderator. The initial presentations will be followed by an interactive debate chaired by the Vice-President of the Human Rights Council. There will be two rounds of interventions (45 minutes per round) by States and observers, with comments and questions from the floor (2 minutes per intervention), followed by 15 minutes for comments and replies by panellists (3 minutes each) and short concluding remarks by the moderator.

States, national human rights institutions, non-governmental organizations and other observers are encouraged to intervene in an interactive way, through questions, comments and sharing of experiences, good practices and challenges, as well as suggested recommendations on the way forward, with a view to contributing to a constructive and inclusive debate.

Interpretation will be provided in the six United Nations official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).

**Outcome**

As mandated by resolution 30/8, a summary report of the panel discussion will be prepared by the High Commissioner, submitted to the Human Rights Council at its thirty-second session and brought to the attention of the General Assembly ahead of the high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS, to take place in June 2016. The Human Rights Council, in its resolution 30/8, invited the General Assembly to take the summary report into consideration ahead of and during the high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS, in accordance with the modalities and organizational arrangements, to be agreed pursuant to Assembly decision 68/555. The report will provide the General Assembly with the human rights perspective for the commitment to ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030, therefore contributing to the discussions to take place in New York during the high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS.

**Background documents**

[Human Rights Council resolution 30/8](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/RES/30/8) entitled “Contribution of the Human Rights Council to the high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS in 2016”

[General Assembly resolution 70/228](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/res/70/228) on “Organization of the 2016 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS”

[General Assembly decision 68/555](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/49(vol.III)) entitled “Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declarations on HIV/AIDS”

1. Commission on Human Rights resolutions 1990/65, 1992/56, 1993/53, 1994/49, 1995/44, 1996/43, 1997/33, 1999/49, 2001/51, 2003/29, 2003/47, 2004/26, 2005/23 and 2005/84. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Human Rights Council decision 2/107 and resolutions 12/27, 16/28 and 30/8. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. UNAIDS Strategy 2016-2021: On the Fast-Track to end AIDS, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. General Assembly decision 68/555. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Report of the Secretary-General “Towards ending the AIDS epidemic: meeting the 2015 targets and planning for the post-2015 era” (A/68/825), p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)