



ACTIVE expresses its concern about the global AIDS epidemic and calls for a global strategy to combat the disease

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The HI-Virus and the AIDS disease cause tremendous suffering and are one of the biggest obstacles for development in the world. Globally there are 36 Million people infected^[1], three Million die per year and an inconceivable number of 4.3 Million people get newly infected^[2].

On 1st December the 20th World AIDS Day has recently been commemorated. And few days ago the ICASA conference in Dakar ended. ACTIVE welcomes and supports its core message that “Youth are essential in response to AIDS and have to be involved in the design of HIV programs...” In the spirit of the ICASA message, ACTIVE highlights that AIDS is not only a problem of Africa. AIDS is not only a problem of the poor, of drug addicts, prostitutes and prisoners. The HI-Virus does not stop at geographical or social borders. ACTIVE draws attention to the situation in Ukraine, where 440,000 people are infected and where the rate of new infections increased by 10% in 2007^[3]. With the impetus of the ICASA conference ACTIVE demands AIDS to be assessed holistically. The epidemic calls for an approach of Global Governance and for measures to tackle its social catalysts.

To solve the AIDS catastrophe in the world, the alcohol problems of societies have to be tackled: Alcohol plays a major role in transmitting the HI-Virus. It leads to higher risk taking (drink driving/ violence), to a bigger probability of unprotected sex and to a more frequent change of sexual partners. And physiologically it weakens the immune system so that the likelihood of transmission increases with the consumption.

ACTIVE urges the international community to take all measures to end this vicious circle of alcohol consumption and the AIDS epidemic into consideration. In the twentieth year of the Worlds AIDS Day humanity finally has to move one step further in combating the AIDS epidemic.

For further information:

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“Active- sobriety, friendship and peace” is a non - governmental organisation gathering European youth organisations working for peace and solidarity, promoting a lifestyle free from alcohol and other drugs. We have more than 25 000 members - 25 000 young Europeans who do not drink alcohol in any amount.

Sources:

[1] UNAIDS: Global View on HIV infection 2008

[2] Global Hangover. Alcohol as obstacle for development: Alcohol and HIV, 2007

[3] ZEIT online