



UNAIDS Reference Group on HIV and Human Rights

Reference Group statement: Release of the Independent Expert Panel report

December 4, 2018

Over the course of this year, the UNAIDS Reference Group on HIV and Human Rights has engaged repeatedly with the senior management of UNAIDS, including the Executive Director, regarding the handling of an investigation into allegations of sexual harassment and assault by a former staff person and the creation of an Independent Expert Panel to review the matter. This has included a number of in-person discussions and formal correspondence.

The Reference Group convened for its 20th meeting in Geneva this morning (December 4, 2018), and received a briefing by senior management of the UNAIDS Secretariat regarding the release of the report of the Independent Expert Panel. The members of the Reference Group present at the meeting strongly recommended to the UNAIDS Executive Director that the report be released immediately in full. We understand that the report, and UNAIDS' response to it, have been sent this evening to the members of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, who will vote within the next two days on the timing of its release. We also understand that the Executive Director has asked the Board to publicly release the report immediately.

The Reference Group now calls on the members of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board to release the report in full, without delay, and to ensure an open and transparent discussion, that includes civil society, at its upcoming meeting next week.

The Reference Group is an independent body that serves as an expert resource for UNAIDS to ensure systematic and timely attention to human rights across the work of UNAIDS, reflecting the fact that respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights is essential to an effective HIV response.