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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MORE THAN 200 SCIENTISTS, RESEARCHERS AND CLINICIANS INCLUDING THE CO-DISCOVERER
OF HIV DENOUNCE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION POLICIES THAT UNDERMINE THE GLOBAL HIV
RESPONSE**

More than 200 HIV scientists, researchers and clinicians – including Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, a virologist and Nobel Laureate who co-discovered HIV; Linda-Gail Bekker, President of the International AIDS Society; and the HIV Medicine Association – have signed an open letter to U.S. President Donald Trump denouncing the deterioration of evidence-based policymaking during his administration. The letter was released today on the final day of the annual Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) in Boston, Massachusetts. CROI is the preeminent HIV research meeting in the world and attracts more than 4,000 HIV/AIDS research leaders internationally. The conference has facilitated the presentation of important discoveries in the field and accelerated progress in HIV/AIDS research.

On this last day of the conference, scientists, researchers, and clinicians spoke out against actions taken during the Trump presidency, which has been marked by a dramatic decline of evidence-based policymaking and repeated attempts to slash funding for scientific research.

The full text of the letter and list of signatories follows:

We, the undersigned, are HIV clinicians, researchers and scientists responding to the AIDS epidemics around the world and in the U.S.

We are gravely concerned by President Trump's pursuit of policies that are out of step with evidence. The most recent examples include:

President Trump's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget proposal to the U.S. Congress that contains at least \$1.284 billion in cuts to life saving global HIV programs, when no less than \$850 million in additional funding is needed for PEPFAR, and a full \$1.35 billion in funding for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Analyses by UNAIDS show that a surge in global AIDS funding is needed now, in order to accelerate treatment and prevention and attain control of the epidemic by 2030.

Reinstatement and expansion of the Mexico City Policy, now called "Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance." This policy blocks U.S. funding for non-U.S. organizations that use non-U.S. government sources of funding to provide abortion counseling or referrals, advocate to decriminalize abortion or expand abortion services. Expansion of this policy to include PEPFAR and all other health development assistance will reduce the standard of sexual and reproductive care provided to women living with and at risk for HIV.

The establishment of the Conscience and Religious Freedom Division at the Department of Health and Human Services, and the proposed rule regarding "Protecting Statutory Conscience Rights in Health Care," an Executive action that, if enacted, would provide license for health care providers to discriminate against their patients.

Proposed cuts to the National Institutes of Health, specifically the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) and the Fogarty International Center, which if enacted would slow urgently needed HIV basic and implementation research and impair work to build research capacity in partner nations to fight HIV.

Science shows us that we can defeat HIV, but not if we defy evidence.

President Trump's misguided budget proposal, and his Administration's attempts to scale up policies in defiance of evidence will only undermine the global AIDS response and should be stopped.

Signed,

Initial signatories:

Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, PhD

Nobel Prize in Medicine 2008
Professor, Pasteur Institute and Research Director, INSERM

Max Essex, DVM, PhD

Lasker Professor of Health Sciences, Harvard University
Chair, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health AIDS Initiative (HAI)
Chair, Botswana Harvard AIDS Institute Partnership

Linda-Gail Bekker MBChB, DTMH, DCH, FCP(SA), PhD

Deputy Director, Desmond Tutu HIV Center
President, International AIDS Society

Wafaa El-Sadr MD, MPH

Director, International Center for AIDS Care and Treatment Programs (ICAP)
Director, Center for Infectious Disease Epidemiologic Research, Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health

Paul Volberding, MD

Professor of Medicine and Associate Chair for Global Health, Department of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco
Director, The AIDS Research Institute and Co-Director, The Center for AIDS Research

Salim Abdool Karim, MBChB, PhD, DSc

Director, Centre for the AIDS Program of Research in South Africa (CAPRISA)
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research), University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
Adjunct Professor of Medicine, Weill Medical College, Cornell University
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Jose Zuniga, PhD, MPH

President, International Association of Providers of AIDS Care (IAPAC)

Anton Pozniak, MD

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Connie Celum, MD, MPH

Professor, Departments of Medicine and Global Health
Director, International Clinical Research Center, Department of Global Health
Adjunct Professor, Department of Epidemiology, University of Washington

Chris Beyrer, MD, MPH

Immediate Past President, International AIDS Society
Director, Center for Public Health and Human Rights
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Diane Havlir, MD

Professor of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco
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Donna Futterman, MD

Professor of Clinical Pediatrics, Albert Einstein College of Medicine and the Director of the Adolescent AIDS Program, Children's Hospital at Montefiore

Francois Venter, MD, FCP

Deputy Executive Director, Wits Reproductive Health & HIV Institute at the University of the Witwatersrand

Frank D. Goebel, MD

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Professor, Medicine/Infectious Diseases
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Carole Treston, RN, MPH, ACRN, FAAN

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Professor, Harvard School of Public Health
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Professor of Infectious Diseases, Buenos Aires University Medical School

Perry Halkitis, PhD, MS, MPH

Dean | Rutgers School of Public Health

Peter Mugenyi, MBChB, DCH, FRCPI, FRCPE, ScD

Founder, Joint Clinical Research Center on AIDS (JCRC), Uganda

Rochelle Walensky, MD, MPH

Division of Infectious Diseases, Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School
Associate Director of the Program in Epidemiology and Outcomes Research, Harvard Center for AIDS Research

Stefano Vella, MD

Center for Global Health
The Italian National Institute of Health

John W. Mellors, MD

Professor of Medicine
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Endowed Chair for Global Elimination of HIV and AIDS
University of Pittsburgh

Sten H. Vermund, MD, PhD

Anna M.R. Lauder Professor of Public Health
Dean | Yale School of Public Health

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

(Affiliations provided to individual endorsements are for identification purposes only.)

Complete list signatories as of March 6, 2018:

1. Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, PhD, Nobel Laureate

2. Linda-Gail Bekker MBChB, DTMH, DCH, FCP(SA), PhD
3. Anton Pozniak, MD
4. Carole Treston, RN, MPH, ACRN, FAAN
5. Chris Beyrer, MD
6. Connie Celum, MD, MPH
7. Diane Havlir, MD
8. Donna Futterman, MD
9. Francois Venter, MD, FCP
10. Judith Feinberg, MD, FACP, FIDSA
11. Kathryn Anastos, MD
12. Kenneth Mayer, MD
13. Max Essex, DVM, PhD
14. Mardge Cohen, MD
15. Paul Volberding, MD
16. Pedro Cahn, MD, PhD
17. Perry Halkitis, PhD, MS, MPH
18. Peter Mugenyi, MBChB, DCH, FRCPI, FRCPE, ScD
19. Rochelle Walensky, MD, MPH
20. Stefano Vella, MD
21. Sten H. Vermund, MD, PhD
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25. Alexandra Calmy, PhD
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27. Alison Case, MD
28. Alison Roxby, MD, MSc
29. Amir Mohareb, MD
30. Andrea Ciaranello, MD, MPH
31. Andrew Trotter, MD, MPH
32. Angelo Seda, RN
33. April Soto, MD
34. Ashley Moore, MSW, LSW
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36. Bobby Cohen, MD
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50. Dalmacio Flores, PhD
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52. Daniela Garone, MD
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55. David Vance, PhD, MGS, MS
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57. Debra Kosko, DNP, MN, FNP-BC
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67. Emilia Iwu, RN, MSN, APN-C, FWACN
68. Erin Athey, DNP, FNP-BC, RN
69. Francois-Xavier MBOPI-KEOU, DBIOL, MPhil, MSc, PhD
70. Frank D. Goebel, MD
71. Gilles Van Cutsem, MD, MPH
72. Gustavo Velásquez, MD, MPH
73. Gregg Gonsalves, PhD
74. Gwen Childs, PhD
75. Harlan Pruden
76. Harry Heiman, MD, MPH
77. Henry Nguyen, FNP-BC, AAHIVS
78. Hugues Fischer
79. Ibra Ndoye, MD
80. Igho Ofotokun, MD
81. Ingrid Bassett, MD, MPH
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86. Janet Turan, PhD
87. Janitzio Guzman, MD
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91. Jeanne Kemppainen, PhD, RN, FAAN
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94. Jennifer Pisano, MD
95. Jessica Schmitt, LCSW

96. Jina Saltzman, PA
97. John Martin, MD
98. John Mellors, MD
99. John Nelson, PhD, CNS, CPNP
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108. Keanan McGonigle, medical student
109. Kim Scarsi, PharmD
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117. Lindsay Gordon
118. Lisa Abuogi, MD
119. Lisa Cosimi, MD
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151. Richard Murphy, MD
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177. Virginia Lipke, RN, MHA, ACRN, CIC
178. William Towner, MD
179. AIDS-Free World
180. AIDS and Rights Alliance for Southern Africa (ARASA)
181. American Sexual Health Association
182. Association of Nurses in AIDS Care
183. AVAC
184. Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
185. Coalition for Children Affected by AIDS
186. HIV Medicine Association (HIVMA)
187. Health GAP (Global Access Project)
188. India HIV Alliance
189. International Civil Society Support

190. Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD)
191. International HIV/AIDS Alliance
192. International Association of Providers of AIDS Care
193. New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
194. Pan African Positive Women's Coalition-Zimbabwe
195. Réseau Accès aux Médicaments Essentiels (RAME)
196. Salamander Trust
197. Tendo's World (Arts in Health)
198. The Thai Red Cross AIDS Research Centre
199. Treasureland Health Builders Initiative
200. UBtheCURE LLC
201. The Well Project
202. West and Central Regional HIV Research and Training Reference Center Hospital, Fann University Teaching Hospital – Dakar, Senegal

For running list of signatories, visit www.healthgap.org/croi