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Press release

Addressing HIV in the Context of Sex Work

Kyiv, 11 November 2013

Across Ukraine and the Russian Federation sex workers experience serious human rights violations that impact on their vulnerability to HIV/STIs. Protecting human rights of sex workers is imperative for HIV prevention, treatment, and care.

In spite of that, policy and legal barriers continue to hamper effective investments in the national HIV responses and sex workers are heavily affected by stigma and discrimination.

“Shifting demographics of the AIDS epidemic in the Russian Federation and Ukraine demands a new focus to reach sex workers—a population currently underserved by HIV services and highly affect by stigma and violence”.

The European Union’s CONECTA project | **Strengthening of HIV/STI Interventions in Sex Work in Ukraine and the Russian Federation** presents the results of a two-year programme in an International Conference to be held in **Kyiv, Ukraine, from 12 to 14 November 2013**.

Joint Russian and Ukrainian delegations representing civil society organisations, governmental institutions, international organisations, and community representatives will discuss problems and solutions in addressing HIV in the context of sex work.

The purpose of the conference is to:

- Promote, raise awareness, and cooperate with different stakeholders in Ukraine and the Russian Federation and highlight the structural determinants that put sex workers, their clients and other sexual partners at greater risk of HIV infection; and
- Strengthen rights-based approaches to HIV and sex work. Conecta project will share good practices and develop evidence-based recommendations collected throughout the two-year program with state and non-state actors from both countries. Next steps and future actions will be identified to further progress responses to HIV infection in the context of sex work within Russian Federation and Ukraine.

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The press is invited to interview experts and sex worker representatives during the conference upon schedule.

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