



International Development Law Organization
Organisation Internationale de Droit du Développement

Statement by

David Patterson

**Head of Delegation
for the International Development Law Organization (IDLO)
at the**

**2011 High Level Meeting on the Comprehensive Review of the Progress Achieved
in Realizing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political
Declaration on HIV/AIDS
(8-10 June 2011, New York)**

(Check against delivery)

Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,

1. IDLO is the only inter-governmental organization entirely devoted to advancing the rule of law and its contribution to development. Over 27 years, IDLO has trained more than 20,000 lawyers and others in developing countries and transition economies. There are registered IDLO Alumni Associations in 46 countries. Many IDLO alumni now hold senior positions in government, civil society and private sector organizations.
2. In 2001, this Assembly recognized that the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all is an essential element in the global response to HIV. To achieve human rights for all, including people living with HIV and key affected populations, UN Member States undertook, by 2003, to enact, strengthen or enforce as appropriate legislation, regulations and other measures to eliminate all related forms of discrimination, including through legal capacity building.
3. However, law reform to prohibit discrimination is a central, but not the only, element of an enabling legal environment. The law cannot eliminate discrimination without accessible and affordable quality legal services. To provide such services, lawyers need to understand HIV, the relevant national and international law, and their clients' needs. Legal services can also support evidence-based law and policy reforms by compiling accurate data on complaints received and legal and social outcomes.
4. IDLO has undertaken an extensive process of professional and community consultation, including with people living with HIV and key affected populations, to identify how to improve HIV-related legal services.
5. The IDLO health law program started in 2009 with a focus on eight countries with core funds and support from the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID). In 2011 we will provide technical and financial support to strengthen and expand HIV-related legal services and rights in 17 countries.

6. IDLO has since undertaken ground-breaking work on HIV, law and development: pilot projects to expand HIV-related legal services; research on legal service models, and on the links between legal services and HIV prevention, treatment and care; and support for South-South dialogues and professional networking.
7. In 2009, we hosted the first regional training seminar on HIV law and policy in Asia and the Pacific. This course was then adapted for IDLO's online e-learning platform, and offered in English in 2010. The French version of the e-learning course will be offered in 2011, and the Spanish version in 2012.
8. We have co-hosted regional consultations on HIV-related legal services and rights with local partners in Latin America, Middle East North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2011 IDLO and UNDP hosted the first national workshop on intellectual property law and access to medicines in Nepal.
9. With UNAIDS and UNDP, we developed the publication: *Toolkit: Scaling up HIV-related Legal Services*. Over four thousand copies were distributed in English to government and civil society partners by UNAIDS and UNDP. In 2010 the *Toolkit* was disseminated in French and Chinese. In 2011 it will be published in Spanish and Arabic. A national version has been developed by partners in Burkina Faso.
10. Our experience has proven that people living with HIV and key affected populations will seek and use quality legal services to address discrimination and other HIV-related legal issues, even in contexts where the rule of law is weak. From Benin to Papua New Guinea, our work has shown that legal services make a difference.
11. The international community's decision to hold this high level meeting, and the statements we heard during this debate, show that there is renewed political will at all levels - community, national and international levels - to act on the commitments that Member States entered into ten years ago to eliminate HIV-related discrimination.
12. We know legal services are essential to address discrimination and other HIV-related legal issues. The challenge now is to strengthen and expand these services and integrate them into national plans and budgets for HIV, and government legal aid programs. IDLO stands ready to assist governments and civil society partners meet this challenge.

Thank you, Mr President.

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