

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Twenty-five years of commitment –
The International AIDS Society (IAS) celebrates its 25th Anniversary**

25 January 2011 - Geneva, Switzerland - The International AIDS Society (IAS) celebrates twenty-five years of commitment this year as the world's leading independent association of HIV professionals. With some 16,000 members from 196 countries, the IAS has contributed to shaping the global response to the HIV epidemic and will continue to do so in the upcoming years.

The organization was founded in 1988 in conjunction with the IV International AIDS Conference in Stockholm, Sweden, to be the agency responsible for the planning of the conferences. From this initial role the IAS rapidly expanded its activities and has become a strong focal point for all those engaged in the fight against HIV including the scientific community. The work of the IAS is equally divided between the organization of the IAS and International AIDS Conferences, policy and advocacy initiatives, services for its members and promotion of scientific research.

“Over the years our membership has grown steadily, we have increased our services and strengthened our partnerships with scientific and community-based organizations, industry, and international institutions,” said Bertrand Audoin, Executive Director of the IAS. *“We advocate for the rights of people living with HIV (PLHIV) and key affected populations and for evidence-based policies and scientific strategies. Thanks to this advocacy work and to the diversity, expertise and dynamism of its membership and leadership, the IAS has proven in many ways to play a leadership role in the international AIDS community.”*

The history of the IAS is marked by a number of milestones, from the first IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment in 2001 in Buenos Aires, to the creation in the same year of the [IAS-Industry Liaison Forum \(IAS-ILF\)](#), a unique forum convening industry, investigators and policy planners engaged with research in the developing world, and the launch in 2004 of the [JIAS](#), the Journal of the International AIDS Society, an important tool to disseminate essential HIV research.

Since 1988, the IAS is the custodian of the International AIDS Conference, a unique forum for the interaction of science, community and leadership.

More recently, the return of the XIX International AIDS Conference ([AIDS 2012](#)) in the USA after 22 years of absence represented a huge success for the IAS and partners after years of strenuous advocacy to end the country's entry restrictions on people living with HIV. Advocacy to end HIV-related travel restrictions is part of more general IAS work on human rights. Other current policy priority areas of the IAS are Key Affected Populations, Social and Political Research, Treatment as Prevention (TasP), Effectiveness and Efficiency (E²) in national AIDS Programmes and HIV Cure.

At AIDS 2012 the IAS launched, in collaboration with partners, the "[Towards an HIV Cure](#)" Global Scientific Strategy with the aim to contribute both to maximizing resources and strategic investment in the most promising strategies in search of a cure, and to the establishment of an international research alliance and/or expansion and global collaboration of existing consortia.

The IAS further promotes scientific research with research prizes, awards, fellowships and grants. In 2012 the IAS launched [Collaborative Initiative for Paediatric HIV Education and Research \(CIPHER\)](#), a two-year initiative funded by the ViiV Healthcare UK Paediatric Innovation Seed Fund and aimed at investing and promoting priority paediatric research and strengthening paediatric cohort collaboration.

“In these 25 years the IAS has accomplished many successes, but there still remain huge barriers to ending the epidemic,” said Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, President of the IAS. *“In recent times science has delivered new tools that have the potential to dramatically reverse the course of the epidemic, yet three decades on too many people still do not have access to prevention and treatment. Too many government policies continue to be based on ideology rather than scientific evidences which in turn drive the stigma and discrimination of PLHIV and those most vulnerable communities. Our role is to continue support the science and to advocate for those most affected by the epidemic through our members, our partnerships and our conferences.”*

The IAS is constantly investigating new ways to connect with its audience. In addition to the IAS Newsletter, the website and other core publications, the organization is currently expanding its presence in social media. To celebrate the 25th anniversary, the IAS is adopting a special edition of its logo which will be used throughout the year and a formal reception will be held Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in conjunction with the 7th IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention (IAS 2013), 30 June – 3 July 2013.

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About the IAS

The International AIDS Society (IAS) is the world's leading independent association of HIV professionals, with over 16,000 members from more than 196 countries working at all levels of the global response to AIDS. The IAS members include researchers from all disciplines, clinicians, public health and community practitioners on the frontlines of the epidemic, as well as policy and programme planners.

The IAS is lead organizer of the IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention, which will be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 30 June – 3 July 2013 and custodian of the biennial International AIDS Conference, which will be held in Melbourne, Australia, 20-25 July 2014.

www.iasociety.org | www.ias2013.org | www.aids2014.org

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