

## Statement

### **UNAIDS and OHCHR call for greater protection of the human rights of all persons regardless of sexual orientation or HIV status**

**Geneva, 26 February 2008** - The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) are alarmed at recent reports of human rights violations committed against people on the basis of their sexual orientation and their actual or presumed HIV status.

UNAIDS and OHCHR urge all governments to be vigilant in respecting and protecting the rights of individuals in this regard, in particular the rights of all to be free from murder, torture, violence, arbitrary arrest and vilification, regardless of their HIV status or sexual orientation.

Among specific concerns that have arisen in national responses to HIV are reports of forced HIV testing, arbitrary detention on the basis of HIV status and disclosure of an individual's HIV status without consent. Such punitive measures violate individuals' rights and make it more difficult to reach those in need of HIV prevention, treatment and care services. Where it exists, homophobia fuels the HIV epidemic, and must be addressed as a key part of national HIV responses.

Experience has shown that effective responses to HIV are those based on respect for human rights, tolerance, and unimpeded access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.

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For further information also read the presentation of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Ms Louise Arbour to the International conference on LGBT (Lesbian, Gays, Bisexual and transgender) human rights – [Read presentation](#)

#### **Contact**

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