

## Impact of HIV/ AIDS on International Peace and Security

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### *Statement by Mr. Alain Juppé, French Minister of Foreign Affairs*

Just before the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on HIV and AIDS opens tomorrow, I would like to thank President Bongo Ondimba for the initiative to hold a debate on this topic, which is too often overlooked or neglected.

In 30 years, AIDS has killed some 30 million people and orphaned more than 16 million children. The Second World War is the only conflict to have claimed more victims and caused greater suffering. The international community is fully mobilized to fight this scourge. Eleven years ago, in resolution 1308 (2000), the Security Council recognized the pandemic as a threat to international peace and security for the first time. Since then, every time we have addressed the subject of AIDS, we have stressed the terrible consequences of the illness, which are not only social and human, but also economic. We have shed light on the obstacles it poses to countries attempting to recover from conflict, especially because it primarily affects women and girls, who play a fundamental role in rebuilding any society.

Given this threat, several international instruments have been established, in particular in the framework of the United Nations system. These include the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS), whose Executive Director, Michel Sidibé, I welcome here today; the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; and the International Drug Purchase Facility (UNITAID), which is based on a French initiative and receives innovative financing. I would like to commend the work carried out by these different bodies on a daily basis.

This joint commitment has not been in vain. The numbers of deaths and new infections have been cut by 20 per cent in 10 years. Moreover, the increase in funding for programmes to fight HIV and AIDS and for the development of generic medications have allowed 6 million people in low- and middle-income countries to begin treatment. Finally, mother-to-child transmission prevention activities have opened the way for a generation to be born free of HIV. These positive results should encourage us to redouble our efforts.

Thirty-four million people are living with the disease today; seven million are infected every day. Every year, with almost 300,000 babies being born with the virus and with two people infected for every one that is placed under treatment, the epidemic continues to be one length ahead of us. It is still the most disadvantaged countries that pay the heaviest price — I am thinking in particular of the African continent, which represents 36 per cent of the people who are infected and 72 per cent of deaths associated with AIDS.

We must therefore do more. That is the meaning of the resolution we have adopted today (resolution 1983 (2011)). It is the meaning of the campaign “Be Born without HIV” that was launched in Paris in May 2010 by Global Fund Ambassador Mrs. Carla Bruni Sarkozy. It is in this spirit that France, the second largest global contributor, increased by 20 per cent its contributions to the Global Fund for 2011-2013, which is a commitment of almost €1 billion. Over the same period, we will devote almost €300 million to UNITAID. That is also the reason that, during the last summit in Deauville, the Group of Eight reiterated its commitment to support the Global Fund and reaffirmed its determination to improve maternal health to fight against mother-to-child virus transmission.

In this context, the Security Council has a particular responsibility — first of all, to act on the factors of the spread of the disease, in particular, sex abuse. Since the adoption of resolution 1308 (2000), the Security Council has been fighting against all forms of sexual violence against women and children, which involves a zero-tolerance policy, and has made every effort so that impeccable discipline is maintained within the ranks of the Blue Helmets and the United Nations civilian staff in peacekeeping missions. There is also the responsibility to take into account the challenges of HIV/AIDS during post-conflict and reconstruction phases, including with respect to the management of the displacement of populations.

Finally, there is the responsibility to encourage and assist in the development of national strategies to fight AIDS on the basis of the values and commitments propagated by the United Nations — respect for human rights, the decriminalization of homosexuality, attention to vulnerable populations and fighting against stigmatization and discrimination against persons living with HIV. In spite of all of our efforts, the AIDS pandemic is a growing human and social cost, particularly for the poorest and weakest countries. Therefore, today more than ever, AIDS is a threat to international peace and security. Let us spare no efforts. Like the Secretary-General, France shares the view of a world without new infections, without discrimination and without deaths associated with AIDS. That is an enormous challenge, but it is a challenge in the service of peace. It is a challenge for all of us.