



January 30, 2007

The Honourable James M. Flaherty  
Minister of Finance,  
Department of Finance Canada  
140 O'Connor Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G5

Dear Minister:

**Re: Demonstrating Canada's Commitment to a Comprehensive Funding Plan for Universal Access to HIV Prevention, Care and Treatment by 2010**

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As international development organizations, humanitarian organizations, AIDS service organizations, trade unions, faith-based groups and human rights organizations, we are writing to encourage you to continue showing Canada's commitment to address the global HIV/AIDS crisis when you participate in the G8 Finance Ministers meeting on February 9-10 in Essen, Germany.

At the Gleneagles Summit in July 2005, G8 leaders promised to develop and implement a package for HIV prevention, treatment and care, with the aim of as close as possible to universal access to treatment for all those who need it by 2010. Canada was among the countries that reaffirmed a commitment to this target during the G8 Summit in Russia. However, we are deeply concerned that 18 months after this ambitious target was agreed, the funding needed to ensure its delivery has yet to be committed. In 2007 alone, \$8.1 billion is needed to close the funding gap. As a result, over 75% of people urgently needing life-saving HIV treatment are not receiving it, and last year almost 3 million people died unnecessarily of AIDS-related illnesses. Prevention that could stop transmission to newborns reaches less than 10% of pregnant women. Less than 50% of young people have the knowledge they need to stay healthy. The well-demonstrated links between HIV infection, progression to AIDS, poverty and food insecurity continue to be ignored.

Growth and responsibility are central themes of Germany's G8 presidency, and the German Government has announced that the 2010 target will be on the agenda at the G8 summit in June. However, without a funding plan in place making progress to halt the HIV pandemic will become just another broken promise.

We urge you to work with the German Government and other G8 Finance Ministers, beginning at the G8 Finance Ministers meeting in February, to agree to a comprehensive funding plan for universal

The Global Treatment Access Group (GTAG) is a working group of international development, human rights, humanitarian, and AIDS service organizations, trade unions, student groups and faith-based groups seeking to improve access to essential medicines and other aspects of HIV prevention and care, treatment and support for people living with HIV/AIDS in developing countries.

access to HIV prevention care and treatment by 2010. This funding plan should map out how donor countries intend to urgently increase revenue and channel much-needed additional money to fully fund all national targets. As a starting point, funding for universal access must have a prominent place on the agenda at the G8 Finance Ministers meeting in February.

We are also alarmed by the fact that many countries heavily burdened by AIDS continue to spend disproportionately high percentages of their national revenue on servicing the debt held by multilateral agencies and banks. This money could be put to better use supporting the expansion of HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support programs at home. Expecting countries to continue servicing debt while their people are not accessing treatments is an injustice and a travesty.

The Gleneagles Summit announced debt relief for some Heavily Indebted Poor Countries but the G8 Finance Ministers need to finish the job started in 2005. We urge you as Minister of Finance to work with your G8 partners to promote the immediate and unconditional cancellation of 100% of the multilateral and bilateral debt owed by all countries burdened by AIDS, debt and poverty and to ensure that debt cancellation is not conditional on macro-economic policies that hinder the fight against poverty and the AIDS pandemic.

In making these requests we join a broader coalition of civil society organisations from across the G8 countries. In the coming weeks our partners will contact your counterparts in Germany, France, Italy, Japan, UK, the USA and Russia with identical demands. Campaigners from across our membership will also be directly lobbying the German Finance Minister, Peer Steinbrueck, asking him to lead negotiations towards a funding plan.

2007 represents a make-or-break point for the 2010 target. We hope that you and other G8 Finance Ministers will support this initiative and provide a lifeline to people living with HIV and AIDS around the world.

Yours Sincerely,



Michael O'Connor  
Executive Director – Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD)

***On behalf of:***

ACCSPA  
Action Canada for Population and  
Development  
AIDS Bow Valley  
AIDS Committee of London  
Alberta Community Council on HIV (ACCH)  
Asian Society for the Intervention of AIDS  
(ASIA)  
Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's  
Health - Dalhousie University  
BC Persons with AIDS Society

Bruce House  
Canada-Africa Community Health Alliance  
Canadian AIDS Society  
Canadian AIDS Treatment Information  
Exchange (CATIE)  
Canadian Physicians for AID and Relief  
(CPAR)  
Canadian Treatment Action Council (CTAC)  
CARE Canada  
Central Alberta AIDS Network Society  
Dignitas International

HIV Network of Edmonton Society  
HIV West Yellowhead  
ICASO  
Jackie Heim  
Lawrence Heights Community Health Centre  
Maison Plein Coeur  
MATCH International Centre  
Mennonite Central Committee  
Plan Canada  
Positively Africa  
Primate's World Relief and Development  
Fund

Rooftops Canada  
Sean Boushel  
Tariq Bhanjee  
The Marquis Project  
The SHARP Foundation (Society Housing  
AIDS Restricted Persons)  
United Steelworkers Humanity Fund  
University of Alberta  
Youth Challenge International

*c.c. Right Honorable Stephen Harper – Prime Minister of Canada  
Honorable Peter Harder – Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Int'l Trade*