
Speech at the Opening of the Summer Camp

David J Mcloughlin, Deputy Representative, UNICEF China
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Mme Gu Xiulian, Vice-chairwoman of the Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress, Mr. Zhang Huaixi, Vice-chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), distinguished guests and young friends,

It is my honor to be here today with so many committed people to take up one of China's greatest challenges—to ensure the survival and development of children and parents affected by AIDS. I would also like to give a warm welcome to all the children, and acknowledge your courage for being here in these bright lights with so many reporters, to share your experiences. You are examples to all of the adults on how we can be courageous people.

Special congratulations to the CNCCC, the Chinese government and Chinese people on their commitment to respond to children and families affected by AIDS.

The first step to ensuring the survival and development of children is listening to their voices. Today, we have heard the voices of children loudly through their art.

In these pictures –there is a clear statement coming from all the children. It is simple, and a statement I have heard from children all over the world. They want their parents to live; and they want their parents to get medicine from doctors. We can all understand this wish.

Another dream is one many of us may never have thought of –because we never knew it was important—it was always there. These children want to go to school – they want to have friends –they don't want to be hated because of AIDS. I am sure we can all understand this wish too.

But today, I can tell you that there is hope—but only if the commitment in this room reaches beyond these walls – to townships and villages all over

China. The “four frees and one care policy” responds directly to the wishes of children—it can provide hope to children and parents if it is fully implemented.

Children affected by AIDS pose no threat to a community—rather, by integrating children and parents affected by AIDS, the community becomes a role model—demonstrating leadership in caring for children—leadership in implementing the “four frees and one care”—and leadership in reflecting the ideals of the Chinese government

President Hu Jintao, Premier Wen Jiabao Vice-Premier Wu Yi have asked all of us to eliminate stigma and implement the national “four free one care policy”. It is important we show leadership at all levels of society—and I extend congratulations to all the host families who are demonstrating the first steps in leaderships. I hope you will take your experiences beyond Beijing and share it with all your friends and colleagues.

UNICEF and UNAIDS are committed to working with partners and supporting the Chinese Government in listening to children—and ensuring the survival and development of children and parents affected by AIDS.

Thank you very much and I wish all our young friends have a memorable stay in Beijing.