Elton John AIDS Foundation and PEPFAR Announce Inaugural LGBT Fund Recipients

July 20, 2016

**Durban, South Africa** – The Elton John AIDS Foundation (EJAF) and the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) are today announcing the first two recipients of The LGBT Fund. The inaugural recipients are the International HIV/AIDS Alliance (The Alliance) and the Global Forum on MSM & HIV (MSMGF). These partners will administer small grants and provide key technical expertise addressing stigma and discrimination through innovative and community-led approaches in sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean.

First launched in London by Sir Elton John and Ambassador Deborah L. Birx in November 2015, the $10 million Fund was created to address stigma, discrimination, and violence faced by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people. The grants will strengthen the capacity of local community organizations and expand HIV prevention and treatment for LGBT people.

Further, three PEPFAR supported countries will be funded to increase access to quality HIV services for LGBT people in high HIV burden geographic areas.

"On behalf of the Elton John AIDS Foundation and PEPFAR, I’m delighted to present the International HIV/AIDS Alliance (The Alliance) and the Global Forum on MSM & HIV (MSMGF) as inaugural recipients of The LGBT Fund," said Sir Elton John, founder of the Elton John AIDS Foundation. “Establishing The LGBT Fund between EJAF and PEPFAR is something we’ve worked towards for a long time in our attempts to make a real and lasting difference in HIV awareness, education and prevention. Just earlier today we visited Anova clinic, a project both EJAF and PEPFAR have funded in the past. The work they are doing through their ‘We the Brave’ programme, the first large scale campaign ever in South Africa to address both prevention and treatment issues in an affirming, non-judgmental and sex positive way, is something for us all to be incredibly proud of. We look forward to building long standing relationships with the International HIV/AIDS Alliance (The Alliance) and the Global Forum on MSM and HIV (MSMGF) in a similar way."

“We stand with and for LGBT people everywhere who are too often forced into the shadows and lack access to HIV services,” added Ambassador Deborah L. Birx, M.D., U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and U.S. Special Representative for Global Health Diplomacy. “Together we are putting our words into action to reach LGBT people with
HIV services and stop stigma in its tracks.”

This Fund, which will work closely with UNAIDS and other partners, is part of our joint and steadfast efforts to collaborate with community leaders, civil society and service providers – leaving no one behind in the HIV/AIDS response. By providing small grants and targeting projects that support LGBT people in countries with a high HIV burden, the Fund marks an important step toward ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

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About EJAF:

At the Elton John AIDS Foundation (EJAF), we believe AIDS can be beaten. We act on that belief by raising funds for evidence-based programs and policies, and also by speaking out with honesty and compassion about the realities of people’s lives. Sir Elton John created EJAF over twenty years ago, first in the United States in 1992 and then in the United Kingdom in 1993. Through hard work and with the help of our generous friends and supporters, the two foundations together have raised more than $350 million over the past two decades to combat stigma, prevent infections, provide treatment and services, and motivate governments to end AIDS. The U.S. foundation focuses its efforts on programs in the United States, the Americas, and the Caribbean, while the U.K. foundation funds HIV-related work in Europe, Asia, and Africa. Join us in speaking out, taking action, and contributing to our efforts to achieve a world without AIDS. For more information, please visit www.ejaf.org.

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About PEPFAR:

The U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is the U.S. government initiative to save the lives of those affected by HIV/AIDS around the world. This historic $70 billion commitment is the largest by any nation to combat a single disease internationally, and PEPFAR investments also help alleviate suffering from other diseases across the global health spectrum. PEPFAR is driven by a shared responsibility among donor and partner nations and others to make smart investments to save lives. For more information about PEPFAR, visit www.PEPFAR.gov, www.instagram.com/pepfar, www.twitter.com/PEPFAR, or www.facebook.com/PEPFAR.

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