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**STATEMENT BY
DR. RAINER ENGELHARDT
ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER
INFECTIOUS DISEASE PREVENTION AND CONTROL BRANCH
PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY CANADA**

**TO THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN REALIZING THE
DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT ON HIV/AIDS AND THE POLITICAL
DECLARATION ON HIV/AIDS**

NEW YORK, 9 JUNE 2011

**DÉCLARATION DU
DR. RAINER ENGELHARDT
SOUS-MINISTRE ADJOINT
PRÉVENTION ET CONTRÔLE DES MALADIES INFECTIEUSES
AGENCE DE LA SANTÉ PUBLIQUE DU CANADA**

**À LA RÉUNION DE HAUT NIVEAU DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE VISANT À
PROCÉDER À L'EXAMEN D'ENSEMBLE DES PROGRÈS ACCOMPLIS DANS LA
RÉALISATION DE LA DÉCLARATION D'ENGAGEMENT SUR LE VIH/SIDA ET DE
LA DÉCLARATION POLITIQUE SUR LE VIH/SIDA**

NEW YORK, 9 JUIN 2011

Thank you, Mr. President.

Canada welcomes this important opportunity to assess the progress made in realizing the goals of the 2001 Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the 2006 Political Declaration.

We can be proud of our many accomplishments: collectively, we have made great gains in increasing access to treatment, and decreasing the incidence of HIV. Throughout the world today, there is a greater recognition of the importance of an enabling environment to reduce stigma and discrimination, and to protect the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Despite these successes, many political, social, economic and scientific challenges remain. Progress has not been evenly distributed around the globe. Universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support remains out of reach in many countries and among certain populations.

Canada is committed to achieving universal access to these services. We recognize that to achieve the goal of universal access, a comprehensive, integrated and co-ordinated response to HIV and AIDS is needed.

Canada recognizes that if global action to fight HIV/AIDS is to be successful, it must also be evidence-informed, and built on a foundation of diversity, respect for human rights and gender equality. The value of local knowledge, lived experiences and the meaningful inclusion of people living with HIV/AIDS is vital to achieving this success.

By working with partners and aligning with developing country governments, Canada is fighting HIV/AIDS in a harmonized way, to reach those at risk more efficiently. We have demonstrated our commitment by providing \$783 million, between 2005/06 and 2009/10, to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support programs in developing countries.

The Government of Canada also recognizes that prevention remains the most effective tool to address HIV and AIDS. Finding more effective methods of prevention is the best way to mitigate the human and financial costs of the epidemic.

The Government of Canada is investing in new methods of prevention. We strongly support the development of a safe, effective, affordable and globally accessible HIV vaccine through the Canadian HIV Vaccine Initiative. Canada will continue to seek innovative partnerships in research and laboratory sciences to further prevention efforts.

Preventing the transmission of HIV from mothers to children is a component of Canada's contribution to the G8 Muskoka Initiative on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health. In June 2010, Canada led G-8 and non G-8 leaders to commit \$7.3 billion to mobilize global action to reduce maternal and infant mortality, through the Muskoka Initiative. Canada is providing \$1.1 billion in new funding over the next five years. Canada is also providing \$1.75 billion in ongoing spending on maternal and child health programming a total contribution of \$2.85 billion over five years.

Last September, the UN Secretary General launched a Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health. To support the Strategy, the Secretary General asked the WHO to establish a *Commission on Information and Accountability on Women's and Children's Health*. Canada was honoured to have co-chaired the Commission, with President Kikwete of the United Republic of Tanzania.

The Commission has moved quickly to identify ten practical recommendations that will improve the tracking of resources and measuring results for accelerated progress on women's and children's health. The *Commission's* work was greatly informed by the experience of the HIV/AIDS response. In selecting the prevention of mother-to-child transmission as one of the tracer indicators for women's and children's health, the *Commission* has sent an important signal regarding the needed integration of health services.

The launch, at this meeting, of the *Global Plan Towards the Elimination of New HIV Infections Among Children by 2015, and Keeping Their Mothers Alive*, underscores that the world has an unprecedented opportunity to prevent new HIV infections among children, and keep mothers and children infected with HIV healthy and alive.

Canada's domestic response has taken into account the specific needs of populations disproportionately affected by HIV, including; Indigenous Peoples, men who have sex with men, people who use drugs, people living with HIV/AIDS, people from countries where HIV is endemic, women at risk, youth at risk, and people in prison.

The Government of Canada plans to invest more than \$91 million this year to support vaccine development and domestic prevention, diagnosis, treatment, care and support programs for these key populations.

We are also looking at the ways in which social, cultural and economic factors can make some more vulnerable to HIV infection and how those factors affect the quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Both domestically and globally, Canada is working to overcome stigma and discrimination faced by those living with, and at risk of, HIV and AIDS. We are also committed to decreasing the number of infections among women and girls

and to eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls.

Furthermore, Canada supports programmes that empower people to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.

Global action will only be successful if we work together. Success will be measured by how well we prevent the further spread of HIV and other related infections and how we support people living with those diseases

It has been ten years since we adopted the *Declaration of Commitment*. Since then, we have truly accomplished a great deal. But we cannot afford to be complacent. Through universal access to prevention, care, treatment and support, we, the international community, are capable of meeting our targets and reversing the negative impacts of HIV and AIDS.

Thank You