

What happened at the 26th meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) in Geneva, Switzerland, June 22-24, 2010?

Civil society played a crucial role in this meeting, both through the NGO Delegation and the many Observers who participated in the meeting. Following a controversial discussion over the human rights of key populations that arose in the last PCB, there was great concern that the agenda items and related decisions in this meeting (which included men who have sex with men and transgender persons, as well as stigma and discrimination) would be contested, and that some countries were attempting to limit the work of UNAIDS in these areas.

The overwhelming presence of civil society at the meeting allowed the NGO Delegation more consultation and more influence in its negotiations, especially in the drafting room (where the wording of the decisions are discussed and agreed). In the end, the key decision points passed, notably the decision point on the agenda item “Reducing HIV transmission among men who have sex with men and transgender people.” This decision took note of the update report from UNAIDS on [Reducing HIV transmission among men who have sex with men and transgender people](#), and “calls on UNAIDS and all partners to intensify efforts to meet the health needs of men who have sex with men and transgender people in the context of HIV and to ensure non-discrimination,” and to increase their “direct participation in national, regional and global HIV policy and programming.” Iran disassociated itself from this decision point at the end of the meeting.

THANK YOU to the civil society Observers who attended!

Thematic session: linking sexual and reproductive health services to HIV interventions in practice

This PCB Meeting’s thematic session focused on linking sexual and reproductive health services to HIV interventions in practice and was divided up into four breakout sessions: Empowering young people through comprehensive sexuality education; Models, Magic and Meaning: Integrated Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV Services; Funding opportunities for integrating SRH and HIV services; and Gender-based violence and HIV. The opening session began with a presentation from Lydia Mungherera, NGO Africa Delegate and also included presentations from Ricky Swuan Pyae Phyo, a sex worker and community organizer in Myanmar, and Luisa Cabal, Director of the Center for Reproductive Rights in New York. The break-out sessions were designed to be interactive and allow for more detailed discussion and participation. Each session included civil society speakers and one NGO Rapporteur. A panel discussion with lead rapporteurs from each session was held at the end of the day and final conclusions compiled. More information, including the reports from the individual breakout sessions and the final conclusions, will be available shortly on the NGO Delegation’s website: www.pcbngo.org.

In order to encourage concrete outcomes via board decision points, the NGO Delegation requested a decision point that sexual and reproductive health be an agenda item at the next PCB, which was accepted.

Upcoming thematic sessions:

- 27th meeting (December 2010): “Food and nutrition security and HIV: how to ensure that food and nutrition security are integral parts of HIV programming”
- 28th meeting (June 2011): No Thematic Sessions to allow greater focus on the budget and accountability framework
- 29th meeting (December 2011): “HIV and Enabling Legal Environments”

Report from the Executive Director

This year’s report to the board underlined the accomplishments but also the shortfalls towards the achievement of universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support, and called for a renewal of commitments as outlined in the political declarations to achieving universal access for all, with an extension of the deadline to 2015 and a high level meeting in 2011. Last December at the 25th PCB Meeting, Michel Sidibé called for a “Prevention Revolution,” an area the Second Independent Evaluation of UNAIDS identified as weak. The Executive Director noted that the “revolution will be driven by communities, for communities” in his address to the 26th PCB and described the process, which includes the development of a UN High-Level Prevention Commission, composed of political, business, activist and philanthropic leaders, and a Scientific Advisory Committee. Michel Sidibe emphasized renewed commitment to universal access to treatment and talked about treatment as prevention under the new UNAIDS concept of “Treatment 2.0.” The High-Level Commission stemming from the Prevention Revolution and Treatment 2.0 will be launched by UNAIDS at the International AIDS Conference in Vienna. During this PCB, Sidibé also launched the high level commission on HIV and the Law, which will be coordinated by UNDP and work with the World AIDS Campaign and run for 18 months.

NGO report on stigma and discrimination

This year’s annual NGO report focused on stigma and discrimination (the key barrier to universal access identified in the 2009 report) and was presented under a dedicated agenda item entitled “Ensuring non-discrimination in responses to HIV.” The report was presented by African NGO Delegate Lydia Mungherera and was followed by the UNAIDS Secretariat update on non-discrimination work, a civil society response from Kenly Sikwese (from the Zambian Network of People living with HIV and an implementer of the PLHIV Stigma Index), and the Minister of Health from El Salvador, Eduardo Antonio Espinoza Fiallos, who presented on some ground breaking work in his country.

The board reaffirmed its commitment to the political declarations of 2001 and 2006, and supported a High Level review in 2011 with attention to stigma and discrimination. Additional decision points supported the evaluation and expansion of stigma and discrimination programs, and the training of health care workers, notably around sexuality and the specific needs of key populations. The board agreed that tools for measurement and the inclusion of PLHIV and key populations in the development and use of those tools should be strengthened. The board supported the improvement of global, national and programmatic indicators to measure our progress, especially specific to key populations.

The more controversial decision points were around: calling on Member states to remove punitive laws; and the request for Member States to increase direct participation of PLHIV and key populations in programming and data collection. This point was passed by the board with wording that did not specify key populations, even though the original decision point explicitly named population groups.

UNAIDS' Evaluation Follow up

The board reviewed the [progress report](#) and recommendations coming from the [task force](#) on governance following the Second Independent Evaluation (SIE). The board supported recommendations around the ways of working of the Cosponsors and the ways of working of the board. One recommendation notes the need to increase participation from the Middle East and North Africa and other under-represented regions and constituencies. The subcommittee of the budget (with civil society participation) will be reconvened and thematic sessions will be moved to the third day of a board meeting (except when the budget is being reviewed) so that the topic of the thematic can be better followed up in the next meeting. In the meeting, the NGO Delegation followed up on the recommendation of the SIE to ensure that the new UNAIDS' partnership strategy with civil society is distinct from other partners, and is focused at country level.

UNAIDS passed a new vision and [mission statement](#)

The new vision statement reads: "Zero new HIV infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS-related deaths." The NGO Delegation supported the vision and mission statements, but noted that consultation should have extended beyond French and English, as it limits inclusion of civil society.

Gender sensitivity of the AIDS response

An update was given to the board on the implementation of the Agenda for Accelerated Country Action for Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV. There were strong concerns from civil society on the lack of progress in implementation at country level. The board adopted a decision point highlighting the need for the next update (to be a substantive agenda item at the 27th PCB Meeting in December 2010) to include a section on the policy and programmatic progress achieved at country level.

Statement by the representative of the UNAIDS Staff Association

The UNAIDS Secretariat Staff association gave its [report](#), in which it requested support for same sex partners to receive benefits and support for HIV+ staff, which the NGO Delegation supported in its intervention.

Reminder: What is the PCB again?

The Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) is the governing body of UNAIDS. It is made up of 22 voting Member States, the 10 UN Cosponsors that make up the UNAIDS program, and a NGO Delegation (consisting of one delegate and one alternate from each of 5 regions).

How can I learn more?

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