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**Ford Foundation and Elton John AIDS Foundation
Join Caribbean Broadcasters and the Kaiser Family Foundation
to Advance the *Caribbean Broadcast Media Partnership on HIV/AIDS*,
as Part of a Global Mobilization of Media**

**Partnership Includes Regional PSA Campaign,
HIV-themed Programming, and Other Informational Resources**

Toronto, Canada, August 16, 2006 – Today, the **Ford Foundation** and **Elton John AIDS Foundation** announced they would be joining the **Kaiser Family Foundation** in together providing one million USD to support the operations of the **Caribbean Broadcast Media Partnership on HIV/AIDS**, the region's first media-led initiative on HIV/AIDS. Kaiser, which helped initiate and create the Partnership, will also provide ongoing operational and public health expertise. The Partnership – which responds to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan's call-to-action to media under the Global Media AIDS Initiative (GMAI) – promotes collaboration and leverages resources among media in the region with the goal of expanding AIDS programming.

The Caribbean region has the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in the world outside sub-Saharan Africa. According to the latest UNAIDS statistics, AIDS is now the leading cause of death among adults in the region ages 15-44 years. Stigma and homophobia have been identified as major contributors to the spread of HIV/AIDS in the region.

“We know that the media is our most powerful tool to get out information and change attitudes,” said Sir Elton John, founder of the Elton John AIDS Foundation. “I am delighted that my Foundation, in conjunction with our partners Kaiser and Ford, will work directly with Caribbean broadcasters to help educate their audiences, promote tolerance, and change the public dialogue about this epidemic.”

“Media is a central part of Caribbean communication and culture. It is well-placed to bring HIV/AIDS concern and awareness into the households, hearts and actions of our families and communities,” said Dr. Jacob A. Gayle, Deputy Vice President for the Global HIV/AIDS Initiative at the Ford Foundation.

The Caribbean Partnership includes more than 30 television and radio companies representing 22 countries from across the region as well as the U.S. who have committed to making HIV/AIDS a core business priority and integrating HIV-content across all program genres, including news, public affairs and entertainment. Led by a seven-member steering committee made up of broadcast executives and chaired by Dr. Allyson Leacock, General Manager of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), the Partnership has made a minimum commitment of 30 seconds of airtime per hour (12 minutes per day) for HIV/AIDS messages and mapped out a strategy for the first-year that includes:

- A pan-Caribbean public service campaign;
- Original HIV-themed entertainment programming, such as soap operas;
- Programming workshops for writers, producers and on-air talent;
- Journalist trainings and briefings; and
- Complementary information resources.

“Media-based public education campaigns are a powerful force to motivate social change and deliver life-saving information to young people” said Matt James, Senior Vice President, Kaiser Family Foundation. “The generous support of the Ford Foundation and the Elton John AIDS Foundation are essential to helping the Caribbean Broadcast Media Partnership develop programming that will both entertain, inform and potentially save lives.”

“Caribbean broadcasters have made an unprecedented commitment to collaborate and dedicate resources to the fight against HIV/AIDS,” said Dr. Allyson Leacock. “Together with our partners at Kaiser, Ford, and the Elton John AIDS Foundation, we have an unique opportunity to leverage the communication power of our media platforms to raise awareness, fight stigma and intolerance, and support people already living with this disease.”

Launched in May, the Partnership was the outcome of a regional media leaders summit on HIV/AIDS, organized by the CBC, Caribbean Broadcasting Union and Kaiser, in support of the GMAI. Conceived by Kaiser and UNAIDS, the GMAI was launched in January 2004 at special meeting of many of the world’s top media leaders at the United Nation’s headquarters in New York. It seeks to mobilize the media industry globally to fight HIV/AIDS. To date, Kaiser has helped to create and is actively involved in media partnerships to address HIV/AIDS in Africa, India, Russia, and the U.S.

Today’s announcement was made at news conference at the XVI International AIDS Conference in Toronto by Dr. Allyson Leacock of the CBC, Dr. Jacob A. Gayle of the Ford Foundation, Scott Campbell, Executive Director, Elton John AIDS Foundation, and Matt James of Kaiser, who were joined by Sir George Alleyne, the UN Secretary General’s Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Latin American and the Caribbean.

Ford’s contribution to the Caribbean Partnership is part of a larger commitment to working on global media initiatives with Kaiser, including programs in Africa and elsewhere in the world.

About the Elton John AIDS Foundation

Since its establishment in 1992 by Founder and Chairman Sir Elton John, the Elton John AIDS Foundation (EJAF) has raised over \$100 million to support HIV/AIDS prevention and service programs in 55 countries around the globe. Today, EJAF is one of the world’s leading nonprofit HIV/AIDS organizations. EJAF focuses on supporting community-based prevention education programs, harm reduction programs, and direct services to persons living with HIV/AIDS, especially populations with special needs. These efforts include HIV/AIDS-related physical and mental health services, HIV testing and counseling, street outreach and education, food distribution, assisted living services, social service coordination, and community volunteer recruitment and support.

About the Ford Foundation

The Ford Foundation is an independent, nonprofit grant-making organization. For more than half a century it has been a resource for innovative people and institutions worldwide, guided by its goals of strengthening democratic values, reducing poverty and injustice, promoting international cooperation and advancing human achievement. With headquarters in New York, the foundation has offices in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Latin America, and Russia.

About the Kaiser Family Foundation

The Kaiser Family Foundation is a U.S.-based non-profit, private operating foundation dedicated to providing information and analysis on health issues to policymakers, the media, and the general public. It is not associated with Kaiser Permanente or Kaiser Industries. Information on HIV/AIDS and Kaiser's public education partnerships with entertainment media is available at www.kff.org. A daily news summary report on developments in HIV/AIDS is available on www.kaisernetwork.org, Kaiser's free health information service. Kaiser also operates www.globalhealthfacts.org and www.globalhealthreporting.org, where the latest information on HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria can be found.

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