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Mexico City, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009

## FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION “PREVENTING THROUGH EDUCATION”

The next 1<sup>st</sup> of August commemorates the anniversary of the Ministerial Declaration “Preventing through Education”, approved in Mexico City on the framework of the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of Ministers of Health and Education to Stop HIV in Latin America and the Caribbean. This meeting, which included 30 Ministries of Health<sup>1</sup> and 26 Ministries of Education<sup>2</sup>, resulted in the, which highlights prevention as the main strategy to respond to HIV and AIDS in an effective way.

The goals established in the Declaration and agreed upon by the Ministries of Health and Ministries of Education are:

- By 2015, reduce by 75% per cent the number of schools under the jurisdiction of the Ministries of Education that have failed to institutionalize comprehensive sex education.
- By 2015, reduce by 50% the number of adolescents and young people who are not covered by health services that address their sexual and reproductive health needs appropriately.

To meet these goals and to ensure comprehensive sexuality education and the promotion of sexuality and reproductive health among youth and adolescents, a strategic Alliance between the health and education sectors is required.

Today, almost a year since the Declaration was approved, the Ministries of Health and Public Education of Mexico, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the UN system, and the countries of the region, still coordinating actions aimed at meeting the goals.

Thanks to this collaborative effort, it has been possible to include elements of the Declaration in the Annual Ministerial Review meeting of Latin America and the Caribbean (Jamaica, June 2009), in preparation for the annual meeting of the Economic and Social Commission of the United Nations.

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<sup>1</sup> MINISTRIES OF HEALTH: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico Mexicanos, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú, Dominican Republic, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, Saint Lucia, Uruguay, Venezuela.

<sup>2</sup> MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION: Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Suriname, Saint Lucia, Uruguay, Venezuela.



At this meeting, Mexico was designated by participating countries as the coordinator of activities of the Executive Secretariat of a regional intersectoral group formed to lead the follow up to the Declaration's agreements its goals, as stated in the point 3.15 of the Declaration.

The Ministries of Health and Public Education of Mexico have established an ongoing dialogue with the Latin America and Caribbean Regional Directors' Group of the United Nations. Regionally, this group has been working to mobilize resources for the dissemination of the Declaration, the intensification of national and regional activities for fulfillment of the commitments and promotion of the technical cooperation among the countries of the region during 2009 and 2010.

Also, we welcome UNAIDS decision to clearly identify the empowerment of youth to protect themselves from HIV as one of nine key priorities for the global response in its new Joint Action Framework for the 2009-2011 period.<sup>3</sup>

Given the need to establish a common language and a shared framework that reflect available evidence and a regional definition of the concept to comprehensive sexuality education, the Ministries of Health and Public Education, supported by a group of regional experts, are promoting the development of a series of technical instruments for comprehensive sexuality education , sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS that will serve as reference materials for health workers and educators working to meet the needs of adolescents and young people.

Finally, and with the aim of continuing to work in a coordinated and intersectoral manner on activities to fulfill the commitments contained in the "Educating to Prevent" Declaration, we hereby recognize the countries that have joined this initiative, reiterating their commitment to promote the contents of the Declaration at all levels and in all sectors, and to mobilize resources to meet them.

Though some countries report modest progress relative to the commitments undertaken, we are certain that they will soon implement activities that will enhance comprehensive sexuality education and sexual and reproductive health promotion, grounded in the bases of scientific evidence and to the benefit of young people in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Once again we express our sincere appreciation and admiration for the commitment shown by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, and reiterate our support to this initiative – an example from this region to the world. The adoption of healthy life styles by our present and future generations is the basis of our effective response to HIV and AIDS.

<sup>3</sup> UNAIDS. Joint Action Framework 2009-2011. Geneva, May 2009.



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Sincerely,

The Ministry of Health of Mexico

The Ministry of Education of Mexico

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Group of  
Regional Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations

The National Center for HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control of Mexico (CENSIDA)