

United Nations warns six million people could die if U.S. stops funding HIV/AIDS programs



U.S. President Donald Trump signs executive orders on January 20, 2025. (Photo by AP)

United Nations, February 9 (RHC)-- The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has warned that six million people could die from AIDS and HIV in the next four years if the U.S. stops its global funding programs.

UNAIDS warned that the decision by the new U.S. administration to withdraw funding from international AIDS and HIV programs could have catastrophic consequences.

On his first day in office, U.S. President Donald Trump signed an executive order suspending all aid programs for 90 days. Although the U.S. has temporarily excluded AIDS and HIV programs, including PEPFAR, from its freeze, UNAIDS is concerned about their continued functioning.

“There is a lot of confusion, especially on the community level, how the waiver will be implemented. We’re seeing a lot of disruption of delivery of treatment services,” Deputy Executive Director of UNAIDS Christine Stegling said.

According to Stegling, if the U.S. does not confirm its financial support for PEPFAR between 2025 and 2029, AIDS and HIV-related deaths will increase by 400%. “That’s 6.3 million people, 6.3 million AIDS-related deaths that will occur in future...Any penny, any cut, any pause, will matter for all of us.”

“In Ethiopia, we have 5,000 public health worker contracts that are funded by U.S. assistance. And all of these have been terminated,” she emphasized.

UNAIDS is an international project aimed at combating AIDS and HIV. It operates in more than 80 countries. It gathers “data collection on HIV epidemiology, program coverage and finance and publishes the most authoritative and up-to-date information on the HIV epidemic.”

AIDS and HIV are major health problems in many African countries. The Trump White House has decided to stop sending medicines for HIV, malaria, and tuberculosis and medical supplies for newborns to most African countries.

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