

## Turkey's Joint Declaration for World AIDS Day 2017

### HIV has changed; Have we?

It has been 36 years since HIV was first reported and 21 years since effective treatment. Today, medical progress has stopped one of the most shocking epidemics from being inevitably fatal. We are facing a very different picture than that caused by HIV in its early years.

To summarise;

- In many countries risk of vertical transmission HIV has been reduced to less than 1%.
- People living with HIV can have children that will be HIV negative.
- Modern treatment (ART) can prevent development to AIDS. People can live longer and have normal life expectancy.
- Public awareness campaigns, access to anonymous HIV testing and new prevention options such as PrEP have dramatically reduced new infections.
- HIV-positive people can now take an active part in all areas of everyday life.

Treatment prevents transmission. Two important studies in the past year have proved that HIV-positive people on treatment with undetectable viral load do not transmit the virus, even when not using condoms.

All these factors show why there is no reason to continue discrimination against HIV-positive people. There is no excuse or reason for discriminatory attitudes and behaviour. This is especially at a time when the strongest arguments of HIV treatment activists and scientists, has been approved by organisations such as UNAIDS, the US and European CDCs. For these reasons, we, as HIV treatment activists and scientists who are working together to end this discrimination towards HIV positive individuals, are happy to announce the following progress:

- That Turkey's HIV communities have been internationally recognized for its cooperative capacity,
- That scientists for HIV positive individuals have worked to ensure access to all health services under equal conditions in all parts of Turkey,
- That access to medication and treatment for HIV positive individuals is on equal terms with developed countries.

It is now time to highlight what needs to be done to bring Turkey out of the list of countries with increasing rates of HIV infections and to reach 90-90-90 UNAIDS goals;

- To break the barriers around anonymous testing across the country,
- To have effective prevention tools such as PrEP,
- To create awareness campaigns around important scientific evidences like U=U,

And we are inviting all shareholders to work together.

### ***SIGNING ORGANIZATIONS***

- Red Ribbon Istanbul Association
- KLIMIK (Turkish Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases Association)
- HIVEND (HIV Infection Association)
- EGEHAUM (Ege Universtiy HIV/AIDS Practise and Research Center)
- TAPV (Turkish Family Health and Planning Foundation)
- KAOS GL (Kaos Gay and Lesbian Research and Solidarity Association)
- Association for Struggle Against Sexual Violence
- Association of Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Red Umbrella Sexual Health and Human Rights Association
- Young Approach to Health Association
- 1 December Youngs Initiative
- Pozitif-Iz Civil Society Initiative