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Secretary-General

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SECRETARY-GENERAL, IN WORLD AIDS DAY MESSAGE, DESCRIBES HALTING PANDEMIC AS PREREQUISITE FOR REACHING OTHER MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Following is the text of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's message on World AIDS Day, to be observed on 1 December:

In the course of the past decade, the world has made considerable progress in the fight against AIDS. It has also made considerable promises. The time has come to keep them. And I believe we can.

Today, we have about \$8 billion available for AIDS efforts in developing countries annually - compared to \$300 million a decade ago.

Today, the national AIDS response in some 40 countries is led by Heads of State or Government themselves, or their deputies.

Today, AIDS is a familiar item for discussion in the General Assembly and the Security Council.

We see new signs of progress in almost every region of the world.

We have real evidence that AIDS is a problem with a solution.

We have a clear plan of action to halt and reverse the spread of AIDS.

At the World Summit held at the United Nations in September 2005, leaders pledged to fully implement the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted in 2001, by scaling up efforts for prevention, treatment, care and support so that every person, without exception, has access to these life-saving programmes. Next year, we will review progress so far in implementing the Declaration.

So, this is a time to concentrate our minds. It is a time to recognize that although our response so far has succeeded in some of the particulars, it has yet to match the epidemic in scale. It is a time to admit that if we are to reach the Millennium Development Goal of halting and beginning to reverse the spread of AIDS by 2015, then we must do far, far more. That mission concerns every one of us. For halting the spread of AIDS is not only a Millennium Development Goal in itself; it is a prerequisite for reaching most of the others.

Today, let us make clear this is a time to keep the promise. On this World AIDS Day, I ask all of you to join me in that mission.

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