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Dr Kanem, as the co-convener of the Global HIV Prevention Coalition, what does prevention leadership mean to you, and why are we having this conversation now?

- **We are talking about HIV prevention because, for the most part, we are falling short on prevention.**
- There were 1.5 million new infections last year – 3 times the 2020 target. Key populations – who are most at risk, along with their sexual partners, accounted for 62% of adults newly infected in 2019. Policies and stigma often bar key populations access to services and commodities. The result? Growing epidemics in at least 33 countries.
- Adolescent girls and young women in sub-Saharan Africa account for 1 in 4 new HIV infections, despite representing just 10% of the population.
- Between 2010 and 2019 new infections among men who have sex with men increased by 25% and barely changed among people who inject drugs, female sex workers and transgender women.
- **40 years into the epidemic, we cannot lean on the excuse that prevention is complicated.**

What does prevention leadership mean to me?

- **It is leaders in government and communities catalyzing societal change for the health and well-being of everyone, including the most vulnerable and left behind.**
- **Leaders speak the truth regardless of political or cultural pushback.** Change should not be seen as an attack on society or culture. Change should be about using the best of our societies and cultures to accelerate HIV prevention, while addressing elements of culture that exclude and divide us.
- **Leadership means looking clearly at the evidence**, ignoring the ‘noise’, and creating an environment to accelerate action for change:
 - Changes in laws and policies to ensure access to information, services, justice and inclusion;
 - Changes in attitudes to reduce stigma and discrimination;
 - Change towards gender equality and increased opportunities.
- **Prevention leadership enables women to exercise their fundamental right to make decisions over their bodies and futures.** Bodily autonomy is a foundation upon which all other human rights are built. It is time to recognize and realize autonomy and ensure

unfettered access to sexual and reproductive health care for all, and zero tolerance for discrimination and violence.

- **Prevention leadership empowers adolescents and youth to know about their bodies,** about relationships, about autonomy of body and mind, so that they can make decisions to safeguard their health and wellbeing, and so that we are stronger as communities.
- **Last but not least, it's also long past time to take the leadership of women, young people and key populations seriously and to support and invest in it.**
