

FINAL REMARKS

BY

DEPUTY HIV/AIDS Officer, Ms. Sangita Patel

AT THE CITY OF WINDHOEK WORLD AIDS DAY CAMPAIGN AND AWARENESS

RAISING CEREMONY HELD AT ZOO PARK, WINDHOEK

ON FRIDAY 24th NOVEMBER 2006

The Distinguished invited Guests

1. His Worship the Mayor, Cllr MK Shikongo (in absentia)
2. The Deputy Mayor of the City of Windhoek, Cllr. Elaine Trepper
3. City of Windhoek Councilors
4. Junior Council
5. Regional Councilors
6. City of Windhoek Management (CEO – City of Windhoek Mr. Niilo Taapopi
7. City of Windhoek Divisional Heads
8. Jan Jonker Cultural Group, Schools, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs

All Protocol observed

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the US Government, I thank you for inviting me to be part of this very important day. We are all here to support the City of Windhoek as they mobilize communities and sensitize them about HIV/AIDS. The cultural performance that you observed by the Jan Jonker group is a testament to the national theme for World AIDS Day “**ZERO TOLERANCE OF HIV & AIDS INFECTION AMONG THE YOUTH.**” Our youth are key to helping us stop this epidemic, through early education, awareness, and sensitization about the virus which will empower them to make responsible and safe decisions. They are essential to Namibia’s prevention efforts and have the opportunity to be at the forefront of leading a new generation free of HIV. We are pleased to work shoulder to shoulder with Namibia and its communities to support and build capacity to maintain programs promoting this national agenda. Partnering to prevent new infections is key to a sustainable solution to Namibia’s HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The City of Windhoek is a strong local partner in the implementation of US government funded HIV/AIDS activities. The leadership, political will, and commitment of the City of Windhoek has impressed us, particularly their dedication to implementing home-based care, OVC support and HIV/AIDS awareness activities. Approximately US \$ 50,000.00 in USAID resources have been available for OVC, Soup kitchen, HIV & AIDS Awareness, and other activities since June 2006. As a direct result of this partnership, over 450 OVC in three community centers of Otjomuise, Greenwell Matongo and Maxuilili are receiving daily meals. The City of Windhoek has also been working closely with partners such as AIDS Care Trust, AMACO, and ELCIN to incorporate gardening, sewing, income generation, counseling, and home based care training into their program. We look forward to working closely with the Municipality to ensure that support is provided to implement activities, and to establish proper monitoring systems.

Building local capacity to lead and implement their response to this crisis is a priority of USAID assistance. We are pleased that the City of Windhoek has developed a transition plan towards a sustainability strategy that will enable continuity of these important activities beyond donor support. We encourage the City of Windhoek to begin to take action on this strategy, and look forward to working with them to support this process.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Municipality for their continued commitment, as well as all of the people who offer their time, energy, and resources to serve those in need, particularly orphans, the sick, and the elderly. To all of the volunteers involved in this effort (some of whom will be recognized today), I do salute and thank you. You are on the frontlines and serve as the day-to-day face of our partnership efforts to support orphans and people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS.