May 6th, 2016

H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, President of the General Assembly
H.E. Ms. Patricia Mwaba Kasese-Bota, Co-facilitator, High Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS
H.E. Mr. Jürg Lauber, Co-facilitator, High Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS
H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations
Mr. Michel Sidibé, UNAIDS Executive Director

We, the undersigned civil society organizations from around the world, are writing to you to express our profound outrage at the exclusion of a significant number of civil society organizations from the list of organizations published today, accredited to attend the upcoming High Level Meeting on AIDS on June 6th to 8th 2016.

This exclusion is unacceptable, and we call on you to use your fullest influence and understanding of UN processes to work with the General Assembly to reverse this egregious decision.

Whether by intention or omission, community organizations from populations most directly affected by HIV have been excluded, namely Men Who Have Sex With Men, Transgender People, People Who Use Drugs, People Living with HIV, Positive Youth Groups, as well as several major global and regional civil society networks. We cannot on one hand talk about Key Populations and on the other hand exclude their voice from the highest level forum in the global response to HIV.

This decision goes against the principles of inclusivity and solidarity that both the President of the General Assembly and the Co-Facilitators clearly stated at beginning of the process:

“Also with regard to stakeholder engagement, delegations will recall that on 30 March, I circulated the list – of NGOs, civil society organizations, academic institutions and the private sector who applied to attend the High-level meeting in June – for consideration of Member States on a non-objection basis. Given the important contribution of civil society, private sector and other stakeholders in the AIDS response, and in order to ensure an inclusive and participatory HLM, I call on Member States to extend their full support to stakeholder participation and approve this list as soon as possible.” (1)

“… No member state can deny that it is legally bound to ensure that all people enjoy their human rights without discrimination – and this includes discrimination against those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.” (2)

This decision is also a direct rebuff to the Secretary General’s own advocacy to strengthen the rights of and engagement with LGBTI communities around the world:

“And I say to members of the LGBT community: the United Nations will always stand with you in your fight for recognition, respect and rights.” (3)
Further – and perhaps most critically – the draft Political Declaration is itself underpinned by the clear evidence that involving vulnerable populations most affected by HIV – particularly Men Who Have Sex With Men, People Who Use Drugs, Transgender People, and Sex Workers – is essential to mounting an effective response to end AIDS, and helping to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Is this not the fundamental purpose of holding this High Level Meeting? Does this foreshadow what civil society can expect from UN Member States in the final Political Declaration?

By excluding organizations from these communities, the General Assembly is sending a terrible message to the world that it is prepared to let discrimination and prejudice yet again hamper our collective efforts to end AIDS. It also signals a disregard for communities most affected by HIV worldwide and Member State intentions to weaken the outcome of the High Level Meeting through exclusion and subsequent omission.

We appreciate that your offices have been and continue to advocate for inclusivity and equity in our efforts to reach the SDGs. Moreover, we understand that the challenges faced in mounting an effective AIDS response may continue to be sensitive for some governments. However, we urge the General Assembly to show moral and political leadership. June’s High Level Meeting on AIDS is an occasion of great importance to all who work to bring the global HIV epidemic under control. We cannot afford to fail.

We therefore call upon the GA to reverse and reconsider the exclusion of the groups so far excluded from the accredited list of civil society organizations, and work with us to ensure a powerful, inclusive outcome in June that will drive the world’s effective response to AIDS over the next fifteen years.

Sincerely,

Acción Ciudadana contra el SIDA (ACCSI)
Action against AIDS
Adhikaar
Affirmative Action
Africagay contre le Sida
African Black Diaspora Global Network (ABDGN)
African Men for Sexual Health & Rights (AMSHeR)
African Services Committee
AID FOR AIDS
AIDES
AIDS Accountability International
AIDS Action Europe
AIDS and Rights Alliance for Southern Africa (ARASA)
Aids Fonds
AIDS Orphan
AIDS-Fondet
Alliance for Public Health
Alliance India
All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV
Alternative Cameroon
amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research
Andrey Rylkov Foundation for Health and Social Justice
APCASO
APCOM
Arcad Sida
AS Center for the Empowerment of Young People Living with HIV and AIDS
Asia Catalyst
Asia Pacific Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (APA)
Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers (APNSWP)
Asia Pacific Transgender Network (APTN)
Asociación Silueta X
Association of Substitution Treatment Advocates of Ukraine (ASTAU)
Athena Network
ATL Tunis
Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO)
AVAC: Global Advocacy for HIV Prevention
Ave de Mexico
Beyond Positive
Blue Diamond Society
Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN)
Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
Canadian Positive People Network (CPPN)
Canadian Treatment Action Council (CTAC)
Caribbean Drug and Alcohol Research Centre
Caribbean Forum for Liberation and Acceptance of Genders & Sexualities (CAISO)
Caribbean Harm Reduction Coalition
Caribbean Regional Network of Seropositives (CRN+)
Caribbean Vulnerable Communities Coalition (CVC)
Caribbean Sex Worker Coalition (CSWC)
Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE)
Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE)
Chances For Life Foundation
Civil Society Organisations Forum on HIV and AIDS (FOCDHA)
Coalition of Asia-Pacific Regional Networks on HIV/AIDS
Coalition PLUS
Collaborative Network for Persons Living with HIV
Colour Pink
Community Health Alliance Uganda
Comunidad de Trans y Travestis Trabajadoras Sexuales Dominicana (COTRAVETD)
Damj pour la justice et l'égalité
Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation
Dignitas International
Double Positive Foundation
East Europe & Central Asia Union of PLWH
Eastern Africa National Networks for AIDS Services Organisation (EANASO)
Eastern Caribbean Alliance for Diversity and Equality
Espolea, Mexico
Eurasian Coalition on Male Health
Eurasian Harm Reduction Network (EHRN)
Eurasian Network of People who Use Drugs (ENPUD)
Eurasian Women's Network on AIDS
EVE for Life
Federation Addiction, France
Forum Droghe, Italy
Foundation HE+HIV
Friends For Life
Fundación para Estudio e Investigación de la Mujer (FEIM)
GESTOS—Soropositividad, Comunicação e Gênero
Global Forum on MSM & HIV (MSM-GF)
Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+)
Global Network of People Living with HIV North America (GNP+NA)
Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP)
Grandmothers Advocacy Network (GRAN)
GrenCHAP Inc.
Grupo Este Amor
Guyana Trans United (GTU)
Haitian Organization for the Prevention of HIV AIDS & STDs (HOPHAS)
Harm Reduction Coalition
Harm Reduction International (HRI)
Health GAP (Global Access Project)
HIV i-Base
Hivos Oficina Regional América Central
Hiv-Sverige / HIV-Sweden
Hornet Gay Social Network
Housing Works, Inc.
Humanitarian Organization Against Social Ills (HOASI)
"Humanitarian project" Novosibirsk Russian Federation
ICASO

ILGA, the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association

INA (Māori, Indigenous & South Pacific) HIV/AIDS Foundation

India HIV/AIDS Alliance

Instituto para el Desarrollo Humano - Bolivia

Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD)

Intercambios Civil Associatioin

International Center for Advocacy on Rights to Health (ICARH)

International Centre for Science in Drug Policy

International Civil Society Support (ICSS)

International Community of Women Living with HIV (ICW)

International Community of Women Living with HIV Asia Pacific (ICWAP)

International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC)

International HIV/AIDS Alliance

International Indigenous Working Group on HIV & AIDS

International Network of People who Use Drugs (INPUD)

International Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS (INERELA+)

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

International Treatment Preparedness Coalition (ITPC)

International Treatment Preparedness Coalition Latin American and Caribbean (ITPC – LATCA)

International Treatment Preparedness Coalition Middle East and North Africa (ITPC MENA)

International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC)

IRGT: A Global Network of Trans Women and HIV

ISHTAR-MSM

Jamaica AIDS Support for Life (JASL)

Jamaican Forum for Lesbians All Sexuals and Gays (JFLAG)

Jovenes Positivos de Latinoamerica y el Caribe (J+LAC)

Kenya AIDS NGOs Consortium (KANCO)
Kenya Network of People Who Use Drugs (KeNPUD)
LACCASO
LGBT Platform Suriname
Marco Perduca, UN Representative, Nonviolent Radical Party
M-Coalition (MENA Region)
Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)
Mena Rosa, the MENA Régional Network of Women Living With HIV
NGO Phoenix PLUS
Osservatorio Italiano sull’Azione Globale contro l’AIDS (Italian Network against AIDS)
OutRight Namibia (ORN)
Pangaea Global AIDS
PETAL
PLUS, Coalition Internationale Sida
PO Gay-Alliance
Positive Action for Treatment Access (PATA) Nigeria
Positive Vibes Trust
Proactividad para la Cooperación y el Desarrollo (PROACODES)
Public Union "Kyrgyz Indigo"
Real World, Real People
Red de Voluntarios de ASA (REVASA)
Red Nacional de Jovenes viviendo con VIH/SIDA (REDNAJCER)
Red Nacional por los Derechos de las Personas Travesti, Transgenero y Transexuales del Peru (RED TRANS – IRGT)
REDCA+
REDLACTRANS
RedTraSex
Regional HIV Legal Aid Network
Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative (REPSSI)
REVSI+
RISE Life
RNJ+ (Burundian Network of young people living with HIV)
Salamander Trust
Salud por Derecho
SANGRAM
Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association
SEROvie Foundation
"Siberia-AIDS-Aid" Tomsk Regional Charitable Fund
Society Against Sexual Orientation Discrimination (SASOD)
SOMOSGAY
Southern African AIDS Trust (SAT)
Stand Up For Jamaica (SUFJ)
Stop the Drug War
STOPAIDS
Supporting Community Development Initiatives (SCDI)
Taller Salud
The Africa Civil Society Platform for Health (CISPHA)
The Coalition for Children Affected by AIDS
The Family Planning Association of Trinidad and Tobago (FPATT)
The Jamaican Network of Seropositives (JN+)
The NGO Delegation to the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB)
The Silver Lining Foundation
The Swedish Association for Sexuality Education (RFSU)
Transform Drug Policy Foundation
Trelawny Parish AIDS Association
Tunisian Association of Positive Prevention
"UCO "Legalife-Ukraine""
Unión GTH Vegano
Union of Women of Ukraine affected by HIV "Positive Women"
United and Strong, Inc.
United Belize Advocacy Movement (UNIBAM)
US PLHIV Caucus
WACI Health
WCC-Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance
Women Against Rape Inc.
Y+ (Global Network of Young people living with HIV)
Yale Global Health Justice Partnership
Youth LEAD, the Asia Pacific Network of Young Key Populations
Youth RISE
Youth Voice Count
Yugoslav Youth Association Against AIDS - Youth of JAZAS

References
1) Opening remarks by H.E. Mr Mogens Lykketoft, President of the 70th session of the General Assembly, at informal meeting of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, New York, April 2016
2) Opening remarks by H.E. Mr Mogens Lykketoft, President of the 70th session of the General Assembly, at the Economic Cost of LGBT Exclusion, New York, December 2015
3) UN Secretary-General's remarks at the High Level LGBT Core Group Event "Leaving No-One Behind: Equality & Inclusion in the Post-2015 Development Agenda", New York, September 2015