

PRESS STATEMENT

UNAIDS welcomes first voluntary license to the Medicines Patent Pool by the National Institutes of Health of United States

US National Institutes of Health, Medicines Patent Pool and UNITAID announce landmark license agreement for the new Medicines Patent Pool

GENEVA, 30 September 2010—The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) welcomes the announcement made today by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) that they will be sharing patents with the Medicines Patent Pool. This is the first time that a patent-holder has shared intellectual property on antiretroviral medicines with the newly established Medicines Patent Pool.

“This announcement by the NIH underscores the tremendous potential of the Medicines Patent Pool to help increase access to more affordable, newer and better medicines for people living with HIV,” said Mr Michel Sidibé, UNAIDS Executive Director. “I commend the NIH and urge all public and private partners, in particular pharmaceutical companies and research institutions, to follow suit and collaborate with the Medicines Patent Pool to increase access to HIV treatment.”

The Medicines Patent Pool was set up in July 2008 by the global health financing mechanism UNITAID, to increase access to newer antiretroviral medicines by creating a pool of patents and intelligence on antiretroviral production donated by medicine producers.

The Medicines Patent Pool aims to increase access to treatment by promoting price reductions of existing antiretrovirals, stimulating the production of newer first- and second-line drugs and by increasing the number of generic producers of these medicines.

In low- and middle-income countries, around 15 million people are in need of treatment but only five million currently have access. This announcement will help advance *Treatment 2.0*, a radically simplified treatment platform which includes producing better drugs with better resistance thresholds and less side effects; easier HIV testing, simpler monitoring technologies; and more community empowerment.

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UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS, is an innovative United Nations partnership that leads and inspires the world in achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. Learn more at unaids.org.