

For Immediate Release

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*MR. ANAND GROVER-SPECIAL RAPPOTEUR ON HEALTH MEETS CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS OVER CHALLENGES ON ACCESS TO MEDICINES IN UGANDA.*

Kampala, - On Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> August, 2012 the Special Rapporteur on Health Mr. Anand Grover will meet civil society organizations working on issues of access to medicines in Uganda.

The meeting convened by the Center for Health, Human Rights and Development under the umbrella of the Uganda Coalition on Access to medicines will discuss current challenges on access to medicines, ways to overcome them and good practices in improving access to medicines for all.

In its resolution 17/14, the Human Rights Council mandated the Special Rapporteur to prepare a study on existing challenges with regard to access to medicines in the context of the right to health, ways to overcome them and good practices. In preparation of the study, the Special Rapporteur is undertaking consultations with States Members of the United Nations, United Nations agencies and programmes, international and non-governmental organizations, and relevant stakeholders, with a view to harvesting relevant comments, insights and experiences, which will collectively inform the forthcoming report of the Special Rapporteur.

In this context, the study on access to medicines and the right to health will explore existing challenges to access to medicines in the context of the right to health, ways to overcome them and good practices to promote access to medicines that are affordable, safe, effective and of good quality. The Special Rapporteur will also consider such substantive issues as pricing, procurement, distribution, rational use and domestic production of medicines, as well as cross-cutting matters of transparency and participation.

On his previous Visit to Uganda, the Special rapporteur made recommendations to government to put in place a human rights desk at the Ministry of health and a Right to Health Unit and this was done at the Ministry of Health and Uganda Human rights Commission to address health rights violations, he also asked government to address Civil society demands in the Anti- Counterfeit Bill of 2009, this too was done among other recommendations.

“The challenges of access to medicines in Uganda are numerous; they include drug stock outs, health worker shortage, poor health financing, corruption, poorly drafted intellectual property laws, poor quality and substandard medicines, stigmatizing of patients by health workers, negligence and absenteeism by health workers among others. The visit of the Special rapporteur offers us a rare opportunity to elevate our voices to the international level which the government pays more attention to. We look forward to a fruitful discussion with the rapporteur” notes Moses Mulumba, Director for CEHURD.

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