



COMMISSION ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE: **HIV in prisons in Africa and the Middle East**

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Learn About African Action on AIDS (AAA)

AAA is a tax exempt non-profit organization registered in the USA and operating under section 501(c) 3 of the IRS code. It is also registered in Cameroon (auth. No00174/A/MINAT/DAP/SDLP/S AC). It has special consultative status with the United Nations ECOSOC and the UN Department of Information.

AAA's work is based on 3 programmes:

"JUST KNOW" Campaign emphasizes" MA YEM, MA BO":

- Knowledge of one's body
- Knowledge that leads to behavior change
- Knowledge that helps to visualize a future without AIDS

"Health before Wealth" Concept promotes:

- Testing for HIV
- Clean hands (hand washing stations)
- Clean water (drinking stations)
- Dignified toilets
- Fighting against Malaria (treated mosquito bed nets)
- Vaccination
- Anti worms medicin

"Women's economic autonomy" through our Scholarship Programme. This scholarship enables each teenage orphan girl to complete at least a secondary, general or technical education that will lead to financial and economic autonomy, greatly reducing the risk of being infected with HIV through sexual abuse and violence.

The 28th Session of the COMMISSION ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE was held on 20 – 24 May 2019 in Vienna, Austria. The key topics of the thematic discussion of this year's session related to preventing and countering crime motivated by INTOLERANCE or DISCRIMINATION and the role of criminal justice in preventing and countering hate crimes and enabling sustainable development.

The opening of the Commission session was accompanied by video messages from the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, the President of the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly, Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, and the ECOSOC President Inga Rhonda King.

The session adopted 11 resolutions and 1 decision. In total 126 side events were held during the week. The session was chaired by Ambassador Alena Kupchyna, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Belarus, and was attended by more than 1,500 delegates from Member States, representatives of UN entities, specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations, civil society and the media. **The side event most directly linked to AAA work was:**

➤ **HIV in prisons in Africa and the Middle East – achievements and opportunities:**
In all there are more than 25 million people living with HIV in prisons in Africa and the Middle East. 60 % of them are women and girls, who are more susceptible to sexual violence. Considering the HIV problematic, prisons are usually not a priority issue. Since 2010 the HIV infection rate for prisoners has risen by 12 %.

The rate of HIV transmission in prisons is much higher than outside, mainly because of unprotected sex and drug use and because effective policies are rare, and the highest infection rate is noticeable for women in prison.

One of the speakers, the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Egypt, reported that in his country access of prisoners to treatment services have been improved, training workshops on HIV have been held for medical professionals, and more frequent screenings of people at risk have been performed.

The Commissioner General of Namibia reported that in her country the HIV prevalence inside the prisons was lower than outside. And they had special rehabilitation programmes for women.

The person who reported on the Middle East and North Africa said that over the last 7 years there was a 12 % increase in HIV cases and also a rise in the rate of mortality. One third of the prison population was incarcerated for drug related crimes.

The speakers from East and South Africa reported that screenings brought to light that the HIV infection rate and also the drug dependence were increasing.

Through its Scholarship programme, AAA's education strategy is to enable vulnerable girls between 15- 24 years, to achieve financial autonomy that greatly reduces the risk of HIV infection based on low economic status.



For more information please visit: **WEBSITES:** www.unodc.org / www.unaids.org

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