



# Only Rights Can Stop the Wrongs

## NSWP STATEMENT

### **NSWP CONGRATULATES WINNIE BYANYIMA ON HER APPOINTMENT AS UNAIDS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND LOOKS FORWARD TO WORKING WITH HER.**

**NSWP welcomes Winnie Byanyima as she steps into the critical role of leading UNAIDS as it addresses the unfinished business of the HIV response.**

Ms Byanyima has a strong track record as a human rights defender and advocating for those whose voices too often go unheard. We urge her to meaningfully engage with the global and regional key population-led networks and networks of people living with HIV to ensure UNAIDS is rooted in the lived realities of those most impacted by HIV - people living with HIV, gay men and other men who have sex with men, people who use drugs, sex workers of all genders and transgender people. We trust that she will ensure the voices of female, male and transgender sex workers from across the world are not lost in the global HIV response and that UNAIDS maintains the current rights-affirming approach to sex work.

It is essential that UNAIDS safeguards an evidence and rights-based position that validates the call for the full decriminalisation of HIV transmission, exposure, and non-disclosure; drug use and possession; gender identity and expression; sexual orientation; and all aspects of sex work, including a rejection of abolitionist positions on sex work that conflate sex work with trafficking and sexual exploitation.

With 41% of people living with HIV not currently having access to life-saving treatment, and the latest UNAIDS global report showing 54% of new infections are among key populations and their sexual partners, it will be essential for the new Executive Director to provide bold leadership and work with donors and member states to ensure there is both funding and political will to prioritise the urgent needs of those who carry a disproportionate burden of HIV, and are currently being left behind.

