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For Immediate Release

In this changing world let's change how we respond to HIV

World HIV Day

The world has profoundly changed. Science has changed. The global fight against this epidemic must change too. December 1<sup>st</sup> has traditionally been known as World AIDS Day - and this year, we urge the global community to reclaim December the 1<sup>st</sup> as World HIV Day.

HIV organizations from around the world, such as Hornet Impact, Pangaea Global AIDS, Project Inform, ICASO, MSMGF, AIDS Care China, CAL-PEP, and WORLD, have united and urge others to sign-on the letter of support to change the way we talk about and respond to this epidemic.

"Despite the uncertainties around us, the world needs us - more than ever - to commit to delivering an optimistic vision of ending HIV. We can only do that by respecting and supporting the many diverse communities heavily impacted by this disease – girls and women, people of color, men who have sex with men, people who inject drugs, trans men and women, and incarcerated populations," said Ben Plumley, CEO of Pangaea Global AIDS.

Key points for shifting to "World HIV Day":

- This epidemic has never been just about a virus but about the social justice and the fundamental human rights and dignity of the vulnerable populations around the globe.
- The use of the term HIV includes all those living with HIV. That includes those with an "AIDS" diagnosis.
- Many hold an outdated view of HIV treatment as toxic and burdensome and this prevents engagement in care.
- AIDS is a stigma-laden term about an arbitrary syndrome. Moving to HIV is more precise and less stigmatizing.
- Retiring the term "AIDS" stimulates dialogue about the modern experience of living with HIV.
- PrEP has radically changed HIV prevention and information and access is a critical issue.

"Gay men need better access to HIV treatment and prevention globally. Hornet is supporting the efforts of World HIV Day on our platform and continuing to push this agenda," said Sean Howell, president of Hornet app.

If we choose, we can end HIV by devoting the needed resources to key populations and meet the challenge of dismantling systems that create poverty, mass incarceration, lack of access to health care and education and structures that support and foster homophobia, racism, and sexism.

AIDS was our past, HIV is our present but our future can be a world where we ended a virus, not just by relying on science, but by coming together as a global community and embracing and celebrating our diversity, and by fighting for the human rights of all. This December the 1<sup>st</sup> – commit to creating a World Without HIV. Let's End HIV.

<http://www.WorldHIVDay.org>