



Reference : **DIR/SAD/ D1a/245/06**

The Commission of the African Union presents its compliments to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs/External Relations of all Member States and has the honour to inform the latter that in August 2005, Ministers of Health at the 55th Session of the Regional Committee for Africa held in Maputo, Mozambique adopted Resolution AFR/RC 55/R6 calling Member States to intensify HIV prevention efforts and declaring 2006 as the Year for Acceleration of HIV prevention. This resolution is also in line with the Declaration and Road Map towards Universal Access adopted by the Second Session of the AU Conference of Ministers of Health in Gaborone, Botswana in 2005 (Copy of Declaration is attached).

Furthermore, this is also in the framework of the Brazzaville Commitment on Scaling up Towards Universal Access to HIV Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support held in Brazzaville, Congo in March 2006, and the Theme of World Health Day 2006, “*Working for Health*”.

In response to the adoption of the Resolution, Regional Directors of UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIFEM, and WHO met in November 2005 in Brazzaville and adopted a declaration in which they committed themselves to support the Resolution of African Health Ministers, recognizing the need to strengthen and reinvigorate HIV prevention efforts with a sense of urgency. The meeting proposed that a regional launch be organized under the leadership of the African Union to strengthen ownership from Member States.

In line with the decisions of the Task-Force chaired by AU and WHO working in collaboration with other UN Agencies, it was proposed that the main launch takes place in Addis Ababa on the 11th April 2006 at AU Headquarters. Three locations for possible simultaneous launches are Dakar (Senegal), Johannesburg (South Africa) and Khartoum (Sudan) through video conferencing.

In this connection, the Commission of the African Union has the pleasure to:

1. Propose that national launches be organized at convenient dates in countries covered by the WHO Regional Office for Africa; and acceleration of HIV prevention implemented in the context of universal access in all AU Member States.

2. Invite the Permanent Representatives of all AU Member States to attend the official launch of the “*Year for HIV Prevention*”, which will take place at the AU Conference Centre, AU Commission, Addis Ababa at 10:30 – 13:00 hrs. on 11th April 2006.

Further information could be obtained from:

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The Commission of the African Union avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs/External Relations of all Member States the assurances of its highest consideration.

Addis Ababa, 20th March 2006

**To:- Ministries of Foreign Affairs/External Relations
of Member States of the African Union**

- cc: - Permanent Missions of Member States to the AU
Addis Ababa**
- The Ministries of Health of all Member States of the AU**