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**Providing Leadership on Critical HIV/AIDS Issues:
An Appeal by and to Members of Parliament
Kaiser Family Foundation
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PETRA BAYR: I'm very pleased to welcome you at this session, with the title "Providing Leadership on Critical HIV/AIDS Issues: An Appeal by and to Members of Parliament."

My name is Petra Bayr. I'm a member of the Austrian Parliament and I had the great honor to act as the Co-Chair of the Leadership and Accountability Program Committee, during the last 21 months, preparing the 18th International Conference, where we also decided to offer this session. And Heir Fudence [misspelled?], which I do not know whether is in the room now, he is the point person for this session.

I'm confident that that MPS are playing an increasing role in the fight against HIV and AIDS. We had a very constructive seminar of the Parliamentarian Networks on population and development, from all over the world on Sunday dealing with the questions on integration, of HIV and AIDS, services and those of sexual and reproductive health, and we had a very inspiring discussion with young leaders there. Yesterday we had an innovative side event held by the IPU and the Austrian Parliament, where we intensively dealt with the crucial question of human rights, in the context of public health services, and the prevention of mother-to-child transmission.

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And as far as we all know, this session now is the very first session ever in the history of International AIDS Conferences where only parliamentarians or former parliamentarians would give some inputs and tell about their successful political interventions.

They will let us know how prosperous it is for MPs and for the constituencies, to work with people who often are left behind, who are marginalized, and who are minorities. And I'll pass over now to Inviolata, who is my co-moderator.

INVIOLATA MWALI MIMBWAVI: Thank you, Petra. Good morning everybody, Excellencies. My name is Inviolata Mimbwavi. I'm an Executive Director of a local NGO based in the Western province of Kenya. Before this, I was the first National Coordinator of the network of people living with HIV and AIDS in Kenya.

I'm a woman living with HIV and AIDS for the last 18 years. I have served as a council member on the National AIDS Control Council and on the council coordinating Global Fund mechanisms, CCM. Currently, I am also a member of the Leadership and Accountability Program Committee, in this conference. So, I have real personal interest in this session.

In 2007 I vied for a Parliamentary seat in Kenya and lost. I don't know if my status has anything to do with that. And so, like I say, I've got a lot of interest and I'm really

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looking forward and I'm so happy to sit with current and former members of Parliament here. If I'll never do that I'm happy to have sat with them. That's all about me.

Today we are going to talk about critical issues, which members of Parliament are making or doing, and I'm really honored to sit with some of the few leaders. Sometimes people say leaders are people who command a following. But I also believe leaders are people who are ready to stand alone on something they believe in.

On my right, we have Honorable Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu. She could say that herself, a Member of Parliament from South Africa, and Deputy Minister for Public Works. The Minister will be speaking to us on why members of Parliament should oppose criminalization of HIV and AIDS transmission. She's a guru in this, from what I've gathered.

Hendrietta is a Disability Rights, Gender HIV and AIDS activist, children and youth developer, policy analyst and developer, a trainer, researcher on disability and development on HIV and AIDS, and a writer on disability. She has represented South Africa in a number of national, regional and international forums and has also led delegations to national, regional and international conferences and meetings. She is currently serving as chairperson of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, IPU advisory group on HIV and AIDS. She is a founder of

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Disabled Women and Children Award, and Co-founder of Disabled Youth South Africa. Welcome Hendrietta. [Applause]

Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu: Thank you very much, colleagues and friends; good morning. As I said, I always try and make sure that my surname is Bogopane because I'm a real Mozwana girl, so it's important that it's pronounced in a real Suzwana, but you've done well, thank you very much.

I've had so many instructions and as I sit here, I'm trying to think which one am I going to talk about. Criminalization, but let me try to switch gears because as a member of Parliament I'm serving my third term. I've been in Parliament for 10 years, and now I'm in Parliament and in Government so it makes it very interesting.

The issues of criminalization in the fight against HIV are very emotional, sensitive. Sometimes, very rational or irrational, but there is also a response in an attempt by members of Parliament to actually address the against and the for. And sometimes it becomes very difficult for members of Parliament to find the balance.

And there are a number of things that actually stand in the way. And one of the things that I always, as an HIV activist for the past 16 years, I always say to members of Parliament, keep your emotions out of the legislation. Because sometimes as Parliamentarians one of our experiences, or one of

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our families or one of our people in our constituencies experience tend to be what matters most. And we tend to have a limit on the bigger picture.

The second thing is what is extremely important. I always say, and I want to say it again, that the battle of HIV and AIDS and what happens to the epidemic in the coming 10 years will be decided in the chambers of Parliament. Activists and NGOs have done their part. The scientists continue to do the part, but I think all of us who work in the field of HIV and AIDS, we must all accept that the coming 10 years and the reshaping of the virus is going to be determined in the chambers of Parliament.

What does that mean? It means that as a civil society, we need to shift gears. We've been chasing governments, but now I think they're hearing us, but now you need to chase Parliament because it is them that are going to actually reshape the response to HIV and AIDS.

And how are they going to do that? We all are aware that criminal law is becoming the order of the day across, from travel bans to curbing of genetic medicines, to criminalizing of HIV transmission, to the utilization of sexual offenses, as an excuse to deliberately neglect whatever the language that we use to actually criminalize those of homosexuality, and the list is becoming very long.

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And all of that is done because members of Parliament live in our communities. They are part of us. They need to actually respond, and they sometimes find in the balance. So, what I normally advise members of Parliament is as follows, very briefly.

Inside Africa we've gone through full circle, in my view. We are an easy nation that would have gone into criminalization, and when that debate, especially the pressure from women's groups became louder, we had to actually, instead of just criminalizing to respond to the pressure, we had to establish a social dialog.

So, it is important for members of Parliament, when the pressure gets hot, don't rush to legislate, but establish, use the power of Parliament to establish social dialog. And what we then did was instead of just ignoring what the women were raising, we then reviewed our whole social, sexual offenses legislation so that it doesn't come out like South Africa is criminalizing HIV. We did a whole review where we established one piece of legislation on sexual offenses, and within that we also made a serious commitment on issues of sexual offenders who are deliberately transmitting HIV.

But remember South Africa is a rights-based country. So we needed to make sure we protected the rights of the offender and the rights of the victim.

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And how did we manage to do that? Firstly we made sure that yes, the victim has the right to know the offender's status, but she can't just go and ask for it. She needs to apply through a Court of Law, so that we curb where people are going to settle their scores by knowing each other's statuses. That the Judge, at the end of the day, is the one that will make the final decision.

We also have moved to say, what do you actually need the HIV status for? Do you need it in terms of assisting the investigation, and if that's the case, would it assist in minimum sentencing or what would assist in? But what we then did is we said we need to also protect the victim. We moved and said the victim might apply so she is empowered to make medical lifestyle changes.

But we then said priority is to get prep services to her as speedily as possible. And once she's got that - that's priority number one - we then said what happens when she wants the results. When she wants the actual results, then she needs to apply within 90 days, but also the offender has the right to know by choice.

So, it's not automatic that just because you are a sexual offender you must now be - the status must now be imposed on you. So what we then did is we made sure that we don't move into the deliberate transmission, but we reserve the

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HIV element to empowering the victim and supporting the offender.

Now, this assisted us to move away from deliberately criminalizing HIV. But also it assisted us to ensure that we're able to protect those that are negative, and those that are experiencing gender-based violence, but also we find a balance that until you are found guilty, your status is also protected. And that information is used responsibly for a particular defined reason.

Lastly, let me also say that members of Parliament, when we criminalize a behavior, we're stepping into a terrain where we are beginning to tamper with cultural and with the being of the person. So, before we move to criminalization, as members of Parliament we need to ask, what are we criminalizing and why? And what would the impact of that decision be in the health systems? And what contribution will it make to our advances in fighting the disease, because that is what we are all working towards. Thank you very much. [Applause]

PETRA BAYR: Thank you very much, Hendrietta. I would like to pass over now to Tim Barnett, former NPO of New Zealand, and global program manager of the World AIDS Campaign.

Tim successfully sponsored legalization, which led to New Zealand becoming the first country to decriminalize sex work, and championed human rights and race-related causes.

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Prior to this, he worked in Barbados and the UK, in NGO Management, including in a letter, Leadership of National Charities working on the promotion of volunteering and of human rights for the lesbian and gay population.

Tim decided to leave the New Zealand Parliament in 2008, and since March 2009 he has been the Global Program Manager of the World AIDS Campaign, a Global Civil Society Agency. Besides many, many other activities, Tim is part of the agency management team and is leading the WAC's role as partner in the UNDPUN AIDS initiative, The Global Commission on AIDS and the Law, focusing on the impact of criminalization of particular populations and behaviors. Tim, the floor is yours.
[Applause]

TIM BARNETT: Thank you and greetings and thank you, all of you, for coming along today.

My particular focus is around sexual orientation, and within that, I'm going to be speaking from the perspective of being the second or third Member of Parliament in New Zealand, to come out as gay, and we're very honored at the front row here today is Svend Robinson, who was the first Member of Parliament anywhere in the world to come out publically as a gay man. Thank you for coming along, Svend.

In New Zealand there are a number of particular characteristics including a pretty powerful history of Women's

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Equality, and a fairly good record in terms of human rights, and back in 1984 we had a woman, a conservative member of Parliament, who if she reflected now would say, she probably did come out as Lesbian at the time, but I don't think anyone really noticed in the heat of the political argument; but from 1993 onwards our Parliament has always had elected and open gay members.

The colleague that came out as gay in 1993 lost his seat in 1996. I came in, I made my maiden speech in the Parliament and the media labeled me as Parliament's gay palm. Upon being somebody who has emigrated from Britain to New Zealand, and the gay bit I've already mentioned.

So, I was on my own for three years, and since then we've had at least three and now six out of 120 members of Parliament in New Zealand are openly lesbian or gay, and they come from three different political parties.

So, I think the first message is that if one is talking about people from particular groups, defining themselves in a very difficult and closed environment of Parliament, then there's some strength in numbers that makes it all a bit easier.

I was asked to reflect on what was difficult about disclosure, because one of the themes of this session is about people disclosing what they are. And in a sense that one can

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choose not to disclose one's identity as PLHIV, you can also choose your identity as lesbian or gay.

I think the challenges one has to face includes the fact that immediately you're labeled with that name. I can remember that my colleague, who came in 1993 came back in again and is still in Parliament there. He used to find everyone called him by my name and they called me by his name. So somehow people are thinking that person's a gay MP and getting the name wrong. So, I think there's a sense in which there is something that's in people's heads that looks at us and says, they're the gay ones, and therefore they got the wrong name on occasions.

I think secondly, and often we don't realize that, Members of Parliament who are lucky enough to have staff, often find that their staffs soak up a lot of the homophobia, a lot of the anger, and a lot of the pressure, and actually end up protecting us, but put themselves under some pressure in the process. So I can remember the day that our Parliament was voting on Same Sex Relationship Recognition, the first country outside Europe to pass that law. The front page of the paper had a picture of my partner and myself together. And my partner is Maori so he's brown, and I'm white and my office was deluged with phone calls not about the fact that I was gay. I think most people locally realized that by then. But the issue

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for them was the fact that I had a partner of a different race. So, sometimes when you think you've dealt with one prejudice you find another one that leaps forward anyway.

I think it can also mean that your office becomes pressured, and that people come to you with issues which come out to the fact that they are lesbian or gay issues of prejudice and discrimination, particularly I found around policing, where our police force was going through a process of getting a little more sensitive to the issues. But people were afraid, if they were being blackmailed for example because of their sexuality, they were afraid to go to the police and they'd come to me and want me to go along with them to talk to the police.

That was fine, but what it meant was that I became a Member of Parliament almost for the whole city, around those issues. And also it acted like a magnet for those in the media who chose to focus on us. I can remember being accused by one right wing commentator of arriving in New Zealand with my gay rights manifesto, in the same way as Lennon arrived at Moscow railway station, with his Communist Manifesto. So the images are all very real.

But just a last point really, I mean by coming out it gave meaning to my career, it gave me character as a Member of Parliament, particularly for younger voters, and it meant that

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when it came to the big project, and I mentioned same sex relationship recognition, that it was me that our Prime Minister came to and said, "Around the world debates are starting about same-sex relationship law. We want to be ahead of the play, we don't want to wait for our courts to force us into doing something," and so I was given the job of going off talking to lesbian and gay groups, conducting consultation, going back to Ministers with some options, talking to our caucus, and we made a whole lot of decisions that meant we could actually, at the end of the day, after a very bruising debate, pass that law through the Parliament; and that plus the decriminalization of sex work are my two "unexpected legacies" from that 12 years in Parliament.

So, I think those benefits are all ones that almost involve a sense of self incentivitation; it's quite easy to stay comfortable and not be open. The openness gives one a lot more depth and honesty, and I think makes one much more attractive to the general public.

But luckily enough for me, it was a process I could determine state by stage. Thank you. [Applause]

INVOLTA MWALI MIMBWAZI: Critical HIV and AIDS issues, really. Our next speaker is Libby Davies. Libby Davies is a Federal Member of Parliament for Vancouver East. The New Democrats party spokesperson for drug policy, Reform Housing on

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Homelessness, and Solicitors in Laws as well as her party's Deputy Leader and House Leader.

Since she was first elected in 1997, Libby has been an outspoken critic of the criminalization of drug users, and of course by Canada's Prohibitionist Policies. She is the 2007 recipient of the Drug Policy and last Justice Gerald La Dain Award for achievement in the field of law for her work on drug policy.

As a MP, Libby made the work on harm reduction for injection drug users a priority issue, and advocated strongly and successfully to open inside North America's only supervised injection site in her community.

Libby's writing is currently home to some of the country's most progressive harm reduction and social policies programs.

Libby will be talking to us about why Parliamentary leadership on harm reduction and the rights of people who use drugs is important. What barriers exist and how they can be overcome. Welcome Libby.

LIBBY DAVIES: Thank you very much, Inviolata. Hello everybody, good morning. Thank you very much for coming to our session today and thank you to the International AIDS Society and the AIDS Conference for hosting this panel today that is made up of Members of Parliament, or former Members of

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Parliament. It is great honor to be here to speak from this perspective as an elected representative.

I was first elected in 1997. My Federal riding is on the West coast of Canada, in Vancouver, and I represent a very low income riding. When I was first elected, the most critical issue that people in my community faced was people dying from drug overdoses, people who were mostly HIV positive.

And I remember within the first few weeks of being elected attending a meeting of drug users in a Mission Church, up a very steep flight of stairs, in a hot, small room where about 100 people were standing and sitting on the floor. They were drug users. They were my constituents. And they had never met a Member of Parliament before. And they believed that nobody cared about them and nobody cared about their rights. And we had a meeting and they told me about their issues and their concerns and the desperation and the pain and the suffering that they faced as drug users who were criminalized, who had nowhere to go, nowhere to live. They were on the streets and they were at the very margins of society.

And I remember that the question that people asked me, over and over again is: What are our rights? Do we have a right to housing? Do we have a right to healthcare? Why can't

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we see a doctor? Why are we turned away by the landlords? Why are we turned away from everywhere?

And so when I went to Ottawa, where the Federal Parliament is, I made a decision that this was the most important issue facing the people of my community. Not only the drug users, the intravenous drug users, but the whole community because crime rates were soaring, people felt unsafe, and so it became a very critical issue and we made sure that a public health emergency was declared in that local community.

And what I learned from working on this issue is that it is critical that elected representatives are willing to speak out for human rights and for justice. It is very easy for Members of Parliament or any elected representatives to play it safe, and to play the politics of fear, and to divide people to say there's them and there's us. There's the good citizens and the bad citizens. And that's what was happening in my community.

The drug users were demonized, they were vilified, and I decided that as an elected representative I had to fight for the rights of my constituents. And when I started to do this 13 years ago, I was told that I would never be reelected. People said to me, people that I knew very well who supported me, they said you're crazy. If you work for these drug users, if you work for their rights, if you try to stop the

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criminalization of the law, if you try to change the debate, you will never be reelected.

I didn't believe that and I didn't care anyway. I thought that this was the most important health issue in my community. And so working with local organizations, with drug users, with scientist researchers, we built a very powerful movement to open up the first safe injection site, to promote harm reduction, to challenge drug policy laws themselves, and to push back on what we now have the conservative government in our country who tried to challenge some of these programs.

I'm very delighted that the Vienna Declaration that we have at this conference originated in the City of Vancouver, and I hope that everybody will sign it because I believe that we have to go back into our communities, we have to speak to our elected representatives and say that we have to speak the truth. We have to stop the criminalization of people who are marginalized, whether they be sex workers or drug users or people with HIV generally.

And we have to demand that our elected representatives uphold the rights of these people and to make sure that we are part of a progressive solution that includes harm reduction. That's what we're doing, many of us in Canada, and we want to appeal to other elected representatives to do the same. Thank you very much. [Applause]

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PETRA BAYR: Last but not least I want to invite Marleen Temmerman to deliver her statement.

Marleen is a member of the Senate from Belgium, and as an expert in women's health, Marleen Temmerman has managed to successfully combine politics and medicine to make a significant impact on healthcare.

Professor Temmerman is currently Professor for Obstetrics and Gynecology at Gant University in Belgium, head of the Obstetric and Gynecology department of the Gant University Hospital.

After working in Pumwani Maternity Hospital in the slums of Nairobi, Professor Temmerman fought for improvements in healthcare of the poor population, and for reproductive and sexual rights of women.

In 1992 she joined Gant University where she became the first female Gynecology Professor in Belgium, and created in 1994 the Multidisciplinary International Center for Reproductive Health, based in both Gant and Kenya. Under her leadership it's developed into one of the main centers of excellence in the field for reproductive and sexual health and rights. And in March 2010, Marleen Temmerman received a Lifetime Achievement Award of the British Medical Journal for her work on SRHR. Professor Temmerman.

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MARLEEN TEMMERMAN: Thank you Petra for this extensive introduction. Shall I present from here because I have a PowerPoint?

Good morning and thanks to all of you for being here. It is really important, I think, as Petra said the first time, that there is a Parliamentarian panel within the AIDS conference. We tried it last time in Mexico, it didn't work out. So we are very happy and proud to be here.

Just as an introduction, sexual and reproductive rights are still under threat worldwide, not only in developing countries, but also in Europe. Pressure from some groups, mainly conservative groups, have reduced already in our own countries, access to essential health services, especially for poor and migrant populations.

There is also too little good quality sex education and access to family planning to prevent unwanted pregnancies and abortion, even in European countries. And countries where access to abortion is severely restricted, the number of unsafe abortions is huge and still rising.

I start with this statement because before I joined politics, I was working towards legalizing abortion, I've never met somebody who is for abortion. Everyone is, it's a choice that you make if there is no other option, but the legislation of abortion has been proven to contribute to lower rates of

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unwanted pregnancy. Of course when it goes together with good, contraceptive policies.

In our settings, and I think it's worldwide, female migrants face other difficulties. They have fewer channels through which they migrate legally to the EU. The men for example, fear of deportation and economic vulnerability leaves undocumented migrant women more exposed to sexual and domestic violence. And we are trying now, to prepare a bill in our country because we have discovered through research that female migrants and vulnerable groups are really at a high extent, victims of sexual- and gender-based violence.

Sexual and reproductive rights are being violated worldwide and a transformation of social norms should be embedded at all levels of society with also men and boys, of course.

Now, what can Parliaments do? To start with Parliamentarians have an important role in shaping this debate in their countries, and to fight ignorance, stigma, and discrimination. And we just heard some magnificent examples here, from my colleagues.

And these can start or strengthen women's right and gender committees in their Parliaments. If they don't exist yet, it's time to start up these committees. And it's time

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that the civil society put some pressure on their parliamentarians to work along these lines.

MPs should take the lead on topics such as sexual and reproductive rights, and pass laws amongst others violence, female genital mutilation, where that happens, discrimination. They should fight for equal pay and rights of migrant women and as the Parliament has the power to legislate, this is very important. And Parliaments, even as important can control government budgets and fight for local and global solidarity. I will give you some examples.

The European Parliament, for example, can use budgetary and policy powers which will increase if the Lisbon Treaty is ratified, to make sure that women's right are fully incorporated into the EU Social Policies, the Stockholm and the common European Asylum System.

Some good examples and best practices. I didn't only take examples from my own country. I just start with citing two years ago, we as a group of Parliamentarians with the IPU, were at the Mexico conference, outside the conference, but still; and there one of the chairs said, if the pandemic is being feminized, the HIV Pandemic, so should the solutions. There is a need for greater political leadership in the response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and few are as well placed to provide as is Members of Parliament.

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Well, I think also what we should maybe focus attention is that there's a very good handbook that has been made by IPU, UN AIDS and UNDP to help Parliamentarians. Just some examples, due to the high rate of maternal mortality in Mozambique, parliamentarians together with government have taken action, convinced the President that 11 young women are dying in Mozambique of maternal health, most of them due to illegal abortion, and the Mozambiquean government is now rewriting the legislation.

Another example where I've been involved in is men having sex with men in Kenya. It's criminalized, forbidden, but now more and more public health authorities speak out that from a public health perspective, we should not hide and a debate will be initiated in Parliament.

And yesterday because some of my colleagues from Senegal and other countries are here, in our IPU meeting yesterday, we were given a good example by our Senegalese Parliamentarians who are reviewing the laws and legislation for gender aspect and discrimination. We should follow their example.

Barriers are many, difficult topics are not often popular, and as it was said by my neighbor here, you don't win votes very often. Parliamentarians are afraid to really

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campaign for vulnerable people and for topics like drug use, that maybe don't make you popular.

Active support of the community, we have to explain, to educate, to argue, and to stand for our cause. And I think very important, and that's my last statement before I show you two pictures, we have to go from a public health approach, whether you are for, against, or against some cause, for or against homosexuality, and so on. From a public health perspective, it is very important that all people have equal rights and equal access to healthcare.

And then to end an initiative we took in our own Parliament with a group of Parliamentarians for the Millennium Development goals to raise attention to the problem of maternal mortality and in the first place to raise more funding from our own government. So every year around Mother's Day we have an initiative in Parliament where we are like this one, it's just some pictures. There is a statement that every minute a woman dies of maternal causes somewhere in the world. So every minute a Parliamentarian laid down on the one the Red Cross blankets. There was a lot of media around, media coverage. We do this every year and trying to get also our male colleagues involved in this. Trying to fundraise for maternal health because it is a shame that we still have so many women dying of maternal mortality. And to cite an African proverb, it takes

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two to make a child but it takes a village to raise a child.
And we are all part of that global village.

I think yes, we can change if we care. Thank you.

[Applause]

PETRA BAYR: Thank you so much. I also introduced Marleen this year in Austria. I think that all the four panelists showed a very colorful picture that it's possible to work with people and for people who are not mainstream, for the benefit of the whole constituency, always and successful work for them.

I would allow questions among the panel if there are some. Do you want to refer to anybody? Are there some contradictions, some questions on the plenary? If not, I'd like to pass over to the audience, and ask you to take the floor. We have two microphones: number 1 and number 2. Three microphones, who would I ask to use? If you want to take the floor, please tell us in brief your name, and background, and also tell us who of the panelists you address with your questions, with your few remarks. And please try to be as short and precise as the panelists were.

Okay, we'll go with the speaker on Microphone 3.

JAMILE KADABA: Thank you Madame Co-Chairs. My name is Jamile Kadaba and I'm an Executive Manager dealing with Public Health programs based, Capetown, Western Cape, one of the nine

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provinces in South Africa. My questions could be answered by, actually directed to either Madame Speaker from Canada, or Tim from New Zealand, and any other. Maybe just a short context to my question. Maybe first just two things and I congratulate all the speakers I think, for the outstanding work that you've done, in sharing with us your lessons and experiences.

In real life, I think the kind of experiences you shared with us, underpin the context within this topic that between public representatives and managers or health planners and researchers, there needs to be that good relationship. I mean, lessons in South Africa for example is that the leadership is provided within some kind of institutional framework, e.g. the South African National AIDS Council and its structures. And we know of experiences elsewhere in Africa and so on. However we had for example in the past two days, EU and some of the Middle East are only now grappling with establishing national strategic plans and so on and so forth.

Now, my question then based on that context is: Are there any lessons for you as current in peace and past in peace, are there any lessons that could be used to strengthen an engagement and interaction between public officials that is health planners such as ourselves, and politicians? Because unless we strike that balance, what I'm hearing for example

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quite often is that researchers having an input, community, a civil society has input.

We're not quite often hearing the inputs that the public officials need to make. For example, we need to process the information, we need to analyze it by rational planning for example, so that we show that the information that goes through, or the input that I've given to politicians and a public representative are technically sound and evidence based. So information from research need to processed prior to be given to our politicians, our political leaders, and their lessons -

INVIOLATA MWALI MIMBWAZI: Thank you, thank you, thank you.

JAMILE KADABA: Thank you.

INVIOLATA MWALI MIMBWAZI: Please could we be precise on our questions? These are really critical issues, and I'm sure very many people would want to speak. We're going to take three questions before any panelists can respond. Could we hear from Microphone 5?

JARED GUS: Yes, my name's Jared Gus and I'm from Northern Alberta Canada where I work in community-based education and support. So my question is mainly directed at Tim and Libby. How can community-based NGOs better support our parliamentarians? Giving an example that our MP is quite young,

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early in his political career, and quite in the heart of conservative country. Thanks.

INVIOLATA MWALI MIMBWAZI: Microphone 1?

DR. TU: I'm Dr. Tu from Taiwan, I was Minister of Health before and now I am the Member of Parliament and I try to propose a law, a change to decriminalization of the drug use, because I think this is very important. Drug is so special because some people get profit from that, maybe some from the policeman or some from drug leader, and because drug is so expensive, some try to promote the use of drugs. So that the decriminalization, is our best way to decrease the burden of drug use. So that I proposed it though, I tried to decriminalization and try to ask my government to provide drug for drug use. And it causes a difficulty to pass the law. I will ask around here, is there any country had passed this kind of law? That decriminalization, and it's been how long to pass this kind of a law? And do you any know government offer cheap drugs for the drug user? Is there a there an issue to buy from very expensive from the drug dealer. Thank you very much.

INVIOLATA MWALI MIMBWAZI: Thank you, so we'll have reactions, responses from the panelists and any of you can pick it up.

LIBBY DAVIES: Okay well I could begin. Thank you very much for the excellent questions. On the first question about

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how to develop good relationships, I think this is key to bringing about change. And what I've learned from my own experience is that often that begins at the very local level.

Although I'm a federal representative and I represent my district in the Federal Parliament, the work for change begins in the local community and that's where you build the alliances with local organizations, with professional community, public officials. And I think when that work begins to happen in a local community, then it's much easier to build on that strength and begin to then challenge the barriers and the systems that you face at the federal level where it's much harder to change things.

The whole issue of decriminalization, I mean it's very clear that when you tackle drug policy and our prohibitionist policies, you take on everything in society. You take on the judiciary law enforcement, police controls. So it's a very high stakes game, but I do believe that there is a great movement worldwide and I think this again is reflected in the Vienna Declaration, that the so-called war on drugs has failed.

It's a war on poor people by and large, and so it is very important that we go back to our local communities and find out the elected representatives, such as we heard from the gentleman from Taiwan, who have some understanding of this issue and to give those people support. And then to put

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pressure on other elected representatives who are standing by and reinforcing these reactionary models of criminalization and law enforcement.

In Canada, we make some progress and then we go backwards again, because we now have a conservative government that's even dropped harm reduction from drug policy, which is a very basic element of a good public policy.

So, in terms of local organizations, the gentleman from Alberta, I think a lot of people feel very divorced from the political system, and as community activists we have to go and speak to these elected representatives at the local level and make it clear what the reality is and start pushing on elected representatives to hear the voices that are not being heard in their local community, and demand that they have a right to be represented.

And I think when that happens and we can find what support and sympathy there is, then we can start building the alliances, and that's what brings about the change. The most important element though is drug users in the case that I am speaking about, when they spoke themselves, their own voice and their own power, that's what changed the debate.

Because then they were visible, they were not invisible, they were speaking about their own issues, their own rights, their own needs, and then they could not be ignored.

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INVIOLATA MWALI MIMBWAZI: You can really wait on members of Parliament occasionally. Panelists, you too try to be brief. Tim, can you say something?

TIM BARNETT: I'll try and be very brief Chair, promise. Jiminy, I think it was from the Western Cape, I also live there so I recognize the issue that you raised about the relationship between policymakers and politicians.

It was always a frustration of mine that a lot of the ethics under which policymakers worked in government prevented them in having direct contact with politicians, so we had to use all sorts of means, such as contact through our political parties such as the interaction at committees in Parliament where we were directly questioning officials and could have a chat with them in the corridor outside sometimes.

Also in our government we manage to create an innovative concept of a rainbow desk in our Ministry of Social Development which were staff working in government across the whole of government on lesbian and gay issues and they were allowed to have monthly meetings with me, although I wasn't a Minister, in order to work on a common program.

So there are ways of doing it, but it is tough and it is frustrating, and I think it's a question of trying to work out lateral ways of doing it.

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Jerard from Alberta mentioned about links with community based NGOs, I think politicians get cynical when NGOs only come to them when there's a crisis. I think relationship building, relationship maintenance is the crucial thing in a sustainable way, so for example invite the MP to your staff Christmas party to pop in and socialize with people.

Send them the newsletter with a handwritten note saying look particularly at the article on this page. And then when the crunch issue comes, it's much easier to go in and say we want you to do this with us.

And also as Libby mentioned experiential, the more the politician can actually experience the issue firsthand, rather than on a bit of paper, actually see the person who is on kidney dialysis and see what it involves their lives, the more they can talk with a clear voice.

And Dr. Tu from Taiwan, I think Libby answered all the issues really. A decriminalization campaign is a tough one, and it's always good to go into the political commitment to at least work on the issue.

The Coalition of Civil Society is necessary, you need to have some media on the side of civil society, are often the sector that can give you the stories that make it real, and they need to persuade your colleagues and that's another session in itself. But, if you can get that right, then there

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are examples to go by, then you can do remarkable things.

Thank you.

HENDRIETTA BOGOPANE-ZULU: Thank you very much Tim, I think I just want to talk to issues to say that especially to the colleague from Taiwan, when you have empowered members of Parliament because we are expected to be experts on everything So it is important that civil society organizations identify champions out of members of Parliament that will champion their respective causes.

That way you do all the things that Tim has said, remember the birthday, it's all about relationships at the end of the day. But it's also about empowering the Member of Parliament to represent the cause.

Also on the issue that you asked around the decriminalizing of South Africa for example in our nation of strategic plan we recognize we don't have the high intravenous drug, but we do have a rising community of drug users. And when I served in my term in the Portfolio Committee on social development, we dealt with an act that we passed in 2008 on prevention and treatment of drug use.

And the first things that we did, because the country is still in dialogue on issues around harm reduction, we made sure that we pass legislation that is not in any way going to criminalize.

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For the first time we gave, the first thing we did is to give dignity to the drug users, to say that whatever and at any level somebody that interacts with them must treat them with dignity. We removed the stigma by saying that drug use is actually a chronic illness, it should be treated as such.

We moved on and we said, we established halfway houses, we established the Central Drug Authority that registers are all of those NGOs that are working in the field so that at no point they can be treated in whatever way.

We then further also ensured that the person that is a drug user is engaged in their medical, they have the right to choose what kind of treatment they want, and we moved on to say that that treatment must also be made available and government must establish government run.

And in that legislation we strongly also recognized the interaction between HIV and the fact that when we address issues of drug users, we actually contribute to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.

So we didn't go out there, even though the country is still in dialogue, criminalize or decriminalize, but we created an enabling environment for every drug user at any level to find any support they need and to be treated with all the dignity and for their rights to be respected. We moved further to even establish community-based centers so that it's not us

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and them, that the community understands we imposed on government programs, on awareness and advocacy, so that we deal with the root of the problem, and also introduce what we call parenting programs.

All of that is in the drug law and it's in support of drug users. So, I'm just sharing this because we need to also bear in mind how we can introduce innovative legislation, responding to the cause without criminalizing anything.

INVIOLATA MWALI MIMBWAZI: Thank you. So, Microphone 4? The two of you.

SVEND ROBINSON: Thank you very much, my name is Svend Robinson and I'm working with the Global Fund now and previously had the honor of being a member of Parliament in Canada for a little over 25 years.

I want to first of all congratulate all of the panelists, this really is a historic panel at the International AIDS Society Conferences and I can't think of better representatives than those who are here today. Each of you are truly champions and have demonstrated incredible courage in your roles as members of Parliament, past, present, and Inviolata, I would say future as well.

I wanted to just make a brief point and then ask a question, and that is with respect to many of the issues that have been addressed this morning, whether it is the importance

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of the link, as Marleen has talked about, between sexual and reproductive health and rights and HIV. Harm reduction, and Libby has just done an amazing job in Canada on harm reduction. Tim's work around equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans people, and Henrietta who has been a really visionary leader, not just on disability issues, but also on issues such as decriminalization of homosexuality in Burundi, Uganda and elsewhere.

On each of these issues, the Global Fund is playing a key role. The Global Fund is in a position, in a unique position, to fund work in these areas. It's the biggest funder in the world now for example on harm reduction, funding programs in the Russian Federation when the Russian government refuses to provide that funding.

Funding, we have a gender strategy, a sexual orientation and gender identity strategy. Many of these issues, critically important, as you've identified, we at the Global Fund see parliamentarians as key partners.

But I want to make a particular plea this morning, and that is as some of you will be aware, this is a critical year for the Global Fund, it's the replenishment year when governments must decide how serious they are about support for the Fund.

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The SADC Parliamentary Forum just recently met in Zambia, unanimously passed a motion calling for full support for the Global Fund, a \$20 billion replenishment to enable it to help to meet the millennium development goals, the goal of universal access, the chair is here actually, from Zimbabwe Honorable Tabitha Khumalo.

A number of you have been active, I know Marleen and the Belgium Parliament and elsewhere. I just want to make an appeal to those of you who are in Parliaments, those of you who are in the panel as well as those of you who are in the audience to understand the critical importance of the Global Fund in advancing many of these issues, and to ask that you, if you haven't already done so, go to your government, make that appeal, help them to understand that it will make a difference, that it will save lives, it will promote harm reduction, the other issues.

So my question I guess is, partly also with respect to the moderator, we are in Austria and Petra knows very well, Austria has contributed nothing to the Global Fund, not one cent. And I would hope that perhaps you Petra, as a real leader, and I know someone that's supportive as the chair of your committee, would be in a position to move this forward, perhaps bring emotion to the committee as other parliamentarians have done in their countries and to recognize

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that at this critical time, the Global Fund must be supported by parliamentarians. Thank you very much. [Applause]

BRIONNE DAWSON: Good afternoon. My name is Brionne Dawson. I'm with the National Democratic Institute. I work primarily with parliamentarians in Southern Africa and I want to echo Svend's comments in applauding you for your leadership and your courage and to thank you for the service that you've provided in all of these key issues.

I wanted to ask, in some of the countries that I work in, many of the parliamentarians talk about prevention and many of you talked in your remarks about some of the political issues and personal issues that you faced in taking on some of these key issues.

If there's no votes in some of these issues that you've taken on, I've heard quite often that there is also not any votes in promoting issues around male circumcision, for example a key issue in prevention.

And I'm wondering what suggestions you might have for parliamentarians in accelerating the prevention movement?

And I also wanted to ask, given some of the issues and the realities that you face, what you might say, I noticed several of the panelists are women, and what you might say about the role that women can play in advancing some of these

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issues, and what unique challenges also women elected leaders face in taking some of these issues on? Thanks.

INVIOLATA MWALI MIMBWAZI: So we'll hear from Microphone 3 and Microphone 1. Then the panelist will respond.

MARIE KAYULUFSAN: My name is Marie Kayulufsan [misspelled?], I'm from IDASA's Governance and AIDS Programme based in Pretoria, South Africa.

In the past seven years we've been collecting evidence about the impact of leadership attrition in several countries in Africa and my question is to Tim Barnett. While we find that some of them do speak out, as Libby said that that's the most important thing, but we have yet, although we have evidence that parliamentarians on a local and national level are dying of AIDS and are living with AIDS, none of them, hardly any of them disclose their status.

And I would like to know from your experience, Mr. Barnett, if there's any analysis that you can have on why it's so difficult to disclose your HIV status and if there is anything that you think one can do to create a space that would make it easier for political leaders to disclose their HIV status?

FEMALE SPEAKER: Thank you, my name is [inaudible]. I'm also from South Africa. My question is to everyone about

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the challenges and maybe some of the success stories you may say about different departments working intersectorally.

Because I think any one of the issues that you are dealing with necessitates that everybody else takes it up. For an example, the issue of criminalization of HIV in South Africa speaks to the issue of protecting women and children against abuse, because if they were not raped and they were not abused, you wouldn't be dealing with a community that asks you to criminalize because they are at a risk of dealing with HIV.

So how do you then deal with not only looking at issues of criminalization, but also looking at issues of protecting women and children?

And I guess the same thing is around drug use, the same thing is around looking at abortion. How are you looking at education to make sure that young people delay sexual debut?

So I guess my question is about how successful, or what are some of the challenges in whatever issue that you have been dealing with as parliamentarians, have you found that you are able to make different departments that have an impact on the issues you are championing to work intersectorally?

HENDRIETTA BOGOPANE-ZULU: Okay. Well, thank you very much; I will start with the last question going up. Different countries have different models, we in South Africa have the InterMinisterial Committee on HIV and AIDs which actually

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brings the ministers and deputy ministers that are responsible for the different ministries to be able to come together and actually determine what the program on HIV and how intersectorally they are going to actually spread the budget.

And the allocation of human resource also, not necessarily financial only. And that committee also is the same ministers that from part of the South African National AIDS Council representing government. And also some of those ministers from part of the country coordinating mechanism to represent government.

So you have that constant, and each and every department is required to have an HIV and AIDS vocal person. So irrespective, I mean I'm in public works, which is construction and the build environment, and our department and the ministry, we headed one of the biggest testing campaign where we led the testing of all of our employees, including captains of the construction industry, which is introducing HIV in the construction industry, we've done that and it went very well.

The issue of disclosure by members of Parliament is another, for me, yardstick that we need to use to say have we done enough? And one of the realities is that in the fight against HIV in the 30 years, parliamentarians have not really been taken seriously. They have been either excluded, left

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out, and in a way civil society spent time holding governments to account at the total exclusion of Parliaments.

So it has created a very comfortable space for Parliaments to get away with murder, and as a parliamentarian, I'm saying it's about time that you shift from governments to Parliaments, so that you are able to actually begin to empower parliamentarians, by sharing information, partnering with them and they themselves create an enabling environment but they are not yet there in the space where they are, and where they operate.

Lastly, the issues of the replenishing of, which is what Svend was talking about. I think to those in the room, I want to say it is extremely important, I can't stress this enough. That civil society really shifts because Parliaments appropriate the budgets. Governments spend them. That's very important to understand.

Now, a government will never be in a position to make the decision whether they are going to refurbish the Global Fund, unless their Parliament allocates them the resources to do so.

So what does it mean? It means that between now and October, all of us in this room must be at the doorsteps of our Parliament and ensuring that our Parliaments in their appropriation, is able to allocate the relevant resources so

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that our governments are able to make the requisite commitments.

But it also means that we need to go out there as civil society and empower our parliamentarians through training so that they understand the importance of HIV prevention, the fight thereof. That way, and I think Marleen can share a thing or two, when you have empowered parliamentarians who are ready and who understands the issues of HIV, I bet it with my life, they will defend the health budget with everything that they've got.

But if they are not empowered and they've never been exposed as Tim said, the health budget is the first one to be cut. And that is the reason why, instant for Africans, governments can't meet the Abuja Declarations, because they went and made political commitments when actually they are not politicians. And now they came back, they did not explain the 15-percents to their Parliaments, and that is why they are unable to meet them.

So, we need to begin to understand the power parliamentarians have, and how we can tap into that power to benefit the fight against HIV and AIDS. Thank you very much.
[Applause]

TIM BARNETT: Four great issues and questions, I just, to follow up the comments about the Global Fund, vital issues

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there. We were in government for nine years, we spent eight years battling with our ministers to get an increase in, a real increase in percentage terms and overseas development spending, and I think sometimes civil society can imagine that because a Parliament believes something therefore the government would do it, but this isn't issues of legislation, this is really is issues of persuasion. And so getting the right structures in Parliament such as Marleen spoke about, I think, absolutely crucial and just keep putting the pressure on, on the ministers and on the officials to make those changes.

Brionne spoke about models around prevention. In Southern Africa we have got a 50 by 15 initiative which is specifically around HIV prevention, it's about a 50-percent reduction in new infections by 2015 and it's essentially a partnership between the parliamentary forum in SADC made up of parliamentary representatives in the whole region and regional and national levels of civil society.

And the idea of that is to get the two sides working together around some common targets, which will be specific to each country and a common strands are around evidence based activity, they're around being brave enough to tackle the difficult issues and it's about civil society as the people as advocates and about parliamentarians as the people's representatives, being prepared to work together on those

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tricky issues. So strength in numbers and strength in the sectors working together.

Thirdly, [inaudible] spoke about departments working intersectorally, the best example I have of that is when we decriminalized sex work in New Zealand. Where previously the only relationship between the state and the sex industry was the police, it used to arrest, it used to register, it used to generally give everyone a pretty tough time and label sex workers as being drug-taking and being linked to big criminals.

And the law reform, the relationship with the State became a lot more complicated, it was about a relationship with justice, a relationship with health, a continued relationship with the police, relationship with local councils, relationship with occupational health and safety.

It's a lot more complicated, a lot more mature and actually about the sex industry and sex workers coming out into the light from the shadows, so I think that was, that's a nice example.

And Mareeka from Edassa [misspelled?] asked a question so complicated we could spend the rest of the day talking about it.

I mean certainly Africa I think it's true that no member of Parliament has yet openly come out as having a positive status, and I think there's a whole lot of solutions

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we can think of around strength in numbers and around media support and around those members of Parliament not being seen as single dimensional.

But I do think it's tough, I mean Chris Smith who was I think together with Svend one of the first MPs in the world in Britain to come out as gay. He took 25 years to also come out as being positive.

I mean, it's actually that the stigma is so deep that sexuality becomes a minor issue I think compared to that. So I loved to sit down with the HDASA and think about some ideas, but it's tough.

And I guess we always need to ask ourselves, why do we want people to expose themselves? Because if a Parliament is not seen as being a very effective or very dynamic institution, an MP being very exposed publically in that way may do nothing for the institution, nothing much for them. So we need to know also why we want it to happen.

LIBBY DAVIES: I certainly agree with Tim on his last comments.

I just try and respond to a couple of the questions. Thank you Svend for your question on the Global Fund and for the work that you are doing, because I know that you have contact with many MPs all over the globe and I think that's so

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critical in terms of building that relationship with individual members of parliament.

And in terms of how we move forward now at this critical point of the replenishment fund, I think one of the problems is, is that a lot of activists and people in civil society, when they think of the political system, they think of government and they think of who is the government? And I think we need to recognize that in many situations there are opposition parties that can play a very influential role.

So, I think in terms of something like the Global Fund where we're trying to push a national government to make its commitment, one of the things that we can do from civil society is to also work with opposition parties and urge them to bring it forward as a motion in a committee, or during a question time that we have in some Parliaments. And so to seek out the opposition parties and get them to frame it as a key human rights issue in terms of the obligations of that national government.

And I think when we take it on in that way, we're not politicizing something, we're actually using the political system in the most effective way to bring forward the critical nature of the issue and to put pressure on the government, and that's an entirely responsible and legitimate thing.

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I'd just like to respond as well to this issue of how different departments are involved and sometimes it becomes very territorial. I do think that this is very critical in terms of the big debate that's going on about criminalization and yesterday at the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the IPU that some of us have spoken about, where there were delegates, MPs from around the world.

The senior human rights advisor from UNAIDS spoke about this issue and made it very clear that there are big concerns about various countries that are now criminalizing the lack of disclosure on status. And I think we get back to this central question that politically, criminalization has been equated as protection. That when you criminalize something, that you are protecting the broader society.

And I think what we have to do is to examine this in grated depth and realize that on questions around HIV/AIDS, around drug users, sex workers, just the issue generally, when you criminalize, you also create a climate of fear.

And that you create a situation where then prevention, disclosure, safety, coming forward, become even more difficult, and so this was a very strong message from UNAIDS yesterday at the Inter-Parliamentary Union and I'm hoping very much that members of Parliament who were there were hearing this message.

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Because if we continue on the path of criminalization, if we allow the Justice departments to play the primary lead role in dealing with this issue that somehow it's a criminal justice issue and not a public health and human rights issue, then we will be committing many, many people to dire circumstances and death.

And so I do think as parliamentarians we have to change the frame, we have to change the debate, and we have to work with civil society to strengthen that, and I think the Global Fund has been very, I mean we heard yesterday from the Russian delegate, and it's true, if it weren't for the Global Fund working on harm reduction in Russia and reinforcing human rights aspects of that work, things would be very much worse in the Federation of Russia.

So it's vital that we make that connection to the Global Fund with civil society and put pressure on all political parties, not just the government. Thank you.

PETRA BAYR: Thanks, I couldn't agree more Libby. Just to add something, you know Svend that I've been campaigning a lot for the Global Fund with some success, but now we don't have a government, we are waiting a couple of more days or weeks.

But we are preparing already with a group of parliamentarians, the MDG Group, with members from opposition,

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mainly women, mainly female parliamentarians, but not only women, and we are trying. We made already a list of priorities and the Global Fund is one of them, so to our increase pressure on government.

Another statement, another question was about disclosure, I agree it's a pity that on the whole African continent no members of Parliament have disclosed their HIV status, on the other hand I think it's a very personal decision, and we should not force people, maybe we should create an enabling environment that those who want to disclose, that they are supported by colleagues, parliamentarians, by groups and society, by their family and so on.

I had a personal experience, I had vocal cord cancer two years ago and so it took some time also before I decided to disclose because all kind of stories were going around, but you need some support. And it's not because you are parliamentarian that you have to feel kind of obliged or forced to disclose your own personal medical history.

So I think we should create an enabling environment, but no accusation that they don't come out. I think it's a very individual decision and you have think twice and to really, not only as a parliamentarian but as a public person actually, to make sure that if you disclose your HIV status or

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whatever that is really has an impact. Otherwise, it can just turn and you are the one suffering, which is helping nobody.

The other question on intersectorial, yes, it's very important in Parliaments that you work with, as has been said by my colleagues with the civil society and also with different political parties.

We have many political parties, we work quite well with the opposition, and now we are trying for example to look in Belgium, since we changed the abortion legislation way back in 1990, the number of abortions went down, because it goes together with a very good contraceptive policy.

But we see one group where the number of abortions is going up, that is in vulnerable women, single women, migrant women, and it's very hard to get other politicians and parliamentarians interested in this vulnerable group.

So that's why you need to have an intersectorial, inter-political groups putting pressure on that and working towards these groups as well.

INVIOLATA MWALI MIMBWAZI: Thank you very much. We are really running out of time, we have five more questions to make and ten minutes to go. We need to clear this room for the next session. So please very quickly say your questions so that we don't inconvenience the next session. Microphone 4.

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MICHAEL HAMMA: Thank you very much. My name is Michael Hamma [misspelled?], I'm from the One World First based in the UK. We work a lot with parliamentarians and one of the things that we always notice is that they are all stretched into all directions, Monday they deal with Social Security and their constituency, Friday, Nuclear Disarmament. I mean I don't know how they cope and applause to you for doing it.

But what that means is that if you have issue an like this on your agenda, could you just very briefly talk to the issue of capacity within Parliament the question of research, support, maybe that you receive or that you would like in order to be able to deal with such a complex issue and the reception that your agenda on this finds with your peers who all have other, also equally-important competing agenda items. Thank you.

SHIV KHARE: Thank you very much, my name is Shiv Khare. I'm from the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development based in Bangkok.

I just want to clear one environment here that nothing is happening in the area of parliamentarian. UNFP was the first agency, I think 30 years ago, which is started a parliamentarian program. And because of that now, you can see the parliamentarians are also sitting over here, otherwise the bureaucrats were the one who are always considered as the

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policymaker, and parliamentarians were not considered any important.

And since last 30 years, this movement has grown, and then you can see that the parliamentarian meeting which took place which Madame Moderator also moderated the other day, we brought along 40 parliamentarians over here. And all the four parliamentarian forums, like the African Parliamentarian Forum, the European Parliamentary Forum, Latin American Parliamentarian Forum, an Asian parliamentary are well funded, and as well as they have national committees in each places so the people, civil society, if they want to get parliamentarian involved, I think it's better to go through them, go to them also, apart from other channel.

And think Tim also would know because he has been involved with us, and also been with Madame Moderator who's also involved.

Another thing which I want to tell you, therefore yesterday when we had this special seminar here, we had a member of parliament from Japan, who lives openly as HIV positive person, and he also narrated in our meeting it is unfortunate that we could not have it over here, but he openly narrated how he became the HIV positive, and we brought him over here.

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There are two members of parliament in Japan who are openly HIV positive and I think we should recognize them.

Another point which I want to mention here is that the new AIDS Commission on law also has three members of Parliament in Asia, they have three members, all of them are members of Parliament on the AIDS commission on law.

One question I ask, how do we motivate UN agencies to work with parliamentarians? There are several UN agencies, there's those who don't want to work with parliamentarians, they only want to work with bureaucracies -

INVIOLATA MWALI MIMBWAZI: Okay, cut the question.

Thank you. Number 1?

FEMALE SPEAKER: Thank you, my name is [inaudible].

Thank you for your kind words, Shiv.

I am director Europe Central Asia from UNFPA, and in the past I was a parliamentarian and thanks for all the work you are doing.

But we agree, but it's very difficult to keep HIV/AIDS on the agenda worldwide. It's very difficult, because finally after fight from years and years, finally we had the interlinkages between - thank you Marleen - between sexual reproductive health and rights and HIV and AIDS.

And now we have it on the agenda, and now they use the excuse of the financial crisis not to invest in this agenda

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anymore. And I really think that we need new alliances, because if we do this good investing in health, investing in sexual and reproductive health and rights, investing in HIV/AIDS, the battle against it, it's so good to overcome the financial crisis and to make a better economic future.

So maybe we need new alliances, not only with the Ministers of Health, but with the Minister of Economic Affairs, with the Minister of Finance, because on this moment it's critical, and the upcoming conversation and what you said was so right that discrimination and to cover that I guess sometimes very often the financial crisis is used as a kind of window dressing for that. And we have to be alert on that, thank you so much.

INVIOLATA MWALI MIMBWAZI: Thank you [inaudible].

Microphone number 3?

MELISSA DULEARY: Hello, my name is Melissa Duleary [misspelled?] and I'm an [inaudible] from [inaudible] in First nations Canada. And I've been here for the last five days, and I've been consistently encountering the near invisibility and exclusions of indigenous peoples at this conference.

And I was wondering what you were doing in your area to support the work of indigenous communities to do the work of HIV/AIDS in your area?

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INVIOLATA MWALI MIMBWAZI: Thank you, and the very last one, microphone number 5.

NIFA SOLANO: My name's Nifa Solano [misspelled?], I'm a Kenyan-born based in Switzerland. And my special thanks goes to Mwali Mimbwazi, executive director, grass roots in Parliament trust in Kenya.

I have a problem with African governments, who are by, because my observation is during, World AIDS day and even this World Conference 2010, African countries are not really, governments are not really involved. But when it comes to funding they get inactive, so I would like to add also a who Canada and USA to host maybe, conferences with African governments if there is a possibility, thank you very much.

INVIOLATA MWALI MIMBWAZI: Thank you. And that leaves one minute left for each at the panel to respond.

HENDRIETTA BOGOPANE-ZULU: Thank you very much for all of those that came to this session to listen to us.

I just want to repeat what I said at the beginning that for the slogan of Rights Here, Rights Now to become a reality, Parliaments are the custodians of human rights.

They have been left out and they have not been accounting for what they have or have not done in the fight against HIV and AIDS. And as I said that the coming ten years, the reshaping of the HIV response will happen in the chambers

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of Parliaments and it's about us as activists to be ready for the shift, to be ready for the requirements that are going to be needed.

But it is also important for us as activists to begin to understand the political dynamics and the political space that we would need to occupy, to make those commitments that governments have made at whatever level, become a reality. Thank you very much for listening to me. [Applause]

TIM BARNETT: And following on from that, I think all those questions were addressing where Parliaments go next as institutions. And yes, parliamentarians do need more resources, but it's not a popular cause but absolutely necessary to be able to speak sense on these issues.

Absolutely the links that AFPBD and others have given parliamentarians between countries is invaluable, because governments do not encourage their parliamentarians to travel overseas and meet other parliamentarians, there's a threat in that, and therefore it's been necessary to set up these groups.

And yes the UN I think is a way to go in getting their strategy towards Parliaments right. Yes and to the MDGs, we need new alliances and new relationships in the Parliament and think outside the squares that we have.

Indigenous people's involvement in the issues, I mean we have a reasonably good story in New Zealand, but partly

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because our Parliament has a higher percentage of Maori members of parliament and the population in general does, which is really helpful in getting your voice in the chamber, but I could talk a lot more about that.

And as well as African governments doing more, there's also a need for African Parliaments to be engaging more on these issues and recognize that gap.

LIBBY DAVIES: Well, I'll just respond to a couple of the questions given the time that we're now at.

In terms of how to get through to members of Parliament, like in Canada there's 308 members of Parliament and most groups feel overwhelmed about where to even begin. Like who do you go to? Who do you contact? Many Parliaments have 400, 500, 600 members, where do you begin? I think one good strategy is to do some intelligence gathering. Usually within each political party there are individual members who become associated or known for the work they do on a particular issue.

So what you need to do is find the champion within that political party and use that person as your conduit to other members in that political party or it might be the government. And I think by doing that, by building that relationship and Tim referred to this earlier, the most important thing is building that relationship with the parliamentarian and then

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making sure that parliamentarian is communicating this information with the resources that they have within their own caucus, their own party and within the broader Parliament.

In terms of First Nations and indigenous people, I think that this is, I'm very glad that you raised this. I know within Canada we have a very strong aboriginal HIV/AIDS network and I'm sorry that it hasn't been of greater visibility here at the conference, and maybe that's something that we need to follow up. I think it's a particularly important issue because certainly within our country in Canada for many First Nations people who live on Reserve, who live in remote communities or in an urban environment where they're facing many barriers of discrimination and poverty, the whole question of HIV/AIDS becomes very much linked to issues of discrimination and poverty.

The reality is it's a constant battle and struggle for funding to even keep the services that we have going. So again this becomes another area where I think we need to see political leadership to make sure that people who are not being heard, who have been silenced, who have been outside of the system so to speak, are not basically lying in suffering because they're not being heard and they're not getting the resources that they need.

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So I'm very happy that you raised that and I think we need to make a commitment to recognize the importance of indigenous people on this issue of HIV/AIDS and the work that needs to be done. So thank you for raising it.

MARLEEN TEMMERMAN: Just one reaction on the question about, from the gentleman from Welcome Trust, but there is a huge gap I think everywhere between research and policy between policy research and implementation.

What we have been trying to do in Belgium and also within the European Commissions and in the European Parliament, is to try to get researchers, people from NGOs, from the civil society together, and to organize within Parliament a discussion, a debate on Social Security, on HIV, on women's health and rights, looking for allies within the different political parties.

And so far we have managed to set up within our Parliament some kind of reflection days, and that's a start. It's like here what we are doing now here is integrating, or trying to bring together the IPU and parliamentary work with the scientific society, with the AIDS community. And I think that's a step forward and that can work.

The working together, collaborating between the political world and UN agencies has been ongoing already for many, many years and maybe we can applaud now the recent

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decision of the Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon to create a new UN agency, UN women agenda agency that will bring the efforts of different UNIFEM and other UN agencies at the higher level and it might be, we hope that it is an important step forward towards gender equality, women and sexual reproductive health and rights. Thanks.

PETRA BAYR: Thank you all very much for your contributions, thank you for this fruitful and serious discussion. I'm convinced that parliamentarians can play a key role in the fight against HIV and AIDS.

And it's us, it's them who decide about the laws, who can see where it is laws really work for the benefit for vulnerable people and for the human rights really to get through. And SMPs who are dealing with non-mainstream issues, which are not broadcasted at the breaking news every day, until we can tell you that we are very, very grateful about the support you give us, of the support of civil society of people in our contingency.

Please go on giving us this support, we are very grateful that you are here, we thank you for your engagement and your energy and that you spent this morning together with us. Thank you. [Applause]

[END RECORDING]

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