



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Statement on the re-emergence of HIV in the “Mississippi Baby”**

**Friday, 11 July, 2014 (Geneva, Switzerland)** -- The International AIDS Society today expressed its disappointment at the announcement made in the past 24 hours by the National Institutes of Health in the US that the child known as the “Mississippi baby” - an infant seemingly cured of HIV in early 2013, now has clear evidence of HIV rebound after more than two years of not taking antiretroviral therapy with the virus in remission.

The IAS expressed its regret at the turn of events for the child and her mother, at the same time concurring with the statement by researchers involved in the case that the fact that the child was able to remain off antiretroviral treatment for over two years with no viral rebound was also unprecedented.

“This is sad news for the little girl and her family. This very late rebound has shown us that we need to develop better tools to detect persistent virus and better strategies to control it, as a tiny amount of virus can get things going again,” said Professor Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, President of the International AIDS Society (IAS), co-chair of the Global Initiative *Towards an HIV Cure* and International Chair of the upcoming 20<sup>th</sup> International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2014) to be held in Melbourne, Australia, July 20-25.

“We’ve always known that the search for an HIV Cure wasn’t going to be easy so the lesson to be learnt from cases like this are hugely important for informing researchers on where to focus their efforts.”

“The Mississippi baby case and indeed the Boston patients who also rebounded after a prolonged remission, tell us that we have to tackle the problem on multiple fronts – getting extremely low levels of long lived virus as well as bolstering the immune system,” said Professor Sharon Lewin, Professor, Director of the Department of Infectious Diseases at The Alfred Hospital and Monash University in Melbourne, Australia and Local Co-Chair of the 20<sup>th</sup> International AIDS Conference.

“The case is yet another piece in the complex jigsaw puzzle that is HIV cure, one that will require well-funded research over the long term. We will endeavour to move that research forward and discuss the case and the significant lessons learned in Melbourne both at the pre-conference HIV Cure Symposium and at the AIDS 2014 conference proper where all the world’s leading HIV cure researchers will be gathered under the one roof”, concluded Lewin.

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### **About the IAS**

The International AIDS Society (IAS) is the world's leading independent association of HIV professionals, with over 16,000 members from more than 176 countries working at all levels of the global response to AIDS. The IAS members include researchers from all disciplines,

clinicians, public health and community practitioners on the frontlines of the epidemic, as well as policy and programme planners.

The IAS is custodian of the biennial International AIDS Conference, which will be held in Melbourne, Australia, 20-25 July 2014 and lead organizer of the IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention, which will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, 19-22 July 2015

[www.iasociety.org](http://www.iasociety.org) | [www.aids2014.org](http://www.aids2014.org) | [www.ias2015.org](http://www.ias2015.org)

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