

LOME DECLARATION ON HIV/AIDS IN AFRICA

WE, the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), meeting at the Thirty-sixth Ordinary Session of our Assembly in Lome, Togo from 10 to 12 July, 2000,

Having devoted a full session of our meeting to deliberate frankly and extensively on the epidemic of HIV/AIDS in our countries and Bearing in Mind the daunting medical, socio-economic and political challenges posed by the HIV/AIDS scourge in our continent;

Recognizing that responding to those challenges requires inter-alia, intense awareness building campaign and an expression of political will of an exceptional nature at the highest possible level in all countries of our continent;

Recalling our previous Declaration AHG/Decl.(XXIII) on Health, as a Foundation for Socio-Economic Development, endorsed in 1987 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as well as our Dakar (1992) and Tunis (1994) Declarations on HIV/AIDS in Africa in which we committed ourselves to mobilize all segments of the society in our countries, to fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic;

Gravely Concerned about the rapid spread of HIV infection in our countries and the millions of deaths caused by AIDS throughout our continent in spite of the serious efforts being invested by our countries to combat this scourge, as well as infectious diseases particularly sexually transmitted diseases (STDs);

Further Concerned by the recurrence of diseases which had previously been eradicated from our continent, such as Tuberculosis, and the emergence of new diseases which have

become prevalent in Africa, and are complicating the control of HIV/AIDS;

Commending the efforts made by our respective individual national governments, our Continental Organization, the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies, national and International NGOs, and some individuals, to sensitize our peoples to the threat of HIV/AIDS and Recognizing that progress made in this endeavour has remained largely limited, uneven, fragile and incomplete;

Further Recognizing that the sacrifices, and ability of our people mainly women to cope with the tragic consequences of this pandemic at the individual, family, community and national levels, to confront and overcome the losses and threats of HIV/AIDS, need our greater attention and support;

SOLEMNLY DECIDE TO:

- RECOMMIT OURSELVES and our Governments to the principles and actions enunciated in our previous Declarations, Decisions and Recommendations on controlling the spread of the HIV/AIDS on our continent;
- COMMIT OURSELVES to take personal responsibility and provide leadership for the activities of the National AIDS Commissions/Councils where they exist and ensure that they are established where they do not exist;
- RESOLVE to keep the question of HIV/AIDS high on national agenda for health, social, cultural and economic activities and to make it a development issue;
- ENHANCE capacities of our Governments, particularly our Ministries of Health, to develop and enact national strategies to deal with HIV/AIDS as a priority within our national development plans;

TO THAT EFFECT, WE RESOLVE TO ENDORSE:

- The Algiers Common Position and Plan of Action on Strategies to support HIV/AIDS Orphans, Vulnerable Children and children-infected by HIV/AIDS adopted by the OAU Labour and Social Affairs Commission;
- The Algiers Appeal by the OAU Labour and Social Affairs Commission for the Intensification of the fight Against AIDS in Africa;
- The Ouagadougou Commitment for Action for the Implementation of the Declarations, Decisions and Recommendations of the Heads of State and Government of the OAU aimed at strengthening HIV/AIDS Control in Africa;
- The Framework of the International Partnership on AIDS in Africa in order to intensify the health sector response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic;
- FURTHER COMMIT OURSELVES and PLEDGE TO TAKE all necessary measures to facilitate the implementation of the above instruments and to allocate resources within the framework of our national budgets to HIV/AIDS activities, particularly the prevention and the epidemiological study of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, public education on HIV/AIDS and its prevention and care, taking due recognition of the needs of HIV positive people and People Living with AIDS, their rights and roles in the containment of the epidemic;
- REQUEST the International Partnership against HIV/AIDS to collaborate with the OAU General Secretariat and our individual Member States in order to mobilize necessary additional financial resources for the fight against AIDS epidemic in Africa;

- MANDATE our Governments, with the assistance of International partners, to take all necessary measures in order to accelerate Health Sector reform with a focus on all pandemics in general and HIV/AIDS in particular, as a basis for improving the standard of living of our populations;

- FURTHER REQUEST our Secretary-General in collaboration with international partners, to draw up a Plan of Action for acceleration of Health Sector Reform with a focus on epidemics such as HIV/AIDS, and malaria in our Continent, particularly the establishment of research and training centres where African indigenous knowledge on health systems could be incorporated.

- ALSO REQUEST our Secretary-General, in collaboration with WHO, UNAIDS, UNICEF and all other interested international partners, to follow-up on the implementation of this Declaration and report to our Assembly every year on progress achieved.

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