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PRESS RELEASE

East Java to Combat HIV/AIDS through Workplace Education Programmes

SURABAYA (ILO News): The HIV/AIDS epidemic has become a global crisis affecting all levels of society. It is also a major threat to the world of work. Globally, nine of every ten people living with HIV/AIDS are adults in their productive prime, the mainstays of families and communities. HIV/AIDS, according to an ILO study in 2004, can become the single biggest cause of mortality in the world of work: 48 million workers will be dead by 2010 and 74 million by 2015.

Workplace prevention has proven highly effective in fighting the spread of the epidemic in many countries. During the last ten years, it has become increasingly clear that the world of work is a key arena where the battle against HIV/AIDS can be fought—and won.

Therefore, to build a strong foundation for combating HIV/AIDS at the workplace, the International Labour Organization (ILO) will sign an East Java Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Partnership together with the East Java Provincial Manpower Department, the Indonesian Employers' Association (Apindo), the Indonesian Manpower Services Association (Apjati), the Federation of Indonesian Prosperity Labour Union (KSBSI), the Indonesian Trade Union Congress (KSPI), the Federation of All-Indonesian Workers Union (KSPSI), and two pilot enterprises: P.T. Steel Pipe Industry Indonesia (Spindo) and P.T. Perwita Nusaraya.

The signing ceremony will take place on Friday, 16 September 2005, at Majapahit Mandarin Hotel, Surabaya, East Java. It will be officially opened by M. Sudjono, Chief of East Java Provincial Manpower Department and Dr. Benjamin Alli, ILO/AIDS Coordinator of Technical Cooperation and Advisory Services.

The MoU highlights four major programme components: (1) coordination; (2) policy; (3) education and information; and (4) monitoring and evaluation. These programme components are aimed to build sustainable education and behavior change programmes at the workplace and within the surrounding communities. In addition, with the signing of the MoU, it is expected that all parties concerned, particularly the two pilot enterprises, can take immediate action by formulating HIV/AIDS prevention policies and programmes.

The signing of MoU will be followed by a series of awareness raising trainings in DKI Jakarta, East Java, Papua, and Batam. They are aimed to examine the impact of HIV/AIDS particularly in the workplace and business environment and to provide more information and better understanding about the impact and how to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS at the workplace, which in turn will eventually change attitudes and risky behaviour.

These trainings are organized by the ILO under its HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Project in Indonesia. Established in January 2005, the Project covers three provinces (East Java, Riau Islands and Papua) and is to run for three years to the end of 2007. Funded by the United States Government, the programme is aimed at creating a sustainable national programme to combat HIV/AIDS in the world of work that is fully integrated into the national response and in support of the National Strategy on HIV/AIDS.

The MoU has been developed as a follow-up to the *Manpower Ministerial Decree No. 68 on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control at the Workplace* adopted in May 2004 and a Tripartite Commitment which was signed both at national and provincial levels in 2003, including East Java Province. The Decree and Commitments, which adopt the principles of the *ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work*, ban employers from discriminating against workers with HIV and oblige employers to take steps to prevent and control the spread of HIV/AIDS in the workplace.

In East Java, there were an estimated 19,153 to 27,167 people living with HIV/AIDS at the end of 2004, of which 2,933 were women. The HIV prevalence among injecting drug users (IDU) in East Java has reached between 20 and 35 percent. Meanwhile, the total number of people living with HIV/AIDS in Indonesia in 2005 is around 90,000-130,000. It is estimated that the number infected could double in 2006, and up to 20 million Indonesians are at direct risk of HIV infection.