



INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE TO HIGHLIGHT ADVANCES IN HIV SCIENCE AND TREATMENT

Paris, May 20, 2003 –This year’s largest scientific and medical conference on HIV/AIDS will be held in Paris July 13-16, 2003, the International AIDS Society and ANRS, the French National Agency for Research on AIDS, announce today. The goal of the conference is to share the latest advances in HIV research and provide a unique platform for the international community to translate the science into action.

Announced twenty years to the day* after the discovery of HIV-1, the 2nd IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis and Treatment will bring together 6,000 leading scientists and researchers from around the world to focus on the most recent advances in HIV science (e.g., viral entry, integration, immune responses to HIV) and how these translate into new drugs and strategies for treatment. Hosted by ANRS, it will be the largest AIDS conference to be held in France in more than 15 years.

The conference will feature a dynamic mix of basic and clinical science: 6 plenary sessions, 180 oral presentations, 15 special forums, 8 controversy sessions, 900 posters, and more than a dozen symposia. In addition, former presidents Nelson Mandela of South Africa and Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil will give plenary talks on AIDS in the global South, and the need to expand access to prevention and treatment in all settings.

“To scale up AIDS treatment in the developing world, researchers and clinicians everywhere will need access to cutting-edge basic science, clinical science and therapy, and they’ll find it at the Paris conference,” said Professor Michel D. Kazatchkine, Conference Chair and Director, Agence nationale de recherches sur le sida (ANRS) and chair of the Technical Review Panel of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. “We will have science and treatment success stories. But scientific and clinical advances are diminished if their benefits do not reach the people suffering from the effects of HIV. For this reason, we will also have state-of-the-art talks devoted to the economic, political and socioeconomic issues that are key to implementing such programs.”

“This is the international forum that brings together scientists and clinical researchers working on HIV/AIDS from both the developed and developing world, forging alliances to jointly address the most pressing issues in the combat against this global emergency,” said Professor Joep Lange, president of the International AIDS Society (IAS) and IAS chair of the conference.

“HIV has proved to be treatable in the poorest communities in the world, thanks to many of the researchers attending this conference and to the vision of some committed community and national leaders,” said Dr. Souleymane Mboup, of the University of Cheikh Anta Diop in Dakar, Senegal, a Scientific Co-Chair of the Conference. “It is time to make that vision a reality in every country. We need to get the benefits of research to people throughout the world -- particularly the 30 million people living with HIV/AIDS in Africa.”

The conference will also honor the discovery of the virus.

“The early years of HIV science clearly demonstrated that interactions between basic scientists and clinicians are a key determinant to rapid discovery. This conference provides a wonderful opportunity to promote these interactions, which are still needed to improve our knowledge of ‘HIV pathogenesis and treatment.’ Together, we can share advances in science - - and join our voices to seek the resources required in both developed and developing countries to elaborate on new therapeutic strategies, and to hopefully find a vaccine,” said Professor Françoise Barré-Sinoussi of the Institut Pasteur, Conference Co-Chair and first author of the landmark paper published in *Science* magazine, May 20, 1983, announcing the discovery of HIV-1.

At an extraordinary plenary session, Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases of the U.S. National Institutes of Health, will deliver a keynote address on 20 years of HIV science, the subject of his lead article in a special July cover issue of *Nature Medicine* tying in with the conference commemorating 20 years of HIV science.

“We stand on the threshold of new and promising fields of AIDS research. At the conference we will learn about the future of HIV science, and in the absence of a vaccine that the future is prevention and treatment. We will see the results of the latest clinical trials and of progress with entry inhibitors and immunotherapy,” said Jean-François Delfraissy of the Hôpital de Bicêtre and Conference Co-Chair.

Over 6,000 are expected to attend the conference, about 1/3 of them basic scientists. Another salient feature of the meeting is a record number of scholarships, including 290 awards to scientists and physicians in the developing world, 50 community awards and 80 scholarships to pre- and post-graduate students from basic science laboratories around the globe.

The conference is held in scientific collaboration with the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

2nd IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis and Treatment
July 13 – 16, 2003
Le Palais des Congrès, Paris, France

For more information and media accreditation, visit www.ias2003.org.

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