PRESS STATEMENT

UNAIDS saddened by death of Dame Elizabeth Taylor

GENEVA, 23 March 2011—UNAIDS is deeply saddened by the death of legendary British-American actress and longstanding AIDS activist Dame Elizabeth Taylor.

A passionate and vocal advocate of the AIDS response, Dame Taylor's personal involvement in HIV issues began at the onset of the epidemic.

She was the founding international chairperson of the American Foundation for AIDS Research (amfAR), an organization she helped form in 1985, together with a small group of scientists and physicians. For many years, she served as amfAR's spokesperson and offered her voice on AIDS issues.

"Elizabeth Taylor was one of the first AIDS activists and one of the first celebrities to use her influence and public persona to help educate people about HIV and remove the fear and stigma surrounding the disease," said Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS.

In 1991, Dame Taylor founded an AIDS organization in her own name, The Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation, to raise funds for AIDS service organizations worldwide working in the field of HIV research, prevention and awareness.

"The AIDS movement has today lost a true friend and supporter of people living with HIV and affected by HIV," said Mr Sidibé.

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UNAIDS
UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, is an innovative United Nations partnership that leads and inspires the world in achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. Learn more at unaids.org.