



**International Association
of Physicians in AIDS Care**

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IAPAC lauds leadership, compassion, and commitment that define *Secure the Future*

IAPAC agrees to serve as an initiative monitor

**A statement by
José Zuniga, Deputy Director
International Association of
Physicians in AIDS Care**

The past seventeen years of the global AIDS pandemic have largely been marked by a lack of leadership, compassion, and commitment by government, the private sector, and communities of faith in response to the pain and anguish suffered by millions of children, women, and men caught in the wake of dehumanizing disease and poverty. Leadership is a rare and difficult gift since it often requires risking failure to achieve success. Compassion is also rare because of the obligation to act that is inherent in the recognition of another's anguish and suffering. Commitment can be the most challenging of gifts, especially when applied to seemingly insurmountable obstacles. The provision of comfort and care to an estimated 30 million people living with HIV globally—most of whom lack access to appropriate nutrition, palliative care, prophylaxis against or treatment for HIV-associated opportunistic infections, and antiviral drugs—poses especially daunting challenges. However, as Jonathan Mann challenged us, "Where better to start than with a commitment, fully aware of the difficulties, complexities, and inherent conflicts; a commitment to challenge the *status quo*."

The International Association of Physicians in AIDS Care (IAPAC) salutes the leadership demonstrated by Charles Heimbold, Bristol-Myers Squibb's chairman and chief executive officer, and his colleagues in launching *Secure the Future*. In advancing their commitment to this initiative, Bristol-Myers Squibb and its partners have signaled their understanding that we can ill afford to shy away from any enterprise that promises to extend the benefits of medical and scientific progress to those for whom such progress has been unattainable. *Secure the Future*'s goals of advancing medical

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**Third International
Conference on Healthcare
Resource Allocation for
HIV/AIDS and Other
Life-Threatening Illnesses**

October 11-13, 1999
Vienna, Austria

Organizing Committee

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UNAIDS - Geneva, Switzerland

Conference Secretary
José Zuniga
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Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico

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Geneva, Switzerland

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Austrian AIDS Society
Vienna, Austria

"To let oneself be bound by a duty from the moment you see it approaching is part of the integrity that alone justifies responsibility." - Dag Hammarskjöld

education, improving access to life-extending AIDS drugs, and implementing HIV prevention efforts reflect a palpable acknowledgment of the dignity and value of the lives of all at risk for and affected by poverty and life-threatening disease.

IAPAC also commends the physicians, other healthcare professionals, and government and non-government officials who are partnering on this initiative and taking decisive action to address some of the many complex challenges that contribute to the lack of appropriate healthcare. Their bold actions may help avert if only a fraction of the human devastation wrought by the intersecting pandemics of HIV, other life-threatening diseases, and poverty in the five Southern African countries participating in the *Secure the Future* initiative. IAPAC is proud of the contributions made by its many members, including Mark Kline, MD, of Baylor College of Medicine; Hoosen Coovadia, MD, of the University of Durban, South Africa; and Richard Marlink, MD, of the Harvard AIDS Institute, to the design and implementation of *Secure the Future*. Their personal commitment to those disenfranchised by disease and circumstance best reflects the mission of our association and the privilege and responsibility of medicine.

Secure the Future is an historic sociomedical experiment that may ultimately raise more questions than provide answers. But it is often through such unexpected questions that we learn what is real and true. It is with that understanding and resolve that IAPAC will serve as an official monitor of the *Secure the Future* initiative. Similar to our role as monitor of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) *Drug Access Initiative* in Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Viet Nam, and Uganda, IAPAC will provide independent, objective evaluations of the context, framework, objectives, activities, and, ultimately, sustainability of this model drug access and medical/patient education initiative. Our monitoring goals will include recognizing objectives met, flagging potential deficiencies, recommending programmatic adjustments, and drawing more widely applicable lessons to guide decision-making around future drug access initiatives.

We will report our findings to Bristol-Myers Squibb; to the partners advancing the initiative; to the governments of Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland; and to our association's more than 6,080 members in 43 countries. As important, we will feature our reports in the *Journal of the International Association of Physicians in AIDS Care* and, subsequently, on our Web site so that the world community may see what we have seen, learn what we have learned, and better understand what must be done to meet the unrelenting challenges of disease and poverty—challenges that must be addressed by each of us individually and collectively.

The International Association of Physicians in AIDS Care's mission is to craft and implement global educational and advocacy strategies to better the lives of all people affected by HIV/AIDS. IAPAC represents more than 6,080 physicians and other healthcare professionals in 43 countries.

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[EDITORIAL NOTE: IAPAC Deputy Director José Zuniga is heading the association's Global Monitoring Team. IAPAC commences monitoring of the UNAIDS *Drug Access Initiative* with Zuniga's nine-day visit to Uganda in mid-May. IAPAC's monitoring reports will be featured in the *Journal of the International Association of Physicians in AIDS Care*, with summaries posted on IAPAC's Web site (www.iapac.org) within 90 days of their publication.]