**The 3rd National HIV Prevention Summit: 17th-18th Sept. 2013**

NATIONAL AIDS CONTROL COUNCIL

**Theme:** “HIV Prevention: Every one’s Business”.

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

MINISTRY OF STATE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE MINISTRY OF HEALTH

**HIV represents one of the greatest**

**public health challenges confronting**

**Kenya today. Despite the**

**achievements made in the fight**

**against the scourge in the last decade HIV**

**remains a challenge to the Country’s socioeconomic**

**development. As at 2012 (KAIS**

**II, 2012), 5.6% of adults in Kenya aged 15**

**to 64 years or about 1.2 million people**

**were living with HIV. This is a decrease**

**compared to 2007 (KAIS I, 2007), when the**

**prevalence was 7.2% or about 1.4 million**

**people.**

It has been a long three decades since the

first HIV Case was diagnosed in Kenya and

a case definition done to give scientists,

policy makers and health service providers

a road map to deal with the scourge.

Today Kenya holds the fourth largest epidemic

in the World with a total of 1.2 million

people living with the Virus (KAIS II,

2012) as the search for the elusive cure

for AIDS continues.

A lot has however been achieved in the

efforts aimed at combating the scourge.

The Prevalence rates have come down

from a high of 14% in the 1990’s at the

peak of the epidemic to the current rate

of 5.6%.(KAIS II, 2012). The number of

deaths from HIV related infections have

drastically come down as more and more

people are being put on life prolonging

drugs (ART).

We are now at a tipping point in the fight

against HIV and AIDS. Science has given

**Scourge still a challenge yet to be tamed**

**Message from the Cabinet Secretary for Health** has aligned itself to a number of

Global Declarations regarding HIV

and AIDS and even made national

declarations resolving to continue

a sustained war against HIV and

AIDS. If left unchecked HIV and

AIDS is capable of watering down

all the gains we have made in the

socio-economic development of

the country. Slightly more than ten

years ago World leaders made a

declaration at the United Nations

Security council to tackle HIV and

AIDS Globally to which Kenya was

a party. Almost at the same time

Kenyan Political leadership lead by

the former President His Excellency

Hon. Mwai Kibaki launched a campaign

to wipe out AIDS in Kenya under

the slogan “Pamoja tuangamize

Ukimwi”.

Today as we engage in defining

the next steps to take forward the

war against HIV and AIDS in Kenya

through an agreed formula of a

Road Map under the theme “HIV

Prevention: Every one’s Business”

we look forward to a paradigm

shift that is envisaged to be a game

changer in the HIV and AIDS Programming

in the Region. This roadmap

recognizes the complexity of

HIV and AIDS regarding prevalence

and incidence and draws on this to

identify priority populations and interventions.

This overlaps with administrative

boundaries of Kenya’s

47 Counties. Approximately 9 high

HIV burden counties account for

54% of the HIV Prevalence in the

country

While several enabling factors are

necessary, the epidemic’s future in

Kenya will be determined, in large

measure, by the country’s success

in making revolution in behavioral,

structural and biomedical interventions,

an all inclusive combination

prevention, care and treatment and

mitigation.

Recently programmes targeting high impact

areas of intervention of Most-At-Risk

Populations and pregnant mothers in addition

to Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision

have been emphasized with notable

positive results contributing directly to the

attainment of the Millennium development

goal number six (MDG No. 6 Combating HIV

and AIDS, Malaria and other diseases). This

momentum needs to be sustained in order

for the country not to lose the gains made

so far.

Being part of the Global Community Kenya

**Mr. James Macharia**

**Prof. Fred K. Segor**

**Message from the Principal**

**Secretary, Ministry of Health**

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**Prevalence rates down to 5.6 percent**

***“***

us the knowledge and tools that we can

use to interrupt HIV transmission from the

mother to the baby during pregnancy, delivery

and breastfeeding. The government

has continued to scale up evidence based

HIV preventive measures to attain its goal

of an HIV free society by targeting high impact

interventions.

Preventing Mother-To-Child Transmission

of HIV (PMTCT), has been one of the great

but little known HIV prevention success

stories. Because of these tools, today, the

world is talking about a reality of a new

generation free of HIV. Therefore, PMTCT

is considered a preventive priority and over

90% of all HIV Positive pregnant women

visiting ANC in 2012 received ARVs for prevention

of mother to child transmission of

the HIV virus to their babies. PMTCT services

have made great impact on the mother

to child transmission with the rates dropping

from 28% in 2005 to 8.5% in 2012

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In 2001, Voluntary Counseling and Testing

(VCT) was introduced in Kenya and the

number of testing sites have since continued

to increase from 1600 sites then to

5700 sites in 2012. As a result of this, the

number of people tested for HIV every year

has risen to over 6.7 million. The Government

has revised the National testing algorithm

which is expected to boost the capacity

and efficacy of the testing process and

more reliable results once it is rolled-out.

These achievements would not have been

possible without the collaboration and support

from the Partners and the resolve by

our own local experts who have dedicated

their time and efforts to realize these results.

These efforts have been put in the

areas of the search for an HIV vaccine

where great sons and daughters of this

country have shown exemplary progress.

Relevant Policies and protocols that guide

HIV and AIDS interventions have continuously

been developed and reviewed to

ensure that they are in tandem with the

Internationally agreed guidelines.

The National HIV Prevention Summit

would therefore not have come at a better

time to rejuvenate and build on the

achievements made in the HIV and AIDS

interventions so far. The Government will

continue to ensure progressive and consistent

move towards the realization of

universal access to HIV and AIDS services

as we work towards creating a new generation

free of HIV.

**DAILY NATION**

Monday September 16, 2013