

Excellencies,

I am pleased to make this statement on behalf of the Executive Director of UNAIDS.

UNAIDS commends WHO, as one of the six lead cosponsors of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, for its continued leadership on the health sector response to HIV and its critical contributions to the global AIDS response. In a time of significant funding uncertainty, we particularly appreciate WHO's efforts to sustain essential HIV capacities and services.

The Global AIDS Strategy 2026–2031, adopted by the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board in December 2025 in Brazil, provides a renewed framework for our collective efforts. It sets a clear direction for a country-led, resilient and future-ready response, with people living with HIV and communities at its centre. It focuses on closing prevention gaps, expanding access to HIV testing and treatment, and addressing the inequalities and structural drivers of the epidemic.

In this context, WHO's role remains indispensable. As the lead agency for the health-sector response, WHO will continue to set norms and standards, provide evidence-based guidance, and help support countries to scale up equitable, high-quality HIV services within primary health care and broader health systems, aligned with universal health coverage. This includes supporting countries to ensure that health sector responses are people-centred, rights-based and free of stigma and discrimination.

Excellencies, as we assess progress, we must also be clear: AIDS is not over. Today, 9.2 million people living with HIV are still not receiving life-saving treatment. This is not a failure of science—we have the tools—but a failure to reach people and remove the barriers in their way. Sustained political leadership, accountability, and coordinated multisectoral action remain essential to stay on course.

The strength of the HIV response has always been its multisectoral, people-centred approach, grounded in data, science and human rights, and shaped by the shared leadership of communities and countries. Protecting this model—especially where rights are under pressure—remains critical for impact.

UNAIDS is transforming its operating model to support countries sustain, multisectoral and inclusive HIV response and is transitioning further, through an inclusive PCB-led process, to integrate more deeply within the United Nations system and beyond. This process is focused on protecting impact and sustaining progress for people, while ensuring that the UN system delivers on its HIV mandate in a coherent and effective way.

UNAIDS looks forward to working with WHO and the other cosponsors, governments and communities to implement the decisions of the Programme Coordinating Board and ECOSOC. The recent multistakeholder consultation of the PCB Working Group reinforced the importance of sustaining key UNAIDS functions—political leadership, coordination, data and accountability, and support to communities and national responses—and ensuring that the Global AIDS Strategy translates into sustained results.

Together, we have the tools and experience to end AIDS—and together, we must stay the course.

Thank you.