



OFFICE OF NATIONAL AIDS POLICY
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
THE WHITE HOUSE

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**AIDS CZAR, IN AFRICA, APPLAUDS GORE
ANNOUNCEMENT ON
GLOBAL AIDS INITIATIVE**

KAMPALA, UGANDA - Sandra L. Thurman, Director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy, released the following statement from Kampala, Uganda, where she is on a four country tour to implement the LIFE Initiative, the new U.S. response to the global AIDS pandemic:

“Since the beginning of this relentless pandemic, it has been determined leadership that has made the most profound difference. Today, I am extremely pleased that Vice President Gore and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Richard Holbrooke, have seized this historic moment to lead the Security Council to its first consideration of a health issue. Today, the U.N. stated in no uncertain terms that our shared battle against AIDS is much more than a humanitarian crisis, it is an economic and a security crisis as well. If we are to win this war, it will take aggressive and concrete action from all sectors of all nations. Today’s action moves us decisively in that direction.”

For more information, please contact the Office of the Vice President at (202) 456-7035. For Sandra Thurman, on location in Uganda, please call (256) 77-221-293 or her office in Washington, D.C. at (202) 456-2959.

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THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF NATIONAL AIDS POLICY
“LIFE” INITIATIVE IMPLEMENTATION TOUR

WHEN: January 8 – 23, 2000

WHERE: Uganda: the global success story
Rwanda: an example of how armed conflict exacerbates HIV/AIDS
Tanzania and Kenya: two countries with serious and growing HIV/AIDS situations where increased leadership and resources are needed

WHO: Sandra Thurman, Director, Office of National AIDS Policy (ONAP)
Michael Iskowitz, Consultant, ONAP
Tom Niblock, Department of State
Kate Carr, CEO, Pediatric AIDS Foundation
Mary Fisher, President, Family AIDS Network
Ronald Johnson, Member, Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS

WHAT: In July 1999, the President proposed and Congress approved a LIFE Initiative, providing an additional \$100 million to enhance the USG’s global AIDS program. This will more than double its efforts in Africa. The purpose of this trip is to work with host countries and non-governmental organizations on the implementation of this important initiative. As part of this trip, the new fiscal year 2000 country allotments will be announced and model community-based programs will be visited and promoted. In addition, meetings will be held with top government officials to ensure that host countries are fully engaged in their AIDS programs and know of the strong interest of the USG in a real partnership in the battle against AIDS.

LIFE Initiative funding will be used for: prevention, basic care and treatment, support for children orphaned by AIDS, and the development of infrastructure needed to realize these goals. During this trip, special attention will be given to a family package, which includes: reducing mother-to-child transmission, providing basic care and treatment, especially to mothers, and supporting children left behind.

WHY:

- ✓ The UN called AIDS the “most deadly undeclared war in human history”. In 1998, nearly 3 million people worldwide died of AIDS – more than 10 times the death toll of the war in Bosnia;
- ✓ More than 50 million people worldwide are already living with HIV/AIDS and that number is expected to double by 2005;
- ✓ More than 16,000 people become HIV-infected each day – half of whom are under the age of 25 – with the fastest growing rates of infection now found in India and South Asia;
- ✓ As UNICEF said today in releasing the State of the World’s Children: “There can be little doubt that the same catastrophic combination of stigma, taboo, and silence that continues to fuel the deadly epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa is repeating itself in South Asia.”
- ✓ More than 11 million children have already lost their mother or both parents to AIDS, and by 2010 that number will rise to 40 million in sub-Saharan Africa alone; and,
- ✓ AIDS is not only a humanitarian crisis, but has been called the “single greatest threat to future economic development in Africa” by The World Bank.