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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE TO FEATURE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN HIV BIOLOGY, PATHOGENESIS, TREATMENT AND PREVENTION SCIENCE

IAS 2007 to Explore How to Bridge the Gap Between Research and Practice, Particularly in Developing Countries That Bear the Brunt of the HIV Pandemic

Sydney, Australia [3 April 2007] – As the largest international gathering of its kind, the 4th IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention (IAS 2007) will convene in Sydney, Australia from 22-25 July 2007, conference organizers announced today. Held every two years, the conference is a unique opportunity for leading scientists, clinicians, public health experts and community leaders to examine the latest developments in HIV-related research, and to explore how scientific advances can – in very practical ways – inform the global response to HIV/AIDS. IAS 2007 is organized by the International AIDS Society (IAS) in partnership with the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM).

“With important developments in HIV science on the horizon, the need to effectively translate science into practice has never been more important,” said IAS President and IAS 2007 International Conference Co-Chair Dr. Pedro Cahn, who is also Director of Fundación Huesped in Buenos Aires, Argentina. “The successful scale-up of prevention and treatment requires an unprecedented level of collaboration between scientists, clinicians and others on the frontlines — and the IAS Conference is where this collaboration happens,” he added.

The choice of Australia as host of IAS 2007 reflects the country’s longstanding commitment to HIV/AIDS, including its support of dedicated research centres in several disciplines. Australia was one of the first countries to develop a national strategy on HIV/AIDS, and continues to base its response on a collaborative partnership between the research, health care, government and community sectors.

“Australia’s long history of leadership on HIV/AIDS makes it an ideal host for IAS 2007”, said IAS 2007 Local Co-Chair Dr. David Cooper, Director of the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia. “As one of the first HIV medicine societies in the world, ASHM looks forward to welcoming delegates to Sydney.”

The IAS 2007 programme will include a mix of sessions, including plenary remarks by high-level speakers addressing current topics in HIV science and clinical care, such as:

- Dr. Robert Bailey, with the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health, discussing next steps in the use of male circumcision to prevent HIV;
- Dr. Debrework Zewdie, Director of the Global HIV/AIDS Program for the World Bank, providing an update on the rollout of antiretroviral (ARV) therapy and associated research in the developing world;
- Dr. Nancy Padian, Executive Director of University of California, San Francisco’s Women’s Global Health Imperative, speaking on promising new biomedical prevention technologies;
- Dr. Joseph Eron, Director of the University of North Carolina’s (UNC) Center for AIDS Research Clinical Core, who will provide an update on ARVs and new treatment options on the horizon;

- Dr. Mike Lederman, Director of the Center for AIDS Research at Case Western Reserve University speaking on T-cell loss, immune activation and potential therapeutic interventions;
- Dr. John Rossi, Associate Director for Laboratory Research at the Comprehensive Cancer Center, City of Hope, discussing RNA interference mechanisms and therapeutic prospects;
- Dr. Brian Gazzard, Chairman of the British HIV Association (BHIVA) discussing ageing and AIDS;
- Dr. Annette Sohn, Assistant Adjunct Professor at the University of California in San Francisco, providing an update on pediatric therapeutic issues; and
- Dr. Ben Berkhout, Chairman at the Center for Infection and Immunity in Amsterdam (CINIMA), discussing virology, viral fitness and resistance patterns.

The abstract-driven programme will feature state-of-the-art research in three broad areas: basic, clinical and biomedical prevention science. A record number of abstracts (over 3,200) were submitted for presentation — an increase of more than 50% over the previous IAS conference in 2005. The submissions from 133 countries cover a wide range of topics across the three scientific tracks. Abstracts are currently under peer review and the selection of those for presentation will be announced in late April.

In addition to plenary and abstract-driven sessions, the programme will include symposia, which offer keynote addresses or presentations of outstanding abstracts, and bridging sessions, which will provide an opportunity for a multi-disciplinary discussion of a single issue from a variety of viewpoints.

To encourage broad participation in the conference, organizers are offering a two-tiered fee structure, with lower registration fees for delegates from middle- and low-income countries (as defined by the World Bank). Organizers also will award at least 200 scholarships. In an effort to further expand access, webcasts of plenaries and other key sessions, as well as online coverage of scientific sessions will be provided through IAS' online partners, kaisernetwork.org and Clinical Care Options.

"The IAS conference is the premier forum for participants to learn about the latest developments in HIV science and also explore how such developments can be realistically applied to the global response to HIV/AIDS," said IAS Executive Director Craig McClure. "IAS 2007 delegates are guaranteed to leave Sydney with new knowledge and skills," he added.

For more information, including online delegate registration, media accreditation and additions to the conference programme, visit www.ias2007.org.

About the Organizers:

The **International AIDS Society** (IAS) is the world's leading independent association of HIV professionals, with over 10,000 members from 153 countries. IAS is a non-profit organization with two ongoing initiatives: the Industry Liaison Forum (ILF); and the electronic Journal of the International AIDS Society (eJIAS). Founded in 1987, the **Australasian Society for HIV Medicine** (ASHM) is one of the first HIV medicine societies in the world.

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