

Ambassador Eric Goosby, MD
The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator
2100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
S/GAC SA-29, 2nd Floor
Washington, DC 20037

February 1, 2011

Dear Ambassador Goosby,

We, the undersigned organizations, urge the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAC) to issue the PEPFAR Field Guidance on Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) without delay.

Research from around the world shows that MSM face an elevated risk of HIV infection over the general population, yet they are all too often sidelined in the global response. With shifts in donor funding and global health policies moving increasingly toward country ownership, we are gravely concerned that MSM and other marginalized populations will not be prioritized in certain regions where they are not politically expedient. Releasing the MSM guidance will send a powerful message that the U.S. government prioritizes an evidence-based response that aligns with the global HIV epidemic, one that seeks to stem the tide of new infections among most-at-risk populations. The guidance will also give program implementers concrete tools to be able to carry out this vital work.

While a swift release of the guidance is most urgent, a guidance document alone will not guarantee good outcomes for MSM and other sexual minorities. To give program implementers concrete tools to be able to carry out this vital work, OGAC should make available a specific funding stream dedicated to funding HIV programming and research targeting MSM, and provide robust support to build capacity to scale-up this work. Subsequently, funding structural interventions must be an important component of a comprehensive HIV prevention package.

Further, OGAC's proactive leadership from the highest levels, coupled with careful coordination of State Department diplomatic efforts, is critical to ensuring country team leaders, mission offices and host governments utilize the guidance to intensify treatment, care and prevention targeting MSM. OGAC should actively encourage and support efforts to reprogram current funding to prioritize MSM and subsequently ensure MSM are included in future country operating plans, partnership frameworks agreements and global health strategies through the U.S. Global Health Initiative. We are encouraged to hear that three regional meetings will take place about the guidance, and urge OGAC to ensure engagement with a wide cross-section of stakeholders in these efforts: U.S. government officials (USAID, OGAC, CDC, State Department), a broad representation of civil society including groups working with young MSM, local governments, and multilateral funding partners.

The forthcoming guidance provides PEPFAR a unique opportunity to dramatically alter the course of the global AIDS epidemic, and shape a response characterized by accountability, appropriate targeting and sufficient scale. To maximize impact, OGAC must require reporting on related indicators in order to effectively measure programming and progress for MSM and other sexual minorities.

Lives are being lost and we cannot afford to wait any longer. The PEPFAR MSM guidance will be a critical tool that will help reduce the scourge of the epidemic, not just among MSM, but also in reducing HIV prevalence generally. In a time of fiscal austerity, this is a smart investment to improve the effectiveness of the U.S. global health efforts.

Thank you for your continued leadership. We look forward to working with you on the implementation of this guidance, and are eager to play a role in making this important initiative a success. Should you have any questions, please contact Jirair Ratevosian (jirair.ratevosian@amfar.org) and Krista Lauer (klauer@msmgf.org), Co-Chairs of the MSM Policy Working Group.

Signatory Organizations

Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa, & Middle East

Activate Wits, South Africa
African Council of AIDS Service Organizations (AfriCASO), Senegal
AIDS and Rights Alliance for Southern Africa (ARASA), Namibia
Alternatives-Cameroun, Cameroon
Ambassadors of Change, Kenya
Centre for Health Policy and Innovation, South Africa
Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation (CHRR), Malawi
Centre for Popular Education and Human Rights Ghana (CEPEHRG), Ghana
Centre for the Development of People, Malawi
Equality Now Development Group, Kenya
Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Kenya – GALCK, Kenya
Global Research and Advocacy Group (GRAG), Senegal
International Centre for Advocacy on Right to Health (ICARH), Nigeria
ISHTAR MSM, Kenya
MARITIME LIFE PRECIOUS FOUNDATION, Ghana
MEN AGAINST AIDS YOUTH GROUP, Kenya
NIGERIAN LGBT RIGHTS COUNCIL, Nigeria
PEMA Kenya, Kenya
Peoples Alliance to Combat HIV/AIDS, Gambia
Programme for the well-being of children, South Africa
QyR Alcohol and Substance Use Prevention.org, Kenya
Rainbow Health Foundation Mbarara, Uganda
SAPT Kenya, Kenya
The National Empowerment Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS in Kenya (NEPHAK), Kenya
Treatment Advocacy and Literacy Campaign (TALC), Zambia
YOUTH AGAINST AIDS, Kenya
Oui Pour La Vie, Lebanon
Stop AIDS in Liberia (SAIL), Liberia

Asia Pacific

ACON, Australia
Adamzone Can Tho, Viet Nam
Adhikaar, India
Asia Pacific Coalition on Male Sexual Health, India and Thailand
Asia Pacific Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS, Thailand
Asia Pacific Transgender Network, Malaysia
ASTITVA - An Organisation for Development & Support of Sexual Minorities, India
Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO), Australia
Bandhu Social Welfare Society, Bangladesh
Beijing Evening Primrose Care Center, China
Blue Diamond Society, Nepal
Body Positive Inc., New Zealand
Diversity And Solidarity Trust, Sri Lanka
Heroes Project, India
Humsafar Trust, India
India HIV/AIDS Alliance, India
Koshish, India
People Like US (PLUS) Kolkata, India
People Living with HIV/AIDS Victoria Inc., Australia
PT Foundation, Malaysia
Purple Sky Network, Thailand

Queensland Association for Healthy Communities, Australia
SAFE NEPAL, Nepal
Sahayogi Samaj, Nepal
SGRainbow, Singapore
The Thai Red Cross AIDS Research Centre, Thailand
Voice of People, India

Eastern Europe, Central Europe, and Central Asia

AIDS Foundation East-West, Kazakhstan
Czech AIDS Help Society, Czech Republic
Equal Opportunities, Tajikistan
Interregional Centre of LGBT-studies Donbas-Soc Project, Ukraine
NGO Safe Pulse of Youth (SPY), Serbia
Penitentiary Initiative, Ukraine
Scientific and Productive Centre for Preventive Medicine, Kyrgyzstan
Siberian Alternative Center, Russia

Latin America & the Caribbean

AMOTRANS (Articulação e Movimento para Travestis e Transexuais), Brazil
Diverse Youth Movement (DIYOME), Guyana
EPAH, Brazil
Foundation He+HIV, Suriname
GTP+ Grupo de Trabalhos em Prevenção Posithivo, Brazil
Jamaica AIDS Support for Life, Jamaica
REd Initiatives, Trinidad and Tobago
Society Against Sexual Orientation Discrimination (SASOD), Guyana
SOMOSGAY, Paraguay
United Belize Advocacy Movement, Belize
Vallarta Enfrenta el SIDA AC, Mexico
Vivir. Participacion Incidencia y Transparencia A.C., Mexico

North America, Western Europe & Northern Europe

Adelson Consulting Services Inc., United States of America
Advocates for Youth, United States of America
AID FOR AIDS International, United States of America
AIDS Action Baltimore, United States of America
AIDS Foundation East-West, Netherlands
AIDS Foundation of Chicago, United States of America
AIDS Project Los Angeles, United States of America
AIDS United, United States of America
Aktionsbündnis gegen Homophobie e.V., Germany
American Jewish World Service (AJWS), United States of America
amfAR The Foundation for AIDS Research, United States of America
AVAC: Global Advocacy for HIV Prevention, United States of America
Bisexual Queer Alliance Chicago, United States of America
Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), United States of America
Center for Public Health and Human Rights, Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, United States of America
Centre for Spanish-Speaking Peoples, Canada
CLINIQUAL Inc / CLINIQUAL ASIA, United States of America
COC Nederland, Netherlands
Colega-Jaén, Spain
Community Access National Network (CANN), United States of America

Council for Global Equality, United States of America
David Ostrow & Associates, United States of America
EnCompass LLC, United States of America
EngenderHealth, United States of America
Foundation for Integrative AIDS Research (FIAR), United States of America
Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), United States of America
General Board of Church & Society, United States of America
Global AIDS Alliance, United States of America
GlobalGayz.com, United States of America
Greater Community AIDS Project, United States of America
h2o gais lesbianes bisexuals i transsexuals del Camp de Tarragona, Spain
Harlem United Community AIDS Center, United States of America
Harm Reduction Coalition, United States of America
Health GAP (Global Access Project), United States of America
HealthHIV, United States of America
Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights, United States of America
HIV Medicine Association, United States of America
HIV Prevention Justice Alliance, United States of America
HIVictorious Inc., United States of America
Howard Brown Health Center, United States of America
Human Rights Campaign, United States of America
International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC), United States of America
International Lesbian & Gay Cultural Network, Sweden
International Rectal Microbicide Advocates, United States of America
IntraHealth International, United States of America
Lower East Side Harm Reduction Center, United States of America
Malta Gay Rights Movement, Malta
Management Sciences for Health, United States of America
Metropolitan Community Churches, United States of America
National Association of People with AIDS – US, United States of America
National Association of Social Workers, United States of America
National Coalition for LGBT Health, United States of America
Naz Foundation International, United Kingdom
Open Society Foundations (OSI), United States of America
Physicians for Human Rights, United States of America
Population Council, United States of America
Projecte dels NOMS-Hispanosida, Spain
PSI (Population Services International), United States of America
Schorer, Netherlands
The AIDS Institute, United States of America
The Fenway Institute, United States of America
The Global Forum on MSM & HIV (MSMGF), United States of America
The Global Health Council, United States of America
The International HIV/AIDS Alliance, United Kingdom
TOTAL RESPECT - TJENBÉ RÈD FÉDÉRATION (Fédération de lutte contre les racismes, les
homophobies & le sida issue des communautés afro-caribéennes), France
Treatment Action Group, United States of America
UKCAB, United Kingdom
Unitarian Universalist- United Nations Office, United States of America
YouthCo HIV and HepC Community Outreach, Canada