



**STATEMENT
BY
THE REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE INDONESIAN DELEGATION**

**BEFORE THE PLENARY
OF THE 57th SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ON AGENDA ITEM 42: FOLLOW-UP TO THE OUTCOME OF THE
TWENTY-SIXTH SPECIAL SESSION: IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT ON HIV/AIDS.**

NEW YORK, 8 NOVEMBER 2002

Mr. President,

At the outset let me thank the Secretary-General for his timely report on this very important subject.

Mr. President,

According to the UNAIDS report issued in July 2002, forty million people across the globe are now infected with the HIV virus, while twenty-five million have already died. If left unchecked the rate of infection will increase, with forty-five million new infections before the end of the decade. AIDS has already devastated large parts of Africa; eleven million of the fourteen million AIDS orphans in the world are located in Africa.

In addition, the data shows that one of the regions that is experiencing the most rapid growth in new HIV/AIDS infections is Asia. If HIV/AIDS infection rates in Asia are allowed to reach the levels of sub-Saharan Africa, the number of infected individuals worldwide would number over one hundred million people. There are many who feel that in the absence of concerted and sustained global efforts to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, that the grim figures I have quoted are in fact optimistic, and that the massive growth of the HIV/AIDS pandemic will begin to pose a serious threat to the world economy, and global peace and security.

On the bright side, the adoption of the Declaration of Commitment at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS in June 2001, provides a new momentum for the international community to combat this devastating epidemic. It marks a turning point in the struggle against HIV/AIDS, by setting time bound targets to prevent and treat this disease. There is hope if we take action. It is estimated that sixty-three percent of the new infections predicted between now and 2010 can be prevented.

Mr. President,

Today's session is also of momentous importance, since we will deliberate what follow up actions are necessary to implement last year's Declaration of Commitment. Indonesia is encouraged by the fact that so many countries have already implemented national AIDS strategies, but Indonesia also notes with concern that the implementation of those strategies, especially in the low and middle income countries, is in jeopardy due to a lack of resources and technical capacity. In order to mount an effective global response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic there must be concrete political commitment, genuine cooperation and concerted action by all, at all levels and across all sectors. A pre-requisite for the international community to remove this global curse, is strong leadership that will mobilise the additional, substantial and sustained resources necessary to eradicate HIV/AIDS.

It is of particular importance to note, that in order to fight the epidemic in the low and middle income countries, spending will have to double to over six billion dollars by next year, and to over ten billion dollars by 2005. This

does not include expenditure needed to improve basic healthcare infrastructure. Therefore, particularly for low and middle-income countries, international cooperation is needed to implement the Declaration of Commitment in order to combat HIV/AIDS.

Therefore, Indonesia actively seeks to cooperate with its regional and global partners to fight AIDS. In November 2001, Indonesia along with its ASEAN regional partners made a joint declaration to cooperate in combating AIDS, including fighting drug use. For years the infection rate for HIV/AIDS in Indonesia, and many other Asian Nations, remained negligible, but in recent years the twin curses of intravenous drug use and HIV/AIDS have been growing in Indonesia and throughout the region. At the present it is estimated that there are about one hundred and twenty thousand HIV/AIDS cases in Indonesia, which is still less than zero point one percent of the population, but the risk of widespread infection is present.

Indonesia recognized the potential for this disease to grow unchecked, and as early as 1994 was initiating a National Program to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS, including the establishment of a national AIDS Prevention and Control Commission. The AIDS prevention program included AIDS education, prevention, testing, treatment, research and monitoring of the progress of the program. It also delineated roles for various levels of government, civil society, and acknowledged the need for external assistance and cooperation. In addition, earlier this year, in line with the Declaration of Commitment, Indonesia reinvigorated its efforts to fight the twin curses of

AIDS and drugs through Presidential Decrees, which included the launching of a national movement against AIDS, and efforts to fight drug abuse.

The National Program also acknowledged the role of the community, especially the family, in the prevention of the disease, and the caring for those already infected. A third of those suffering from HIV/AIDS are in the 15-24 year old range, and new infections typically occur at the highest rates for people in this age range. The family plays a key role in teaching young people to avoid unsafe activity, and so in prevention. Also, especially in developing countries, the family will be the main source of care for those already infected, and so the Indonesian National Program includes efforts to destigmatise the infected and maintain their full integration into society.

One of the most important issues is that of HIV/AIDS related drugs. Improving the affordability of, and access to these drugs is critical to the fight against HIV/AIDS in developing countries with limited resources. Research must be funded in the developing countries so that cures and treatments acceptable and affordable to local populations can be found. For developing countries this is a critical issue; life-saving drugs will not save any lives when the sick have no access to them due to lack of money.

In conclusion, combating HIV/AIDS is one of our Millennium Development Goals, and so one of the most important objectives of the international community. The struggle versus HIV/AIDS is appropriately one for international concern, and requiring international action, because this disease

does not respect international boundaries. Any solution to the HIV/AIDS problem must solve the problem for all of humanity, both rich and poor.

Thank you Mr. President.