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**XVII International AIDS Conference  
Country-Level Advocacy Initiatives that Support Children and  
AIDS  
International AIDS Society  
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**PETER LAUGHARN:** So there has been considerably increased governmental action in the OVC area in the last five years. The national plans of action, OVC frameworks, and of course the funding flows that have been coming into the area of AIDS have also picked up more on the OVC issues than in initial rounds of global funding or World Bank or very initial PEPFAR. So there is more activity going on and I think that prompts an interest in activism or in advocacy.

Without further ado then, I would like to just ask each of our participants to say in a couple of minutes what their work is relevant to this and how they see the complementarity of government and civil society action. And I would like to start with the Honorable Minister from Lesotho.

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** He is putting me on the spot.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Not at all.

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** As a Minister of Health and Social Welfare, I see my role clearly as a protector of children, as a voice of the children. It had to take HIV and AIDS to expose that fact that our children were so unprotected because whether there were few children were being orphaned or were being abused, that went really unnoticed, but it had to take this scourge to expose a lot of us as having been very inadequate in our roles as the voice, as the

protectors of children, as the decision maker, as policy makers. So I see my role as the Minister of Health and as a mother, as the one who will speak on behalf of the children even when it is really very tough. I will give you an example when everybody said, well, you know what, you should not be testing every woman who is pregnant without actually counseling them properly.

Well, we passed the law, we are testing every woman who is pregnant. We are looking for them, we are testing them because I believe we are also helping them in a way. The epidemic where I come from is 23-percent. It is such an emergency that people are no longer able to bury their loved ones when they die and that is very un-African. African people bury people. If you have come to a point where you have mortuaries full, then you know there is something that you are not doing right.

And there are so many children also who are dying. So in this, I am violating people's civil rights and not their human rights. I want to make absolutely sure that all children born, that children are protected, born from now. Since we have passed that law, now we are testing also children at six weeks. Fortunately, I run the first clinic for vaccination clinics, the rate is very high, it is in the 90s, 90-percent. Therefore, we feel that we are in a position to get at least 80-percent of the children and test them who have been born.

If we have missed the mother, then we will catch them at six weeks and test them.

Therefore, I really honest and truly believe that a lot of governments, not only in Africa, have been exposed as have been terribly doing not a very good job in protecting the lives of the children and it took this to know that we are not—and a lot of countries I think in Africa now are passing laws that are protecting children. That are protecting children who are orphaned and children who are really positive. As a result of that, we are moving forward and hopefully beyond HIV and AIDS, we will have a better society.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Thank you very much. And I think this is really an exchange that we do not need to be applauded each time, unless people are very moved by a particular point.

[Laughter]

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** People were moved.

[Laughter].

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Okay good, then go ahead. [Applause]  
[Laughter] Great, great. Maxwell, could you give us two minutes from your point of view about your organization and the complementarity of it?

**MAXWELL MATEWERE:** Yes, before I say that maybe I will say that—

**PETER LAUGHARN:** [Inaudible]

**MAXWELL MATEWERE:** Oh, okay [Laughter]. I must say that I am happy with the mission of the Minister. They have felt as governments have failed greatly in providing services to the children. That is true. It is very said that we are discussing this at a time when we have enjoyed a long period where government have actually tried different conventions. And we have also seen a process where lots of resources have been channeled through different governments to service the children. But what has been happening in different countries is sort of a diversion of resources to other services other than the intention of those resources. So this is quite impressive that a Minister would agree that somehow they have failed short in terms of providing or meeting the needs of the children.

As an organization, I have reached out. We are doing our activities for advocacy. We also provide [inaudible] protection and also conduct a series of trainings. So through advocacy, perhaps maybe that is where we engage the government most. We strongly believe that government is a primary service provider. And the process to provide the services, the first thing that government has to do is to put in place policies and programs. And another same time, find resources to service those program and services.

As the civil society organization, apart from pushing the government to put those services in place, we also have an

extra responsibility to encourage or to mobilize the target audience to patronize and enjoy those services. Somehow we have also felt we usually, apart from demanding the government to provide the services and also put in place programs.

We have also realized in a way that we also expect the same government to mobilize the target audience, the children and their parents, to patronize those services which the government has put in place.

So as the civil society organization, we have an extra responsibility apart from monitoring the role of the government in putting in place the programs and policies and also finding resources to finance those program and policies, we also have another responsibility to be sure that the target audience indeed enjoy or patronize the services.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Thank you Maxwell. It seems we are going to have a nice lively discussion here. Dr. Kiboneka, a couple of minutes, your work and the complementarity.

**ANDREW KIBONEKA, M.D., F.A.A.P.:** Thank you, Peter. My name is Andrew Kiboneka. I work with The AIDS Support Organization in Uganda.

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** Can you speak up?

**ANDREW KIBONEKA, M.D., F.A.A.P.:** My name is Andrew Kiboneka. I am a pediatrician working with The AIDS Support Organization in Kampala, Uganda. And also I do for the last about one and half years, two years, I have been doing work

with the Joint Learning Initiative on Children and HIV/AIDS, Learning Group Three.

And just as a background, TASO is a large NGO in Uganda that takes care of both adults and the children. We take care of about 4,000 children who are HIV infected. But we also take care of children who are affected by HIV through a lot of issues, psychosocial issues and as well as medical issues.

And maybe I just wanted also to comment that regarding the issue of the role of the NGOs and governments, I see what has developed over the years is the need for a partnership between the NGOs and the government, a public-private partnership. Because as we realize that the issues of HIV/AIDS are very complex and no one single person or method can overcome this important crisis.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Thanks a lot, Andrew. I think we have heard a couple of contrasting or complimentary points of view among the NGOs. Brendan Howlin, as a parliamentarian, how about yourself?

**BRENDAN HOWLIN:** Peter, so this was a talk show format without the musical interlude so we have to be very entertaining as well I suppose.

I am happy to actually get the opportunity to speak last after the Minister gave a governmental perspective and I have been a Minister for Health, so I understand the executive point of view and the NGOs. And it is interesting to me as a

parliamentarian that nobody so far has mentioned parliament, that they assume that there is government and there is NGOs and that actual democratic tier that exists with legitimacy has been mentioned by nobody.

In many of our countries, in fact most of our countries, the people elect parliament and parliament elects government. And policy is determined or should be determined by parliament, not by the executive. And from my perspective, one of the great deficiencies over the last few days around here has been the centrality of parliament and, therefore, the centrality of a democratic accountable forum.

Let me, in two or three sentences, say who I am. I obviously am a member of parliament in Ireland. But I also have another hat as Vice President of the Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa. Within the advocacy group, obviously I have a responsibility to be accountable to my own electorate in relation to children. And I would be very happy at length talking about that because I am working on a Parliamentary Commission right now on amending our Constitution to provide children's rights. And what looks like a very simple proposition have become an immeasurably complex one, that is for another day.

The African work we do is I suppose twofold. One, to keep the issue of Africa on European agendas. And secondly, to ensure that we can assist in empowering parliament and ensuring

that parliaments are skilled, up skilled and have the resources to effectively do their job, which as I said in the beginning is both holding their executives to account and determining policy.

My final comment in this opening session would be this. One of the main projects currently underway—and there are many by AWEPA, my organization—is to reconnect parliament at donor level and recipient level because, and it is interesting, I attended a parliamentary forum at lunch time today under the auspices of the Interparliamentary Union and the Senate of Mexico and the Vietnamese delegate there said the same point, that money is donated. It goes into the central government mar. But neither the parliament that votes the money in the home state or the parliament of the country that receives the money is connected to know, well, how much and for what is voted and how is it spent and is it spent efficiently. And it is making that connection is one of our objectives in the medium term. Thank you.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Thanks very much.

**BRENDAN HOWLIN:** You are welcome.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** [Laughter] Okay. That is very good. Yes, go ahead please. [Laughter]. I think that is actually a very fresh and refreshing perspective that indeed we have not heard very much at the conferences here is one from parliaments.

I wanted to start of the freer form debate with a question to the Minister. I noticed that she spoke primarily about government and quite frankly I think about government's intentions but did not speak about the complementarity of civil society and government. Now you have worked for a civil society organization before being Minister. How would you, in your mind, compare the two experiences and how did they interrelate? Go ahead.

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** I thought Maxwell spoke very well really for civil society. I mean basically they are the advocates of the children, the voiceless. They push the government to do the right thing and the role of civil society is key, is really key.

I know when we had first went the Global Fund and people were applying for the Global Fund fund. It was very uncomfortable for a number of governments to find themselves having to be under the watch dog of the civil society and partners and everyone. But that synergy, it worked very, very well. It is working very well. Everybody is accountable in my country, including the civil society.

Although now there is another angle, they want to be the recipients of the money and be able to disburse it. Well, we are still working on that, but I think that is quite doable. I see the role of civil society as very, very important. Sometimes actually they are sometimes the implementers on

behalf of the government. In my country that is quite possible.

They reach certain sectors of society that we are not able to see, to reach. For instance, they can reach the gay community very easily. They are able to reach sex workers. They are able to reach children street workers or children who are very difficult to actually access. So we rely very closely, we have a partnership with civil society. We actually disburse our funding through them. Sometimes they are the implementers or they implement on behalf of the government. Not only donor funding, but also money coming from the budget of the government. So I work well with civil society.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Very good.

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** [Laughter] And by the way I am a parliamentarian too. [Laughter] But I am in the Senate, in the Upper House. [Laughter].

**PETER LAUGHARN:** We try to get multifunctional participation. But let me press you a little further. Are there types of advocacy that you find very useful and some that you find less useful? What would be most useful in terms of a civil society approach to government?

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** Coming from a country that is very small, we have a population of 1.8 million, yes, civil society sometimes is seen as a nuisance, I must say. [Laughter] I would have to say. [Laughter] Because they

sort of expose things even though you are still going to get through them, they will expose you. I mean there is no one way of dealing with civil society because you do not determine their program. They do what they want to do. [Laughter]

Yes, I mean the best way to do is to plan with them. I have realized that I am not going to let them off the hook. Global Fund has taught me one or two things. You need to plan with them. When there is budget time, yes, we plan together. We plan. It is not perfect because you cannot have everyone. Even with civil society, we have very good organizations. You have organizations that are not so good. And well, you realize you have been giving them money and they are receiving even more money from elsewhere.

So they need to be as transparent as we are. When they are dealing with us, they expect us to be transparent. They ought to be also transparent and there are governments that really prefer to deal only with civil society. And for the funding that they receive, I think they need to tell the government of Lesotho what they are getting and what for and whether they are actually spending the money well, that is also very, very important.

But the one thing that I do not like about civil society, even when you are still working on the problem, trying to get to it, they make so much noise. [Laughter] I mean it can be very difficult when you are dealing with many issues.

Because what is good about civil society, one person who is dealing with the issues of children is dealing with the issues of children only and we will deal with them. For the elderly, again you have other people, but you have so much. There is poverty, everything. Right now we are dealing with the prices of food and food for people who are on ARVs. That is very difficult and again civil society is doing a great job.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** And actually, I think the Minister is making this really fairly easy for you [Laughter] The NGOs, let us take the idea of the three ones. We know that there should be one national plan, there should be one monitoring and evaluation plan, there should basically be one push for fighting AIDS and the government is in part, in large part, the coordinator of that. How do you relate to that? Are you part of that action or are you outside simply criticizing it?

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** And be honest.

[Laughter]

**MAXWELL MATEWERE:** Maybe on the basis of our experience in Malawi. Somehow because of the economic situation, political situation, we have noticed that the interest of the government may not be on the children as such. Or the priority might not be to put in place a program of action or policy, neither a monetary strategy. So what the NGO usually do to come together and they invite the government on board. The NGOs become the facilitators of the process and the government

still have the ownership, but the NGOs would take the leadership in terms of facilitating the entire process.

So that has actually made things easier for us. And even to an extent that still we would work together with the government, but it does not mean that we are not going to check on the government responsibility. We are now coming together and we noticed that somehow our program has been delayed because the Minister did not come to open our session. Or maybe someone [inaudible] did not do ABCD, so we have gone ahead and reminded the minister that you have reasonable responsibility.

Otherwise if you do not do that, then the whole process will be dragged. So we use our existing good relationship between the government and the civil society organization. So NGO can become the facilitator apart from becoming watch dogs. They can also become a facilitator of the process.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** In some ways I think in the opening-

**MAXWELL MATEWERE:** I wanted to make a comment on the parliament. Why is it that we did not mention about the parliament? When we are doing an advocacy, when we come out with an advocacy strategy, usually we analyze our partners and what has been happening, like in my country, I think in the region, where the government has been led by a minority. Usually when we are pushing for policy or a program for the interest of the children, that is usually not an interest of

those who are in the majority, let us say for instance the opposition.

So somehow the laws has been delayed. The process has been delayed because there is some argument between the minority government and the opposition majority. And usually they are [inaudible] along political issues. So what we have done we have re strategize if we are not working direct of the individuals in the Ministry who have now used the court, to engage the court in strategic litigation. So somehow the governor has been made to dance to respond to the orders made by the court.

So we are now trying to address the new development in countries like Zimbabwe, Malawi, Kenya and even in East Africa. But those are the three countries of Malawi, Zimbabwe and Kenya for us to pursue our advocacy campaign for the benefit of the children.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Let me actually ask a question based on something he said before we started about the relative strength and numbers of NGOs at this conference and the relative paucity of parliamentarian representation. Why do you think that is? And how do feel about it? Not to give you too big an opening. [Laughter]

**BRENDAN HOWLIN:** We feel, in relation to what we have said already, all good parliamentarians want to comment on what others have said, I fully empathize with the Minister when she

says that sometimes NGOs, civil society can be a pain in the butt because they can by necessity always want more. I was brought up in a trade union household and the basic principle of trade union is whatever is on the table, we want more.

And I remember as Minister for Health announcing a £30 million child-focused program which I thought was a big deal on the day. And the main children's advocacy group denounced it because they said it should have been a £100 million program. And I understood from their perspective, but when you fought within cabinet to get a chunk of money, we are all human, we like to have that.

There is also another point in terms of sometimes you have NGOs vying with one another to be more assertive and one of the problems is the old adage, "The meek will inherit the earth." Often the loudest voice gets a political ear and funding and important issues that do not have strong NGO basis, sometimes do not get the clout that they are required. I just wanted to make that point because I think the idea of joined up thinking and fairness is also a part of it.

In terms of parliamentary participation in a forum like this, I believe it is important because I am a passionate parliamentarian. Because I believe that that gives democratic legitimacy to actions and I understand the use of the courts and obviously in all our jurisdictions, that is often a resort, that you go to the courts to vindicate a particular right or to

look for a particular program, but why are you not lobbying your parliamentary colleagues, all parties, raising the issue? Do you as a matter of routine demand access to parliament? Stand outside parliament if they do not give you that access. And this is what you must do and mobilize as NGOs can the most potent force in any country which is the electorate to shape the views and policies of parliamentarians.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Thanks. Dr. Kiboneka, I think in your and Maxwell's intros, Maxwell styled himself a little bit as the watch dog and you as the partnership builder, can you tell us a little bit more about that and particularly, where have you been successful and where have you been more challenged?

**ANDREW KIBONEKA, M.D., F.A.A.P.:** Thank you. I will begin by saying that what we have come to realize in Uganda and also in TASO is that government has certain weaknesses and also certain strengths and also the same with TASO. So this is how through regular meetings that we hold between the government and TASO and also at the district level. We realized that it is actually in our interests, both in the interest of the government and also in the interest of TASO, to work especially in issues of PMTCT and issues in rural areas, issues of children. And so that is how that has come to evolve. And again on the other hand, TASO has also realized that it is better to operate in a certain manner. And so though sometimes we get criticism from the government that why you are doing

this and why you are doing this now? You should stick to this. You should not get involved in this.

But essentially, the issue of partnership is something that is coming into play especially as we are seeing that we are not really managing our HIV in children or even the whole HIV epidemic very well. So we have by necessity realized that it is better we work together. Thank you.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Thanks. I think that is a point that everyone around the table would agree to. I think at this point you probably have a taste of the perspective of each of the people up here except perhaps Paul. [Laughter] So at this point maybe we could open the discussion up to involve some of the people who are here because we have I can see even beyond the glare here, there are some very experienced people. So please let us-

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** [Interposing] I want to say something about parliament a little bit.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Okay, wait, let us-

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** [Interposing] Why we do not have parliamentarians-

**PETER LAUGHARN:** [Interposing] Let us have these people get it out of their systems first. [Laughter]

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** [Laughter] I just wanted to mention that we are at the point in Africa where democracy is still a notion that is still very difficult to

grasp and we have all kinds of problems and parliamentarians too need to be empowered. They need to be taught more about all of these issues.

I was very excited actually a month ago when I was summoned actually to one of the HIV/AIDS Committee of Parliament to tell them more about the policies. And at the end of it then they just announced, oh, we just told the Public Accounts Committee that you should be called to account for the—

We have had a Know Your Status Campaign where we were testing everybody above the age of 12 years, to go and account for the Know Your Status Campaign funding. And honestly to tell us exactly what it is you did with so much money. We know it belonged to partners, but you need to account. I was very excited to learn about that, but unfortunately as he mentioned you find situations where it takes months just to pass the budget.

Just I am talking about Malawi because I know that is a fact and I know, I think the Minister wanted to come, but he cannot come because the government, the Parliament is paralyzed. So what you need to do now is because it is a minority, they need to sit down, talk, agree. And so once this whole process—first had to go for elections in Africa after many, many years. After elections, this whole issue of handing over to successive people who have won elections is kind of, it

is new. So we expect our partners, our friends, countries from the North to come to Africa, assist the parliamentarians to be empowered, to be able to see beyond being elected and beyond being a parliamentarian.

That is very, very important. Once we have passed that threshold, it will be easy. It will take a few more years, but they need to be the decision makers and policy makers.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Did I hear a bit of rumbling over here? [Laughter]

**BRENDAN HOWLIN:** It is a little bit like make me a democrat, but not yet. I think that the organization that I am a member of was established 25 years ago as an anti-apartheid parliamentary group in Europe. Basically to counter the argument, then being put out by the apartheid regime, that sanctions hurt [misspelled?] black Africans. And they were being effective in that argument. And AWEPA was established as a parliamentary group of people who were involved in the anti-apartheid campaign to link up and counter-veil that argument successfully. At the end of the apartheid regime we were asked by largely the SADC countries, front line states as we use them then, to continue in operation as a parliamentary support. That is what we have been doing for the last 25 years.

There is a huge democratic base across Africa and I do not think—I have been in many African parliaments, whether it is competent, efficient democratic structures working well. I

was in Uganda earlier this year. They have a very dynamic parliament. They have good public accounts committees. They have independent judiciary. So I am confident of Africa being able to do the parliamentary process. And of course, there are problems. We were in Kenya when we saw the aftermath of the Kenyan elections. And they came up with a novel solution. I think they made 96 ministers so that every region and every political view is represented in the government. It is one novel solution, but let me tell you it is not so awful.

I come from Ireland and we have a novel solution to Northern Ireland where we have a power sharing executive drawn from all political parties. So different structures work and there is no one model of democracy that is transposed everywhere because of tradition and ethnicity and tribalism and I know about tribalism. I am from Ireland.

So what I am saying is that in essence we have to strive to empower people's democratic right to elect people and to have their vote validly interpreted and then to empower the parliamentarian. Not to say well, I am elected now. The government runs the country, but the basic job I have to hold into account is somehow to be mitigated. I do not accept that. So that is my basic thesis.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Great. So we have heard from the Ministry and the parliament. Would civil society like a last word? [Laughter]

**MAXWELL MATEWERE:** Yes, of course. [Laughter]  
[Inaudible] says we must. When you are dealing with parliament, you are talking about a process, a process which actually that poses either sacrifice in the interest of the children. Now you are looking at the child who need medicine tomorrow, not the next year. Now you have to follow a strategy which will give the child medicine that particular day. Not to wait for that democratic process which usually will take quite a long, long time to deal with.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** So civil society had a non-democratic last word. [Laughter] Just a [inaudible]. Okay, people had some questions. The woman here, and then Stewart and then Jan.

**BRENDAN HOWLIN:** But you need, just for recording I think. It does not amplify much.

**FEMALE SPEAKER:** It is actually on the same subject of parliament and looking at children's parliaments. I think that often people forget the children are the strongest advocates for themselves. And whether AWEPA and your experience has been with children's parliaments and also maybe the other panel and kind of how we can really maximize the advocacy impact for children for themselves.

**BRENDAN HOWLIN:** Very briefly it is not something that AWEPA have done, but certainly within Ireland, we have done it and the Parliamentary Commission that I am a member of looking at the rights of the child in the Constitution had a meeting

with what we call Dail na nOg in the Irish language, the Youth Parliament of Ireland, which is a formal structure. And they held a questionnaire across every county of Ireland coming up with the issues that are important to them.

So certainly structurally there is a consultative role for young people and for children in their own welfare. And it is something that we should probably take up on an AWEPA basis.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Let me just welcome Paul Zeitz from Global AIDS Alliance. And let him know that what we have done is kind of say what our organizations do, how we see the complementarity of government which has been split between Ministry and Parliament now, distinguished I should say. And [interposing]—

**BRENDAN HOWLIN:** Honorable even.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** That is right. [Laughter] And civil society and basically we will take a couple of questions and you can think how you want to jump in though. So, Stewart? Identify yourself.

**STEWART KEENE:** Okay, I am Stewart Keene [misspelled?]. I work with—Sorry, I am Stewart Keene and I work with World Vision International. My question is, I suppose, to the Minister and the former Minister. But to try and get to the issue of policy influence. What is it that—and I speak as an advocate—to try and find out what is going to influence you? To what extent is it the fact that we could get constituents,

members of the public, being able to make a case about children that is going to influence you? To what extent is it lobbying that is going to come from NGOs? To what extent is it actually research and evidence that you need to have?

So what is it that is going to really enable you in your roles as ministers to bring about policy change and more effectively policy implementation?

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** I would say all the issues that you mentioned would actually influence me. It depends on whether it is evidence based, whatever it is that I have to do on behalf of the children, I would actually embrace it.

But just to give you a little bit, before a law is passed on behalf of the children or on behalf of anyone, we have to workshop it. All interest groups will have to come around and have a say, even in the writing, even in the language, how it looks like. Of course, we still follow the Westminster style. I mean it still has to conform to that because we have a Westminster-style parliament, so the language of bills is pretty much the same. But whether it is lobbying or whether it is evidence based, science based, I embrace all that. So it is not very difficult.

I am a very accessible person. So all NGOs, no, seriously, I am. [Laughter] She is laughing at the back. Very accessible, even as a minister, it is a very small

country. People can walk in and get to meet me. You are invited to come. You will see I am accessible. [Laughter] So on behalf of the children really, there is very little that any of us would say and moved. We are quite moved by issues and we are quite appalled by the fact that we have done so little for our children.

**BRENDAN HOWLIN:** Well, I can only answer the question in the Irish context and my first, I suppose, answer is to belie everything I have just said in terms of the attitude of the people being paramount. Because I think a compelling argument of evidence, if I think it is right, I will vote for that and I will advocate that even if it is not popular.

As you can see, that is a view taken by a lot of Irish parliamentarians. The Irish parliament voted for the Lisbon treaty by 160 for and 6 against referendum, the people voted against it. So there was a certain disconnect between parliament and people on that important issue and I dare say on other ones too. Because sometimes parliament needs to lead as well as to follow, and on initiatives occasionally in the past, I think courageous politicians find a path rather than wait for the wind of the people to follow. But it is a call you have to make. But certainly, if there is strong advocacy and strong lobbying, it impacts on politicians and the way they formulate and their attitude to policy.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** And probably those pathfinders could also use a couple of—

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** [Interposing] Yes.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** —informed advocates. John?

**JOHN MILLER:** I am John Miller from the Coalition of Children Affected by AIDS and I have at times been an AIDS activist. And then I have also been in the Civil Service in Canada and so I know that sometimes the shouting of civil society can be a nuisance. But it can also sometimes be used by politicians and by civil servants who are trying to convince their colleagues because they happen to be in agreement with the shouting. So can I just wanted to ask the two parliamentarians, if you could give instances of when it is useful to have civil society give public declarations or to have demonstrations and when it is not useful to you?

[Laughter]

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** Well I will give a recent occurrence. We noticed that the way—well, we had a lot of anecdotal data about children leaving the country, who were adopted and some of them were adopted illegally and being sent to go into all sorts of things. Whether they were being sex slaves or whether they have been traded and so we talked about it amongst people who were interested. And, of course, I encouraged civil society to push me to actually suspend adoptions in the country and institute a Commission of Inquiry

led by a judge. That happened, I needed them to be just outside shouting for 30 minutes and I stopped it. [Laughter]. So that is the kind of—when it is for a good cause, I think I would do that. [Laughter]

I do not quite like it when they put me in the spot. [Laughter] When they put me in the spot, then I do not like it. I mean like when they are, for instance, the way a lot of South African-based organizations that did not want the Opt Out Method that was done in Lesotho, when we just quietly instituted Opt Out in all hospitals, all clinics, everywhere, walked in, we made absolutely no noise about it. And a year later, then they were saying that we were violating people's human rights. There were demonstrations. I would have none of it, absolutely. Fortunately at that time, I was not a politician, but I actually encouraged politicians to just totally ignore it because people were dying. So I do not think civil society was used well in that.

The demonstrations worked for them at that point in time because they were saying that people had not been given proper counseling. Their rights were being violated. People were traumatized by the fact that they now knew their status. You know what? I do not think so. Their lives were saved in my view.

So if it is for a good—I mean civil society can use it, it depends. They follow whoever sometimes has the most money

or the biggest voice. You know very well that is what happens. [Laughter] So it is difficult in the age of HIV and AIDS. We are a land locked country. Unfortunately land locked by one country. And our people looked to South Africa as a panacea of everything. They know everything. The best comes out of South Africa. But when it comes to HIV and AIDS, I think they have now noticed, no, it is absolutely the opposite. So I would love very much to have our people demonstrating in South Africa for the good causes there.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Very good. Should you add to that?

**BRENDAN HOWLIN:** I will give you two, you asked for two examples, in my own experience where advocacy or campaigning helped. One was when I was Minister for Health in relation to AIDS campaigning. I had come from a very conservative country. And to have, as I determined, a very in your face television advertising campaign, promoting condoms, and changing the law in relation to the availability of condoms at the same time; to have very strong voices particularly people affected by AIDS, being vocal about the issues, a huge assistance, probably an essential assistance and parliamentary support was important. And I also was Minister for the Environment and certainly the climate change issue where you have to make difficult decisions was helped by lobby groups in relation to that matter.

Where it is a detriment, there are some very loud voices from the NGO community that I simply do not agree with.

Some very conservative voices as you can imagine in my country that I profoundly disagree with and I am willing to argue with them. So advocacy comes from all shapes and sizes and things that from the podium are said as unchallenged truth, for example, that circumcision is an assistance in the prevention of sexual disease transmission. There is a guy down there saying the opposite. So I mean that is an NGO in advocacy of it, I would not agree with. So there is all shapes and sizes, if you pardon the phrase, in terms of arguing, all positions, some you agree with, some you disagree with.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Great. Before we take a couple more questions, I would like to give Paul an opportunity to jump in.  
[Laughter]

**PAUL ZEITZ:** Thank you, Peter. Thanks everyone. Sorry for being late. I was jumping through traffic literally.  
[Laughter] I said, taxi drop me here and I leaped through a few lanes to get here as quickly as I did.

My name is Paul Zeitz. I am the Executive Director of the Global AIDS Alliance and I am also on the board of directors of Global Action for Children. These are two U.S.-based political advocacy organizations that are dedicated to accelerating bold action now in order to achieve results on behalf of children and on behalf of mitigating the end of the global AIDS pandemic. And we are part of transnational advocacy movements. So we work in solidarity with partners in

implementing countries and solidarity with advocacy partners in donor countries. And I think that I am here in the midst of this AIDS Conference looking at the power of the transnational AIDS movement.

This meeting is a biannual ritual where we all sort of come together and see each other and feel out where the movement is moving and this is my fifth in a row so I have that ability to reflect on it that way and after the Children and AIDS Summit that we had earlier last week, I was thinking, where is the global children's conference? Where we are struggling with science and political action and implementation strategies and all the medley of what is going on here in order to achieve children's wellbeing in the world. It is really missing and I think that we are struck by the profound weakness and lack of connectivity between very dynamic children's advocates in each and every country that I am aware of.

Petronella from Justice for Children in Zimbabwe and the Uganda Child Rights' Network and CHIN [misspelled?] in Zambia, I mean all these groups are there ready to roll and they have no resources. And the donors are not giving them any money. And there is no voice for children. Literally, it is very, very weak. And that is why we see this ongoing crisis of children. And we had to fight to get children even recognized at this conference. It is unbelievable. So I think that people are studying the AIDS movement and I think people are

recognizing that there are some things that we have learned how to do that maybe could be replicated for other issue areas.

The one thing that we have done is UNAIDS in 2001 at the UNGASS did a global costing. We said that it is going to achieve 10 billion dollars a year to achieve universal access. And then we said, Uncle Sam and Aunt Samantha in Washington, you owe one-third of that, that is three billion dollars. Okay? And then countries have to pay their fair share and all the donors have to pay their fair share. We do not know what it costs to achieve the goal we want to achieve. We can never get there. So we think it costs 10 billion dollars a year to achieve children's wellbeing. But UNICEF, we cannot get them to do a global costing on what it would take. It is strange.

And then the AIDS movement then works on advancing specific policy issues. We would work on getting the money and then we work on breaking through the policy barriers. The biggest barrier right now facing AIDS is the fiscal space constraints that are imposed on countries by the IMF and the World Bank that prevent expenditure for human resources in the health sector, education sector, and social protection sector. There is a philosophical battle going on at the global level between that construct of reality, fiscal space constraints and the need to provide health care for all people. I mean that is really the debate. So there is those kinds of debates in education and on social protection as well.

We are running around Washington saying we could get every kid in school for 10 billion dollars a year based on DFIDS [misspelled?] estimate, that is three weeks of the Iraq war just from the US expenditures. For three weeks of the Iraq war, we could get every kid in school in five years. I mean what is wrong with us as people on the planet? Why can we not make that happen?

And so we are about urgency. We are about fierce determination. We are about relentless pursuit of justice and we use every tactic. We want politicians to feel uncomfortable. We want you to feel awkward in your skin. You are not supposed to be cozy. You are supposed to be on the frontline of ideas and politics is a competition of ideas. And we need you to advance the idea of solving the problems and civil society has to hold politicians accountable. Thank you.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Welcome, Paul.

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** Wow. [Laughter]

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Would you like to respond?

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** Yeah, I just would like to respond to Paul. Paul, you know you have just changed the whole debate now. We were on top with my fellow parliamentarian here. Now civil society is in the majority. [Laughter]

**PAUL ZEITZ:** The people's view.

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** I know. When you talk of the facts that we really do not even know the financial architecture of HIV and AIDS, it is disgraceful. I was in four hours sitting in a meeting talking about financial architecture with the World Bank, UNAIDS, WHO, PEPFAR, [inaudible] and Michelle Kazatski [misspelled?]. We were all there sitting and talking about and what did we reach? Nothing, nothing. Nobody knows the financial architecture of HIV and AIDS. But we have policies such as the one you have mentioned, we cannot even employ the human resources that we produce.

Right now as we speak, Kenya is producing more nurses than any other country in Africa. And three-quarters of those nurses are at home or are working out somewhere. As a result, we had to actually get funding from the Parliament of Ireland to fund us to talk to get the nurses from Kenya to come and work in Lesotho. [Laughter] Why? Because three-quarters of the nurses from Lesotho are working in the UK and Australia.

So it is really very complicated. We do not have a voice sometimes in Africa or in the developing world and I agree with you entirely. Until such time that we know the financial architecture of HIV and AIDS, as it is now, how it is compromised and the amount of money that actually is needed, hopefully we will be able to treat HIV and AIDS, but right now it is very difficult. There are countries who are not coming to the party. There are countries in Europe which are not

coming to the party at all. And so, well, should we be excited about the recent announcement by Ambassador Dybul of PEPFAR? Should we be?

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Is that a rhetorical question?

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** Yeah.

**PAUL ZEITZ:** You want my opinion? [Laughter]

**PETER LAUGHARN:** I think we have it. [Laughter]

**PAUL ZEITZ:** No, I mean I think we worked relentlessly on that. I think that the PEPFAR initiative is a historic breakthrough.

**MALE SPEAKER:** We're recording, it does not amplify.

**PAUL ZEITZ:** It is fine. Okay, okay. [Laughter]  
Hello. Oh, for recording, yes. I can whisper. The PEPFAR bill we think is a historic breakthrough in terms of the level of investment, 48 billion dollars over five years. It is the largest investment in human history. We think that it needs to be fixed though and we need to work together to fix it. Most, at least half of the US assistance is spent in my city, Washington DC, on overhead rates and technical assistance and, it is called tied aid. They require the buy America clause.

And the exciting news is that the Congress, both the House and the Senate, have foreign aid reform as the top of the agenda. And we need stakeholders like yourselves from other donor countries and from partner implementing countries to step forward and say how do you think the US should do business

going forward. And depending on the outcome of the election, there is a good prospect that there could be a new Department of Global Development, a new cabinet level department is being contemplated in the political arena and by the presidential candidates. We do not know what they actually would do, but it is in play right now. And so I think it is really recipient countries pushing the US to change its behavior and give the money to programs and indigenous organizations and local governments in order to make the money work to achieve results. So I think there is a lot of opportunities for fixing the way the US does business and let us seize this political transition that is coming up and optimize that.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Jan [misspelled?], you could ask your question if you want. [Laughter] Okay.

**MALE SPEAKER:** Why do you not use the mic?

**JAN:** Are you sure?

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Sure, please, come on. After all your work on plans of action.

**JAN:** Oh yeah. My burning question actually is that a lot of work has gone into the National Orphan and Vulnerable Children strategic plans. And to varying degrees there was civil society participation and to varying degrees including child and caregiver participation as part of civil society and 19 of these have been ratified by government. The bottom lines on these strategies in terms of resources needed are very

large. They are somewhere between 30 million dollars and 50 million dollars for each year of a three- to five-year plan, approximately.

So my question is this and it is really to the civil society folks, so in a resource-poor setting or in a resource-limited setting where only some of the monies are trickling from governments and from donors in support of these very in-depth planned strategies, what are your wishes for how civil society can continue to be involved in setting priorities given that there are limited resources and not everything can be attended to perhaps in the first year or second year? And then in implementation because we have been talking a lot about just getting people around the table to make OVC a priority. But in those countries where there is some kind of prioritization of OVC, how can civil society continue to work as true partners with government in each stage of implementation and the evaluation of these plans? I would love to hear from civil society about that in particular.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Who wants the mic? [Laughter]

**MAXWELL MATEWERE:** It is quite an interesting question. Particularly it is very clear in terms of thinking of the government and also maybe the international partners and how they will go solve some of the problems which affect grass root. Why? Because attention would originate from the grass root themselves and the civil society. They are thinking might

be slightly different. The civil society mostly would want to engage because the civil society strongly believes that within the local settings, within the communities, there is quite a lot of resources and it is not all the time that we might need an international partner to help out in terms of solving out problems surrounding communities.

So by engaging more civil society to engage more in terms of mobilizing communities to find solution to the problem which they face maybe that could be their first solution, but currently what we have noticed is that the civil society organization have weak capacity. They cannot manage really to engage in the community as much as they wish because of their weak capacity.

So the first thing that you asked may be for me would be to build up the capacity of civil society so that they are able at least mobilize the communities to be able to solve out some of the small problems within the community. Before that, also engage the civil society to facilitate a process where they are involved at all stages of implementation of policies.

**ANDREW KIBONEKA, M.D., F.A.A.P.:** Thank you. My comments to this first of all is that funding is also a very complex issue and it keeps changing. For example, in Uganda the civil organizations are now being funded for HIV through something call the Civil Society Fund and so things are changing. But having said that, also the TASO is a large NGO

which has a budget. It is donor-funded NGO which has a budget larger than many ministries in Uganda, but then what I think regarding all this is that we have had problems in not prioritizing as an organization OVC issues. And so this has kind of also brought up the amount of money that comes in for the OVC program has somehow been limited. What has happened was that when we get funds that it is somehow funds are not earmarked for OVCs? And so it has become an issue, so it has taken us back to the drawing table to try and work out our OVC strategy looking at the national OVC strategy plan and so on. So those are some of the dilemmas we have been going through.

**PAUL ZEITZ:** Can I just respond as civil society?

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Okay, sure.

**PAUL ZEITZ:** My response is that the reason why those plans have not been funded is because there is no transnational advocacy behind getting those plans supported. 50 million dollar plans in 20 countries is about one billion dollars, okay. You need one billion dollars a year for those plans. There is about a 35 trillion dollars annual global economy. So there is plenty of money around to support the implementation of those plans, but there is no groups in these countries holding their own governments accountable to get the money to fund those plans. And there is no global solidarity behind that so that if the President of Country X is coming to London or coming to Washington, there is no protest against that

President when he or she are coming through the global capitals.

I can tell you from personal experience that those presidents are very sensitive to the U.S. press that they get so we can do those kinds of actions, media work, holding them accountable, everywhere they go they get held accountable. There is just no movement trying to make it happen and that is rounding error on the global economy. There is just no political will to do what is a basic right. And we are just completely failing as global stakeholders in generating the political will. We know how to do it. We know how to generate will, but it is not happening.

**BRENDAN HOWLIN:** It is the same argument again. What you are saying to parliamentarians and to governments as well is that you know how the money is to be spent, but there are organizations for the aged or for a million other issues that says, well this is the way the money should be spent. So it is not a matter of saying I know and we will screw somebody who does not agree with us. You have to convince and convince is not standing and beating up. It is going to parliaments either in African countries and saying the policy is wrong here, we have to change it and make that case and go to the parliament, to the donor countries and say, listen the money is being misspent, do something about it. And that is why my thesis again is the pivotal role of the connection of parliament as

the democratic tier to do it because I do not think that any NGO, no matter how powerful, can say this is what you must do because I say so. And who are you? And what is your legitimacy? You have to have the legitimacy of the vote of the people ultimately to speak authoritatively.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** You had a question?

**FEMALE SPEAKER:** I guess what I want to ask the question is to what extent does civil society feel that they actually can go to the governments? Whether it is on policy or implementation, to say this policy is wrong and be able to get a response and engage in a process to address those issues? Or if it is on funding, to say these are the wrong priorities where the funding is going. Do you feel as civil society that you have the space to engage either on policy, on resource allocation, or implementation? Or do you think this is an area that still civil society still needs to develop the capacity to do? [Laughter]

**ANDREW KIBONEKA, M.D., F.A.A.P.:** Thank you for that question. I just want to say that sometimes as a civil society, TASO has taken steps and pointed out certain issues to the policy makers which is the government. And just to bring you back on board, from my executive director who gave the plenary on Monday, Dr. Alex Coutinho, about three months ago, Uganda has not adopted male circumcision, but this is something that was brought out in the open, so you see that there have

been steps from civil society regarding certain issues pointing out that this is the direction that should be taken. Thank you.

**MAXWELL MATEWERE:** I will say that advocacy is a continuous process. The moment civil society sleep it means that the government will relax and it means that the one to suffer now would be the beneficiaries. But if the civil society will do, are engaging themselves in a continuous process, it means that you would actually see the benefits from that process. But I do agree with you that maybe this is something that the civil society need to strengthen in terms of capacity building. There are not so many organizations of those who are working with children who have expertise in terms of advocacy.

Although at the same time, mostly they will do engage the government at the grass root level, but not at the policy level. So it is something which we really need to transform ourselves as civil society organization, working for the children to be able to interact, to have more interaction with the government at the policy level.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Thanks. I am thinking just judging from the temperature of the room and a bit of the body English, shall we take one or two more questions and then ask each of the participants to kind of give a summing up? Nugate [misspelled?] you have got a question? Okay?

**MALE SPEAKER:** Well actually, in Africa actually, we do not very much experience in working with research institutions, with academia, with universities, to have a concrete data so that we can bring that to show to the government convince for a policy change. I think that is one of the problem and there is no strong networking. And if you go to like in Europe for example like in Ireland or in UK, the civil societies strongly work with these institutions. I think that needs to happen in Africa also so that we can have a concrete data to bring it to the attention of the government so that we can influence the policy. Otherwise, I think, individual NGOs, I do not think we can really go further. Even among the NGO community we need a really strong voice, we need a strong networking. So I think that is very important in Africa. Thank you.

**DESIREE:** My name is Desiree [misspelled]. I work with NOAH, Nurturing Orphans with AIDS for Humanity in South Africa. I was hoping that the Minister from Lesotho would be here. I think she went to the toilet. So I do not know. I guess I can open it still up to everybody, but in part it is specific in part to the South African context, but I think it is applicable across the region with regards to OVC.

In South Africa at the moment there is quite a few bills, particularly the Children's Act Bill that is going forward and it does specifically address lots of the issue of OVC. So I guess, let us take it from the civil society portion

and the government sector. There is quite a few elements to it that assume that there are going to be enough social workers and enough people on the ground that are going to be able to implement. So on one level, we see that the government is taking action and we applaud that. But on the same side, on the ground, you know that there is not necessarily X number of social workers to actually be able to get the birth certificates available for all the students or for all the children.

So I know that you were mentioning before that sometimes the pilot will take action hoping that civil society and everybody else will follow. So I guess the question would be, like I said I was in part I was hoping to get the perspective from Lesotho, but maybe to open it up to the other parts as well. I do not know all the things that are happening in some of the other parts of the region, but perhaps perspective as well, say from the government's side in this situation where there is not necessarily enough infrastructure, do we move forward? Is this a good push to move forward with the government? Or from the civil society point, do we say, well wait a second, we wanted the government involvement, but at the same time we need these resources on the ground first? Does that make sense? Okay.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Let us go to Brendan first.

**BRENDAN HOWLIN:** My direct answer to you is that enacting good law is a good thing even if the resources to implement it immediately are not there. That happens in developed countries as well as developing countries because once you have enacted the law, then you can press for its implementation. If it is not enacted, you will never get to the point where there is adequate resources, because what is adequate? And I as Minister of Health in Ireland enacted the Children's Act which had been passed by Parliament two years previously, but only sections have been brought into effect because of resource matters, but eventually you can face the lobbying of civil society to say, listen, parliament has spoken, bring in the resources. So my strong view would be get parliament to enact best practice rather than sit on their hands until resources may become available.

**MAXWELL MATEWERE:** Briefly, I do agree with that comment. Again, we should understand that civil society organization apart from looking at the ensuring that the government provide the necessaries or implementing responsibility in terms of putting in place policies, programs and laws. Civil society has to also to come in knowing with the current economic setting within our countries, civil society has to come in as again to complement the government effort in terms of providing services. Otherwise, what would happen is that the target audience, the children, will actually

lose trust in us. They will think that we are only there to lobby the government to put in place the laws at the same time most of the economic challenges which are within our countries.

If the government fails, then what happens is that the [inaudible] of our law will also have a negative effect on the target audience. So the civil society organization have both the responsibility of pushing on the government at the same time also complement the government effort in terms of providing the services.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** If you will permit, I think what I would like to do now is to ask each of the participants to give something of a closing statement and then if some of you want to either challenge or stay behind afterwards and talk there will certainly be room. But it does take us a while to get back to our hotels, I noticed last night. What I would like the people up here, the talk show guests, to think about is the speech of Stephen Lewis at the end of the Pre-Conference Symposium on Children Affected by AIDS.

He was very articulate and very condemning I think of basically the way things are slipping in terms of the 2010 goal for universal access. And I think he fired us up a bit about what can actually be done between now and 2010 and I would just like to hear from each of you, what would you like to see in this conference or in any other venue that you cherish in the year 2010 in terms of better delivery for children and in terms

of the complementarity of civil society, of parliament and of ministries? Certainly. Please. Coming from UNICEF.

**KAREN WOODS:** My name is Karen Woods [misspelled]. I am from UNICEF and the question that I have for each of the panel members is this, well it is two parts. One, UNICEF, and Paul already articulated what UNICEF could be doing and we are hearing very loud. [Laughter] I will bring to UNICEF home, what we could be doing about some costing.

But in that UNICEF has a normative role and it should be doing a watch dog role, what does civil society organizations believe we could be doing more to support their work? What should we be doing in terms of work with government? What should we be doing work with civil society organizations in the north? And where could we play a better role on the advocacy part as opposed to the implementation?

The second part of the question, and I am sorry to have two questions when you wanted to wrap up, but it is really a question about this. I spent five years in India in a very interesting policy environment, beautiful policies, very weak implementation, so there was always a struggle. So I think the point about get the policies, but is the advocacy around the implementation that really makes the difference.

But one of the big mantras in India was India moves India. International discourse will not help and actually will damage. Now that is an interesting question because sometimes

international spotlight actually help move things, but I would just be interested to know at what point does international actually have a negative impact because it is the country that moves the country, not the international organizations and so on and so forth. So I would just be interested in that sort of perception and I am sorry to ask questions right at the end.

[Laughter]

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Both very appropriate questions, I think. Shall we start actually with the second and ask, I think our one governmental implementing country representative here about international and then ask the group about UNICEF?

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** Yeah. I think what you are saying is that the international organizations are the ones that actually try and move the government to implement or to change policy. Was that what you are trying to say?

**KAREN WOODS:** The question is at what point does it back fire?

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Does it back fire?

**KAREN WOODS:** Yes, yes, does it backfire is that not a good thing? Because it is a national issue.

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** I agree, it can be good and it can be bad also. If the governments are very weak, then international organizations will just take over. That is what happens, either they are weak in implementation or lack the will to actually implement because the country that you

mentioned should have resources. It should have at least human resources to be able to implement. In Lesotho we are very—we question I think pretty much everything. [Laughter] We have everything.

We have asked our international partners to work within the government structure. This is why when you get to Lesotho and you ask for any organizations that even if it is related to the Ministry of Health, it will be in the Ministry of Health. So that we work alongside these partners. So also it is very difficult to have organizations such as TASO, the one that—in Lesotho, that organization would not be implementing at such a level. It would be part of the government or implementing on behalf of the government. So I do not think it is sustainable to have—or you need to have government ownership, you need to have country ownership of programs and processes, so I think something was wrong there, somewhere. Somebody lacked the will to actually work well with the implementing partners because they will take over. They are very, very fast in taking over and determining policy. [Laughter]

**PETER LAUGHARN:** So the backfiring starts when ownership—

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** When you take ownership. You asked, I think a question about this, what are we taking from here, what should such for a such as this one be doing?

**PETER LAUGHARN:** The other question about UNICEF first, about—

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** I think UNICEF is actually one of the champion of children. Its advocacy role is very, very important on behalf of children, but sometimes UNICEF, this is one organization that can be very, very good and also they tend to implement as well. I think they also have that implementing arm of UNICEF. This is the one that governments do not like. This, I have to be honest with you, we do not like when UNICEF implements because they go along—it depends who is in the country and what their feeling is about what they have to do.

And I made an example of when UNICEF wanted to give assistance to young mothers. In Lesotho, young mothers are educated most of the time. Our literacy rate is high and they give them farm implements in Maseru, Lesotho where they are no farms, to go and grow vegetables and it was a big laugh. They laughed so much they were wondering what is going on here? What are we supposed to farm? We live in apartments. We do not even have plants. So what I am saying is when it does implement, we have to work together with governments, because the other roles of UNICEF, I have only praises.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Others who would like to speak to the question about UNICEF?

**MAXWELL MATEWERE:** Briefly I will say that UNICEF really need to engage more the civil society organization in order for them to be able to empower the grass root and demand for their rights. And in so doing I think the civil society could be able to transform or maybe to cover where the government might have some shortfalls, so to me I think one of the most important thing which seems to have gone through is the engagement of civil society to be able to empower the grass root. Otherwise, if you do not do that then you will create a weak civil society, eventually the grass root will be the one to suffer.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** If the host can permit himself a slightly partisan response. UNICEF is fundamental in the global response to children at any level, but also for children and AIDS. And I think the idea of a campaign or a collective push has been very useful and mobilizing the people, but there is a structural contradiction that UNICEF needs to deal with and that is that it is also a cash mobilizer for UNICEF as an organization. And those of us on the outside watch the internal machinations over that with some dismay because we need you to bring us all together and we need the people who are program driven to take the lead on that because the cash will come in. And I know you know that, but I think it is useful to put it on record. [Laughter]

**BRENDAN HOWLIN:** Can I make a brief comment?

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Sure, go ahead

**BRENDAN HOWLIN:** Just in answer to your two questions. First question, I think it is a very real one that is how impacted is external pressure or in fact can it actually be a negative force. And that is why in terms of the organization I work with, the idea is to have peer pressure through the regional parliaments within Africa or through the Pan-African Parliament for them to set the standards and them to be the watch dogs and for European Parliament to simply support that and give that capacity.

And I think there is certainly no way that any African parliament or parliamentarian is going to take direction from European parliament. But there are, I mean I had the great privilege of going to Uganda to argue against the change in the Constitution to give Museveni a third term and a very good debate within parliament. They allowed that level of access because we have that working relationship which can have an impact. I am interested about your experience in India. Well, I think India is a law unto itself. I was in the Indian Parliament, I led a formal delegation there in Easter of this year and I put a question to the Chairman of the Human Rights Parliamentary Commission about their laws against homosexuality. And she told me that there was no homosexuality in India which is a cultural issue and that was that. There was no argument. That is the view.

In relation to the work of UNICEF within the North or within Ireland, interesting, the new UNICEF representative in Ireland is the former South African Ambassador to Ireland, Melanie Verwoerd who have had to stay and become the UNICEF person there, so we certainly at parliamentary level have a good working relationship with her and I am looking forward to certainly working with her through the organization. We have to strengthen our cooperation with UNICEF which already is very good.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Thank you. Are there other questions that you did want to get to? Oh, Katie [inaudible]. It is not the hearing, it is the recording for posterity.

**FEMALE SPEAKER:** That is what I noticed.

**KATIE:** My name is Katie Belda [misspelled?]. I am from the Children's Rights Center in Durban and Firelight [misspelled?] Advisory Board Member as well. Okay, see now I have got a mic in front of me, I expect it to do all the work. [Laughter] And maybe that is a metaphor for UNICEF as well.

I wanted to go back to the point that was sort of a couple of questions back and that was that by having legislation, things that need to be done and not having the resources at the time, there is a legal obligation. And it was not a mistake, it was not an oversight that there have never been enough social workers, whether we put it in or not. But it actually allows us to then go back to parliament and say,

this the law you passed, what is your plan, for pressuring government to make sure. And what can civil society do to assist in that? So I think that it was very deliberate in the Children's Act and the Children's Amendment Act to make sure that all those categories of workers that are required to not have NGOs, either I am paid or I am acknowledged for filling those roles, are in fact now either integrated into government service, adequately remunerated for what they do and then we have a skills and human resources plan for children which we have not yet had.

Can I speak to the other point, the UNICEF point? Was that just for the panel? If I speak now? Okay. So I can speak now. That is the first time. Usually it is if I speak quietly.

I just wanted to say I think there is a real tension internationally, but I know certainly within South Africa around UNICEF because UNICEF signs bilateral agreements with governments and if you are a civil society advocate, that means you have to rub government up the wrong way sometimes, and so civil society finds UNICEF a very fickle and a very undermining partner. So as much as we want UNICEF to play that role, in fact you have got an inherent contradiction in how you are set up. And I think that is for civil society. For instance we try, I will give a specific example, in South Africa we pulled UNICEF South Africa in the Unite for Children Unite Against

AIDS Campaign. We saw the logo, we saw nothing was happening, we developed things and it stopped at a pamphlet.

But for UNICEF in terms of their MNE and indicators, they consider it a very good partnership. Civil society looks at it and says, sorry, but that is not for us and I think with government as well, learning how to work together is something within South Africa. We have really worked hard and had some really quite bloody noses along the way, sometimes literally, in terms of trying to get a way of working together that allows each role player to play their role, but to have a respect and I think civil society often gets trampled in that which is I think the point that Maxwell keeps coming back to.

**PAUL ZEITZ:** I was going to comment about UNICEF too and I think it was a similar thing. I mean UNICEF is an intergovernmental body by its governance and so it is beholden to the wishes of governments. I know UNICEF is a great advocate and great partner of civil society and I think this question of how do we build civil society advocacy movements, I think there is a real question about whether or not UNICEF should be the one to channel to those independent civil society groups or should they facilitate private foundations to channel that money so that those advocates can be truth sayers and be voices of justice as opposed to be beholden to that construct that was described in South Africa because that is around the world. So I think that is a real fundamental question.

I think the other big question is UN reform. I mean the role of the UN is a really fundamental question going on right now and how will UNICEF relate to its other partners. I think I am curious to learn more about how that is being implemented, how the one UN system movement is actually happening or not. UNICEF was one of the most effective agencies, so we would not want UN reform to hurt it, but the parallelism of the system is so dysfunctional, so I do not know how UNICEF is grappling with advancing children's issues in the context of UN reform.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** That is a whole other seminar  
[Laughter].

**PAUL ZEITZ:** It is beyond the scope for this.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Okay. Well, at this—[interposing]

**PAUL ZEITZ:** I just figured that out.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** At this point, why do I not ask each of the speakers to give me the one minute, what would you like to see happen the next couple of years by the time we get together in Vienna. Why do we not start with you, Paul?

**PAUL ZEITZ:** Like my dream?

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Your feasible dream.

**PAUL ZEITZ:** My feasible dream is that Barack Obama will be elected president on November 5th or whatever it is and he is going to launch a global initiative on behalf of the world's children. And he is going to mobilize billions of

dollars necessary to achieve all aid MDGs by 2015. He is going to create a global fund for education, get every kid in school around the world in his first term.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** That is really feet on the ground sort of thing. Brendan?

**BRENDAN HOWLIN:** I agree with that. {Laughter}  
Realistically, my concern as well my hope, because I do hope that we can achieve those commitments that we are committed to which is not asking more than we have already signed up to. My fear and I say this from a European perspective is that the changed economic circumstances across the world now, but certainly across most of the countries I know in Europe, are already having an impact on aid budgets and they are already being squeezed.

The Irish aid budget has already been cut this year from what it was in January by a small amount, but \$50 million pullback supposedly not being able to be spent this year and that is going to happen across Europe. So I think we really need to double our efforts and I am saying it from a parliamentary perspective. We can do something about that because we have to prevent our aid budgets and the targets we have set internationally from being the soft option in the next two years.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Let me just say parenthetically that the Irish aid has been the funder of the Joint Learning

Initiative and I believe that some of those cuts in Ireland have also impacted already on the budget of the Joint Learning Initiative. So, we see it clearly.

**BRENDAN HOWLIN:** And we are the main sponsor of Lesotho and we also fund tasks.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Okay so this is an important statement.

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** Well, what I would like to see, maybe it falls outside the realm of this particular—

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Conversation.

**MPHU RAMATLAPENG, M.D., M.P.H.:** Yeah, conversation that we are having, I have not seen enough advocacy for children's medication. I do not see, we are still using the same formulations, the same Kaletra that we need to put in fridges. Yet we know that there is already Kaletra that you no longer have to put, that is heat resistant, right? There has not been, I do not see much about children's diagnosis, young children as complement of PMTCT, nothing in this conference about that. Yet without having proper diagnosis, fast proper diagnosis and also medication, formulation that children can actually use, that mothers, that caregivers, that grandparents can use, we are not going to achieve any of the targets that we are talking about.

So I do not think from my view, I mean I was rather amazed that his conference, even people who are advocating, they are advocating for housing. I have not had anybody advocating for simpler regimens to be made available for children.

**ANDREW KIBONEKA, M.D., F.A.A.P.:** Thank you. First of all I will begin by saying that there need still to be a lot of attention to children. Many people are still not aware of the issues involved with the children. And how I usually tell people that when I graduated in 1986, the children who were born at that time are adults and one has to be very careful to see that children are handled properly so that they grow up and that is what it means about the next generation. It is a very difficult concept to understand.

However, and also that whenever someone goes regarding children issues, it usually comes that somehow it has either been forgotten or it has been put at the end of the agenda, whether it is at the conference or so. So this is something that is an observation through working with children. But just that my vision for the coming years, maybe 2010, is to see better care and treatment for HIV infected and affected children. Thank you.

**MAXWELL MATEWERE:** Very often I am saddened with the amount of resources being put to the waste around the world. Yet there are some resources have made a huge difference for a

child. All they need is a piece of bread to survive. I strongly believe that active civil society would make active government and active society.

If the civil society is sleeping, then the government will relax, then happens is you create a weak society. I strongly believe that in a small way civil society organization, once they increase or strengthen their advocacy and strategies, they are coordinating, they are cooperating, then definitely we will be able at least achieve the goals and at the same time, if we renew our commitment to the children after the conference, no child will really suffer, no child will really die because of our initiative. If we do not do that, then all of us would be there to blame.

**PETER LAUGHARN:** Thanks. If we review from left to right here, then basically Paul was a bit hoping for the new era, I think we will have some, but probably not as much as he asked for. Brendan was saying maintain current accountabilities and hold the line in difficult economic times. I think that is important, that is very practical. The Minister I think had an extremely important point that there is an agenda for advocacy and it involves children and we need to make sure that our efforts focus on that, a similar point from Andrew and from Maxwell, the question of a strong robust and watch dogging civil society and adequate resources for kids. We know what needs to be done. I, myself, I would say that I

think in the big conference symposium and in the sessions we have had, I would agree with the Minister. We should align ourselves with the agendas that are out there and we should insist that people do not slow down on those agendas. Each of us has different roles to play, but there is a movement going on and we should make sure that it moves forward.

Thanks everyone for putting up with us for so long. It is late and I know you have to get back to your hotels, but I would also like to salute the work that all of you are doing and I know that that was an important part and motivation for you to be here. So, I look forward to seeing you again in different venues, but let us move things forward. Thanks a lot. [Applause]

[END RECORDING]