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Hon Christian Mejdahl
Speaker of Parliament
Parliament of Denmark
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Honourable Mejdahl,

It is a great honour to be writing this letter to invite you to attend the Parliamentary Workshop HIV/AIDS in South Asia to be held at the National Assembly of Pakistan on January 14-15 2005. The Workshop will be hosted in collaboration with the National Assembly and Senate Pakistan in Islamabad, Pakistan.

The Workshop is organized by Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), a parliamentary membership organization of about 1350 individual members from 111 countries from all over the world in collaboration with the UNAIDS, World Health Organisation (WHO) and Aga Khan University and with generous support of the Australian, Swedish and Swiss governments UNFPA and UN Foundation.

The meeting will gather the legislators from the countries of the region India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Maldives as well as states that set an example successful HIV/AIDS-related policies, such as Thailand, Uganda, Senegal, Brazil and Malaysia. The participants at the conference will share their experiences, success and failure stories while dealing with the epidemic of HIV/AIDS and come up with a concrete programme of action identifying a strategy for implementing the necessary preventive programmes on both legislative and community levels in the countries involved.

We look forward to hosting the Workshop and hope that a delegation of parliamentarians from your country interested in the issue will be able to attend. Please kindly confirm your participation with Ms. Anna Gekht, Programme Officer, Sustainable Development & Population via email: anna.gekht@pgaction.org, tel. 1-212-687-7755 ext 102 or fax: 1-212-687-8409. Thank you very much for your time and consideration. We look forward to welcoming you in Islamabad in January.

SECRETARY
Secretary-General
Shazia Z. Irfan

Sincerely,

Hon. Kenneth Dzirasah,
Second Deputy Speaker (Ghana)
President of PGA

Mr. Tony Worthington, MP (UK)
Convenor, PGA Population and Sustainable
Development Programme

NGO in general consultative status with the
Economic and Social Council of the United
Nations

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Parliamentarians for Global Action

SUB-REGIONAL SOUTH ASIAN PARLIAMENTARY SEMINAR ON HIV/AIDS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF PAKISTAN
ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN
JANUARY 14-15, 2005

Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), whose membership spans 110 countries around the world, in collaboration with World Health Organisation (WHO), UNAIDS, UNFPA and Aga Khan University is hosting a high-level Parliamentary Seminar on HIV/AIDS in South Asia to be held at the National Assembly of Pakistan in Islamabad on January 14-15, 2005. The seminar will be hosted by Dr. Noor Jehan Panezai, MP (Pakistan) and will act as a forum for the dissemination of information and the exchange of experiences between MPs on HIV/AIDS issues in South Asia and, most importantly, the roles MPs can play in addressing the epidemic.

The Workshop is organized with the kind support of UNFPA, WHO, UN Foundation, Swedish and Australian Governments and will involve about 60 parliamentarians, including high-ranking MPs and Ministers of Health from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka as well as MPs from Uganda, Thailand and Brazil, countries where successful policies to tackle the spread of the pandemic have been implemented. In addition to the parliamentarians, internationally renowned experts in the area, including Dr. Nafis Sadik, Special Representative for the UN Secretary-General for HIV/AIDS in South Asia, will participate and address the meeting. Key representatives of the local, regional and national press will also be invited to the seminar in order to generate media coverage, and ensure that key messages are conveyed to the public.

The seminar will act as a forum for the dissemination of information on the nature and extent of the virus in South Asia, its modes of transmission, impact, which strategies have been documented to work in combating the virus, and, most importantly, the roles MPs can play in increasing political commitment to address the epidemic.

Given that HIV prevalence is proportionately low in the populations at large in South Asia, a great deal of the focus of discussion will be on preventing HIV/AIDS, and scaling up effective pilot programs. Furthermore, the seminar will analyze the underlying factors which can accelerate the spread of HIV/AIDS, with special attention given to addressing the needs of young people, particularly young women, in acquiring the skills to negotiate safer sex, and therefore to protect themselves and their families.

The Seminar will also generate a Declaration of Action that will provide the basis for parliamentary follow-up activities to tackle the spread of the virus in South Asia.

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FROM : GLOBAL ACTION