

## ASIA PACIFIC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

### **Parliaments and Leadership in Combating HIV/AIDS**

Sponsored by the Philippines

THE SIXTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASIA PACIFIC  
PARLIAMENTARY FORUM (APPF),

**Fully aware** that HIV/AIDS is a global emergency which threatens human, economic and social development;

**Deeply concerned** that 25 million women, men and children have died because of the disease, and that in 2006, an estimated 40 million people worldwide were living with HIV, half of them women and girls;

**Taking note** of the last 2006 UNAIDS Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic stating that 80 percent of those in need of antiretroviral drugs were not receiving them, mainly because of unaffordable prices;

**Recognising** that stigma and discrimination remain as strong obstacles to effective responses to HIV/AIDS;

**Recalling** the First Global Parliamentary Meeting on HIV/AIDS held in Manila in 2007 where parliamentarians from 60 countries convened for the first time on the issue of HIV/AIDS and resolved to provide greater leadership in addressing the pandemic;

**Referring** to the Handbook for Parliamentarians, entitled Taking Action Against HIV, published jointly by the IPU and UNAIDS in 2007 as adopted during the First Global Parliamentary Meeting held in Manila;

Further **recalling** the 2005 IPU Resolution on the Role of Parliaments in Advocating and Enforcing Observance of Human Rights in the Strategies for the Prevention, Management and Treatment of the HIV/AIDS Pandemic in its 112th Assembly also in Manila;

**Taking note** of the International Guidelines on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights, issued by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Offices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in 1998, and the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS “Global Crisis – Global Action” adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS in 2001;

**Reaffirming** the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015;

**Supporting** the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS, promulgated at the UN General Assembly High Level Meeting in 2006, which established the goal of providing universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010;

**Recalling** the 13th APPF Resolution on Cooperation for the Prevention and Eradication of Emerging Infectious Diseases;

Also **recalling** the 7th Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit Declaration on HIV/AIDS;

**Welcoming** the efforts of ASEAN to curb the spread of the disease in South East Asia;

**Convinced** that Parliamentarians are in a unique position in society to create legislation providing access to prevention, treatment and support;

**Further convinced** that Parliamentarians also have the moral obligation to take action against stigma, discrimination, gender inequality and other end-results of the epidemic;

#### **RESOLVES TO:**

1. **Call upon** parliaments and governments to recognise that HIV/AIDS is one of the greatest developmental challenges in the world today;
2. **Call upon** parliaments and governments to continue allocating sufficient resources for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and support;
3. **Remind** governments of the commitments they have made to promote and encourage respect for human rights instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
4. **Urge** Parliamentarians to abandon rhetoric and expand their leadership to initiate and promote a rights-based response to the AIDS epidemic;
5. **Also urge** parliaments and governments to adopt and finance the measures necessary to ensure, on a sustained basis and for all affected persons and vulnerable groups, the availability and accessibility of services and information for HIV/AIDS prevention, management, treatment, care and support, as well as affordable anti-retroviral drugs and other essential drugs;
6. **Strongly urge** parliaments and governments to make full use of the flexibilities under the WTO Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (the TRIPS Agreement) in relation to the procurement of cheap and affordable medicine;

7. **Encourage** governments and regional economic organisations to support initiatives aimed at sharing pricing information on HIV/AIDS medicines;
8. **Strongly urge** parliaments and governments to carefully consider the enactment of any HIV-specific criminal legislation, recognising that such laws can further stigmatise persons living with HIV;
9. **Encourage** parliaments to take strong action to reduce vulnerability to HIV of women, children and youth;
10. **Urge** governments in developed countries both to continue and to increase financial and technical assistance to developing and least developed countries;
11. **Enjoin** parliamentarians attending the 16th APPF to attend the 2nd Global Parliamentary Meeting on HIV/AIDS owing to the success of the first one held in November 2007 in Manila once it is organised by the IPU.