



Heads of World AIDS Campaign Meet in Geneva

24th April, Geneva, Switzerland - The HIV/AIDS pandemic, which has already killed an estimated 25 million people since the 1980s, presents a political opportunity to spark changes in society and talk about issues like human rights, homophobia and sex education according to new UNAIDS chief Michel Sidibe.

"You will never make a difference if you look at AIDS in isolation, " Sidibe said during his first meeting with the heads of The World AIDS Campaign in Geneva.

His comments came as both groups committed to putting Human Rights and Universal Access to care, treatment and prevention at the centre of their campaigning agendas.

Executive Director of The World AIDS Campaign Marcel van Soest said. "AIDS is a disaster beyond a health issue, it's a human rights issue too."

International representatives attended the consultation from a wide range of communities including The Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS, The Global Unions AIDS Programme and the Global Media AIDS Initiative.

Chairman of the World AIDS Campaign, Dr. Allyson Leacock who is also Executive Director of the Barbados-based Caribbean Broadcast Media Partnership on HIV/AIDS said the meeting with the UNAIDS Executive Director was a significant step for both organisations. "We committed to leveraging our respective organizational mandates and to working collectively using our comparative advantage to be a force for change with shared messages for sustained political commitment to HIV/AIDS".

In addition to talks on how to help guarantee continuation of treatment, and to stop discrimination against HIV positive people both groups looked at ways to invigorate campaigning at local and national levels.

Earlier in the week the Joint action for results: UNAIDS outcome framework, 2009 – 2011 was published.

http://www.unaids.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/Resources/FeatureStories/archive/2009/20090421_Joint_Action.asp

The 2009 World AIDS Day Campaign will be unveiled in Nairobi, Kenya early in

June.



Pictured from Left to Right: Dr. Allyson Leacock, Chairman of the World AIDS Campaign and Executive Director of the Barbados-based Caribbean Broadcast Media Partnership on HIV/AIDS, Dr. Michel Sidibe, Executive Director of UNAIDS, Marcel van Soest, Executive Director of The World AIDS Campaign

Photo Courtesy of: UNAIDS/O. O'Hanlon