

**A Statement by Dr Edward Maganu, Chair of the UN Theme
Group on HIV/AIDS at the Official Launch of HIV/AIDS Business
Coalition Tanzania (ABCT) at Karimjee Hall,
Dar es Salaam on the 19th August, 2004**

Hon. (Mrs.) Anna Abdallah, Minister for Health, (MP)
Chairman of the AIDS Business Coalition Tanzania, Mr William
Schulz Jr.
Distinguished Chief Executive Officers of Member Companies
Executive Chair of TACAIDS, Maj. Gen. (Rtd) Herman Lupogo
Members of the Diplomatic Corps
UN Colleagues
Distinguished Invited Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

I am honoured to represent the UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS at this auspicious occasion. The Theme Group, as I hope you are aware, is made up of the Heads of UN Agencies that are resident in Tanzania.

The Theme Group's major objectives in its support to the UR Tanzania is to identify what the UN Agencies can contribute jointly and collaboratively in addition to what they do individually in their support to the HIV/AIDS response of the country. This enables the Agencies to each contribute

according to its comparative advantage. The UN also aims at having a common approach when collaborating with other partners and supporting the National Strategic Plans.

We view the Private Sector as a key stakeholder in the fight against HIV/AIDS, and consequently as a partner we would like to work with.

I wish to take this opportunity on behalf of the UN family in Tanzania, to extend our congratulations to the pioneer group among the Private Sector, who realizing the important role the Private Sector can play in addressing HIV/AIDS in Tanzania, initiated first meetings and discussions to establish this coalition where all like minded Chief Executives and companies can work together and share varied experiences and lessons learned.

I am informed that Unilever Tanzania, with strong support from their Headquarters, spearheaded those first meetings and gave almost 75% of the time of one of their senior Managers as well

as some time from other staff members to facilitate the process which as culminated in what we are witnessing today, "The Launch of the AIDS Business Coalition Tanzania". We commend you for your leadership.

This occasion also demonstrates the positive results of the efforts of TACAIDS that is mandated to mobilize the entire spectrum of the society around the issue of HIV/AIDS.

During the last Annual Review of the National Multisectoral Strategic Framework on HIV/AIDS, the Private Sector demonstrated that a good number of individual companies were already doing commendable work in managing HIV/AIDS in their workplaces. It was also clear however that many companies still did not have programmes to help their employees who are infected or affected by HIV.

We therefore congratulate TACAIDS for this major achievement of bringing the Private Sector to the forefront in this mammoth task.

On the part of the UN, the ILO in line with its mandate, leads and facilitates our joint support and collaboration with the Business Sector.

We have closely followed this process through regular briefings and we commend the focused approach towards achieving this goal by ILO and UNAIDS, the joint United Nations programme on HIV/AIDS who have worked with the pioneer group together, and GTZ which brought practical examples of working with companies in the development and implementation of HIV/AIDS interventions. This indeed is an

excellent example where different partners came together to support, collaborate and facilitate a process in a harmonized manner

This model will come in handy as we help other sectors clarify their roles including those Government Ministries that are still working on the strategies for their response.

Hon. Minister for Health, distinguished guests, as we know, this is only the beginning of a long process. The mission of the AIDS Business Coalition Tanzania is: "To contain the spread of HIV, and to control and manage AIDS through development and sharing of best practices, advocacy and creating synergies amongst Tanzania Employers".

In order to achieve this noble mission, ABCT will advocate, develop and encourage workplace programmes and partner with other organizations involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

We as the UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS are interested and engaged in supporting all those activities that will achieve those objectives. I would like to assure the AIDS Business Coalition Tanzania (ABCT) of our cooperation, and that the UN Agencies will deploy their considerable technical capacities to support the coalition according to their areas of expertise. We know that the Government of Tanzania has emphasized the role of the private sector in development, and we are

confident that the coalition can count on the support of both the Government and the rest of the Development partners in their response to this pandemic that constitutes such a major threat to development.

The presence of his Honour the Prime Minister as Guest of Honour at this ceremony bears testimony to the importance that the Government gives to all stakeholders in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

I therefore, in conclusion, wish to take this opportunity to wish the AIDS Business Coalition of Tanzania all success in its future endeavours, and to thank the Guest of Honour, the Honorable Prime Minister for demonstrating Government support by his presence.

Thank you all.

DSM, 19.08.04

EDM