

# **The UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation**

## **Communique**

January 2009

### **What happened in the 23rd meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) in Geneva, Switzerland, December 15-17, 2008?**

The UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation and observers from civil society helped influence Board decisions and recommendations throughout the meeting. Below is a short overview of the process and decisions made. The full list of decision points and recommendations can be found on web site of the UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation at <http://www.pcbngo.org/pcb/blog/>

#### **Thematic session**

The 23rd PCB meeting covered many issues. It began with a thematic session on the “The Relationship between UNAIDS and the Global Fund: international technical support architecture and Public-Private Partnerships”. The NGO Delegates to the UNAIDS PCB and a civil society delegate to the Global Fund Board took part in the working group that helped to plan the thematic session and to include civil society partners in the panels.

Many of the discussions centered around the provision of technical support to the Global Fund proposal development and grant implementation. Another session was especially dedicated to the relationship between National AIDS Authorities and the Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs). A final panel focused on public-private partnerships.

One of the decisions initiated by civil society is that UNAIDS update its technical support and capacity development strategy through an inclusive process involving implementing countries and civil society, taking into account all points made and conclusions from the thematic session.

The Board called upon National AIDS Authorities and UNAIDS to invest in the capacity development of civil society to enable their meaningful participation in the work of such authorities and CCMs.

The Board specifically requested UNAIDS to accelerate its work on gender equality (women and girls), and lesbians, gays, bi-sexuals, and transgenders with the meaningful engagement of those communities as well as PLHIV in order to support needs assessments and proposal development by National AIDS programs and Country Coordinating Mechanisms.

#### **New Executive Director of UNAIDS**

Peter Piot, who has been leading UNAIDS since its creation in 1996, resigned his post. Michel Sidibé will be the new Executive Director as of 1 January 2009. Peter Piot’s farewell speech can be read at: <http://www.unaids.org/en/>

In a meeting with Michel Sidibé, the PCB NGO Delegates reminded him that their support for his candidature during the selection process was based on his commitment to lead UNAIDS with a vision centered on GIPA, human rights and the critical role civil society plays in the global response. We also

reminded him to address the needs of vulnerable groups and maintain attention to gender equality, and work to achieve Universal Access by 2010.

### **New Chair and Vice-Chair of the PCB**

As of 1 January 2009, the new Chair of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board will be Ethiopia, with the Netherlands as Vice-Chair and Guatemala continuing as Rapporteur.

### **New UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegates**

The new members of the UNAIDS PCB NGO delegation for 2009 were approved by the Board:

- Alexandra Garita, International Planned Parenthood Federation, Western Hemisphere Region (IPPF, WHR), USA, Delegate for North America;
- Dr. Evan Collins, Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN), Canada, Alternate for North America;
- Dr. Lydia Mungherera, TASO (The Aids Support Organization) Uganda, Alternate for Africa; and,
- Dr. Robert Carr, Caribbean Vulnerable Communities Coalition, Jamaica, Alternate for Latin America and the Caribbean.

### **Unified Budget and Workplan**

UNAIDS work is guided by a budget and workplan that is developed every two years. This unified budget and workplan (UBW) is being updated to focus on results, the impact on cross-cutting issues such as gender equality and human rights, and contain more disaggregated data broken down by country, cosponsor, sex, and age. The NGO Delegation pointed to the evaluation of UNAIDS and the next planning process as entry points for greater results around a human rights framework, increased attention to key vulnerable populations, scale up of prevention and treatment, and gender equality. NGO Delegates called for greater involvement of civil society in National AIDS Strategies and in daily programmatic engagement at the country level. Delegates also used the discussion of the UBW as a place to point out that there is still no Policy Guidance on sex work, despite a key result area to strengthen programming on HIV and sex work. Finally, NGO Delegates pointed out that co-infection with Hepatitis is missing and should be part of a future strategic framework.

In the 23rd UNAIDS PCB meeting, a subcommittee was proposed and approved to prepare the 2010-2011 budget and workplan. This committee will include two NGO members, as well as ten Member States, two Cosponsors and the UNAIDS Secretariat. Their reports will be posted on the UNAIDS website and on the NGO Delegation's website. The process to appoint membership to this subcommittee is forthcoming.

### **International Task Team on HIV-related Travel Restrictions**

Following the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Global Fund Board in November 2007, UNAIDS established a task team on travel restrictions with the aim of eliminating policies and practices that restrict travel for persons living with HIV. The task team, co-chaired by Norway and the UNAIDS Secretariat, has 43 Members from civil society, member States UN and inter-governmental organizations. Gracia Violeta Ross Quiroga, a member of the NGO Delegation, has been a part of the task team.

The Board reviewed the report of the group and adopted resolutions to encourage Member States to abolish HIV-specific restrictions on entry, stay and residence. The Board requested that implementation of the recommendations of the report and an update on progress are presented at the next PCB meeting.

The Board agreed that no PCB meeting will be held in a country with HIV-specific travel restrictions.

### **Increased involvement of civil society in the UNAIDS PCB**

The UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation carried out a focused consultation in September 2008 via an e-consultation in five languages, three focus groups and 25 in-depth interviews in order to present recommendations to the Board on specific actions to further increase civil society participation in the board meetings. The full paper is available on the PCB NGO Delegation's web site at <http://www.pcbngo.org/pcb/files/>

Based on the consultation, one of the UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation recommendations was that Member States include civil society in their own national delegations, as was done for UNGASS on HIV in 2008. The Board agreed to encourage this practice.

The UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation was also successful in its requests that the UNAIDS Secretariat provide road maps for the preparation of key board documents, and ask for board papers 8 weeks in advance. This will allow time for local translation and more consultation with wider civil society.

Finally, the Board agreed that the UNAIDS Regional Support Teams, the UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation's Communications Facility and the UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegates should work to hold regional caucuses around existing meetings in order to hear concerns from civil society in between PCB meetings.

### **Gender sensitivity of the AIDS response**

The UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation requested that UNAIDS report back at the next PCB meeting in June 2009, on how it will strengthen its work on helping countries to meet gender equality objectives in their response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. This includes the call to develop needs assessments for women and girls and LGBT communities separately, for country level action, as well as to establish an inter-agency strategy within the UN System to address HIV and women and girls in a similar way to what has been done on sexual minorities. The Delegation also expressed its appreciation for the need for the work with MSM, WSW Transgender, and for UNAIDS to report back in the next PCB meeting on how it is carrying out both of these strategies.

### **Guidance Note on HIV and Sex Work**

The preparation of the Guidance Note on HIV and Sex Work started two years ago. At the 20th meeting in June 2007, the Board recommended that UNAIDS continue consultation with relevant stakeholders, including affected groups, in developing the Guidance. However, at the 23rd PCB meeting, the NGO Delegation's request to clarify the status of the Guidance was not answered.

### **Commission on Narcotic Drugs**

On the initiative of the UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation, the PCB adopted a decision requesting United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), as one of the UNAIDS Cosponsors, to work towards an outcome of the UNGASS 2009 review of the World Drug Problem that accurately reflects the importance of decreasing HIV transmission and co-infection among people who use drugs.

This is a good opportunity for global civil society and the harm reduction community in particular to try influence the global dialogue to ensure that UN drug policy takes into account HIV-related issues.

**Reminder: What is the PCB again?**

The Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) is the governing body of UNAIDS. It is made up of 22 voting Member States, the 10 Co-sponsors that make up the UNAIDS program, and NGO Delegation (consisting of one delegate and one alternate from each of 5 regions). For more details, including background papers, you can visit the PCB NGO Delegation's web site <http://www.pcbngo.org/pcb/about/index.php?s=10> or <http://www.unaids.org/en/AboutUNAIDS/Governance/default.asp>

**How can I learn more?**

Please visit our new website for more information about the UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation:

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