



Statement by

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on the occasion of the

High-level Meeting on the comprehensive review of the progress  
achieved in realizing the 2001 Declaration of Commitment on  
HIV/AIDS and the 2006 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS

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Mr. President

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Please allow me to associate Suriname with the statements delivered respectively by the distinguished Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the distinguished Minister of Paraguay on behalf of UNASUR.

Mr. President,

I take this opportunity to commend the United Nations for organizing this 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.

In Suriname we have made important strides forward in many areas. After the first reported HIV case in 1983 we have seen a steady increase in the epidemic until 2006. Since 2007 we have noticed a decline in the number of newly registered HIV-cases. According to the Global Report of UNAIDS 2010, Suriname is among few countries in the Caribbean where the incidence of HIV infection has decreased by more than 25%. We have also realized a decrease by 10% in the mortality rates since 2006.

The advances we have realized are the result of the implementation of our National Strategic Plan on HIV which includes the following strategies:

- Strengthened coordination and leadership through the establishment of a national multi-sectoral HIV Council;
- The establishment of additional structures such as the Center of Excellence in HIV treatment and care, that provides leadership in quality of services and training in the revised treatment protocols;
- Introduction of the combined prevention tool which has demonstrated to be effective in the HIV response. As the only country in the Caribbean, Suriname has implemented pilot projects which were successful in mobilizing men for circumcision as an additional preventive measure;
- Integration of HIV and AIDS services into regular health services. Suriname provides treatment and care through its decentralized primary health care centers. Our program to prevent transmission of HIV from mother to child is integrated in the national program for Mother and Child Health. In 2009 we adopted the Regional Initiative for Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV and Congenital Syphilis in Latin America and the Caribbean, which we expanded to include Hepatitis B;
- Involvement of people living with HIV in programs providing care and support and
- Sharing of experiences and lessons learned as well as technical collaboration with Latin American and Caribbean countries.

Despite the positive results mentioned we still face a number of challenges, namely:

- Harmful traditions and customs
- Misconceptions and adverse beliefs
- Language barriers in a multilingual society
- Vulnerability of small communities and individuals due to HIV related stigma, gender inequalities and poverty

Mr. President,

The Republic of Suriname appreciates the financial and technical support received thus far from the Global Fund and other donors which have contributed to the many successes we achieved in combatting the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Suriname. In order to maintain these achievements and to continue progressing in the integration of HIV and AIDS services in regular health services, the continued support of the international community, including donors is required.

In closing Mr. President,

Resources provided by funding agencies are becoming scarcer as already mentioned by several speakers before me. Yet the international community is committing itself to national and international targets. In order to move forward to achieve the goal of universal access to comprehensive HIV prevention programmes, treatment, care and support, it is of utmost importance to mobilize resources and political will on the national, regional and global level.

At the conclusion of this meeting we look forward to the adoption of the political declaration with concrete commitments for all stakeholders for an effective response to the HIV epidemic.

I thank you.