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Press Release

Statement from the Global Steering Committee (GSC) of the World AIDS Campaign

Civil Society is faced with many challenges. We are facing a situation where in 2010, 34 million people worldwide were living with HIV, 2.7 million people were newly infected by HIV, and 1.8 million people died from AIDS related causes¹.

As organizations we are also deeply affected by the lack of resources to ensure that these numbers are reduced as we strive towards zero AIDS related deaths, zero new infections and zero stigma and discrimination.

The World AIDS Campaign is no different. The past few years have indicated that we need to be more conscientious, more innovative and even more accountable and streamlined in our approach as we move to achieve a world without AIDS.

We as a GSC have considered many options and scenarios and feel strongly that the WAC's remit can only be strengthened by an increased presence in the region most affected by HIV. At a recent GSC meeting, a decision was made to close down WAC's office in Amsterdam. This decision was made to truly ensure that the campaign is embedded in the Global South. We realized that with limited funding available, it was only prudent to consolidate our operations and channel our resources into one office to ensure our operations are cost effective and more funds be allocated to our successful programmes on the ground.

We are proud of the role WAC has played in giving all communities a seat at the table of decision-making about an epidemic that affects their lives. There can be no doubt about the contribution of the WAC since 2004, when it transitioned from UNAIDS to a new and independent home in Amsterdam. In particular we recognize the legacy and contribution made by Marcel van Soest, who tragically passed away in September 2011. His work and legacy, along with other staff members, will continue to ensure WAC as the World AIDS Campaign International based in South Africa, maintains its pivotal role in HIV and AIDS around the globe in 2012 and beyond.

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¹ Taken from the UNAIDS World AIDS Day Report 2011, www.unaids.org



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