

USCMA 2003 Resolution
A Mission Response to the Debt and World Health Needs
(HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria)

Let it be resolved that:

We as Catholic missionaries realize that we have a moral responsibility to call for comprehensive plans to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Rationale:

Formed and nourished by the Gospel, our traditions and experiences in the United States and many countries around the world, we clearly see the need for a comprehensive response to this pandemic that seeks not only to eliminate the spreading of HIV, but cares for those that have been infected and those that become infected.

The global AIDS pandemic is destroying human lives and threatening the social and cultural fabrics of nations. It is our individual and collective responsibility to our brothers and sisters to translate our moral obligations into effective actions.

Call for Specific Actions:

We commit ourselves to working within our on personal missionary activities and those of our, congregations, societies and organizations to support the following the efforts:

- 1. To call for the full funding of the Global Aids Fund and Bilateral U.S. Programs.** Rhetoric and promises from world leaders and governmental representatives need to be translated into concrete actions.
- 2. To treat those in immediate clinical need with antiretroviral treatments and/or treatments deemed medically appropriate.**
- 3. To call for and support US trade policies that ensure access to affordable generic drugs.** U.S. Trade policies must promote access to affordable medicine for all developing countries by not seeking bilateral trade agreements that require countries to do more than they are already obligated to do under The World Trade Organization's agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property (TRIPS).
- 4. To continue to support efforts to forgive odious debt incurred by often-departed corrupt governments.**
- 5. To stem the crisis amongst orphans and vulnerable children due to HIV/AIDS.** The best interventions to reduce the number of orphans are national comprehensive prevention and AIDS treatment programs that could avert the deaths of children's parents and caregivers. Most children infected or affected by HIV/AIDS lose not only their families, but also the possibility of education and future livelihood. National policies need to provide total

support to orphans and children infected and affected by AIDS through enrollment in school, housing, and access to health and social services.

6. **To invest in the empowerment of women and girls.** We call for support of policies that reduce the vulnerability of women and girls by greatly expanded access to HIV, STD and reproductive health services; and programs preventing maternal-to-child transmission while ensuring treatment for mothers themselves.

7. **To fight tuberculosis and malaria as part of a comprehensive plan to combat HIV/AIDS.** TB is the single greatest curable infectious killer globally and the leading killer of people living with HIV. The benefits of scaling up TB and malaria treatment would include not only significantly reducing morbidity and mortality associated with these diseases and coinfection with HIV, but also the potential to use expanded DOTS (directly observed therapy) programs and malaria initiatives as a point of entry to HIV counseling and means for identifying patients for scaling up AIDS treatment.

8. **To seek funding for research and development.** We call for a commitment to new resources for the development of effective vaccines, microbicides, simplified antiretroviral treatment and monitoring tools adapted for use in settings that have limited resources as well as novel and adaptive treatments for tuberculosis and malaria.

The “specific actions” section of this resolution was developed from an “Action Alert” received from Paul Davis, Health GAP (Global Access Project). www.healthgap.org.