



Press Release

19 September 2012

EMBARGO: None (for immediate release)

ICASA, Africa's largest AIDS Conference to be held in Cape Town in December, 2013

The 17th International Conference on AIDS and STI's in Africa (ICASA 2013), Africa's largest AIDS Conference, will be held at the **Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC)**, South Africa, from 7 – 11 December 2013, organisers of the conference announced today, 19 September 2012.

The theme of ICASA 2013 is: **Now More Than Ever: Targeting Zero**. This theme was arrived at after an extended deliberation among the representatives of the respective stakeholders at the first International Steering Committee meeting. It is derived from the UNAIDS vision of striving for "Zero new HIV and TB infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS-related and TB deaths"

The conference will be co-chaired by Professor Robert Soudre, the President of the Society for AIDS in Africa (SAA) and Professor Ian Sanne, the CEO of Right Care and Associate Professor of Internal Medicine at the University of the Witwatersrand.

"In 2000, South Africa hosted the landmark International AIDS Conference setting the scene for what was to be a turning point in the international drive to breaking down the barriers to AIDS treatment. What followed was an unprecedented commitment by donors, government and civil society to increasing access to treatment, in an attempt to turn the tide on this epidemic. The 2013 ICASA Conference is an opportunity to renew this global commitment by drawing the world's attention to the fact that the legacy of Durban 2000 is now under threat due to the global economic downturn" says Professor Ian Sanne, Co-Chair of the Conference.

"We invite the international community, and all Africans to join hands once again and show their solidarity for an AIDS free Africa. The 17th ICASA, is being held two years to 2015, the MDG target date. Cape Town will therefore offer a unique platform to Africa to take stock of the past achievements and challenges and to scale up the African response in the context of these MDGs. Our continent is at a cross roads, this is the time for efficiency and innovative and pragmatic approaches to tackle our issues. About 10 000 of the world's leading scientists, policy makers, activists and government leaders and civil society are expected to join the debate," says Professor Robert Soudre Co-Chairperson of the Conference.

The Society for AIDS in Africa (SAA), the custodian of ICASA, and Dira Sengwe, the South African NGO that originated out of the Durban 2000 Local Organising Committee who are the custodians of the

South African AIDS Conferences supported by the Foundation for Professional Development (FPD), are the lead organizers of the 17th ICASA, ICASA 2013 Cape Town

More information is available at www.icasa2013southafrica.org.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

About Dira Sengwe

Dira Sengwe is a South African-based non-Governmental Organisation established in 2002 by the members of the local organising committee of the ground-breaking XIIIth International Aids Conference, Durban, 2000. The organisation emerged at a critical period in the history of the struggle for recognition of HIV and AIDS as a disease, overwhelmingly in poor countries, especially on the African continent. The organisation was established in response to the slow uptake of AIDS treatment in South Africa and established the South African Aids Conference which is organised bi-annually since 2003 as a platform to promote a unified AIDS response. Other Dira Sengwe projects include the AIDS Bravery Award and an Oral History Project. For more information on Dira Sengwe please visit www.dirasengwe.org.

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 and 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 product lives in dignity. For more information on SAA please visit www.saafrica.org.

About The Foundation for Professional Development (FPD)

The Foundation for Professional Development (FPD) is a South African Private Institution of Higher Education dedicated to building a better society through education and capacity development. FPD annually provides management and clinical training to 30 000 health care professionals and managers across Africa and has support the initiation on ART of more than 200 000 PLHIV. FPD also organises national and international conferences as a conduit to shape public and policy perspectives. FPD's involvement in conferences dates back to the Durban in 2000 conference where it provided the conference secretariat. For more information please visit www.foundation.co.za.

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