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MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD BY OBAMA: MARCH TO THE US CONSULATE ON JUNE 17th TO SAVE LIVES!

By *moderator*
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TAC, COSATU and MSF PRESS CONFERENCE

TAC, MSF and COSATU would like to invite all media to attend the press conference on our universal access to HIV treatment campaign. During the press conference we will outline the reasons that we are marching, with partners, on 17 June in Johannesburg. We are calling on governments and funders to prevent millions of unnecessary and unconscionable deaths by meeting their commitment to support universal access to HIV treatment, prevention and care.

Speakers:

Zwelinzima Vavi, General Secretary of COSATU
Vuyiseka Dubula, General Secretary of the TAC
Sharon Ekambaram, Head of the Programmes Unit, MSF South Africa

Where:

COSATU House, 10th Floor Boardroom
1 Leyds Street Braamfontein

When:

3:00 PM, Tuesday 15 June

AFRICA WINS EVERY TIME YOU INVEST IN HIV AND TB.

For more details on the press conference contact:
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MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD BY OBAMA: MARCH TO THE US CONSULATE ON JUNE 17th TO SAVE LIVES!

March details:

We will gather at George Lea Park, Johannesburg at 10:00 am on June 17th. The rally will begin at 11:00 am, after which we will march to the US Consulate to hand over our memorandum.

AIDS TREATMENT IS UNDER THREAT ACROSS AFRICA.

European governments and the USA are betraying their commitments to help fund HIV treatment in the world?s poorest countries

2010 is meant to be the year when we achieve universal access to antiretroviral treatment (ART). But across Africa less than half of people in need of ART are accessing it. Despite this, the United States and Europe are retreating on their commitments to support HIV/AIDS treatment, prevention and care. Their failure to honour these commitments will result in millions of avoidable deaths across sub-Saharan Africa.

Join the March

On 17 June we will be marching to the US Consulate in Johannesburg to make United States President Barack Obama aware of the deaths that will result from his anti-treatment policies. We will hand over a Memorandum to senior US government officials including Deputy President Joe Biden who is visiting for the World Cup.

It is tragic, that under President Obama the President?s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is cutting support for ART and flat-lining funding for HIV/AIDS. Over the years ahead, this will condemn millions of newly infected patients to death and threaten the health of those already on treatment.

The anti-treatment policies of the Obama administration betray the promises made during his election campaign to increase support for PEPFAR. Further, the anti-treatment policies can only be seen as anti-Africa policies - a betrayal of the hope of Africans in his election as President of the United States. It is ironic that the right-wing Bush delivered more on AIDS than Obama.

Funding cuts are killing Hope

HIV/AIDS continues to be an emergency for Africa. It is a leading cause of infant and maternal mortality. The lack of access to ART is fuelling dual epidemics of tuberculosis (TB) and drug resistant TB. In sub-Saharan Africa alone, an estimated two-million people still die each year of HIV/AIDS.

We have already begun to see the harsh reality of funding cuts. This includes clinics running out of drugs, treatment rationing, and patients having to share medicines. Also, the slow-down in enrolment on treatment means that patients only receive treatment when they already require intensive care for opportunistic infections and AIDS related diseases. This is increasing the burden on healthcare workers and health facilities and putting strain on health systems in their entirety. This is no way to build health systems.

Our demands

We are calling on President Barack Obama:

? to reverse the funding cuts for HIV and to ensure that PEPFAR continues to expand funding to meet universal access targets.

We are calling on the United States and Europe:

? to replenish the Global Fund on AIDS TB and Malaria (GFATM) to meet universal access. The Global Fund has indicated that it must raise between $17 and $20 billion for its upcoming round to continue to expand its programmes.

? the United States and Europe must publicly guarantee that this funding is made available to meet the expectations that they themselves have created by their commitments to universal access.

We are calling on President Zuma and Health Minister Motsoaledi:

? to represent the needs of Africa during this year?s global forums on the MDGs.

? to lead developing countries in echoing our calls for expanded and sustainable funding for HIV.

We call on you to join our march. AIDS is not over. Be seen. Be heard by the world while they are watching the World Cup played in our country.

The future of the region and the health of the continent hangs in the balance. Ke nako!

Endorsing organisations:

Treatment Action Campaign (TAC)
SECTION27
Médecins Sans Frontières/ Doctors Without Borders (MSF)
International Treatment Preparedness Coalition (ITPC)
AIDS Rights Alliance of Southern Africa (ARASA)
World AIDS Campaign (WAC)
Community Media Trust (CMT)
The AIDS Consortium
Children?s Rights Center (CRC)
Rural Health Advocacy Project

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