



SPEECH FOR WORLD AIDS DAY
BY PEACE AMADI – MISS NIGERIA IN AMERICA 2007
DECEMBER 1, 2007

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. It is a pleasure to be here with you this evening and an honor to stand here in front of you as we rally around one great cause.

Today is World AIDS Day – a day on which we acknowledge the fact that there is indeed a problem. It is a day on which we remember our family members, friends, communities, countries, and brothers and sisters around the world whose lives have been claimed by the AIDS pandemic. It is day on which we recognize our humane responsibility to raise awareness about the issues and campaign for greater action. It is a day we say we care.

Yes, we care about the fact that there are now 33.2 million people living with HIV today. 22.5 million of these people – about 68% - live in sub-Saharan Africa alone. We care that 2.5 million children (under the age of 15) are infected with the HIV virus worldwide. 2.2 million of these children do in fact live in sub-Saharan Africa. We care that every day; another 6,800 people are infected with HIV; 1,200 of them will be children.

And we care that there have been 15 million children orphaned by AIDS; 13 million of them living in Africa. These kids are left trying to raise their siblings on their own. They are not receiving education, not properly nourished, and fall prey to sexual coercion and child labor.

Simply put, AIDS is devastating whole families and communities and erasing decades of hard-won health, economic, and social progress. We care because we have to, we care because we should. But how can we show it?

Well you're here. And if you don't know already, all proceeds from this event will be going to Keep a Child Alive, an organization that provides AIDS medication to children and families who have been infected with HIV/AIDS as well as medical and other services needed to make treatment possible. Keep a Child Alive also builds and sustains orphanages to keep the most vulnerable children out of harm's way.

Congratulations, you are making a difference. Just by being here, you are helping save so many lives. But it is only the beginning. The AIDS pandemic continues to rage on, threatening the lives of so many people. We must continue to rally against it, and continue to fight. Visit us at www.keepachildalive.org to learn more about what they do. And keep your eyes and ears open for other ways you can help. When opportunities present themselves, opportunities such as one like this, take them. It's the very least you or I can do. We can no longer look the other way. Fight AIDS or it will fight you. Thank you and God bless.

Peace Amadi
Miss Nigeria in America 2007