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A NEW ERA IN HIV PREVENTION IN THE SPOTLIGHT AS HIVR4P 2018 – THE WORLD’S ONLY GLOBAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE DEDICATED TO BIOMEDICAL HIV PREVENTION – OPENS IN MADRID 21-25 OCTOBER

(Madrid, Spain) – More than 35 million people have died of HIV-related illnesses, and another 37 million people are now living with HIV worldwide. Yet today, a new generation of HIV prevention tools in development offer the greatest promise yet of significantly slowing the global toll of HIV and AIDS.

The latest research in every form of biomedical HIV prevention, including vaccines, rings, microbicides and other female-controlled forms of prevention, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and long-acting delivery systems, will be explored at HIV Research for Prevention (HIVR4P 2018). More than 1,400 researchers, policy makers and advocates will gather at the Madrid Marriott Auditorium Hotel in Madrid, Spain 21-25 October as HIVR4P, the only global scientific meeting dedicated exclusively to biomedical HIV prevention, is held in Europe for the first time.

Across a five-day conference program, HIVR4P looks not only at scientific advances, but also at the obstacles to developing safe, long-acting and user-friendly forms of HIV prevention, and at strategies to address the barriers to making effective prevention available to all. The global conference features more than 1,000 scientific presentations, including oral and poster abstract sessions, plenaries by the world’s leading HIV prevention researchers, symposia, workshops, satellites, meet-the-expert sessions and more.

“HIVR4P takes place at an unprecedented moment in HIV prevention,” said conference co-chair Georgia Tomaras of Duke University. “Extraordinary progress in prevention research has expanded our opportunities to control and ultimately stop this epidemic. The vibrancy of this field is demonstrated by the fact that research submissions to HIVR4P 2018 were up 20% over the previous HIVR4P conference.”

“As prevention science advances, however, the challenges of maintaining the political will and funding to support a global movement to end AIDS come into even sharper focus. These policy, funding and advocacy issues will also be an important part of HIVR4P 2018.”

“HIVR4P is part of a global movement to build the alliances and exchanges, across disciplines and countries, that can bring us closer to a world without AIDS,” said conference co-chair Jose Alcamí of Madrid’s Instituto de Salud Carlos III. “We are especially proud that Spain will host the first HIVR4P conference held in Europe.”

“Spain’s longstanding commitment to combatting this epidemic includes world-class research, support for domestic and international efforts to ensure HIV treatment and prevention for all, and a commitment the well-being, dignity and human rights of all people affected by HIV. At the same time, several challenges remain in the fight against HIV in Spain, such as PrEP implementation. The celebration of HIVR4P in Madrid is an opportunity to draw attention to those needs as well.”
Key speakers at HIVR4P 2018 include contraception and HIV expert Sharon Achilles (U.S.); Desmond Tutu Foundation COO and vaccine and PrEP researcher Linda-Gail Bekker (South Africa); National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony Fauci (U.S.); International AIDS Vaccine Initiative Director Mark Feinberg (U.S.); NIH Vaccine Research Center Director John Mascola (U.S.); vaccine, microbicide and PrEP research leader Sheena McCormack (U.K.); Projecte dels NOMS-Hispanosida and Barcelona Checkpoint Director Michael Meulbroek (Spain); African Health Research Institute Investigator Thumbi Ndung'u (South Africa); and HIV research, advocacy and policy leaders from more than 40 countries.

Also on the conference program is the presentation of the 2018 Desmond Tutu Award for HIV Prevention Research and Human Rights and research awards and scholarships for outstanding HIV prevention science. More than 300 early-career HIV prevention researchers and advocates from low- and middle-income countries will attend HIVR4P 2018 on scholarship.

The HIVR4P press conference program (full program here) includes daily overviews of some of the most compelling research being presented at the meeting, including:

- Mon., 22 Oct: Vaccine and antibody research highlights (15.00 – 16.00 CET)
- Tues., 23 Oct: Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) update (12.00 – 13.00 CET)
- Weds., 24 Oct: Prevention in women, girls and key populations (12.00 – 13.00 CET)
- Thurs., 25 Oct: Policy, funding and new tools on the horizon (12.00 – 13.00 CET)

For journalists who cannot attend in person, all press conferences will be live-streamed on the HIVR4P Facebook page and available for playback on the conference website. All HIVR4P conference sessions will also be webcast on the conference website. The meeting offers complimentary registration, a fully staffed media center and extensive professional support. Details on media registration for HIVR4P 2018 are available here.

About HIV Research for Prevention (HIVR4P 2018)

HIV Research for Prevention (HIVR4P) is the world’s only scientific meeting dedicated exclusively to biomedical HIV prevention, including vaccines, antibodies, microbicides, treatment as prevention, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and new forms of HIV prevention. Founded in 2014 and emerging from the previous AIDS vaccine and microbicide conferences, the biennial HIVR4P meeting responds to a growing consensus that effective HIV prevention requires a combination of approaches and close collaboration between fields of HIV prevention research. Conference funders include the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, U.S. National Institutes of Health, Gilead, ViiV Healthcare, anRs (French Agency for Research on AIDS & Viral Hepatitis), Janssen, GSK, International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), Instituto de Salud Carlos III, Gobierno de Espana, Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovacion y Universidades, International Partnership for Microbicides, MSD, and the South African Medical Research Council.

The conference secretariat is the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise. In 2020, the International AIDS Society will assume the secretariat role for the conference.

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