



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

11 April 2008

Excellency,

Following extensive consultations with Member States, and in consultation with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, I have the honour to transmit herewith an information note and draft programme for the high-level meeting on the Comprehensive Review of the progress achieved in realizing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS, which will be taking place on 10-11 June 2008.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Kerim' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Srgjan Kerim

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

Proposed arrangements for the high-level meeting for a comprehensive review of the progress achieved in realizing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS, to be convened on 10 - 11 June 2008

Information note

Introduction

1. In paragraph 7 of resolution 62/178 of 19 December 2007, the President of the General Assembly was requested to finalize organizational arrangements for the General Assembly high-level meeting on AIDS. This note outlines proposed arrangements for the high-level meeting, to be held 10 and 11 June 2008. A further note will be issued before the meeting, finalizing any other outstanding arrangements and details.

Participation

2. Participation in the high-level meeting is defined in paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 of resolution 62/178.

3. It is expected that the high-level meeting will be attended by several Heads of State and Government and will have a significant level of ministerial participation (ministers of health, economy, development, finance, foreign affairs etc.). In a letter dated 4 February 2008, the Secretary-General extended an invitation to all governments to be represented by a delegation of foremost authority and ability.

4. In accordance with paragraph 8 of the resolution, a list of civil society representatives that need accreditation to participate in the high-level meeting was drawn up by 31 March 2008 and was circulated to Member States, for consideration on a no-objection basis for a final decision by the General Assembly.

5. In line with paragraph 3 of the resolution, Member States are encouraged to include in their national delegations to the high-level meeting parliamentarians and representatives of civil society.

Programme of work/agenda

6. The proposed programme of work of the high-level meeting, based on the provisions of paragraph 2 of resolution 62/178, is attached as Annex 1.

7. In accordance with paragraph 12 of the resolution, the President of the General Assembly will circulate a comprehensive summary after the conclusion of the high-level meeting.

Plenary meetings

8. The plenary meetings are scheduled from 9 - 11 a.m. and from 3 - 6 p.m. on Tuesday, 10 June, and from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and from 3 - 6 p.m. on Wednesday, 11 June. Additional plenary meetings may be held from 6 - 9 p.m. on both days, as necessary, to accommodate all inscribed speakers.

9. The name of the eminent person actively engaged in the response to AIDS and a person openly living with HIV who will speak at the opening plenary meeting will be communicated in a subsequent note.

10. **To enable maximum participation within the limited time available, statements in plenary should not exceed five minutes when speaking in the national capacity and eight minutes when speaking on behalf of a group. A list of speakers will be open for inscription at the General Assembly Affairs Branch from 1 May 2008.**

11. Representatives of civil society may attend the plenary meetings in the public gallery, within the limits of the space available.

Five Thematic Panel Discussions

12. The five panel discussions will be held as follows: two on Tuesday 10 June from 3 – 6 p.m., two on Wednesday, 11 June, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., and one on 11 June, from 3 – 4.30 p.m. Given limited time, panel discussions will be 90 minutes-long and will be held consecutively.

13. The panel discussions will be open to Member States and observers, as well as civil society representatives. Due to limited availability of space, access to the panel discussions will be on the basis of colour-coded passes.

14. The panel discussions provide an opportunity to have in-depth discussions on the main findings and recommendations of the report of the Secretary-General, which will be based on the national progress reports submitted by Member States. They will focus on selected areas that require special attention to advance the AIDS response, and will help examine the progress made, promote sharing of best practices, identify challenges and gaps and sustainable ways to overcome them. The panels will also consider cross-cutting issues, including human rights, urgency in meeting commitments set out in the 2001 Declaration of Commitment and the 2006 Political Declaration.

15. The following themes proposed for panel discussions:

Panel 1: How do we build on results achieved and speed up progress towards universal access by 2010 – moving on to reach the MDGs by 2015?

The panel will take stock of results and focus on remaining gaps and key decisions that need to be taken - along with actions at country, regional and global levels. The panel will examine specific findings from country progress reports.

Panel 2: The challenges of providing leadership and political support in countries with concentrated epidemics

The panel will focus on the various drivers of the epidemic, HIV and human rights and how to reach stigmatized, hard to reach and vulnerable populations. What specific actions are needed to overcome socio-economic barriers and other obstacles to access to prevention, treatment, care and support.

Panel 3: Making the Response to AIDS Work for Women and Girls – Gender Equality and AIDS

The panel will review findings from country reports on the progress, or lack thereof, with regard to the feminization of the epidemic and gender equality; remaining barriers and proposed actions to overcome these.

Panel 4: AIDS: A Multigenerational Challenge – Providing a Robust and Long Term Response

The panel will examine critical linkages between the response to AIDS and long-term development, health system strengthening, social protection, scientific innovation and the lethal combination of HIV and Tuberculosis. The UN Special Envoy to Stop TB will present the outcome and recommendations of the “HIV-TB Global Leaders’ Forum”. What more can be done to ensure a robust, sustainable and multi-generational response?

Panel 5: Resources and Universal Access: Opportunities and limitations

The panel will examine aspects of financing of the response to AIDS, including sources of funding, resource allocation, and spending, “making the money work”, accountability and predictable and multi-year funding. How can sustainable funding be assured at country level for the long-term?

16. To promote interactive, free-flowing discussions, participants will be invited to make brief remarks not to exceed three minutes, raise questions and to respond to other speakers. Written statements are strongly discouraged.

17. To help focus on the specific issues relevant to each of the five panel discussions, background notes will be prepared for each panel discussion and circulated no later than four weeks before the meeting.

18. . Each panel discussion will be chaired by a representative of government, at the ministerial level or above. The President of the General Assembly shall select, by a drawing of lots, the regional group that will chair each of the five panel discussions. Thereafter, each regional group, through its Chair, shall communicate to the President of the General Assembly, no later than 9 May 2008, the candidate nominated from among the group for the respective panel discussion.

19. Each panel will comprise of three panelists with a thorough knowledge and expertise of the subject. They will include national, United Nations and civil society representatives.

20. The composition of the panels, including the chairs and the panelists, will be finalized by the President of the General Assembly, with due consideration of geographic and gender balance, and communicated in a subsequent note.

21. In accordance with resolution 62/178, the chairs of the panel discussions will present summaries of the discussions to the President of the General Assembly.

Informal interactive civil society hearing

22. An informal civil society hearing, organized in accordance with paragraph 2(c) of resolution 62/178, will be convened on Tuesday, 10 June, from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

23. The Hearing will provide an opportunity for an exchange of views between civil society (including the private sector) and Member States and observers on various issues, including those arising from the report of the Secretary-General and with a particular focus on key priority issues for civil society in achieving universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010.

24. The proposed organizational arrangements for the Hearing will be communicated in a subsequent note.

2008 UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting
Comprehensive review of the progress achieved in realizing the Declaration of
Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS
10-11 June 2008, United Nations Headquarters, New York

Draft Programme

Monday, 9 June 2008		
	Side-events	
Tuesday, 10 June 2008		
9:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Plenary meeting, including opening	GA Hall
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Informal interactive civil society hearing	Conf Room 2
1:15 - 2:45 p.m.	Side-events	
3:00 - 6:00 p.m.	Plenary meeting	GA Hall
	3:00 - 4:30 Panel Discussion 1	Conf Room 2
	4:30 - 6:00 Panel Discussion 2	Conf Room 2
6:00 - 9:00 p.m.	Plenary meeting, if/as necessary	GA Hall
Wednesday, 11 June 2008		
8:30 - 9:45 a.m.	Side-events	
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Plenary meeting	GA Hall
	10:00 - 11:30 Panel Discussions 3	Conf Room 2
	11:30 - 1:00 Panel Discussions 4	Conf Room 2
1:15 - 2:45 p.m.	Side-events	
3:00 - 6:00 p.m.	Plenary meeting	Conf Room 2
	3:00 - 4:30 Panel Discussion 5	GA Hall
6:00 - 9:00 p.m.	Plenary meeting, if/as necessary; Closing plenary	GA Hall