

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stepping up the Pace: Providing continuity that links science and community action in the global response to HIV

Tuesday, 1 April (Cape Town, South Africa) — Responding to the latest science in HIV prevention and treatment, the International AIDS Society (IAS) is hosting a series of events in South Africa to promote the upcoming 20th International AIDS Conference in Melbourne (AIDS 2014), to highlight the appointment of Professor Olive Shisana as the Local Co-Chair for the 21st International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2016) to be held in Durban in 2016, and to discuss the implications of the latest scientific findings and how they can translate into programme implementation.

The events will provide an opportunity to discuss the latest HIV science and look ahead to the discussions likely to take place at AIDS 2014 in July this year. This continuity is important to ensure the hard won scientific, political and community gains in the response to HIV are sustained and scaled up.

The IAS President and International Chair of AIDS 2014, Professor Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, said: "We are looking forward to outstanding science and vigorous debate on all aspects of the HIV response in July in Melbourne. Innovative science, strong leadership and community engagement will all contribute to accelerating advances in the fields of HIV prevention, care, implementation and cure."

The International AIDS Conference provides a unique opportunity to link science, leadership and community together, as these three strands are crucial in the fight against AIDS, and the conferences in Melbourne in 2014 and in Durban 2016 will build on the achievements already made.

Professor Olive Shisana, Chief Executive Officer of the South African Human Science Research Council (HSRC) and AIDS 2016 Local Co-Chair, has also been the Principal Investigator for HIV prevalence, incidence and behaviour surveys 2002-2014. On April 1, the latest results of the survey were released in South Africa. "The International AIDS Conferences are a crucial opportunity to share the latest scientific information and consult with other scientists on the best way to translate the recommendations into implementable prevention and/or treatment options." said Professor Shisana. "I will be there to present our work and ensure discussions are mindful of the need that all proposed interventions must take into account the setting in which they are to be implemented. The scientific conversations, political leadership and community action at AIDS 2014 will help to lay a solid foundation for progress and further scrutiny in Durban at AIDS 2016. I encourage scientists, political leaders and community activists to attend both the Melbourne and Durban International AIDS Conference"

ENDS

About the events in South Africa

4 April: Cape Town

1 - Briefing event for civil society, media and academic partners at the University of Cape Town (UCT) (11am - 12pm), hosted by the Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation, the HIV/AIDS Coordination Unit at UCT, and the IAS - "Stepping up the Pace: Community action and continuing the scientific conversation." Keynote speakers will include Professor Olive Shisana, Professor Linda-Gail Bekker and Cal Volks.

2 - Briefing event for conference delegates at the 6th Annual Infectious Disease Conference in Cape Town (6pm - 7pm) - "Stepping up the Pace: From CROI in Boston, to AIDS 2014 in Melbourne, to AIDS 2016 in Durban." Keynote speakers will include Professor Olive Shisana, Dr. Glenda Gray and Professor Linda-Gail Bekker.

7 April: Pretoria, Cape Town and Durban

3 - Seminar on multi-sectoral leadership and innovative partnerships in the South African and global response to HIV (time TBC) hosted by the HSRC in Pretoria, with live video links to the HSRC offices in Cape Town and Durban. Keynote speakers will include Professor Olive Shisana, Dr Yogan Pillay, and speakers from the private sector.

About AIDS 2016

The 21st International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2016), to be held from 17-22 July 2016 at the Durban International Convention Centre (ICC), is expected to bring together some 18,000 participants from around the world. This is the second time that Durban will be hosting the International AIDS Conference, having hosted the XIII International AIDS Conference in 2000. That conference was the first to be hosted in a developing country and enormously helped to change the approach to global public health. The International Chair of AIDS 2016 is Professor Chris Beyrer, IAS President-Elect and the Local Co-Chair is Professor Olive Shisana.

The International AIDS Conference was previously held in Vienna, Austria (AIDS 2010), Washington, D.C., USA (AIDS 2012), with the next one, AIDS 2014 to be held in Melbourne, Australia, 20 – 25 July 2014.

AIDS 2016 Conference Organizers

AIDS 2016 is convened by the IAS and permanent partners: the Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+); the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO); the International Community of Women with HIV/AIDS (ICW), and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

Non-permanent partners are the Positive Women's Network – South Africa, and the Global Forum on MSM & HIV (MSMGF).

The regional partners are: Réseau Africain des Praticiens Assurant la Prise en Charge Médicale des Personnes Vivant avec le VIH/SIDA (RESAPSI), the AIDS and Rights Alliance (ARASA); and Enda Santé.

The South African partners are: the South African Medical Research Council; the South African Ministry of Health; and the South African National AIDS Council.

About the IAS

The International AIDS Society (IAS) is the world's leading independent association of HIV professionals, with over 16,000 members from more than 196 countries working at all levels of the global response to AIDS. The IAS members include researchers from all disciplines, clinicians, public health and community practitioners on the frontlines of the epidemic, as well as policy and programme planners. The IAS is custodian of the biennial International AIDS Conference, which will be held in Melbourne, Australia, 20-25 July 2014 and lead organizer of the IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention, which will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, 19-22 July 2015.

www.iasociety.org | www.aids2014.org | www.ias2015.org

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