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**The National Association of People with AIDS Commends President Bush's Efforts to Eradicate AIDS in Africa**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA) praises President Bush's efforts to fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa. Bush's Africa plan targets US\$15 billion over the next five years in prevention efforts, anti-viral drugs, and treatment for those living with AIDS. Twelve out of 48 sub-Saharan African countries will benefit from this plan, in addition to Haiti and Guyana.

NAPWA applauds the president's global prevention efforts. However, this foreign plan comes at the same time as a proposed U.S. \$1 billion cut in the Department of Health and Human Services, with potential far-reaching implications for all domestic health services including HIV and AIDS. There are still over one million Americans living with HIV that face dramatic challenges from the pandemic here, including stigma, discrimination and lack of services. HIV prevention programs have received flat funding since 1999, even in the face of increasing infection amongst African Americans, gay and bisexual men, women, and Latinos.

Frank Oldham, Jr., NAPWA's Executive Director, exclaims, "We know the extraordinary impact that treatment can have for people living with HIV. Among these are better health overall, fewer deaths, and potentially lower infectiousness. The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention's (CDC) Heightened National Response is a call to action for government, communities, AIDS Service Organizations and the private sector to intensify focus on domestic

efforts. NAPWA is proud to be part of the Heightened National Response. We hope that more funds are put into the CDC initiative.”

New HIV/AIDS initiatives result in more people knowing they are positive but several states continue to be overburdened by the lack of funding for existing and recent initiatives. The president has also made significant cuts to domestic HIV/AIDS funding. “Though President Bush’s plan to assist the pandemic in Africa has tremendous implications for our nation’s role in the global fight against HIV/AIDS, it remains imperative that domestic issues receive immediate attention and adequate funding,” argues NAPWA Board Chair David Munar.

Founded in 1983, NAPWA-US is the oldest coalition of people living with HIV/AIDS in the world as well as the oldest AIDS organization in the United States. NAPWA advocates on behalf of the over one million people living with HIV and AIDS in the US.

For more information about NAPWA, visit [www.napwa.org](http://www.napwa.org).

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