

SAAWatch

SAA, European Commission work on Global Health Communication

In the past months, SAA has followed closely the discussions on the new European Commission's Global Health Communication, which is currently being drafted, with the aim of adopting it at the end of March 2010. In order to ensure engagement of a wide range of stakeholders, including civil society, in the drafting of this Communication, the Commission initiated an on-line consultation process, based on a questionnaire with 28 key questions related to the contents of the Communication. There were important questions around the concept of global health,

strengths and weaknesses of the current EU policy on health and development cooperation, as well as on EU ODA commitments and the role of civil society in the health sector. SAA underlined the importance of the need for a promotion of integrated approaches and services to tackle, for example, co-infections, in particular HIV/TB and link with services for sexual and reproductive health and rights. We also believe that the new Communications should build on important EU policy strategies and action plans that currently exist such as the European Pro-

gramme for Action to Confront HIV, TB and Malaria. Continued targeted funding for specific diseases is key, in particular to support developing countries in achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. Finally, we stressed the fact that health systems strengthening strategies should adequately recognize, resource and integrate community based health care, as community based organisations play a key role in providing services to communities with little or no access to public or private health systems.

Members of European Parliament briefed in time for World AIDS Day

On the 25th of November SAA, together with UNAIDS, the International Partnership for Microbicides and the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative organized a breakfast briefing for Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) in time for World AIDS Day (1 December). The meeting, entitled: *"The global response to HIV/AIDS: what MEPs can do"* focused on human rights, EU financing for HIV and

support for research and development into new preventive technologies. The aim of the meeting was to increase the knowledge of MEPs and to raise awareness about the current response, challenges and opportunities for effectively addressing HIV and AIDS in EU Development Cooperation and about the key role that they, as an MEP, can play to support a strong EU response to the global epidemic.

World AIDS Day in Brussels

December 1st marks World AIDS Day. Around the world, victims of the pandemic and the millions of men, women and children living with HIV were commemorated, and in Brussels, the European Commission portrayed a giant red ribbon on its Charlemagne Building.

SAA played its part in providing valuable input into the various statements and declarations which were issued by the various institutions, including the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and the EU Statement prepared by the Swedish Presidency. The EU reiterated its

commitment to ensuring equal rights and access to essential services, treatment, care and support, including through the EU Programme for Action to Confront AIDS, TB and Malaria through external action. In order to increase awareness on World AIDS Day, SAA also dis-

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tributed red ribbons at the European Parliament.

