



F. Barré-Sinoussi
Closing session speech

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Distinguished delegates, ladies & gentlemen, dear friends,

Good evening.

We all have been living a week filled with many emotions. Sadness. Anger.

But I really want to thank each one of you for the dignified and respectful atmosphere in which that conference happened. It truly honoured the memory of our lost friends as well as those of all the passengers of the MH17 flight.

It seems to me that the tragic event of last week has also infused in all of us a renewed feeling of unity. Our community has once again demonstrated that in the face of adversity, we were able to come together in solidarity and show the world that nothing can stop us.

UNAIDS announced last week that almost 14 million patients have now access to antiretroviral treatment. We are now on track to reach the UN goal of 15 millions by 2015. I remember 15 years ago some people saying that universal access was just a dream.

Well, I guess this is the proof that when the whole world is mobilized toward one goal then dreams can become reality.

And they will also for the millions of other HIV positive patients that are still in need of those antiretroviral treatments.

But not only!

2014 is a turning point in chronic hepatitis C treatment with extremely efficient drugs coming to the market able to cure up to 90% of patients.

In the light of what has been largely discussed during the week, I am saying this: let's use the experience gained over the years in the HIV fight to reduce HCV treatments cost and make the universal access a dream coming true for the 150 millions patients with chronic hepatitis C!

We all know that the unprecedented international mobilization against HIV/AIDS has fathered the concept of global health. Everywhere, the investment in the AIDS response has catalysed general health improvements

- in addressing the issues of co-infections & comorbidities;

- in addressing the issues of maternal & child health;
- in building stronger health systems by strengthening infrastructures, laboratories and human resources.

The mobilization against AIDS is also a strong driver to advance other areas such as human rights. There will be no end of AIDS without ensuring respect and dignity of all people, equity in access to health services and social justice.

I am very glad that the past week clearly reaffirmed that our engagement goes largely beyond HIV.

Australia will host the next G20 summit in few months and the deadline for the Millennium development goals is next year. In this context of big international rendezvous, I strongly believe that we must further increase our collaboration with other major international health movements at every level of the response because our objective is to build a better future for all. This is what global health is about!

For more than 2 years, a number of people have worked very hard to put this conference together. First, I would like to address my deepest and most sincere thanks to my co-chair, Sharon and the fantastic AIDS 2014 team in Melbourne for the incredible work you have all done. Sharon it has been such a pleasure to work on your side over those past years.

I would like to sincerely thank all the members of the conference coordinating committee, the conference programme committee, the track committees, the youth programme committee. You all truly made a brilliant programme.

Thank you to all the conference partners, to our donors and our sponsors AbbVie Gilead, MSD and ViiV Healthcare.

To all the IAS staff – my heartfelt thanks for the long hours, efficiency and good natured assistance.

To our volunteers – as always, a huge thank you. You are a source of pride to this event.

Finally, to all the delegates who make this event the success it is.

As you all know this is my last conference as the President of the international AIDS society. I would like to take this occasion to say that I am really grateful I was given the opportunity to serve the IAS and beyond the global HIV community in that position.

I am very happy and proud to introduce the next President of IAS, Chris Beyrer, a man I have great admiration for. For those of you who might not know him, Chris is a physician and internationally renowned epidemiologist, professor at the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health. Chris is particularly known for being a champion in the field of HIV & Human rights for more than 2 decades. He has done a tremendous amount of work on key affected population in Burma, Thailand, southern Africa and in Eastern Europe. He is indeed the co-chair with Michel Kazatchkine of the IAS working group on Key populations.

Chris is one of the most passionate advocate for social justice & human rights and I have no doubt that IAS will in very good hands under his presidency.

Thank you again and see you in Durban.