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PRESS RELEASE

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U.S. Government Signs \$469 Million Nigeria HIV/AIDS COP 2017

Abuja – Today, U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, Ambassador-at-Large, Deborah L. Birx, M.D., signed the Nigeria HIV/AIDS Country Operational Plan (COP 2017). The Country Operational Plan is an annual program plan for U.S. government investments in the Nigeria National HIV/AIDS Response through the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). U.S. government commitment to the Nigeria Country Operational Plan 2017 will be approximately \$469 million including centrally funded initiatives, to support HIV prevention, care, and treatment programs in the country.

U.S. Ambassador W. Stuart Symington and the Director General of Nigeria’s National Agency for Control of AIDS (NACA) co-signed the document, describing it as a historic occasion, representing the first time such an agreement was signed in the focus country.

“Right here, right now, in this effort, Nigerians working with the United States can change the course of Nigeria’s history for ever when it comes to health,” Ambassador Symington said.

Ambassador Birx underlined the historic nature of the signing because *“this was the first time that we have ever signed a U.S. government commitment on HIV/AIDS to a country, in that country”*, she emphasized.

She said the reasons for the U.S. support for the Country Operational Plan are two-fold: to represent the depth and breadth of the Trump Administration’s commitment to HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, and to represent the depth and breadth of the commitment to Nigeria and to the Nigerian government’s *“ability to do something big at this moment in time.”*

“I personally have been impressed with the Minister of Health. I have been impressed by your new leadership in the NACA. I have been impressed with their ability to hit the ground running, to understand where we don’t have the depth of knowledge that we need to ensure that all Nigerians can thrive free of HIV,” Ambassador Birx stated.

She further said, *“I think Nigeria can go from some of the lowest numbers in all of west and central Africa to the leadership position that it should be in and really shining the light on how to control this pandemic and ensure all Nigerians can thrive.”*

Speaking on behalf of the Nigerian government, Director General of NACA, Dr. Sani Aliyu said the government and people of Nigeria are deeply appreciative of U.S. government assistance to the country on HIV/AIDS control. *“Remember that we have just about crossed the first million*

people on treatment, and most of it is driven by the U.S. government with more than 700,000 people on treatment. You are committing already to putting an additional 260,000 people on treatment. That means the U.S. government is keeping alive hundreds of thousands of Nigerians, hundreds of thousands who are currently looking after their families, putting bread on the table,” he stated.

Since its inception in Nigeria in 2004, PEPFAR has disbursed more than \$4.3 billion in support of the Nigeria HIV/AIDS response.

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Relevant information about U.S. policies and programs in Nigeria can be found on our websites:
<http://nigeria.usembassy.gov> and www.usaid.gov/ng



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