

## **Statement of Seth Berkley, MD, on naming of IAVI Board Member Dr. Richard**

April 25, 2002

NEW YORK, April 25 /PRNewswire/ -- Seth F. Berkley, MD, President and CEO of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) today released this statement in response to the naming of Dr. Richard Feachem, a member of IAVI's Board of Directors, as Executive Director of the new Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria:

"We applaud the naming of Dr. Richard Feachem, Founding Director of the Institute for Global Health at the University of California, as Executive Director of the new Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Dr. Feachem, who also helped found and serves on the Board of Directors of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), has proven himself a tireless advocate on behalf of combating HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases as well as helping those most disproportionately afflicted by them.

"Through his lifetime commitment to public service, Dr. Feachem intimately understands that the world has a moral imperative to not just stand by as whole societies are decimated by suffering. Dr. Feachem is a wise and fair man whose vast experience will serve the Global Fund well as it navigates uncharted water.

"United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has called on the world to support the Global Fund as if it were a war chest. What has been pledged so far is encouraging, but it falls far short of the mark. AIDS is the Great Plague of our modern time, and we must mobilize a comprehensive, urgent response to this global emergency. IAVI calls on world leaders and international donors to continue their contributions to the Global Fund.

"Currently, the Global Fund is making grants only to support existing technologies for preventing infection and treating those already sick-this is entirely appropriate, given the enormity of these immediate needs. Yet we cannot lose sight of the long term. IAVI also calls on world leaders and international donors to separately step up their commitments to research and development for more effective and safer drugs for killer diseases as well as preventive vaccines that can protect against HIV/AIDS, which are not now covered by the Global Fund.

"IAVI estimates that just US\$430-470 million is currently dedicated to worldwide research and development for preventive AIDS vaccines. This means that AIDS vaccine research gets less than 1% of total global spending on all health and pharmaceutical research and development. Each day we delay in finding an AIDS vaccine means 15,000 more people become infected."

### About IAVI

The International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI; <http://www.iavi.org>) is a global nonprofit organization working to speed the search for preventive vaccines to protect against HIV and AIDS and assure their

global accessibility. IAVI advocates worldwide for increased financial and political commitment to AIDS vaccine science and access. IAVI invests to fast-track promising experimental AIDS vaccines through product development and human testing. Currently, more than a half dozen novel AIDS vaccines are in development with IAVI support, and two are in human testing. IAVI is a collaborating centre of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), and its major funders include the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; the Rockefeller, Sloan and Starr foundations; the World Bank; BD (Becton, Dickinson & Co.); and the governments of the Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Ireland, Denmark and Norway.

[See the topic on aegis.org](http://aegis.org)