

**TALKING POINTS FOR THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
COMMEMORATION OF THE
2000 WORLD AIDS CAMPAIGN
OAU CONGO HALL, 8 DECEMBER 2000**

Your Excellency, the UN Under-Secretary-General and
Executive Secretary of the ECA,

Your Excellency, the Dean of the African Diplomatic
Corps

Your Excellencies, Officials of the Government of the
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

Your Excellencies the Ambassadors

The UN Resident Coordinator,

Honourable Invited Guests,

Teachers and Students,

- We are pleased to have you all here to commemorate the World AIDS Day for the year 2000;
- For Executive Secretary Amoko and for many of you, being here today after five intensive days of in-depth engagement on ways and means of

intensifying our struggle against the HIV-AIDS pandemic is a testimony to the seriousness and grave concern you have of this pandemic;

- It is also an illustration of the success of the Forum in that we are continuously committed to combating this pandemic;
- I know, Mr. Amoako, that most of the participants in the Forum have not yet left Addis and that there must be a number of follow-up activities that have to be finalized. Your accepting to be with us here is a demonstration of your own commitment to the struggle against this deadly illness. We appreciate that;
- A lot has been said in the last five days about the way forward in this struggle. So, it is perhaps appropriate at this occasion to zero-in on the particular theme of this year's campaign – that is “Men Make a Difference”;

- Of course, this in no-way diminishes the important message of last year's campaign that "Listen, Live and Learn" that focused on children and young people;
- Out of the devastation and sorrow that we have experienced in the last fifteen years, it has sadly appeared that more women have fallen victims to the pandemic than men;
- Partly, this has been due to the physiological nature of the female body which is more susceptible to infection, but to a larger extend, it is the way in which we have organized ourselves socially and politically;
- Men tend to be more mobile in our societies, and also yield more power in decision-making at all levels from family, community to government levels;
- Up to now this unique position of men has not been deployed positively in combating the pandemic. If

anything, in many cases, it has contributed to aggravating the problem;

- It is time that men use their comparative advantage and take responsibility in their behaviour and obligations;
- They have to position in decision making and resource allocation in addressing this serious problem;
- They need to contribute to eradicating violence at all levels;
- They need to promote love, caring and compassion;
- I should now leave the floor to Mr. Amoako, who for the past five days has been in the front line of this struggle.