



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 22 2010

NGO Leaders: Canada's Global Fund Contribution a Positive Step, Must Be Strengthened and Complemented by Other Initiatives

Ottawa: Canada's increased pledge to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is a positive step that will contribute to cutting deaths and easing the suffering of some of the millions affected by these three leading killers, according to the Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD), RESULTS Canada, and the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network.

"This contribution will have tremendous impact on the world's poorest," said RESULTS Canada Executive Director Christina Dendys. "The Fund has been responsible for saving five million lives, making it one of the world's most successful mechanisms in global health and an emblem of what effective, focused aid can accomplish."

The announcement was made public late yesterday at the UN Millennium Development Goals Summit in New York. Canada will commit \$540 million (Cdn) to the Fund over three years (a 20% increase over the previous 3-year commitment of \$450 million). Other global donors are expected to make their contributions public at a replenishment conference in October.

AIDS, TB and malaria kill 6 million people every year so the need continues to be great. The Global Fund estimates that demand for support from the Fund has virtually doubled compared to past replenishments. In part, this is because of the Fund's unprecedented success in supporting developing countries in scaling up their efforts to prevent and treat the three diseases.

"If the need doubles, so should financial contributions to the Fund," said ICAD Executive Director Nicci Stein. "Canada has shown leadership with this announcement but we hope that in time this contribution will increase. If we don't keep pace with demand, we risk losing the ground we have so recently claimed and people's lives will hang in the balance." A broad coalition of dozens of AIDS groups, development organizations and others, have consistently called on Canada to work towards doubling its support for the Global Fund.

"Investments in the Global Fund get results – this is value for money," said Dendys. "Support for the Global Fund will also help to ensure that the Muskoka Initiative on maternal, newborn and child health is a success."

While welcoming the Global Fund announcement, the three organizations have also called the commitment bittersweet in a context where the government has frozen official development assistance. "This pledge is welcome, but until the decision to flat-line aid is reversed, our broader global leadership will always be questioned," said Richard Elliott, Executive Director of the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network.

He also reiterated the coalition's call for taking other, complementary measures to address the global AIDS pandemic and other public health needs, such as streamlining Canada's Access to Medicines Regime (CAMR) to help get lower-cost medicines to developing countries. "Ensuring access to more affordable medicines would ensure our investments in initiatives like the Global Fund save even more lives."

-30-

RESULTS Canada is a grassroots citizens' advocacy organization that focuses on global poverty solutions. www.resultscanada.ca

The Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD) provides leadership in the response of Canadian international development organizations and Canadian HIV organizations in reducing the impact of the global HIV and AIDS epidemic. www.icad-cisd.com

The Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network (www.aidslaw.ca) promotes the human rights of people living with and vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, in Canada and internationally, through research, legal and policy analysis, education, and community mobilization. The Legal Network is Canada's leading advocacy organization working on the legal and human rights issues raised by HIV/AIDS.

CONTACTS:

Legal Network: Richard Elliott, 416 595 1666 ext. 229, relliott@aidslaw.ca

RESULTS Canada: Christina Dendys, 613-562-9240, chris@results-resultats.ca

Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD): Nicci Stein, 613-233-7440 ext 113, nstein@icad-cisd.com