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Monday
17th of
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News Line

DECISION A/DEC.11/12/2000 ADOPTING A CONTROL STRATEGY ON HIV/AIDS IN WEST AFRICA THE AUTHORITY OF THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT;

MINDFUL of Articles 7, 8 and 9 of the Revised Treaty establishing the Authority of Heads of State and Government and defining its composition and functions;

MINDFUL of the Protocol on the establishment of the West African Health Organisation adopted in Abuja on 9 July, 1987;

MINDFUL of the Resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, the World Health Organisation, the Regional Committee of the World Health Organisation for Africa, and the Conference of African Ministers on HIV/AIDS held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, which reconfirmed the uphill task in combating HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, and also reconfirmed the important role the health sector has to play to contain the spread of HIV and its negative socio-economic effects on individuals, communities and nations ;

RECOGNISING that the HIV/AIDS scourge has become the major cause of mortality in black Africa causing economic devastation and negatively affecting progress, development and health indicators ;

AWARE that the deteriorating HIV/AIDS situation in one of the main causes of morbidity in the West African sub-region, with an inadmissible death rate and suffering ;

RECOGNISING that the increasing spread of HIV/AIDS amongst women has brought on a massive increase in neonate infection through mother-child infection, and has also reduced or even reversed the improvement hitherto observed in child mortality rates ;

RECALLING that there is a dramatic rise in the rate of infection amongst the youth in those countries where the disease has been spreading most rapidly ;

RECOGNISING that civil wars and economic chaos have caused the type of migrations that leads to dislocation of families and have promoted sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS;

RECOGNISING that HIV/AIDS has been monopolising an increasingly greater share of health care resources;

STAKEHOLDERS TO DEVELOP A MECHANISM TO ACCELERATE ACCESSION OF ECOWAS MEMBER STATES TO PEER REVIEW PROCESS

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ENTRENCHING CULTURE AS THE BASIS FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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RECALLING that the heavy burden of foreign debts has made it impossible to find the necessary resources to meet the major challenges in the sub-region, thereby making it difficult to address epidemics such as HIV/AIDS;

RECOGNISING that sustained political commitment is essential in implementing decisive, functional, multi-sectoral programmes for HIV/AIDS control;

ON THE RECOMMENDATION of the First Assembly of Health Ministers of the West African Health Organisation (WAHO);

DECIDES

Article 1

Member States shall:

show political commitment by introducing a mechanism for the effective implementation of programmes and provide budgetary resources for HIV/AIDS control ;

create collective resistance to HIV/AIDS within the Community and encourage change in habits through centralised action targeting the youth;

develop and adopt culturally acceptable HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment policies and involve the communities in the preparation of such strategies;

empower women to fight harmful traditional and cultural sexual practices reproduction which expose them to HIV/AIDS;

ensure that HIV/AIDS victims are not stripped of their fundamental human rights, that they enjoy confidentiality, and that they are not discriminated against nor refused the right to personal development and progress ;

promote peace in all countries of the West African sub-region, in order to reduce the negative effects of war on health infrastructure and on the population.

Article 2

The World Health Organisation is required:

support Member States in preparing and implementing their HIV/AIDS control plan of action and follow up ;

monitor the development of the HIV/AIDS scourge in the sub-region and design appropriate strategies for HIV/AIDS prevention in the sub-region;

encourage easy access to anti-retro viral drugs at affordable prices. Seek international support for supplying each ECOWAS Member State with equipment for the home treatment of HIV/AIDS ;

support the development of HIV/AIDS vaccines in the Sub-Regional

Research Centre;

improve health systems infrastructures and take necessary steps to ensure that Member States have the required human resources for manipulating of uncontaminated blood and blood products;

ensure that experience in 'good practice' is shared amongst Member States.

Article 3

This Decision shall be published by the Executive Secretariat in the Official Journal of the Community within thirty (30) days of its signature by the Chairman of the Authority. It shall also be published by each Member State in its National Gazette within the same time-frame.

DONE AT BAMAKO, THIS 16TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2000

H.E. ALPHA OUMAR KONARE

CHAIRMAN

FOR THE AUTHORITY

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