



THE CSIS TASK FORCE ON STRENGTHENING U.S. LEADERSHIP

The CSIS Task Force on Strengthening U.S. Leadership on HIV/AIDS, co-chaired by Senators Bill Frist (R-TN) and Russell Feingold (D-WI) and honorary co-chair Senator John Kerry (D-MA), is a four-year project, begun in fall 2001, that focuses on the global AIDS pandemic in acutely affected countries. Funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Task Force outlines strategic choices that lie ahead for the United States in fighting the pandemic. It seeks to build bipartisan consensus on critical U.S. policy initiatives and to emphasize to senior U.S. policymakers, opinion leaders, and the corporate sector the centrality of U.S. leadership in strengthening country-level capacities in Africa and elsewhere to enhance prevention, care, and treatment of HIV/AIDS.

Phase I (August 2001 - August 2003)

During the first phase the CSIS Task Force on HIV/AIDS significantly shaped thinking among U.S. policymakers on global HIV/AIDS. It had a direct impact upon congressional and Bush administration strategies and decisions, and forged a distinctive Task Force identity, and created a momentum to its work.

The Task Force created a forum that drew from an exceptional diversity of interests. In addition to CSIS experts, participants included members and staff of both parties in the Senate and House, representatives of CDC and USAID, which played a special role as technical partners, administration policymakers, independent consultants, activists, and representatives of private biomedical and public health institutions, the business sector, foundations, operational NGOs, and the media. The Task Force created and drew extensively from a 40-person Eminent Persons Panel. The Task Force's Eminent Persons Panel is drawn from Congress, the administration, public health groups, the corporate sector, activists, and others. This panel helps to shape the direction and scope of the Task Force and disseminate findings to a broader U.S. audience.

It has also created a platform upon which prominent international figures who work the frontlines of the HIV/AIDS pandemic were able to reach a high-level U.S. audience, including national media. Speakers have included then Global Fund Chair Chrispus Kiyonga; Botswana Minister of Health Joy Phumaphi; Global Fund Executive Director Richard Feachem; UNAIDS Director Peter Piot and Deputy Director Kathleen Cravero; World Food Program Director James Morris; then French Minister of Health Bernard Kouchner and his HIV/AIDS team; senior HIV/AIDS delegations from China, India, Russia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, and Cambodia; and senior religious figures such as South African Roman Catholic Cardinal Napier.

The Task Force is now widely recognized in Washington and beyond as an influential, centrist, non-partisan platform, that promotes objectivity and critical thinking on emerging challenges posed by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. People working on HIV/AIDS understand that the Task Force's special focus is to strengthen U.S. leadership to meet unprecedented, highly fluid challenges, and that it seeks to make the U.S. approach to international HIV/AIDS an integral

component of U.S. foreign policy. In August 2003, the Task Force's Phase I came to a close, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation funded a major expansion of its activities.

Phase II (September 2003- August 2005)

In its second phase the CSIS Task Force will maintain its core goal of strengthening U.S. leadership and building consensus around enhanced and informed U.S. engagement to fight the global pandemic. U.S. leadership on HIV/AIDS is expanding dramatically, but its engagement in the next two years will be sorely tested by competing health and foreign policy objectives, institutional and human capacity constraints, and ideologically-driven domestic debates, which, in the run-up to the 2004 national electoral cycle, may slow U.S. delivery of critically needed prevention, care, and treatment programs.

In its second phase, the CSIS Task Force will carry forward existing work that has broad application, particularly for those countries of southern and eastern Africa hardest hit by the pandemic's First Wave. At the same time, it will launch select new initiatives—most notably a focused effort to build U.S. bilateral engagement in the large and populous Second Wave states of China, Russia, India, Nigeria, and Ethiopia, and to forge new organizational collaborations, particularly with UNAIDS.

The Task Force therefore has five broad goals for its work in the second phase:

- Working committees that build consensus on broad themes in U.S. policy toward global HIV/AIDS. Three committees will focus on: (i) U.S. policy on HIV/AIDS; (ii) acute vulnerabilities of women and girls; and (iii) international security initiatives to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS.
- Launch of a Second Wave strategy; drawing on CSIS's regional experts, that systematically builds bilateral engagement with China, Russia, India, Ethiopia, and Nigeria. CSIS will strive to strengthen both the voice of key U.S. interests and elite networks in Second Wave countries;
- Integrate the Task Force's analytical work with that of key Gates Foundation grantees, including the Asia Society and the Global Business Coalition, and create a special partnership with UNAIDS to inform the Task Force's multiple activities and amplify UNAIDS' voice in Washington.
- Sustain the CSIS leadership platform that connects leaders on the frontlines of the HIV/AIDS pandemic with senior U.S. policymakers, activists, NGOs, businesses, and national media.

J. Stephen Morrison and Jennifer Cooke, director and deputy director, respectively, of the CSIS Africa Program, will continue to manage the overall project. CSIS regional program directors Bates Gill, CSIS Freeman Chair in China Studies, Teresita Schaffer, director of the South Asia Program, and Celeste Wallander and Sarah Mendelson, respectively director and senior fellow of the Russia and Eurasia Program, will carry forward work on the Second Wave in their respective areas of expertise.