

Sweden welcomes and supports the Risks & Responsibilities Meeting New Dehli, 23-26 September 2006.

This year the fight against AIDS is filled with promises, Universal Access and Time to Deliver being two of the most important ones. But the call for accountability has been almost as strong, accountability at all levels, in affected countries and among international donors. It has also been strongly emphasized that systems must be built, systems that make it possible to judge if promises have been fulfilled, if commitments have led to delivery.

These promises affect all areas of the fight against HIV and AIDS, from prevention to treatment and care, but also research and impact mitigation. These promises mean that we all have to fight HIV and AIDS with open eyes and open minds, not being scared of and shy away from the more difficult matters that have to be discussed, and addressed. A new emphasis on evidence-informed prevention is needed, an emphasis where we all agree that prevention is a complex topic that cannot be easily captured in acronyms and slogans, a topic that cannot be isolated from issues such as poverty, development, human rights and gender relations. These promises mean strengthened and sustainable action on treatment and care, with testing, counselling and affordable medicines being made available for all those who need it.

These promises also mean a greater focus on the rights perspective, right to information, knowledge and services, right to condoms and other affordable commodities, right to sexual and reproductive health care and services, right to sexuality education; and freedom from sexual harassment and violence. The rights perspective means the right not to be excluded, not to be subject to stigma and discrimination, the right to have control over one's own body. These promises mean to promote programmes targeted at key affected groups, men who have sex with men being one of those.

The Risk & Responsibilities meeting, with a focus on both risks and responsibilities for all partners concerned, and its objectives to generate and share knowledge and information, to identify obstacles and challenges and to inform the formulation of strategies and programmes, will be an important building stone in our joint task to expand MSM and HIV specific prevention, treatment, care and support interventions and services. Sweden is proud to be a partner in this endeavour and to support this meeting.

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