

## Society for AIDS in Africa, Third Symposium to be held in Accra-Ghana 4 to 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2016

### Press Release 12 April, 2016 EMBARGO: None (for immediate release) Symposium to preempt the spread of emerging viral infections including Ebola, Lassa and Zika in Africa



This African Regional symposium is intended to enhance awareness, attention and commitment to preempt the spread of emerging viral infections in Africa such as Ebola, Lassa fever and Zika. In the context where the health system are very weak on the continent, Africa vulnerability is higher and needs to develop an early warning system to prevent infection in an epidemic proportion and demonstrate commitment to owning the response. The symposium will draw together experts, policy makers, grass root organizations and various stakeholders to discuss the issues comprehensively and strategically, to foster stronger responses at both national and regional level.

The symposium scientific committee made up of public health experts, scientists from the academia, government agencies, UN system from Ghana, Burkina Faso and Benin met on 12 April 2016 at the SAA permanent secretariat in Accra, under the co-chairmanship of Professor William Ampofo of Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research and Professor Seni Kouanda, Secretary General of Society for AIDS in Africa.

**Africa's Preparedness for Emerging Viral Infections: Lessons from HIV/Ebola and the Outlook for Zika and Lassa fever.** This theme was arrived at the scientific committee meeting after an extended deliberation to highlight the need for Africa to use the HIV and Ebola prevention model to avert and control emerging epidemic of Zika and Lassa fever.

#### **GOAL:**

#### **Positioning Africa for Effective Preparedness & Response to Emerging Viral Diseases**

In line with this goal, the symposium will focus on issues that are significant to our response such as prevention, diagnosis, surveillance and control, treatment, and the lessons from affected countries in Latin America, Cape Verde for Zika, Sierra Leone, Benin, Burkina Faso and Nigeria for Lassa, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and Liberia for Ebola.

Registration for the symposium will start first week of June 2016.

We invite the international community, and all Africans, to join hands and show their solidarity for an African response for the emerging viral infections.

More information is available at [www.saafrica.org](http://www.saafrica.org)

Ends

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

#### **About The Society for AIDS in Africa (SAA)**

The Society for AIDS in Africa (SAA), the custodian of ICASA was founded in 1989 at the fourth International Symposium on AIDS and Associated Cancers in Africa (now ICASA) held in Marseille, France by a group of African scientists, activists and advocates in response to this epidemic. SAA envisions an African continent free of HIV, TB and malaria and their debilitating effects on communal and societal structures, where people are socially and economically empowered to live productive lives in dignity. For more information on SAA please visit [www.saafrica.org](http://www.saafrica.org).

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