

AIDS: THE WORLDS SUMMIT & ITS OUTCOME

London Declaration on AIDS Prevention, adopted by the World
Summit of Ministers of Health on Programmes for AIDS
Prevention, on 28 January 1988

The World Summit of Ministers of Health on Programmes for AIDS Prevention, involving delegates from 149 countries representing the vast majority of people of the world, makes the following declaration:

1. Since AIDS is a global problem that poses a serious threat to humanity, urgent action by all Governments and people the world over is needed to implement WHO's Global AIDS Strategy as defined by the Fortieth World Health Assembly and supported by the United Nations General Assembly.
2. We shall do all in our power to ensure that our Governments do indeed undertake such urgent action.
3. We undertake to devise national programmes to prevent and contain the spread of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection as part of our countries' health systems. We commend to all Governments the value of a high level co-ordinating committee to bring together all government sectors, and we shall involve to the fullest extent possible all governmental sectors and relevant non-governmental organizations in the planning and implementation of such programmes in conformity with the Global AIDS Strategy.
4. We recognize that, particularly in the absence at present of a vaccine or cure for AIDS, the single most important component of national AIDS programmes is information and education because HIV transmission can be prevented through informed and responsible behaviour. In this respect, individuals, Governments, the media and other sectors all have major roles to play in preventing the spread of HIV infection.
5. We consider that information and education programmes should be aimed at the general public and should take full account of social and cultural patterns, different lifestyles, and human and spiritual values. The same principles should apply equally to programmes directed towards specific groups, involving these groups as appropriate. These include groups such as:
 - policy makers;
 - health and social service workers at all levels;
 - international travellers;
 - persons whose practices may place them at increased risk of infection;
 - the media;

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- youth and those that work with them, especially teachers;
- community and religious leaders;
- potential blood donors; and
- those with HIV infections, their relatives and others concerned with their care, all of whom need appropriate counselling.

6. We emphasize the need in AIDS prevention programmes to protect human rights and human dignity. Discrimination against, and stigmatization of, HIV-infected people and people with AIDS and population groups undermine public health and must be avoided.

7. We urge the media to fulfil their important social responsibility to provide factual and balanced information to the general public on AIDS and on ways of preventing its spread.

8. We shall seek the involvement of all relevant governmental sectors and non-governmental organizations in creating the supportive social environment needed to ensure the effective implementation of AIDS prevention programmes and human care of affected individuals.

9. We shall impress on our Governments the importance for national health of ensuring the availability of the human and financial resources, including health and social services with well-trained personnel, needed to carry out our national AIDS programmes, and in order to support informed and responsible behaviour.

10. In the spirit of United Nations General Assembly resolution 42/8, we appeal:

- to all appropriate organizations of the United Nations system, including the specialized agencies;
- to bilateral and multilateral agencies; and
- to non-governmental and voluntary organizations

to support the world-wide struggle against AIDS in conformity with WHO's global strategy.

11. We appeal in particular to these bodies to provide well-co-ordinated support to developing countries in setting up and carrying out national AIDS programmes in the light of their needs. We recognize that these needs vary from country to country in the light of their epidemiological situation.

12. We also appeal to those involved in dealing with drug abuse to intensify their efforts in the spirit of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking (Vienna, June 1987) with a view to contributing to the reduction in the spread of HIV infection.

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13. We call upon the World Health Organization, through its Global Programme on AIDS, to continue to:

(a) Exercise its mandate to direct and co-ordinate the world-wide effort against AIDS;

(b) Promote, encourage and support the world-wide collection and dissemination of accurate information on AIDS;

(c) Develop and issue guidelines on the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of information and education programmes, including the related research and development, and ensure that these guidelines are updated and revised in the light of evolving experiences;

(d) Support countries in monitoring and evaluating preventive programmes, including information and education activities, and encourage wide dissemination of the findings in order to help countries to learn from the experiences of others;

(e) Support and strengthen national programmes for the prevention and control of AIDS.

14. Following from this Summit, 1988 shall be a Year of Communication and Co-operation about AIDS, in which we shall:

- open fully the channels of communication in each society so as to inform and educate more widely, broadly and extensively;
- strengthen the exchange of information and experience among all countries; and
- forge, through information and education and social leadership, a spirit of social tolerance.

15. We are convinced that, by promoting responsible behaviour and through international co-operation, we can and will begin now to slow the spread of HIV infection.