

World AIDS Day 2008

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The national theme for World Aids Day on 1 December is 'Leadership and Unity'. South Africa is finally united in stopping HIV, AIDS and TB, and in fighting for the best treatment and care for all.

TAC calls for all people living in South Africa to get involved in World AIDS Day. At midday on 1 December, there will be a 15 minute work stoppage to show our national commitment to stopping HIV and TB infections and deaths from AIDS. The Minister of Health will address the nation, followed by the Deputy President.

The 15 minute stoppage should be used by people across South Africa, in schools, churches, workplaces and communities, to observe World AIDS Day, and to act together to raise awareness about HIV/TB.

TAC calls for everyone to get involved: now is the time to approach others to plan actions on the day or to join in the many activities which are being planned.

One of the targets set out in the National Strategic Plan is to reduce the number of new HIV infections in South Africa by 50% in 2011. TAC will use World AIDS Day to discuss whether this and the other targets set out in the NSP are being met. The South African National AIDS Council (SANAC) is the guiding body on the implementation of the NSP. How is government assisting SANAC to implement and monitor the targets of the NSP at the primary healthcare level?

The shortage of ART in the Free State and the national condom shortage violates our rights to life and to health. Government must account for why these shortages have come about and how they can be prevented in the future. Government must also implement plans for immediate interventions to end these shortages.

TAC calls for a massive mobilization around PMTCT and ART. Everyone has the right to receive the life-saving treatments they need. And ART and PMTCT programmes must be national priorities beyond the limitations of a one-day celebration.

TAC calls on all of our leaders and citizens to get tested for HIV. Get tested, get treated. We demand a solution to the ART shortages in the Free State.

Aluta continua!

The following activities are being organised by TAC for World AIDS Day:

On the 30th November 2008 the PLWHA sector of TAC and the Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation have organised a VCT event near Mzoli's in Gugulethu.

TAC volunteers will conduct a door to door campaign to inform people about prevention, to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and about VCT to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The Tutu Tester will be there and different leaders and local popular personalities will show support for testing or will get tested. Following this year's theme of 'leadership', they show that leaders test, too, to encourage more people to know their status.

For the 1 December 2008 the PLWHA sector of TAC is part of the coordinating team of a five day event at the V&A

Waterfront, Cape Town, together with ConsciousFlowz, Good Hope FM, Lovelife and the Amy Biehl Foundation. The programme finale of Red Rhythms, a 5 day HIV/AIDS awareness campaign will end on the 1st December 2008. It will feature performances by youth and popular artists, as well as speeches by activists and the MEC for Health. A youth group that engaged in HIV/AIDS related workshops will present a memorandum and hand it over to the MEC.

Furthermore, there will a fair at which TAC and other non-profit organisations will have the chance to highlight their HIV/AIDS-related work and recruit volunteers. Voluntary counselling and testing will be also provided on site to encourage people to get tested. TAC will have an information table and one National Manager(Victor Lakay) and one community activist(Boniswa Seti) will speak at the event.

Leading up to these events we have conducted a workshop with High School learners from Kensington and Heideveld high discussing the human rights issues pertaining to HIV/AIDS and TB. Prevention, PMTCT and gender-based violence and HPV were the topics covered.

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