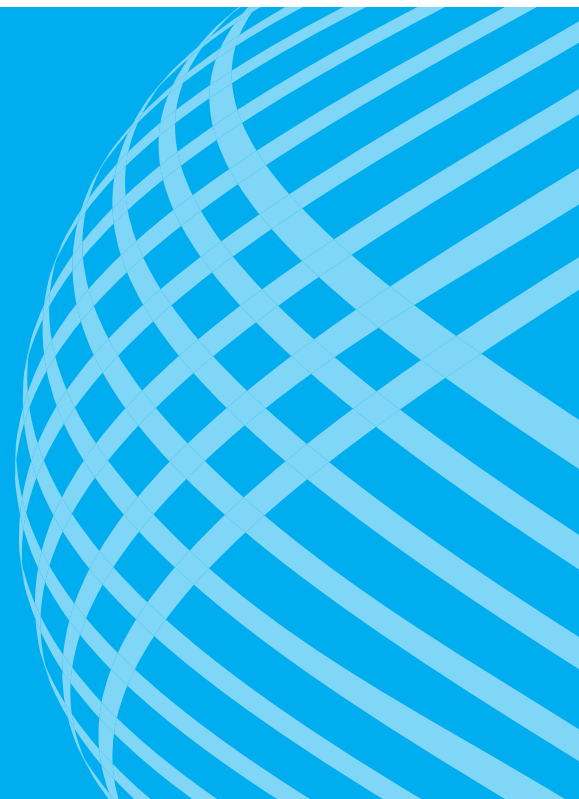


# OPENING AND CLOSING REMARKS

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WINNIE BYANYIMA,  
UNAIDS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
UNAIDS-PEPFAR-GLOBAL FUND HIGH-LEVEL EVENT "REVITALIZED  
MULTILATERALISM: RECOMMITTING TO ENDING AIDS TOGETHER"





# OPENING REMARKS

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WINNIE BYANYIMA,  
UNAIDS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
TUESDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2024

Thank you very much James.

Excellencies,

Heads of State and Government,

Honourable Ministers,

Honourable Guests,

It is my great honour to welcome you to this vital gathering.

Today multilateralism is under threat.

Some ask if it can work.

We are here today to show that multilateralism works. There isn't another way to solve global challenges.

The global response to AIDS, the world's most deadly pandemic, defines that path to success, and it's a path of multilateralism. Over 25 years ago the world came together at the United Nations to fight a disease, HIV. The world set up institutions, such as ours, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. The Global Fund and PEPFAR were created to resource the response. We are co-hosting this event together. The governments set targets, they spurred the science, they mobilized the companies to fight this disease. And every five years, the governments, the leaders have come together here at the General Assembly to recommit and refresh our strategy.

So, it is my distinct honour to welcome you all in this room.

Because here in this room you represent governments, people living with HIV, civil society, the private sector, philanthropy, United Nations agencies, and scientists. In the midst of all the noise and all the doubts, this partnership, that I call a movement, is the proof that multilateralism works and that the United Nations is the platform.

Today, we will celebrate our collective achievements and reaffirm our commitments to end this disease. You have shown that multilateralism is not just a theory, a concept—it is the way we have saved lives and kept the world secure. We celebrate nearly 31 million people who are already on treatment, and we commit to reaching the 9 million people not yet reached. We celebrate the 60% reduction in new infections, and we commit to drive down new infections much further, much faster—turning



## *Nothing about us, without us.*

off the tap. We celebrate the progress we have made in advancing rights, and we commit to rights for all people without discrimination.

Learning from our successes, the path ahead is clear. It is also the path to solving all other global challenges. Here are the things on the path:

First, shared responsibility and global solidarity. No single country can ever solve global problems on its own.

Second, ensuring that the benefits of scientific innovation are shared by all countries. We could be on the doorstep of an era of long-acting HIV medicines for prevention and for treatment if we act together.

Third, today's pandemics are driven by inequalities. Reaching vulnerable, marginalized people first and putting human rights at the centre is key. As is ending stigma and discrimination.

Fourth, people living with HIV and communities, putting them in the lead. "Nothing about us, without us." Making it a reality. Where we are succeeding, community-led responses are strong. So investing in communities for the AIDS response and for every other pandemic is vital for success.

Fifth, resourcing the global response. We must agree a comprehensive and quick debt relief, for developing countries to be able also to reform their tax policies and raise more revenues, and for the world to come together and agree to end tax dodging. This is what will free domestic resources for the AIDS response and for other needs. And global solidarity through development financing, through development cooperation, is crucial. Pulling back would be like pulling the scaffolding away from an unfinished building. This would be irresponsible.

In fighting a pandemic, stopping on the path to winning could mean a resurgent pandemic instead of the end of AIDS. So, I am also excited today about the commitments that are being made. Our path is one of partnership and unwavering political will.

Thank you for your leadership.

Thank you for being here.



# CLOSING REMARKS

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I am inspired. I hope you all are.

Today was much, much more than a lunch. Today for me was a milestone.

You have not only recommitted to our mission to end this disease, you've pledged concrete investments, political leadership, essential reforms that will continue the momentum.

Beyond this room, we have also heard from over two dozen countries and organizations and partners from all over the world, who have also shared their pledges, recommitting to end AIDS.

Commitments include accelerating HIV prevention and treatment, we've heard from the companies, Gilead, GSK and ViiV; ending HIV-related stigma and discrimination; investing in more research and innovation; and mobilizing domestic resources and maintaining ODA.

We've ensured that these pledges and commitments that have been made are all documented and we will share them with you.

I am confident that our legacy will be that the gains that we have made together will be sustained, and that we will beat AIDS, and that this will be our contribution to a safer, fairer and sustainable world.

I am standing here on the shoulders of great leaders.

I want to pay particular tribute to my predecessors—Peter Piot, the founding Executive Director of the Joint Programme, and Michel Sidibé, my immediate predecessor, thank you for being here.

It is also a moment to thank all of you in the room, key partners, like PEPFAR, Ambassador Nkengasong, your partnership is so important, Peter Sands from Global Fund, and all of you in your leadership positions. We only have these achievements because we came together.

So today indeed was a moment to celebrate.

Tomorrow, we have work to do! Let's go and do it!

Thank you so much.



