

Speaking note:

Full text – for 3 mins – 376 words

HIV Prevention and Universal Health Coverage

I would like to thank the proposers, sponsors and supporters of this important Ministerial event on HIV prevention and Universal Health Coverage. This is an opportunity for all partners, founding and new coalition members, to discuss how we strengthen our HIV prevention efforts. I am delighted to say a few words in support of the importance of HIV prevention, on behalf of the UK government.

The UK is the second largest international donor of the HIV response. Through our support the Global Fund on AIDS, TB and Malaria and to civil society networks through the Robert Carr Civil Society Networks Fund, the UK remains committed to the goal of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

Collectively, we have made great progress in the response to AIDS in the last 15 years. The scale up of access to treatment has been a crucial part of this. This is to be celebrated. However too many people still do not have access to the treatment they need, and we must not lose sight of the importance of continuing to push for equitable treatment access.

Effective treatment strategies may avert about two-thirds of new infections. But we cannot rely on treatment alone. There is an urgent need to scale-up primary *prevention* interventions, alongside treatment, as part of a comprehensive package to ensure an effective HIV response and end the AIDS epidemic. This includes addressing structural factors such as weak health systems, repressive laws and social norms, as well as supporting biomedical and behavioural prevention interventions. Only then will we be able to achieve an AIDS-free generation and ensure no-one is left behind.

Investing in prevention is also critical if we wish to ensure a cost-effective and sustainable approach to addressing HIV in the long term.

We are seeing a greater number of countries commit to HIV prevention. Progress is being made. 2018 provides us with several opportunities to build on this progress, and further strengthen our prevention efforts. This includes the 2018 AIDS Summit in Amsterdam in July, which I am pleased the UK will be involved in. I am delighted that the UK is part of the continuing momentum to strengthen HIV prevention efforts and ensure we reach our goal of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.