

**Civil Society Task Force of the 2008 High Level Meeting on AIDS  
Second Meeting, 6-8 April, New York**

**Quick Summary report**

During 6-8 April, 2008, the Civil Society Task Force (CSTF), met in New York for the second time. During this meeting the CSTF focused on the selection of recommended civil society speakers for the High Level Meeting, as well as logistical progress for the meeting.

The CSTF will continue to provide periodic updates, informational notes and Action Alerts to keep you informed. Nonetheless, in recognition of our role and responsibility to communicate widely and in a timely manner with broader civil society, we would like to immediately share the following key issues discussed at this meeting:

1. **Civil society speakers:** During the High Level meeting, there will be three official spaces for civil society speakers: the Opening Plenary; the 5 panels, and; the informal and interactive Civil Society Hearing. The CSTF worked to identify first choice and alternate speaker candidates for each of these events and will shortly be putting these names forward to the Office of the President of the General Assembly (OPGA). They will seek the approval of Member States to confirm these candidates. The recommendations made seek to achieve regional and gender balance, as well as representation from people living with HIV and a broad base of constituencies. Once confirmed by the OPGA, the list of speakers will be publicly available.
2. **Civil Society Hearing (CSH):** The CSH is part of the official program of the HLM and will take place in the morning of June 10<sup>th</sup>, for a duration of 2 hours. The CSTF is recommending that the theme of the CSH be "Action for Universal Access 2010: Myths and Realities". Under this umbrella theme, the hearing is likely to address a number of issues, including: people who use drugs; sex work; access to treatment for people living with HIV; sexual minorities; children and HIV; travel restrictions, migration and mobility; women and girls; young people living with HIV; financing and health systems; and accountability and civil society involvement in AIDS reviews. Once the recommendations have been sent to the OPGA, they will be made public.
3. **Panels:** The OPGA released its latest information update<sup>1</sup> on the High Level Meeting days after the CSTF met. The note includes information on the Panel topics, and stating that they all should consider cross-cutting issues, including human rights and the urgency in meeting commitments set out in the 2001 Declaration of Commitment and the 2006 Political Declaration. The five topics include:
  - How do we build on results achieved and speed up progress towards universal access by 2010 – moving on to reach the MDGs by 2015?
  - The challenges of providing leadership and political support in countries with concentrated epidemics.
  - Making the Response to AIDS Work for Women and Girls – Gender Equality and AIDS.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.un.org/ga/president/62/letters/letters.shtml>

- AIDS: A Multigenerational Challenge – Providing a Robust and Long Term Response.
- Resources and Universal Access: Opportunities and limitations.

The CSTF is finalizing the recommendations for the civil society speaker for each of the 5 panels and once they have been sent to the OPGA they will be made public.

4. **Travel Restrictions:** At the first CSTF meeting, held in February 2008, the CSTF raised its concerns regarding travel restrictions in the host country with the Ambassadors of Botswana and Estonia, who are the Facilitators for the High Level Meeting. In following up on this meeting, and at the request of the UN Global Task Team on HIV-related Travel Restrictions, the CSTF sent a letter to the facilitators, as well as to the OPGA, requesting that one of the 5 official panels be on human rights and travel restrictions. In addition, in order to ensure that the matter of travel restrictions is addressed in the High Level Meeting, it is recommended that it be covered in the CSH issues.
5. **Tour of the HLM venue:** the CSTF visited the rooms within the United Nations where the HLM will take place to ensure their adequacy and size. The CSTF will do its best to ensure that the CSH is held in a room which can hold the greatest number of participants.
6. **Accreditation:** The deadline for non ECOSOC organizations to register has passed and the list of verified organizations had been put forward to Member States for their confirmation. The deadline for any opposition from States is April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Immediately after that, on April 16<sup>th</sup>, the CSTF is planning to have a conference call in an attempt to receive information on any potential issues related to accreditation which may require follow up.

The CSTF will continue to work via email, conference calls and will meet again in-person in early May. Prior to the meeting, we will ensure that the meeting agenda is available.

For further communication, please send an email to: [universalaccess2010@icaso.org](mailto:universalaccess2010@icaso.org) to join the mailing list and receive up-to-date information.

***This Report-back has been prepared by the Civil Society Task Force: Kieran Daly (co-chair), Kate Thomson (co-chair), Claudia Ahumada, Elina Azaryan, Robert Carr, Syed Asif Altaf Cowdhury, Vince Crisostomo, Stijn Goossens, Linda Hartke, Neeraj Mistry, Lilian Mworeko, Rolake Odetoyinbo, Laxmi Tripathi, Zonny Woods.***