

Week Ending Friday, March 31, 2000

United States-India Joint Leadership Statement on HIV/AIDS

March 24, 2000

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is not only an Indian problem, it is not only an American problem, it is a global crisis, threatening every country. It burdens our health systems, our economies and, most importantly, the lives of too many of our citizens. But the AIDS epidemic can be slowed, and ultimately reversed by raising awareness, changing behavior and developing new technologies including—eventually—a vaccine.

To that end, India and the United States are working closely together, involving our public, academic, business and non-governmental sectors for the benefit of our nations, and the world. India and the United States are home to some of the world's finest scientists and facilities. We intend to expand collaborative research efforts in HIV/AIDS prevention. Together we are applying our nations' substantial public health expertise and scientific capacities to fight the global pandemic.

India's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, through the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO), which coordinates HIV/AIDS policy formulation and implements prevention and control programs, has recently launched a new phase of its National AIDS Control Program. With a substantial commitment from the Indian Government, bolstered by additional resources from the World Bank, USAID and other donors, NACO is now working with State health authorities and non-governmental organizations to reduce high-risk behaviors and increase awareness in the general population.

USAID is the major supporter of HIV/AIDS prevention programs in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu States. Additionally, the United States (under its "LIFE" initiative) will support Indian efforts to prevent infection, care for the affected, and build capacity.

Planning for these efforts include: establishing an HIV/AIDS resource center; establishing a business coalition for employer-based HIV prevention activities with private and public sector employers; supporting NGO activities for children affected by AIDS; and sensitizing journalists to HIV/AIDS issues.

Science alone will not win the world's struggle against HIV/AIDS. This will require leadership, which India and the United States are determined to provide. We hereby commit our continued, personal involvement to stopping AIDS in India, the United States, and around the world.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Proclamation 7283—Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy, 2000

March 24, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Two thousand five hundred years ago, the birth of democracy in Greece ushered in one of the true golden ages of Western civilization. The flowering of political, social, and artistic innovation in Greece served as the source of many of our most treasured gifts—the philosophy of Plato and Socrates, the plays of Sophocles and Aristophanes, the heroic individualism that rings in the epic poetry of Homer.

But Ancient Greece's greatest legacy is the establishment of democratic government. America's founders were deeply influenced by the passion for truth and justice that guided Greek political theory. In ratifying our