

Call for Global Day of Action

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TAC calls for a global day of action on Thursday 24 August 2006 End 1000 new HIV infections and 800 deaths daily in South Africa Build a global united front for HIV prevention and treatment

On 20 August 1983, the United Democratic Front was born inside South Africa to unify all individuals, communities and organisations under a common banner to end apartheid and poverty. The vision of the ANC's Freedom Charter became the bedrock of struggles to end apartheid over the next ten years.

On 27 April 1994, South Africa gained its freedom and the ANC became the first legitimate government in our history. The ANC government faced many challenges - inequality, injustice, race discrimination, a mismanaged economy, gender violence as well as extreme poverty. HIV/AIDS became the crisis that exacerbated almost every one of these factors.

Since July 1999, under President Mbeki and his Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, HIV/AIDS has become an area of contestation. Today, we face a crisis of HIV infection, illness and death. Above all, we face a crisis of governance. Despite enormous financial investment and some advances (a result of civil society struggle) in treatment of HIV - more than 1000 new infections occur every day and more than 800 deaths occur every day.

The cruel, unnecessary and preventable death of MM, an inmate at Westville Correctional Centre in Durban, South Africa, is the tip of an iceberg in relation to HIV/AIDS. MM and other inmates were forced to resort to the courts to demand access to treatment. Tragically, the government has seen fit to appeal the order, including the urgent interim order to provide the prisoners with treatment. Government delays, inaction and deceit combined with a misrule of law have forced us to call for mass protests.

We call on all people, locally and globally, to join our campaign based on the following demands to President Mbeki and Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka:

The Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) demands that President Mbeki and Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka:

- **CONVENE A NATIONAL MEETING AND PLAN FOR THE HIV/AIDS CRISIS NOW!** Convene an immediate national meeting to implement an emergency HIV/AIDS plan and a long-term HIV/AIDS plan to deal with the underlying drivers of our twin crises of HIV infection and HIV related death. These include the crises of governance, social security, gender inequality and violence that drive the epidemic. The meeting should put an end to the unnecessary conflict surrounding HIV/AIDS in South Africa. Every civil society organisation, business, trade union, faith-based organisation and health professional not implicated in AIDS denialism must be invited, together with UNAIDS.
- **END DEATHS IN PRISONS - PROVIDE NUTRITION, TREATMENT AND PREVENTION!** Take

immediate action to end the suffering of inmates at Westville Correctional Centre that will allow the Treatment Action Campaign, the AIDS Law Project and doctors to assist with an emergency plan on HIV testing, counselling, treatment literacy, nutrition and access to treatment, including antiretroviral therapy. We also call for the development and immediate implementation of a plan for all prisons. We offer our help, but TAC will pursue this matter through the Courts and the streets, because the delay is leading to unnecessary and preventable death and infection.

- **DISMISS HEALTH MINISTER MANTO TSHABALALA-MSIMANG** Dismiss Health-Minister Manto-Tshabalala-Msimang and her director-general Thami Mseleku immediately. Since her appointment in 1999 and reappointment in 2005 by President Mbeki, she has: failed to address the HIV denialism in the Presidency; delayed and undermined prevention programmes on mother-to-child HIV transmission; undermined the government ARV plan; placed unrealistic conditions on accreditation of ARV treatment sites; allowed our country to suffer under a higher maternal mortality rate, infant mortality rate, rate of TB and death rate than under apartheid. Today, under this Health Ministry and Department, the majority of people who die in South Africa die before they reach the age of fifty. The Health Minister has undermined science, the Medicines Control Council, the Medical Research Council, the courts and the Health Professions Council. She has misrepresented government policy on nutrition and HIV/AIDS. These are all violations of the Constitution and good governance. In terms of section 92 of the Constitution "Members of Cabinet must act in accordance with the Constitution." All people are equal before the law and section 83 of the Constitution requires President Mbeki to "uphold, defend and respect the Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic." President Mbeki owes our country a clear duty to dismiss this Minister of Health.
- **RESPECT THE RULE OF LAW AND THE CONSTITUTION** Government must respect the rule of law, the authority of the courts and constitutional rights of all people to health, life and dignity, and abide by the interim execution order to provide ARVs to the inmates at Westville prison.
- **HEALTH FOR ALL - END HEALTH APARTHEID, BUILD A PEOPLE'S HEALTH SERVICE** Work together to ensure health for all people and to end health inequalities between rich and poor, rural and urban, children, adults and seniors, men and women. This can only be done with civil society and business under government leadership. The Treatment Action Campaign restates our longstanding commitment to work tirelessly with government to implement this agenda.

The United Democratic Front, the ANC and the international anti-apartheid movement is our beacon and model to help democratic South Africa and the African continent struggle against HIV/AIDS, social injustice and gender inequality. The world has a duty to prevent a holocaust against poor people.

Members and supporters of TAC will stage mass protests across South Africa on 24 August 2006. We ask the local and global community to take action. You can undertake one or more of these actions to support us:

- Speak to your sports, religious, business, school and workplace representatives, friends and neighbours.
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Join our demonstrations on Thursday 24 August - details will be sent out on Tuesday 22 August.

- Call and write to the office of the President in Pretoria in support of the above demands.
- Write to all multinationals doing business with South Africa to support our demands and ask them to write to President Mbeki to commit to these demands.
- Write to all business leaders in South Africa
- Write to your Member of Parliament, your Premier, your Prime Minister, and councillors asking them to take action.
- Write to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to UNAIDS in Geneva and in your country.
- Write to your local newspapers to support these demands.
- Call radio stations to support these demands.

For press statements, please contact any of the following TAC spokespeople:

Vuyiseka Dubula - Cape Town 082 763 3005 or 021 447 2593
Fredalene Booysen - Cape Town 083 774 2329 or 021 447 2593
Sindi Blose - Durban 031 304 3673 or 073 407 2150
Lihle Dlamini - Durban 031 304 3673 or 073 152 1952
Nonkosi Khumalo - Gauteng 084 300 7008 or 011 339 8421
Luyanda Ngonyama - Gauteng 083 484 1097 or 011 339 8421
Phillip Mokoena - Eastern Cape 079 213 5889 or 043 722 2645/6
Portia Ngcaba - Eastern Cape 082 968 5306 or 043 722 2645
Msanyana Skhosana - Mpumalanga 013 755 2298 or 082 502 4665
Shaka Twala - Mpumalanga 078 223 3282
Pholokgolo Ramothwala - Limpopo 084 300 7006 or 015 291 5448
Nkhensani Mavasa - Limpopo 072 865 8651 or 015 291 5448

For background information, please contact the National Office:

Ingrid Meintjes-Moakes - 021 788 3507 or 084 399 0031

For information on the day, please contact:

Ingrid Meintjes-Moakes - 084 399 0031 or 021 788 3507

Vuyiseka Dubula - 082 763 3005

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- [Manto Tshabalala-Msimang](#)
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