



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Professor Sharon Lewin to launch the 20th International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2014) on World AIDS Day in the esteemed company of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Michel Sidibé

Tuesday 26 November, 2013 (Geneva, Switzerland) -- Professor Sharon Lewin of Monash University and Alfred Hospital in Melbourne, Australia, will officially launch the countdown to the 20th International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2014) in Melbourne on World AIDS Day, December 1st. Lewin will join Nobel Laureate and human rights activist Aung San Suu Kyi, Chairperson of the National League for Democracy in Myanmar and UNAIDS Global Advocate for Zero Discrimination and Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS, in Melbourne to participate in World AIDS Day activities.

Professor Lewin is the local Co-Chair of the AIDS 2014 conference which will be held in Melbourne July 20-25, 2014. The conference theme, *Stepping up the Pace*, reflects the substantial progress being made in the global response to HIV: there are growing numbers of people receiving antiretroviral treatment, falling rates of new HIV infections worldwide, and a renewed scientific optimism around the benefit of treatment as prevention and scientific progress towards a cure and vaccine.

However, the theme also recognizes that key affected populations (such as men who have sex with men, sex workers, transgender people and people who inject drugs) in many countries are being left behind in terms of accessing treatment, prevention and care. There is a real and urgent need to address stigma and the inequalities that are fueling HIV, particularly amongst those specific groups of the community.

“Stepping up the Pace reminds us that, despite the significant scientific gains being reported in many countries, success has not translated into an effective response in many others including notably in many parts of the Asia Pacific region,” said Professor Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, AIDS 2014 International Chair, President of the International AIDS Society (IAS) and Director of the Regulation of Retroviral Infections Unit at the Institut Pasteur in Paris.

“AIDS 2014 is a significant opportunity to mobilize stakeholders and build on the present momentum necessary to change the course of the epidemic for everyone affected.”

Professor Sharon Lewin, the Local Co-Chair of AIDS 2014, Head of the Department of Infectious Diseases, Alfred Hospital and Monash University and Co-Head of the Centre for Biomedical Research at the Burnet Institute in Melbourne, said: “Australia’s HIV response from the outset has been led by strong and committed bi-partisan political support and a highly successful partnership between government, the research and scientific sector, and community groups. AIDS 2014 will present an important opportunity to share the benefits of such partnerships with delegates.”

“Having said that, the recently reported 20 year high increases in HIV infections in Australia is a wake-up call to all of us that we can always do better and must do better when it comes to responding to the epidemic in key affected populations, in this case men who have sex with men,” concluded Lewin.

Registration, abstract, workshops and programme activity submissions for AIDS 2014 2014 open December 1st online at www.aids2014.org (See below for complete list of key conference dates).

From 5 December online applications for scholarships will be open. The International and Media Scholarship Programme is open to everyone and is aimed at making the conference accessible to people from resource-limited settings and communities. Priority is given to those whose participation will help enhance their work in their own communities. A limited number of scholarships will be also available for media representatives.

In conjunction with World AIDS Day and the opening of registration, the AIDS 2014 organizers are launching a campaign called “Your AIDS 2014”. This online campaign will allow people to start to feel part of the AIDS 2014 conference by sharing what AIDS 2014 means to them. By submitting their entries, participants will share their thoughts and hopes for AIDS 2014 and for the HIV/AIDS epidemic more generally. Take part in this online campaign at www.youraids2014.org.

December 1st, World AIDS Day, also coincides with the birthday of Australia’s only LGBTI radio station, Melbourne’s JOY 94.9. In partnership with AIDS 2014 and Living Positive Victoria, JOY 94.9 will host an on-air and online 24 hour radio and web streaming extravaganza: World AIDS Day Worldwide. The programme will connect internationally renowned experts in HIV medicine and science with local and diverse community leaders globally. Whilst receiving the most up-to-date research and information from influencers at the forefront of the HIV response, the worldwide listening and viewing audience can post questions to any of the guests in real-time via email or Twitter. For further details and to listen live visit: www.worldaidsdayworldwide.org.

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Notes to editors

About AIDS 2014: More than 14,000 participants and 1,200 journalists from approximately 200 countries are expected to convene in Melbourne for AIDS 2014, which represents a tremendous opportunity to highlight the diverse nature of the epidemic worldwide and in the Asia Pacific region specifically and the unique responses to it.

More information on registration process and registration fees:
<http://www.aids2014.org/Default.aspx?pagelId=627>

AIDS 2014 World AIDS Day Media Kit: <http://www.aids2014.org/Default.aspx?pagelId=693>

AIDS 2014 Conference Organization: AIDS 2014 is convened by the IAS and permanent partners: the Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+); the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO); the International Community of Women with HIV/AIDS (ICW), and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). Non-permanent partners are the Positive Women’s Network and Sidaction. The Australian based partners are: AusAID; the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM); and the National Association of people with HIV Australia (NAPWHA). The Asia Pacific Partners are: The Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers (APNSW); the AIDS Society of Asia and the Pacific (ASAP); and the National AIDS Research of India (NARI).

AIDS 2014 on Social Media

Facebook: www.facebook.com/InternationalAIDSConference

Twitter: @AIDS_conference #AIDS2014

YouTube: www.youtube.com/iasaidsconference

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 177 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 custodian of the biennial International AIDS Conference, which will be held in Melbourne, Australia, 20-25 July 2014 and lead organizer of the IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention, which will be held in Vancouver, B.C., Canada, 19-22 July 2015.

www.iasociety.org | www.aids2014.org | www.ias2015.org

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1 December 2013
- Abstract submissions open - Registrations open - Workshop applications open - Global Village and Youth Programme applications open - Satellites applications open - Exhibition applications open - Accommodation bookings open - Tour bookings open
5 December 2013
- Scholarship applications open
22 January 2014
- Abstract Mentor Programme submissions close
6 February 2014
- Abstract submissions close - Workshop applications close - Global Village and Youth Programme applications close
13 February 2014
- Scholarship applications close
20 February 2014 – 24:00 CET
- Registrations standard fee deadline

**Key
AIDS**

1 April 2014
- Volunteer applications open
14 April 2014
- Satellites applications close
24 April 2014
- Abstract submissions late breakers open
2 May 2014 – 24:00 CET
- Registrations late fee deadline
- Exhibition applications close
15 May 2014
- Abstract submissions late breakers close
30 June 2014
- Affiliated Independent Events applications close
20-25 July 2014
20 th International AIDS Conference, Melbourne, Australia

**Dates for
2014**