



**USE THROUGH:**

August 13, 2006

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**MEDIA ADVISORY**

**ARE U.S. RESTRICTIONS UNDERMINING HIV PREVENTION?**

*International experts provide evidence-based critiques of U.S. global HIV prevention policies.*

The United States has become a world leader in total funding for HIV prevention, treatment and care. But mounting evidence indicates that restrictions in U.S. global AIDS funding and policy guidance are undermining effective prevention efforts in many countries.

In a satellite session kicking off the XVI International AIDS Conference in Toronto, an international panel of experts will offer evidence-based critiques of restrictions in U.S. policies and the implications for prevention of sexual transmission of HIV in generalized epidemics, and for the health and rights of intravenous drug users, commercial sex workers, and men who have sex with men. The panel will include critiques of the abstinence-only-until-marriage programs now being funded by the US government, large-scale shifts in funding to faith-based organizations, the implications of U.S. policy restricting needle exchange, and restrictions – recently found unconstitutional in the United States – on foreign NGOs working to protect the human rights and health of commercial sex workers. The satellite session will be followed on Monday morning, August 14th by a press conference on U.S. restrictions featuring Stephen Lewis, U.N. Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS, and Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-California), author of the Prevention of Transmission of HIV for Women and Youth Act (PATHWAY Act) of 2006, which seeks to strike the abstinence-until-marriage earmark.

**When: Sunday, August 13, 14:45-16:45**

**Where: Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Session Room 11, Level 100**

**Who: Beatrice Were**, Action Aid Uganda

**Reverend J.P. Heath**, ANERELA, South Africa

**Raminta Stuikyte**, Central and Eastern European Harm Reduction Network

**Melissa Ditmore**, Network of Sex Work Projects

**Jodi Jacobson**, Center for Health and Gender Equity

**Richard Burzynski**, International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (Moderator)

**Conveners:** AIDS Policy Watch, UK; Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), US; International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO).

**Supporting Organizations:** Action Aid Uganda; Advocates for Youth; AIDS and Rights Alliance for Southern Africa (ARASA); ATHENA; Central and Eastern Europe Harm Reduction Network (CEE-HRN); Human Rights Watch; International Women's Health Coalition; International Treatment Preparedness Coalition (ITPC); Network of Sex Work Projects.

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