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**Canada Commits CAD15 Million to Accelerate Microbicide
Development on World AIDS Day**
*Contribution Brings World AIDS Day Commitments to IPM Close to
CAD20 Million*

SILVER SPRING, MD (1 December 2006) – Momentum for HIV-prevention research advanced significantly today with the announcement of a grant of CAD15 million (US\$ 13.2 million) from the government of Canada to the International Partnership for Microbicides (IPM). Announced on World AIDS Day, the contribution will support product development and clinical trials of microbicides for women in developing countries. This brings the total Canadian contribution to IPM to CAD30 million (US\$ 25.6 million).

“With women and girls making up almost 60 percent of those living with HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment to address the feminization of HIV/AIDS is a key focus of our efforts to fight this deadly disease. Developing an effective microbicide – a means of preventing HIV infection that women can control – is key to this,” said the Honourable Josée Verner, Minister of International Cooperation and Minister for La Francophonie and Official Languages. “Canada is supporting IPM’s research as part of our long-term, comprehensive approach to fighting HIV/AIDS. This World AIDS Day, we are asked to *Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise*. And we are committed to keeping it.”

Microbicides are vaginal products being developed to reduce the transmission of HIV during sexual intercourse. A microbicide could take the form of a gel, cream, film, suppository or sponge, or be contained in a vaginal ring that releases the active ingredient gradually. A microbicide could also be in a new formulation and use a delivery method yet to be invented.

“The government of Canada is to be applauded for its long track record of leadership in addressing the global AIDS epidemic. This new Canadian support will enable IPM to continue working toward the development of a microbicide that has the potential to save millions of women from HIV infection,” said Dr. Zeda Rosenberg, IPM’s Chief Executive Officer. “Microbicide research and development is advancing quickly, and this funding will play a vital role in supporting ongoing laboratory and clinical development efforts that will bring the world closer to the goal of a safe and effective microbicide.”

More adult women than ever before are now living with HIV, according to a new report by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) released on 21

November 2006. The 17.7 million women living with HIV in 2006 represent an increase of more than one million compared with 2004.

“The Canadian government should be congratulated for recognizing the vital need to expand HIV prevention options, especially for women,” noted Lori Heise, Director of the Global Campaign for Microbicides. “Our Canadian affiliate, the Microbicides Advocacy Group Network (MAG-NET), has worked for the past four years to get policy makers to recognize the vital role that new tools could play in helping individuals protect themselves from HIV. It is gratifying to see this response.”

This announcement from Canada comes on the same day as pledges of support to IPM from the governments of Belgium and France. In Brussels today, the Belgian government announced a pledge of CAD4.5 million (US\$4 million) to IPM over the next three years. This support from the Ministry of Development Cooperation was made at a World AIDS Day event hosted by Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid of Belgium. The government of France also committed a first-time grant of CAD300,000 (US\$264,000) in support of IPM’s microbicide research and development efforts.

These World AIDS Day announcements come on the heels of a commitment from the government of the Netherlands of a grant to IPM for CAD18 million (US\$15.7 million) over four years announced in early November. The governments of Ireland, Norway and Sweden have also provided increased support to IPM since the XVI International AIDS Conference in Toronto in August 2006. Other IPM supporters include Denmark, the United Kingdom, the United States, the European Commission, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the World Bank.

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About IPM

The International Partnership for Microbicides was established in 2002 to accelerate the development and accessibility of vaginal microbicides to prevent the transmission of HIV in women in developing countries. By screening compounds, designing optimal formulations, establishing manufacturing capacity, developing trial sites and conducting large scale efficacy trials, the organization works to improve the efficiency of all efforts to develop and deliver safe and effective microbicides for women as soon as possible.