



## POSITION STATEMENT

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### **2021 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: Ending inequalities and getting on track to end AIDS by 2030**

This week, at the [UN General Assembly Special Session: the High-Level Meeting on ending AIDS](#) (HLM), Member State delegations approved the [2021 Political Declaration Ending inequalities and getting on track to end AIDS by 2030](#). The HLM undertook a comprehensive review of the progress on the commitments made in the [2016 Political Declaration](#) towards ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030, and how the response contributes to progress on the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the global health goal.

The declaration approved this week – with 165 countries in favour, 4 opposed, and 0 abstaining - outlines recommendations to guide and monitor the HIV/AIDS response beyond 2021. This includes commitments to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030 through the renewed engagement of leaders, countries, communities and partners by accelerating and implementing a comprehensive universal and integrated response to HIV/AIDS. The declaration reiterates progress and gaps at the international level, such as inequalities, effective combination HIV prevention, pediatric AIDS, community leadership, universal health coverage, stigma and discrimination, and innovation through data and science.

Canada's full support of this declaration represents a commitment to meaningful investment – nationally and internationally – and we look forward to further discussions about specific strategies and actions to end the AIDS epidemic. Further, Canada's commitment presents greater opportunities for integration of the rights of Indigenous Peoples enshrined in the [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People](#).

As one of the leading voices at the HLM that expressed full support for every commitment within the declaration, we are excited that Canada will continue the work that several countries disassociated themselves from, such as comprehensive sex education, sexual and reproductive health rights, and harm reduction. These are proven, critical aspects to reducing new infections and improving quality of life, but the HLM was a sobering reminder that evidence-based interventions are not fully adopted around the world. Without education, rights, and harm reduction, we are still a long way from eliminating stigma and discrimination.

CAAN reaffirms solidarity with our global Indigenous kin and our commitment to working collaboratively with – and holding accountable - all levels of government. Grounded in Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Doing, we will continue to advocate for accessible and evidence-based HIV prevention, treatments, and improvements to quality of life.

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*A panel of Indigenous people living with HIV spoke at Health Canada's National Conference on HIV/AIDS in 1991 and laid the seeds for the creation of the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN). CAAN has decades of history as an incorporated non-profit organization whose mandate has evolved from a primary HIV and AIDS focus to include STBBI, hepatitis C, tuberculosis, harm reduction, mental health, and aging. CAAN provides a national forum for dialogue on these issues, and responds to needs identified by Indigenous peoples, through research and programming, on prevention, education, promotion of wise practices, training, and by supporting and implementing community developed responses.*