

Speech by the KZN Health Head off Department, Dr Sibongile Zungu
on the occasion of the commemoration of the World Aids Day with
the Anglican Church in Ngwelezane

02 December 2012

We meet here today joining the whole world in commemorating, cautioning and looking at ways in which we can eradicate the scourge of HIV and AIDS that has and continues to main thousands of our people.

The World AIDS Campaign was established to ensure that governments and policy makers meet the HIV targets they set, the commitments they made and also mobilise the necessary resources for an effective HIV response

The **Global theme for World AIDS Day 2012** for World AIDS Day is encompassed in that which was selected from the year, 2011–2015 which is 'Getting to Zero: Zero new infections, zero discrimination, zero AIDS-related deaths'.

Our own theme as a country for **World AIDS Day: 2012** focuses on HIV prevention – 'zero transmission' or 'zero new infections'. It also incorporates our focus on football and sport as Africa Cup of Nations will be hosted in South Africa early in 2013. It has thus been seen

prudent that we adopt a theme that incorporates football and HIV prevention. For all of Africa assembled, enjoying and playing football and other sport codes here in our shores, we thus say:

***'A re dlale safe for zero new HIV and TB infections' or
'Let's play it safe for zero new HIV and TB infections'***

Bazazwalwale abahle, KwaZulu Natal has an enormous responsibility in complying with the above theme as our Province leads in many of the deadly maladies that are ravaging the communities of this country. This was well pointed out by our Honourable Premier, **Dr Zweli Mkhize in his 2011 State of the Province Address** when he said:

"It is important to acknowledge that the burden of disease that is affecting South Africa has its epicentre in this province."

We are indeed a letdown in our Government's vision of a **Long and Healthy Life for all South Africans.**

Programme Director, it is also important to note that the World Aids Day commemorations happen within the 16 Days of Activism Against Violence and Abuse directed to women, elderly and children in this country. Again we need to be ashamed of ourselves as our province because we lead in this horrible aspect.

New Zero Infections is not attainable if we continue abusing our womenfolk

Programme Director, in a recently held Inaugural South African National AIDS Council [SANAC] extended plenary at the Royal Show Grounds, it was revealed that 33% of adult people living with HIV reside here in this Province and that together with Gauteng we contribute 49,4% of our country's new HIV infections.

We thus need to redouble our efforts and be at the forefront of all efforts aimed at ensuring that the disease profile and complexion of our country changes for the better. This will only happen when we work together, all of us to ensure that:

- More people are put on ART and at least 70% of them are still alive and on treatment after five years
- Mother to child transmission of HIV is further reduced to below 2%
- More men are circumcised
- More condoms are distributed and appropriately used
- All of us know our status
- Halving the number of new TB infections and death from TB

We also need to note that South Africa today is not only faced with the challenge of the Aids pandemic, but it is also in midst of health transition with growing numbers of people affected by Non Communicable Diseases. These diseases have reached epidemic

proportions, yet they could be significantly reduced, with millions of lives saved and untold suffering avoided, through reduction of their risk factors, early detection and timely treatments. There are **4 main ones that have been identified**, and they are:

- Heart disease and stroke
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Chronic lung diseases

We tabulate all of them so that as leaders in various platforms and engagements you can caution of people on the following:

- Poor diet
- Lack of physical exercises
- Smoking
- Abuse of alcohol

As a nation we have also lost our compass in as far as protecting and nurturing our girl children. The shocking and alarming numbers of **Teenage Pregnancies** being dealt with are unacceptable. We are falling to acknowledge that the ability of young women to protect themselves from HIV is compromised by a combination of biological, social, cultural and economic factors.

It is now an insatiable truth that almost all this girls are not impregnated by boys their age because almost all of them test

positive for HIV. We are basing this on the study conducted by CAPRISA which informs us that:

- at ages 10 ---14 both boys and girls are all HIV negative
- at 15 ---19 boys are still safe but 6 out of 100 girls test HIV positive
- at 20 ---24, 8 out of 100 girls now test positive with boys following at 3 per 100
- at 25 ---29 boys overtake the girls at 9 per 100 whilst girls are starting a decline

The above clearly illustrates the damage and harm the SUGAR DADDY syndrome brings about in our communities. What this means is that at an early age elder males sleep with young girls but then at 20 to 24 girls start realizing their folly and revert to boys their age not knowing that they have already been infected. The vicious circle then begins!

It then rests upon all of us to ensure that no greying, bald and big bellied old man prey on the vulnerable young ones. We need to name and shame the men who are bent on deflowering the pride our nation – let us isolate them!

We also need to become social activists and fight the mushrooming trend of bogus doctors and quacks who advertise in poles and buildings promoting unsafe and illegal abortions and hoodwink

people into believing that AIDS can be cured. Let us within the ambit of the law ensure that their operating dens are raided and perpetrators face the full might of the law and the wrath of our people!

Lastly, for the benefit of the children that we bring into this world; in our homes and communities let us again popularize and promote Family Planning. This will again greatly assist in giving women room to develop themselves by delaying motherhood; allow space in between births; curb unintended pregnancies and abortions and also put an end to childbearing when couples have reached their desired family size.

Impilo ngeyethu to enjoy,

'A re dlale safe for zero new HIV and TB infections'

'Let's play it safe for zero new HIV and TB infections'

I thank you