

STATEMENT

By: UNAIDS

Date: 19 April 2018

Place: New York, U.S.A.

Occasion: 17th session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Agenda Item 4: Implementation of the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum (Education, Culture, Human Rights, Environment, Development, Health)

Chair,

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) would like to take this opportunity to express our support to the Forum as an important venue for the promotion of dialogue between governments, indigenous peoples and the UN system.

UNAIDS is at the forefront of the global efforts to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals, and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths.

Leaving no one behind, by engaging and empowering the affected communities and addressing the needs of all people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV is essential for the achievement of these objectives. This must include indigenous peoples as well.

Whether supporting the Regional Network of Indigenous Peoples Responding to HIV (SIPIA) in launching a "State of the art report on HIV and Indigenous Peoples in Latin America", or working in partnership with the Ministry of Health of Brazil to develop HIV prevention education materials for indigenous peoples of the Javari Valley in the Amazon, UNAIDS knows that we can meet the SDGs with comprehensive national HIV/AIDS plans that include a focus on and engage with indigenous peoples.

Chair,

Across the world – from Saskatoon to Timbuktu, and the Amazon to Arctic – indigenous peoples have been left behind and we must do better.

In recognition of challenges faced by indigenous communities across the globe, UNAIDS Executive Director, Michel Sidibé, met with local groups of indigenous people in Chile in 2015 and again earlier this year in Canada. He met to listen to people describe from their own experiences how a lack of political and social power has led to poverty, low education standards, and limited access to health services. He heard how stigma and discrimination make indigenous people particularly vulnerable to HIV, tuberculosis, sexually transmitted infections, hepatitis and other health issues, and how inter-generational trauma impacts the health and well-being of indigenous people.

UNAIDS recognizes the importance of creating spaces for dialogue and meaningful engagement with a perspective of cultural sensitivity and awareness and developing culturally-appropriate services for indigenous peoples in partnership with indigenous communities' representatives.

Chair,

At its sixteenth session, the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues recommended that "...UNAIDS, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues, sponsor an expert group meeting on HIV/AIDS by 2019, which would include the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, to analyse the sociocultural and economic determinants of health for HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment in indigenous communities, with the Forum's collaboration, in order to ensure the realization of target 3.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals."

Over the past few months, UNAIDS, UNFPA, the International Indigenous HIV/AIDS Community, and the Permanent Forum Chair have engaged in discussions on convening such a meeting to focus on leaving no one behind in the AIDS response. We are in the early stages and would like to call on interested Member States and UN entities to join these discussions.

Thank you.