20 of the World's Leading Researchers Say Scientific Evidence Does Not Support HIV Criminalization Laws

A global consensus statement from HIV Justice Worldwide was announced in Amsterdam at the 2018 International AIDS Conference.

July 25, 2018 By Sean Strub

We just had an historic press conference at the International AIDS Conference in Amsterdam announcing the global consensus statement that HIV Justice Worldwide (Sero and the Positive Women's Network-USA are two of the six HIV Justice Worldwide consortium members) has been working on for two years.

The statement recognizes the science reflected in the U=U campaign, but is much broader and addresses other related issues, specifically in the context of criminal prosecutions. You can read the statement here.

Robert Suttle, Ken Pinkela and Chad Clarke — all criminalization survivors — were present at the press conference. We showed a short film about Kerry Thomas and then he spoke, and answered journalists' questions, by telephone from the prison where he is incarcerated in Idaho.

There were a number of experts, including the President of the International AIDS Society, seated at the dais. We had a name sign and empty chair for Kerry.

It was an emotional, powerful and important event. I am looking forward to the dissemination of this statement, which will be a valuable resource for experts testifying in criminalization cases.

This is a long battle and at times it is frustrating and feels like it is moving too slowly, particularly for those people living with HIV sitting in cages due to ignorance and stigma, but make no mistake: we are making progress.

Today is a milestone. But it is a milestone that would not have happened without the work of so many activists, human rights lawyers, public health experts, allies, donors, HINAC attendees and PLHIV, particularly PHLIV who have been criminalized.

You all deserve credit for and pride in today's achievement.

– Sean

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