



VIP Speaker Bios

Helene Gayle, MD (*United States*), *Co-Chair, AIDS 2006; President, International AIDS Society; and President and CEO, CARE USA*

Dr. Helene Gayle has served as President of the International AIDS Society since 2004 and joined CARE USA as President in 2006. Dr. Gayle previously served as AIDS Coordinator and Chief of the HIV/AIDS Division for the U.S. Agency for International Development; Director for the National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); Director of CDC's Washington office; and health consultant to international agencies including the World Health Organization, UNICEF, World Bank and UNAIDS. Prior to her current position, she was the Director of the HIV, TB and Reproductive Health Program for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, responsible for research, program and policies related to HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, reproductive health issues and tuberculosis.

Dr. Gayle has published numerous articles on public health, especially related to HIV/AIDS, and has received many awards for her scientific and public health contributions. She attained the rank of rear admiral (Assistant Surgeon General) in the U.S. Public Health Service. She is on the boards of the Institute of Medicine and the Council on Foreign Relations. Born and raised in Buffalo, New York, she received her BA from Barnard College of Columbia University, her MD from the University of Pennsylvania and her MPH from Johns Hopkins University.

The Honourable Josée Verner (*Canada*), *Local Co-Chair, Leadership Programme Committee, AIDS 2006; Member of the Parliament; and Minister of International Cooperation and Minister for La Francophonie and Official Languages, Government of Canada*

Josée Verner was first elected as a Member of Parliament in January 2006 from the riding of Louis-St-Laurent and was appointed as the Minister of International Co-operation and Minister for La Francophonie and Official Languages in Prime Minister Stephen Harper's cabinet. In addition to being the chair of the Québec Caucus for the Conservative Party of Canada, in June 2004, she was named the spokesperson for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Region of Québec in Mr. Harper's shadow cabinet. This was widened to also include the Official Languages portfolio in September 2005.

Ms. Verner has spent close to 20 years in the communications and public service fields. She has worked for former Québec Premier Robert Bourassa and for the deputy speaker of Québec's National Assembly, and worked closely with the Ministry of Health. Ms. Verner is deeply involved in her community, and has spent a significant amount of time fundraising for the Children's Make A Wish Foundation.