



PCN Press Release on the European Parliament conference on AIDS in Africa

The Standing Committee of Nurses of the European Union (PCN) participated in the European Parliament conference on Aids in Africa, organised by MEP Paul Lannoye (Belgium) and Didier Rod (France).

PCN congratulates both MEPs for their initiative and constructive debate with world wide stakeholders and European Citizens.

Based on the discussion in the European Parliament, PCN calls on the European Parliament:

- To keep this debate going on and involve much more MEP and European Parliament committees in this discussion, such as the Environment, Developing and Internal Market Committee. The free movement of goods, services and people (health professions) is the key legislation area to tackle this issue. As Professor Mhlongo, member of the experts committee set up by President Mbeki, said: 'Do not steal our nurses!'
- To take care of those who care. Nurses and doctors providing basic care in the community needs to be supported in their daily work and battle against poverty.
- To exchange best practice, especially from nurses. The medical representatives gave impressive presentations (statistics) but referred regularly to nurses (practice). When developing new systems and programs we need to include nurses. We do not need more statistics and definition, we just need political empowerment of results of running twinning programs.
- To control not only the finances of the programmes initiated by the European Commission, but more important is to evaluate the outcomes. Were the millions of euros beneficial for the citizens?
- To strengthen the role of Primary Nursing Care and the concept of the Family nurse. As indicated by different speakers, poverty is the key component to combat AIDS/HIV. We need to focus on care models and not only on medical and medicine models and approaches.

Finally PCN regrets that EU citizens taxes are used in an unbalanced way: 800 Euros is spend for each cow in the European Union and 13,98 Euros per person annually is spent for public health for the European Citizens (Ref. Tamsin Rose, EPHA). For 700 years the black plague is consider as the most fatal epidemic. Currently, the fastest growing number of HIV cases is found in some Eastern European and Central Asian countries. Some of these countries will join the European Union in 2004. The actual economic situation creates new trends that allow HIV/AIDS to be spread: immigration and poverty. We are now at a stage we can influence this together.