

## **Declaration of Ministers in charge of HIV/AIDS (2007)**

**We Ministers of Health and/or Ministers in charge of HIV and AIDS of the IGAD Member States attending the IRHAPP Ministerial Meeting on Health in Nairobi, Kenya.**

**Recalling** the recommendations to the First and Second Conferences on Public Health in the Horn of Africa held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 1996 and 1998, for the improvement of HIV and AIDS control among vulnerable populations in IGAD Region and recommendations from Ministerial meeting on health (November 2006-Djibouti) and other Regional and Sub-regional conferences on major communicable diseases and other key public health priorities,

**Acknowledging** the strong commitment to improving health and promoting well-being of people in the IGAD region by governments, communities and development partners, to achieve the development goals particularly Declarations adopted by the African Union for control, elimination or eradication of communicable diseases and the Abuja Summit, the Millennium Development Goals and universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support.

**Recognising** with appreciation the World Bank HIV and AIDS initiative for the IGAD Region.

**Appreciating** the momentum offered by other international partners and international initiatives supported by partners such as the African Development Bank, Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, UNAIDS, UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO, IOM, PEPFAR and all other partners to help reduce communicable diseases burden.

**Concerned** about the communicable disease crisis in the IGAD region and its negative impact on health and development of hundreds millions of people, constituting a barrier for poverty reduction and human development, in particular:

- High morbidity and mortality from HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria,
- Increasing levels of drug resistance, further complicating disease management,
- Continued occurrence of complex emergencies during which communicable diseases outbreaks occurred,
- Increased risk of spread of avian flu (H5N1) in the region,
- Spread of polio-virus to several countries in the IGAD Region including those where Polio-free status was achieved previously,
- Slow progress of elimination of measles and low routine immunisation coverage in several countries,
- Very high maternal and child mortality,

**Recognising** that countries in the IGAD Region share similar health problems with massive cross-border mobile population movements and that an outbreak in one country can negatively impact others.

**Realising** the overwhelming need for concerted collaborative actions by countries in the IGAD Region to address the communicable diseases and other health related issues.

**Emphasising** that opportunities now exist to prevent and control the spread of communicable diseases in the IGAD Region.

**Acknowledging** the fact that most at risk population have not been adequately served, we recognize the necessity to improve service delivery for the hard to reach and underserved population in order to achieve the universal access goal to HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support

**Recognising** the importance of community mobilisation, empowerment and involvement including education and community awareness in combating HIV and AIDS and others health related issues.

#### **COMMIT OURSELVES TO;**

**Mobilise and maintain political will** at the highest level of each country in support of common regional policies and strategies to prevent and control HIV and AIDS and others health related issues.

**Further strengthen** the capacity of IGAD Health Section, partnership collaboration in capacity building, health system development including human resource development and research.

**Scale up** the existing multi-sectoral and multi-country initiatives for HIV and AIDS containment and the control of communicable diseases such as IGAD Regional HIV and AIDS Partnership Program (IRHAPP) and other regional initiatives.

**Establishing** relationship with other HIV and AIDS initiatives such as Great Lakes Initiatives on AIDS (GLIA), ARCANE and etc.

**Work** with the Ministries of Finance in increasing investment in health as endorsed during the high level forum on achieving health related Millennium Development Goals as well as Abuja Declaration, while using allocated resources efficiently.

**Mobilise** local and international resources for implementing joint activities including development of joint IGAD Region funding proposals.

#### **RESOLVE TO:**

**Support** the realisation of the objectives of the IGAD Regional HIV and AIDS Partnership Programme (IRHAPP).

**Improve** access to basic HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support and others health related services to the most at risk populations.

**Establish** quality Health Information System for timely exchange of essential information and response to HIV and AIDS and others related diseases.

**Harmonise** guidelines for prevention, treatment and care to facilitate effective prevention and control of HIV and AIDS and other related diseases.

**Establish** coordination and collaboration mechanisms between countries and border areas by empowering local health authorities at border areas to regularly exchange information and undertake cross-border coordination meetings and activities.

**Pay attention** to actions against key social determinants of health in the IGAD Member States especially poverty, population mobility and displacements, marginalisation, health inequalities mainly to the detriment of remote and border areas.

**CALL UPON ALL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS TO:**

**Support** prevention, treatment, care and support of HIV and AIDS and including other related diseases for Cross Border Mobile Populations,

**Strengthen and sustain** collaboration with IGAD Secretariat and Member States.

**Done in Nairobi on 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2007**