

Ms. Wanda Nowicka
President
Federation for Women and Family Planning
ASTRA Secretariat
Nowolipie 13/15, 00-150 Warsaw,
Poland

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Dear Ms. Novicka,

On behalf of the Federal Chancellor of Austria, Mr. Wolfgang Schüssel, I would like to thank you for your letter of 14 April stating your key priorities for the forthcoming 2006 UNGASS Review of the Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS.

This UNGASS will stress once more the need to intensify our joint efforts so that – hopefully – one day our fight against this dreadful pandemic might be won. It is in this spirit that Austria conducts its EU-Presidency in the lead up to this important UN-Event. Currently we are deeply involved in the elaboration of the EU-Statement for the High Level Segment of the meeting as well as in the negotiations for a political outcome document. In this context I can assure you that the EU is well aware of the important issues raised in your letter and especially of the need to link sexual and reproductive health with HIV/AIDS services, as well as to increasingly involve SRH organisations in the prevention and treatment process.

In addition, the importance of the upcoming 2006 UNGASS Review Meeting also lies in the excellent opportunity the meeting offers for governmental actors and civil society representatives to exchange views. We think that such an increased involvement of civil society is the only viable way to address such essential issues like the global fight against HIV/AIDS. In this respect I would like to encourage you to make use of this opportunity and to actively voice your ideas and concerns.

Sincerely Yours,



Dr. Irene Freudenschuss-Reichl
(Director-General for Development Cooperation)