
Accra, August 20, 2014 - The Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and UN Under-Secretary-General, Michel Sidibé, arrives in Ghana on Wednesday, 20th August 2014 for a two-day visit.

During his visit, Mr. Sidibé will meet with His Excellency the President of the Republic of Ghana, John Dramani Mahama, at the Flagstaff House to discuss and strategize ahead of the September 2014 UN General Assembly meeting on the emerging consensus around ending the HIV epidemic by 2013, the UNAIDS/Lancet Commission report and the side event at the UN general Assembly meeting in which H.E. the President will be playing a lead role. He will also engage in high-level interactions with the First Lady and will make a courtesy call on Ghana AIDS Commission to be briefed on progress in the national AIDS response.

Mr. Sidibé is expected to view a Ghanaian film on HIV, called “Love or Something Like That”, produced by Shirley Frimpong-Manso. The film has been officially endorsed by UNAIDS, making it the first film in Africa to be endorsed by a UN body.

During this visit, Mr. Sidibé will reiterate the urgency of continuing the momentum on the national response to HIV/AIDS above and beyond the current MDG framework and into the post 2015 global development dispensation.

UNAIDS Executive Director

As Executive Director, Mr. Sidibé has led the UNAIDS’ contributions to regional and country responses as well as its efforts in global policies, evidence, and monitoring and evaluation since January 2009.

An outspoken advocate with a people-centred approach, Mr. Sidibé has called for the elimination of mother-to-child HIV transmission and for cutting in half by 2015 the number of tuberculosis-related deaths among people living with HIV. He also champions the reform of punitive laws that stigmatize HIV. He has appealed for the removal of travel restrictions for people living with HIV and has demanded their global freedom of movement.

Mr. Sidibé hails from Mali and has spent more than 25 years in public service. He joined UNICEF in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1987 and has since served as a UNICEF country representative in several African countries, including Burundi, Swaziland and Uganda. In 2001, he became the Director of the Country and Regional Support Department of UNAIDS and was appointed UNAIDS Deputy Executive Director of Programmes and Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations in 2007, a position he held until becoming the head of UNAIDS.
Mr. Sidibé earned two Post-Master’s Diplomas in Social Planning and Demography as well as in Development and Political Economy from the University of Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand. He holds a Master’s degree in economics.

The UNAIDS head is committed to supporting countries to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.

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UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, is an innovative United Nations partnership that leads and inspires the world in achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. Learn more at www.unaids.org