

## PRESS STATEMENT

### **On HIV Vaccine Awareness Day UNAIDS calls for scaled-up action to find a vaccine for HIV**

**GENEVA, 18 May 2014**—On HIV Vaccine Awareness Day UNAIDS is urging for global efforts to be stepped up to find an effective HIV vaccine and accelerate progress towards ending the AIDS epidemic.

“Although great strides have been made in preventing new HIV infections alongside expanding access to treatment, we still don’t have an effective HIV vaccine,” said UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé. “Finding a vaccine for HIV will be the push we need to achieve zero new HIV infections.”

There have been important breakthroughs in vaccine research in recent years. The RV144 trial, conducted in Thailand and reported in 2009, showed that a vaccine could lower the rate of HIV infection by 31% and provided important clues as to how a more effective vaccine might work. Follow-on studies are now aiming to increase the level and durability of protection.

Recent advances in understanding how the virus behaves, and how the immune system responds, have greatly increased the likelihood of finding an effective vaccine. For example, vaccine trials in monkeys have prevented and cleared HIV infection. Ensuring sustained funding for HIV vaccine research will help to transform promising concepts into effective and affordable HIV vaccines.

“Research is bringing us closer to a vaccine every day, thanks to the tenacity of scientists and support from many donors and communities,” said Margie McGlynn, President and Chief Executive Officer of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative. “Only with sustained commitment can we all continue to build on these promising efforts to develop a rich pipeline of vaccine candidates.”

#### **Contact**

UNAIDS Geneva | Sophie Barton-Knott | tel. +41 22 791 1697 | bartonknotts@unaids.org

#### **UNAIDS**

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) leads and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths. UNAIDS unites the efforts of 11 UN organizations—UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UN Women, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank—and works closely with global and national partners to maximize results for the AIDS response. Learn more at [unaids.org](http://unaids.org) and connect with us on Facebook and Twitter.