

## Press release

### **British Actor and AIDS activist Rupert Everett accepts appointment as UNAIDS Special Representative**

**Geneva, 1 December 2006** – On World AIDS Day, respected British actor Rupert Everett has accepted the appointment of Special Representative for the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

Active in the AIDS response for a number of years, Everett has previously undertaken AIDS awareness-raising work with various non-governmental organizations including Action AID and lately with the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. He has taken part in a number of International AIDS conferences, including the 2004 conference in Bangkok, where he traveled to Cambodia to report on AIDS for a special Vanity Fair and BBC feature.

In his role as UNAIDS Special Representative Rupert Everett will focus on raising awareness about the epidemic and encourage the film and media industry to join forces in the AIDS response. “I am sincerely honoured to team up with UNAIDS to face the challenges posed by AIDS and help find solutions,” Everett said. I have lost loved ones to the epidemic and I have seen with my own eyes the devastation that AIDS, and AIDS-related discrimination brings. As UNAIDS Special Representative I will endeavour to advocate on the issue as much as I possibly can.”

The actor, who has starred in many blockbuster films including “My best friend’s wedding” alongside Julia Roberts, is currently in India and will attend a World Aids Day event in Delhi.

“Rupert Everett has already shown exceptional commitment to the AIDS response and I am proud to appoint him as UNAIDS Special Representative,” said Dr Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director. “People in the public eye like Rupert can inspire and motivate others to unite against AIDS. I am confident that he will speak up, and speak out, building on the good work he has been doing to raise awareness and break down HIV-related stigma.”

UNAIDS estimates that 39.5 million people worldwide were living with HIV in 2006. An estimated 4.3 million became newly infected with HIV and an estimated 2.9 million lost their lives to AIDS in 2006.

#### **Contact**

Tina Bille | UNAIDS Geneva | tel. +41 22 791 4928 | [billet@unaids.org](mailto:billet@unaids.org)

Beth Magne-Watts | UNAIDS Geneva | tel. +41 22 791 5074 | [magnewatts@unaids.org](mailto:magnewatts@unaids.org)