YAOUNDE DECLARATION

6th May 2016, Yaoundé, Cameroon

ACKNOWLEDGING the enduring relevance and importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to the protection and promotion of access to medical care and necessary social services;

MINDFUL of the fact that with the exception of one country, all other African Countries have signed and ratified the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights of which Article 16 states that:

1. Every individual shall have the right to enjoy the best attainable state of physical and mental health.
2. States parties to the present Charter shall take the necessary measures to protect the health of their people and to ensure that they receive medical attention when they are sick;

RECOGNISING that more than three decades of fighting HIV, the current 90 90 90 strategy represents possibly the last realistic opportunity that Africa has to end this pandemic;

COGNISANT of the waning global interest and the emergence of other public health emergencies such as the Ebola and Zika viruses; and

REALISING that that the African continent has to do more in order to ensure that HIV and AIDS become history by 2030;

We, the members of African civil society working on the response to the HIV pandemic who are gathered here at the 10th International Workshop on HIV Treatment, Pathogenesis and Prevention Research in Resource-Limited Settings (INTEREST), as well as those who are following the conference online, are gravely concerned and alarmed about the following issues, among others:

- Africa still remains the epicentre of the HIV epidemic with an estimated 70% of the global burden of HIV care;
- The treatment gap in Africa represents more than 50% of the people currently on ARV treatment;
- The resources being availed for the HIV response have dwindled over the years with grossly inadequate commitment of domestic resources by African governments, the underfunding of the Global Fund and the flat-lining of PEPFAR budgets;
- The failure by African governments to adopt an urgent approach towards meeting the 2020 deadline for the 90 90 90 targets despite the interim period of 4 years before the set deadline; and
- The dire and uncertain future of African people living with HIV should the continent fail to meet the targets.
In the circumstances, we demand the following:

TO AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS

1. That HIV testing facilities and programs be rapidly scaled up to reach all communities and that urgent, committed and innovative approaches be adopted towards ensuring access for HIV testing to all people on the continent and enrolment into treatment and care for those found HIV-positive.

2. That governments avail sufficient domestic resources for the HIV response, including abiding by the 2001 Abuja Declaration by setting aside a minimum of 15% of national budgets to health.

3. That human resources for health be increased proportionally to the populations served, and that they be retained within domestic health systems.

4. That updated national ART treatment guidelines opt for better tolerated and safer regimens to enhance adherence.

5. That safe environments grounded in the respect for human rights, stigma-free and non-discriminatory attitudes be adopted and maintained to ensure seamless access to treatment for vulnerable and marginalised communities.

6. That sufficient testing, diagnostic and monitoring tools, with the highest possible levels of specificity and sensitivity, including viral load machines, be made available to cater for the populations in need of them.

7. That governments collaborate to the fullest extent with civil society groups to enable them to fulfil their mandate within the 90 90 90 strategy, including community mobilisation.

8. That governments introduce and/or scale up biometric systems to account for all persons tested for HIV and those enrolled onto ART and prophylaxis programs to, among other things, minimise loss to follow up and enhance longitudinal follow up.

9. That governments rapidly implement and/or scale up programs and interventions with proven efficacy in order to address the current gaps in HIV programming, and

10. Finally, we demand that all African governments develop and adopt costed national plans with set timelines on how they will meet the 90 90 90 targets by the end of 2016.

UNAIDS

We demand that UNAIDS:

1. Ensures that all African governments have developed and adopted national plans on meeting the 90 90 90 guidelines by the proposed deadline.

2. Provides the necessary technical assistance for the development and adoption of such plans.

3. Adopts a more critical approach to the national response to the HIV pandemic with the objective of ensuring that the 90 90 90 targets are met at all costs.

DEVELOPMENT, BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL PARTNERS

We demand that development, bilateral and multilateral partners:

- Fully fund the Global Fund in the upcoming replenishment process.
• Increase budgets for the response to the HIV response at all levels in order for the 90 90 90 targets to be reached
• Support civil society groups working on community mobilisation, treatment preparedness and other interventions necessary for the attainment of the 90 90 90 targets

CIVIL SOCIETY

As civil society, we commit ourselves to the following responsibilities:

1. We shall mobilise our communities for maximum uptake of HIV testing, HIV treatment and prophylaxis, PMTCT and HIV prevention programs.
2. We shall provide treatment and psychosocial support in order to enhance maximum adherence to ARV regimens by people living with HIV.
3. We shall strive to minimise loss to follow up by tracking all people living with HIV, including children, to ensure that they remain within treatment and care systems.
4. We shall continue raising awareness at community level on HIV and related issues, including new treatments and pre-exposure prophylaxis and new prevention technologies.
5. We shall continue to provide support for government interventions at community, national, regional and continental levels, and to strive towards the meeting of the 90 90 90 targets.
6. Finally, we shall scale up our advocacy to ensure that our governments and relevant organisations and institutions fulfil their commitments to ending HIV by 2030.

We believe that the African continent has the capacity to end HIV by 2030 should an urgent and sustained approach be adopted.

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