

PRESS RELEASE

President of El Salvador to lend support to UN High Level Meeting on AIDS

El Salvador first country in Latin America to declare representation at the highest level at June meeting which will shape the future of the response to HIV

Geneva, 14 April 2011—The President of El Salvador, Mauricio Funes has set aside the dates to attend the United Nations High Level Meeting on AIDS in New York this June. The meeting will be critical in determining the future of the AIDS response as UN member states gather to discuss how to overcome the obstacles which are still preventing many countries from meeting their universal access targets.

In 2001 UN Member States came together for the first historic meeting on HIV, the landmark UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS. At the follow-up review in 2006, the High Level Meeting on AIDS, Member States made commitments to pursue all efforts to achieve the goal of universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.

The meeting to be held in June will provide a platform for Member States and partners to review progress made to date and work out ways of addressing the many challenges faced in the AIDS response today.

“This year marks 30 years since the first case of AIDS was reported,” said Michel Sidibé. “In those 30 years the face of the epidemic has changed considerably and it is essential that the response adapts to the new realities. President Funes’s pledge of support to the June meeting is an encouraging sign that El Salvador is committed to keeping HIV at the top of its political agenda and that it stands firm in joining global efforts to achieve a future generation free from HIV.”

The percentage of people in need of treatment and who had access to antiretroviral therapy in El Salvador increased from 17% in 2004 to 53% in 2009—and the number of people living with HIV reduced by 27% from 2001 to 2009.

El Salvador assumed the position of chair of UNAIDS’ Programme Coordinating Board for 2011. UNAIDS’ Programming Board acts as the governing body on all programmatic issues concerning policy, strategy, finance, monitoring and evaluation of UNAIDS.

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UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, is an innovative United Nations partnership that leads and inspires the world in achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. Learn more at unaids.org.

UNAIDS’ vision: Zero new HIV infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS-related deaths.