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PRESS RELEASE

**Wednesday 28 September 2011**

**SOUTH SUDAN HIV/AIDS COMMISSION (SSAC) LAUNCHES THE 2011 HIV/AIDS AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**

SSAC in conjunction with Ministry of Health and partners are launching the South Sudan 2011 HIV/AIDS campaign today, Wednesday 23 September.

The main aim of the campaign is to contribute to reduction in new HIV infections by creating an enabling environment for HIV response through raising awareness on HIV/AIDS, stigma discrimination and denial as well as mobilizing the communities at all levels for increased commitment at individual, societal and institutional levels to preventing new HIV infections.

The global theme of this year's commemoration is ***"Getting towards zero new infections and zero discrimination"***. South Sudan is promoting this theme with a national slogan of ***"Take lead in preventing HIV/AIDS"***

According to the recently concluded studies, an estimated 3.8 million people in South Sudan are at risk of acquiring HIV and yet approximately 111,391 people only have so far been tested for HIV. Knowing your HIV status is the first stage in deciding to adopt positive behavior change actions and/or to live positively with HIV.

Valuable progress has been made in increasing access to HIV and AIDS services, yet greater investment and commitment is needed from government, donors, international organizations, civil society and individuals if new HIV infections are to be averted.

Key activities at national, state and county levels will include HIV/AIDS radio and TV talk shows, advocacy workshops with community, opinion, religious leaders, teachers and youths, HIV/AIDS

rallies, soccer, volleyball tournaments, marathon, counseling and testing campaigns all geared towards raising HIV awareness and getting people tested for HIV.

SSAC is therefore calling upon public and private partners as well as civil society at GOSS, State and county levels to join efforts in making the campaign a success by encouraging people to get tested in addition to taking lead in preventing HIV. Technical and financial support by partners at all levels will greatly enhance the success of this campaign.

SSAC will continue to initiate, promote and strengthen public private partnerships to promote HIV/AIDS awareness as well as to intensify the multisectoral response to HIV and AIDS in Southern Sudan.

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