



# THE PCB NGO DELEGATION'S COMMUNIQUÉ HYBRID 50<sup>TH</sup> UNAIDS PROGRAMME COORDINATING BOARD (PCB) MEETING



JUNE 21-24, 2022

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## Chapeau

*Aleksey Lakhov, Europe Delegate*



The 50th PCB meeting was marked by significant changes in the structure of UNAIDS, including those related to the continuous underfunding of the Joint Programme, the war in Ukraine, which affects not only the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, but the whole

world, and calls for donors on increasing funding for the global response to HIV/AIDS.

The NGO Delegation was renewed almost completely before this meeting, accepting seven new delegates into its ranks. Thanks to the support of "senior peers" and the CCF, they were able to get up to speed and get involved in an active discussion of decision points in the drafting rooms.

The work on the latter required dedication and attentiveness on behalf of the delegates, but their perseverance paid off: a number of the Delegation's proposals were included in the [Decisions document](#) of the 50th PCB meeting. The decisions themselves were reached by consensus, which was a great merit of the chair – the representative of Thailand, the country that will host the 51<sup>st</sup> PCB meeting in December 2022.

One of the decision points of the 50<sup>th</sup> PCB meeting concerned the creation of an informal inclusive task team on options for resolving the immediate funding crisis for the 2022-2023 biennium. One of the NGO Delegation representatives will form an integral part of this team.

## Agenda 1.3: Report of the Executive Director

*Aleksey Lakhov, Europe Delegate*

The [report](#) of the Executive Director Winnie Byanyima was focused on the wider and challenging context facing the global AIDS response, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and other humanitarian crises, and the global economic downturn, on how UNAIDS is seeking to address this rapidly-changing reality, on the financial outlook for UNAIDS, on the transformation process currently underway for UNAIDS.



The Executive Director made a special mention of an overall slowing of progress in reducing new HIV infections globally and more regions with growing HIV epidemics, of the particular vulnerability of key populations in the context of crisis, as well as of surges of gender-based violence, forced and child marriages and teenage pregnancies caused by COVID-19.

The NGO Europe [intervention](#) was centred around the ongoing war in Ukraine and its devastating effect on the communities in the region. It was noted that this war will have far-reaching consequences for the whole Eastern Europe and Central Asia region.

In addition, the issue of the adoption of the Global Health Sector Strategy on HIV, Viral Hepatitis and STIs was raised. Specifically, it was mentioned that there was a lot of debate about the language of this Strategy, and that only 61 countries voted for it.

## **Agenda 1.4: Report of the Chair of the Committee of Cosponsoring Organisations**

*Charanjit Sharma, Asia and the Pacific Delegate*



The CCO's report was appreciated, and the Co-Sponsoring Organisations were thanked for their hard work. These actions initiated are to be of the highest priority and a transversal, cross-cutting agenda fundamental to end AIDS, given that talking about HIV implies ending inequalities, as stated in the Global AIDS Strategy. And, for that, we celebrate the Global Strategies Initiative being implemented by the CCO. We have seen the added value of the Co-sponsors in HIV programmes especially in countries where UNAIDS offices no longer exist. We have seen Co-sponsors engaging more with the key and priority population communities and bringing their voices to the government. However, the work of the Joint Programme and the Co-sponsors is currently underfunded.

UNAIDS sets an example of good participatory practices in decision-making processes, for which a weak Joint Programme will send a wrong message to programmers and communities around the world, not being able to put up with the same commitments required at regional and in country levels to end AIDS.

It was highlighted with regards to stigma and discrimination of people living with HIV, women and girls and key populations, the in-country presence of the Joint Programme is essential to “assess and scale innovative policies and practices on the path to removing punitive and discriminatory laws, including criminalisation”. Therefore, highlighting the importance of diversifying funding resources to sustain and strengthen UNAIDS and the HIV response worldwide. This is detrimental to the Joint Programme and poses a threat to the HIV response.

Last but not the least, the principle of GIPA and ‘nothing about us without us’, and that the HIV-response must meaningfully involve civil society, key and priority populations and impacted communities.

## **Agenda 2: Follow-up to the thematic segment from the 49<sup>th</sup> PCB meeting**

### ***Jumoke Patrick, Latin America and the Caribbean Delegate***

Data and technology are fundamentally important to the global HIV response especially when linking persons to care and ensuring we reach the people where they are with treatment and care services. The PCB and presenters wanted the decision points to reflect and support the need for timely, accurate and disaggregated data to properly understand and use the data for region- and country-specific programmes. Furthermore, streamlining data was found to be very important.



The NGO delegation along with some member states had strong concerns whether countries are building sufficient protections into data systems especially for those communities that are marginalised and criminalised. Central to the discussions on the board floor was the need for the PCB to recognise that data protection and the privacy of people living with HIV and key population groups should be embedded in regional and national responses for communities. Likewise, security and data protection are important, especially in countries that still outlaw same-sex relationships and countries that continue to demonstrate high levels of stigma and discrimination toward people living with HIV.

The NGO delegation, through its consultations and advocacy at the PCB, was supported by the rest of the PCB when proposing additions to the decision points referencing data protection policies. The NGO Delegation believes that these policies will enhance and support protection for those persons living with HIV and those members of communities that are marginalised, vulnerable and in need of protection.

### **Agenda 3: Leadership in the AIDS response**

*Cecilia Chung, North America Delegate*



UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board invited the leadership of Global Fund, Peter Sands and the newly appointed U.S. global AIDS coordinator of PEPFAR, Dr. John Nkengasong to address the board on the state of global AIDS response.

Both Peter Sands and Dr. Nkengasong spoke about the importance of a fully replenished Global fund and a fully funded UNAIDS. The NGO delegation took this opportunity to highlight the unfinished business in U.S. with the Supreme Court setting the sexual and reproductive rights 50 years back and the continues discrimination against trans people. The 2025, 2030 and 10/10/10 goals would be meaningless if the leadership and member states do not push harder for changes.

## **Agenda 4: Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF) 2016-2021**

*Mubanga Chimumbwa, Africa Delegate*

The 50<sup>th</sup> PCB meeting was held in hybrid both in person and virtually after 2 years of COVID-19 pandemic. And one of the critical reports is the financial report for 2016-2021 implementation period. The report shows that the UNAIDS Joint Programme is facing financial challenges



despite the commitments made in the past years. There is significant evidence that the UNAIDS Joint Programme is underfunded with an estimation of \$25 million under the lower approved threshold of the current UBRAF.

The report also shows that the UNAIDS Joint programme is losing about \$12 million in the market exchange rate per year. It is very unfortunate that the funding trends are troubling especially at this critical moment, with COVID-19. The biggest implication is that without fully funded UNAIDS Joint Programme, the Global Fund and other HIV programmes at country level will not achieve its intended targets in bridging the gaps of communities, key populations adolescent and young women.



**Agenda 5: Indicator matrix for the 2022-2026 UBRAF and indicators, milestones, targets and data sources for the 2022-2023 Workplan and Budget**

*Christian Hui, North America Delegate*



The NGO Delegation integrated the feedback of people living with HIV, members of key and priority populations, and civil society from the North American region and global civil society consultation, in their [intervention](#).

The NGO Delegation's proposed two decision points were accepted. Some of the feedback provided included: The first decision point applauded the engagement of civil society evaluation experts in the UBRAF working group and recognized the Joint Programme for their technical expertise in developing a monitoring and evaluation framework. The second decision point highlighted that a fully-funded UBRAF, the UNAIDS Secretariat, and the Joint Programme is essential to support UNAIDS and the Joint Programme in meeting the new UBRAF indicator matrix targets, as well as contribute to the reaching of the Global AIDS Strategy 2021-2026 targets. In particular, focus should be placed in adequately funding community-led monitoring and youth-led responses.

Through lobbying efforts, both US and Canada included the need for community-led data collection and addressing the systemic and structural inequalities facing young women and girls in Africa, along with Black, Indigenous and People of Colour globally in their interventions.

## **Agenda 6: Update on strategic human resources management issues**

*Gastón Devisich, Latin America and the Caribbean Delegate*

The report presented at the 50<sup>th</sup> PCB Meeting addressed the current Human Resources situation in UNAIDS. The NGO Delegation, Co-Sponsors and the MS acknowledged the dedication and flexibility of the staff and agreed that the new organisational structure and the



matrix management and the decentralisation of functions will contribute to increase efficiencies and cost savings without hampering effectiveness. A process that should carry on with a gender and diversity-centred approach. However, without a fully funded UBRAF, the Joint Programme and critical support to the HIV response will be severely weakened or even cease to exist.

The NGO Delegation also highlighted that trust between Senior Management and UNAIDS staff needs to be fully restored. The USSA reported that the staff had felt that there was not sufficient engagement and information on their part on the effects of the realignment, which significantly affected the staff wellbeing. With this becoming a significant change management challenge, the PCB would welcome updates on what strategies are being put in place to address this issue.

The Joint Programme has always been proud of the comprehensive involvement of all stakeholders in all decision-making processes, and this must include its staff as well. Nonetheless, transformative cultural change will take time and only with a strong, dedicated, safe, transparent and responsive, fully funded-UNAIDS will we be able to fulfil the commitments of the Global AIDS Strategy.

## **Agenda 7: Statement by the Representative of the UNAIDS Staff Association (USSA)**

*Jumoke Patrick, Latin America and the Caribbean Delegate*



The USSA Statement at the 50th PCB meeting continues to raise concerns and issues affecting the staff at UNAIDS at the Secretariat and those staff in regions and countries worldwide. Whether issues and challenges arise from the COVID pandemic, the realignment process, funding shortfalls and concerns and fears

regarding management's ability to handle the challenges effectively.

It is important to note that commendation was given to the UNAIDS management for putting in place many measures towards improving UNAIDS' organisational culture and preventing and addressing harassment, including providing a staff counsellor while acknowledging that more can be done.

The NGO delegation recognized that for many PCB meetings the issues that came up in the USSA statements are recurring and based on the report doesn't seem to share a viewpoint that positive changes or a better working relationship are being fostered for a better and more productive UNAIDS. This was quite concerning for the NGO delegation who as a group of people depends on the collaborative partnership with both staff and management of UNAIDS to make its work for the people living with and impacted by HIV impacting.

Both (Management and Staff) must be more open to resolving issues while holding each other accountable for UNAIDS. One that will improve staff morale and confidence, and address injustices & inequalities, so that together they can make powerful moves in the HIV response and as we implement a progressive Global AIDS Strategy.

## **Agenda 8: Independent Organisational Oversight Reports and Management Response**

### *Midnight Poonkasetwattana, Asia and the Pacific Delegate*

Four organisational oversight reports were presented and discussed. The NGO Delegation welcomed all the reports, highlighting the positive developments and encouraging initiatives taken up to address staff grievances, though noted that the Global Staff Survey showed a low percentage of staff confidence that they would not face adverse consequences if they reported a case of abusive conduct.



The NGO Delegation suggested to fast-track the long-outstanding recommendations from the internal audit, and UNAIDS senior management team ensures sustainable funding for its core programmes, that human rights indicator to be included in the new UBRAF.

The NGO Delegation would also like to see improvement in staff confidence that they would not face adverse consequences if they reported a case of abusive conduct in the next Global Staff Survey.

**Agenda 10: Thematic Segment – “Positive Learning: harnessing the power of education to end HIV-related stigma and discrimination, empower young people, and provide a comprehensive HIV response”**

*Iwatutu Joyce Adewole, Africa Delegate*



The 50<sup>th</sup> thematic segment was timely considering the continued underfunding and challenges that youth-led organisations and initiatives face.

It opened with a powerful keynote speech from Yana Panfilova who made the case for adolescents and young people affected by the crisis in Ukraine and other humanitarian settings. The session included young panelists from America, Asia and Africa regions Ralph, Joyce, Erika and Elena. These young speakers represent the different constituencies of young people. They discussed the challenges around youth leadership, funding, comprehensive sexuality education and young key populations and also the enrollment of girls in school.

In the [intervention](#) done by the NGO Delegation, we emphasised on the need of making school safer for adolescents and young people in all their diversity, eliminating stigma, discrimination and violence in school settings, promoting and full implementation of comprehensive sexuality education for both in school and out of school young people and with emphasis on making young people co-leaders and equal partner in the AIDS response. Another [intervention](#) delivered by the NGO Delegation highlighted the importance of strengthening youth-led response, peer education to enhance the intersectional approach of youth-led response.