

# Anglo American backs AIDS conference

Anglo American has announced that it will be the lead private sector company supporting the 21st International AIDS Conference, which will take place in July 2016 in Durban.

# 2016

21st International AIDS Conference

The International AIDS Conference is held every two years and is the leading global event for sharing the latest knowledge and strategic initiatives to control and end the HIV pandemic. As the largest global health conference, it is expected to attract more than 20,000 delegates from academia, governments, civil society and the private sector in 2016, as well as high-level global leaders, celebrities and journalists.

Khanyisile Kweyama, Executive Director of Anglo American in South Africa, said: "We continue to partner government on a number of developmental initiatives and we are proud once more to demonstrate the benefits of this partnership by supporting the 2016 International AIDS conference. We would like to see other large businesses follow our lead in this critical arena, where we have successfully demonstrated, at both national and global levels, the business and societal benefit of private sector involvement with regards to health-related issues."

Private Sector Reference Group

The organisers of the 2016 event have established a Private Sector Reference Group, which is tasked with shaping national and international business engagement at the International AIDS conference. This group will be chaired by Dr Brian Brink, Anglo American's Chief Medical Officer. Dr Brink said: "This will be a top-quality opportunity to showcase the outstanding contribution that South African companies have made in the fight against AIDS, as well as the great strides that South Africa has taken since the last International AIDS Conference held in Durban in 2000. We aim to illustrate the strength of the private sector as a trusted partner in the battle against HIV and AIDS."

The basis of Anglo American's HIV/AIDS response lies in its human rights-based HIV/AIDS policy, which was first published in the early 1990s. The policy ensures that there is no discrimination against any employee living with HIV and that the stigma associated with HIV and AIDS is eliminated. It also respects individuals' right to confidentiality as a core value in the company's HIV/AIDS response and tackles gender issues, which result in women bearing a disproportionate share of the burden of HIV. Pre-employment testing for HIV has never been condoned by Anglo American.

"Stopping new HIV infections is at the heart of Anglo American's prevention response. Through our annual voluntary counselling and testing campaigns we are able to detect and monitor the HIV infection rate amongst our southern African workforce of approximately 70,000 employees. Whilst the figures show a declining trend, we believe that one new infection is one too many. We remain committed to achieving a new HIV infection rate of zero," added Kweyama.

#### Normal, healthy lives

Early diagnosis and early access to treatment, as well as care for employees who are HIV positive are some of the measures taken to ensure that very few individuals get sick with AIDS. Approximately 16% of the southern African workforce is living with HIV. The vast majority of these employees live normal, healthy lives and carry out their normal work like any other employee, without fear of stigma or discrimination.

Anglo American's tuberculosis (TB) control programmes are fully integrated with the HIV programmes. Anglo American's latest reported incidence of TB in South Africa is below the average TB incidence for the country and the company continues to strive to reduce deaths from TB through earlier HIV and TB diagnosis and treatment. As a result of these efforts, Anglo American is on track to reduce TB deaths by 50% this year.

In an effort to support health in developing countries more broadly, Anglo American remains one of the key private-sector supporters of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, which is a very large donor to southern African HIV and TB programmes.

For more, go to [www.aids2016.org](http://www.aids2016.org)

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