

# AIDS Advocacy Alert

## High Level Meeting on AIDS - HOW TO GET INVOLVED



Prepared by the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO) and the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC)

January 2008

### **Deadline for accreditation of civil society organizations - February 22, 2008**

This AIDS ADVOCACY ALERT aims to inform civil society organizations on how to get involved in the High Level Meeting on AIDS to be held during the UN General Assembly in New York in June 10-11, 2008.

### **High Level Meeting on AIDS**

#### **The Resolution**

In December 2007 the General Assembly approved a [Resolution](#)<sup>1</sup> (A/62/L.40) that sets out the process for the 2008 comprehensive review of the progress in implementing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS. The Resolution:

- agrees to a High Level Meeting to be held on June 10-11, 2008. It also agrees to an opening plenary that includes a speaker who is openly living with HIV, five thematic panel discussions, and an "informal interactive hearing with civil society". The outcome document will be a comprehensive summary of the discussions, drafted by the President of the General Assembly.
- calls on governments to submit national reports by January 31, 2008<sup>2</sup> [see [AIDS Advocacy Alert Reviewing national AIDS responses - How to get Involved](#)]<sup>3</sup> and for the UN Secretary General to submit a report on progress and challenges six weeks before the High Level Meeting.
- encourages Member States to include civil society in their national delegations. As in previous years, civil society organizations are invited to apply for accreditation to attend the meeting. The President of the General Assembly will submit a list, no later than March 31, for approval by member states.

#### **Accreditation and Registration**

The process for accreditation of civil society organizations and registration of participants is now open. You can apply and register online at <http://www.un-ngls.org/un aids/en>. The deadline for non-ECOSOC NGOs to submit applications for accreditation is February 22, 2008.

The President of the General Assembly will prepare a list of the organizations that have applied for accreditation and will submit it, no later than March 31st, to Member States for consideration on a no-objection basis for a final decision by the General Assembly.

1 [http://data.unaids.org/pub/BaseDocument/2007/a-62-l40\\_en.pdf](http://data.unaids.org/pub/BaseDocument/2007/a-62-l40_en.pdf)

2 Country reports are available on the UNAIDS website at:

<http://www.unaids.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/HIVData/CountryProgress/2007CountryProgress.asp>

3 [http://www.icaso.org/publications/aa\\_aug07\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.icaso.org/publications/aa_aug07_FINAL.pdf)

'Accredited' NGOs will be allowed to attend the High Level Meeting and to participate in the side events (e.g., panel discussion and civil society hearings) depending on space constraints.

NGOs will be able to participate in the meeting if they:

- already have consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN (ECOSOC status). They still need to register participants to attend the High Level Meeting.
- are delegates to the Programme Coordination Board of UNAIDS (PCB); or
- apply for accreditation by February 22 through UNAIDS and the Office of the President of the General Assembly and are accorded special authorization by the General Assembly to attend the review meeting.

**Please note:** accreditation does not involve resources to participate; you will need to identify your own funding. Contact your national AIDS Commission/Programme, local UNAIDS office, or donor agencies to ask for support if required.

#### **Advice on how to apply**

- Accreditation is for organizations (not individuals) so this needs to be done once only by someone in your organization.
- Organizations will need to register individual participants to attend the meeting. Due to space constraints, non-ECOSOC NGOs can initially only register two participants. This may be increased or decreased later depending on overall number of applicants.
- Make sure you read the instructions carefully and fill out all mandatory fields (marked with an asterisk \*).
- Other, non-mandatory, information is requested, but will not affect your accreditation. This information mainly aims to assist in identifying possible speakers and participants in the civil society hearing and panel discussions. Provide as much or as little information as you feel comfortable in sharing.

ICASO plans to develop a more detailed 'How to' guide on applying for accreditation. Please check [www.icaso.org/ungass](http://www.icaso.org/ungass) or [www.ungasshiv.org](http://www.ungasshiv.org) for updated information and new documents. If you have any questions or concerns about the information that is being requested, please email [universalaccess2010@icaso.org](mailto:universalaccess2010@icaso.org). We encourage all organizations that register to let us know by email. This way we will know if any organization has been excluded from the final list.

#### **The Civil Society Task Force**

The President of the General Assembly in partnership with UNAIDS is establishing a Civil Society Task Force (CSTF) comprised of representatives from civil society. The Task Force will report to the Office of the President of General Assembly and provide advice on key decisions relating to attendance and participation of CSOs in the High Level Meeting, including helping to identify participants for the civil society hearing and deciding on the format, themes, speakers, and programme of the panel discussions.

An International Civil Society Support Group made up of different constituencies (PLHIV, Sex Workers, IDU/Harm Reduction, Faith, Labor, Youth, Women) and regional representatives, set up to provide support to civil society involvement, will select individual nominations for each of the nine categories of members:

- Two representatives of networks of people living with HIV
- Three representatives from marginalized communities (drug users, sex workers, and men who have sex with men)
- A representative of the UNAIDS PCB NGO delegates
- A representative from the Civil Society Support Mechanism
- A representative of the labour sector
- A representative of the private/business sector
- A representative from a women's organization
- A representative from a youth organization
- A representative from a faith-based organization

The selected nominations will then be sent as recommendations to the UNAIDS Secretariat and the President of the UN General Assembly who will be responsible for the final decision.

### The Civil Society Support Mechanism

A [Civil Society Support Mechanism](#)<sup>4</sup> was set up at the end of 2007 by a coalition of community organizations<sup>5</sup>, with support from UNAIDS. International and Regional Support Groups, made up of diverse organizations and representatives, will provide communication, consultation, and coordination support for civil society to be meaningfully involved in the national and global reviews of the implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS (2001) and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS (2006).

The Mechanism is facilitated and supported by the Coalition members, with communication also supported by Health and Development Network (HDNet) and the World AIDS Campaign (WAC).

If you would like further information on the Mechanism or how to get involved in the 2008 AIDS Review, please write to [universalaccess2010@icaso.org](mailto:universalaccess2010@icaso.org), or go to [www.icaso.org/ungass](http://www.icaso.org/ungass) or [www.ungasshiv.org](http://www.ungasshiv.org).

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<sup>4</sup> [www.icaso.org/ungass](http://www.icaso.org/ungass)

<sup>5</sup> The International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO), the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC), the African Council of AIDS Service Organizations (AfriCASO), AIDS Action Europe (AAE), Asia-Pacific Council of AIDS Service Organizations (APCASO), Latin America and the Caribbean Council of AIDS Service Organizations (LACCASO) and the North American Council of AIDS Service Organizations (NACASO)