

Edinburgh MP joins AIDS activists to praise government's £1bn pledge to Global Fund



Edinburgh East MP Sheila Gilmore this week joined UK, international and student activists at a STOPAIDS parliamentary event to mark the 25th World AIDS Day on 1st December.

She showed her support for the UK's pledge of £1bn to the Global Fund To Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, ahead of the Global Fund replenishment conference in Washington D.C. next week.

The event coincided with the launch of the Department for International Development (DFID) review of its 2011 position paper Towards Zero Infections. Sheila Gilmore spoke with activists about how far we have come in tackling the AIDS epidemic, with 9.7 million people now accessing treatment, and AIDS-related deaths declining from a peak of 2.2 million in the mid-2000s to 1.6 million in 2012.

But Sheila Gilmore also heard how far we still have to go, with 16 million people still not accessing anti-retroviral treatment and 1.6 million people dying of AIDS-related illnesses in 2012. Sheila Gilmore joined STOPAIDS in calling upon world leaders to follow the UK'S example and fully commit to the Global Fund.

Sheila Gilmore said: "I fully support the UK's pledge of £1bn to the Global Fund and encourage other world leaders to join us in committing to bring this disease under control. I urge our government to remain focused on overcoming the challenge

AIDS continues to pose to our international community.”

Ben Simms of STOPAIDS said: “We were delighted to talk to Sheila Gilmore today about how the UK’s support for the Global Fund means the UK public are helping to save a life every three minutes. This World AIDS Day we remember the 35 million people who have lost their lives to AIDS and call on the governments of other countries to follow the UK’s lead.”

This Sunday 1st December marks the 25th anniversary of World AIDS Day, a day when activists and people living with HIV from around the world come together in the fight against HIV, show their support for people living with HIV and to commemorate people who have died.