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S. Africa's Mbeki slammed over AIDS

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27 September, 2005

THE ARTICLE

S. Africa's Mbeki slammed over AIDS

BNE: A South African trade union leader has strongly attacked President Thabo Mbeki and his government over the country's out-of-control HIV/AIDS problem. The union's Zwelinzima Vavi slammed Mr. Mbeki for not helping to stop HIV/AIDS spreading throughout the country. He said there was a "failure of leadership" and "a betrayal of our people and our struggle". Mr. Vavi also condemned the health minister for advising AIDS sufferers to eat spinach to reduce the effects of the virus.

Six million of South Africa's 45 million people are infected with HIV. Mr. Mbeki has angered people for years by refusing to believe there is a link between sexual activity and HIV/AIDS. Many South African health workers say he failed to prevent the avoidable deaths of millions. South Africa began to distribute drugs that reduce the effects of HIV only last year. This followed years of increasing pressure by activists. Mr. Vavi said: "There is something very wrong when there is silence about the need to ensure that people have access to cheap [drugs]."

WARM-UPS

1. HIV/AIDS AWARENESS: Make a timeline of the history of your awareness of HIV/AIDS. Can you remember the first time you heard about it? What TV commercials stick in your mind? What events have increased your awareness? In pairs / groups, talk about your timelines.

2. EDUCATION: Who told you about HIV/AIDS? Who should tell you about it? Talk with your partner(s) about what you have learned from the following sources. How would you feel about receiving information from each source?

- Parents
- Teachers
- Older brother/sister
- Teachers
- Friends
- Government
- TV and newspapers
- Partners (boyfriends, girlfriends etc.)

3. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

South Africa / attacks / Thabo Mbeki / HIV/AIDS / leadership / betrayal / public health policies / spinach / sexual activity / drugs for HIV/AIDS / cheap drugs

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

4. AIDS: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with AIDS. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

5. CONTRACTING HIV & AIDS: In pairs / groups, discuss whether you think it is easy to get HIV/AIDS in the following cases. Check the Internet to find the answers.

- Kissing
- Unprotected sex
- Going to hospitals and dentists
- Shaking hands
- Swimming pools
- Having a tattoo
- Being bitten by a mosquito
- Oral sex

6. HIV/AIDS OPINIONS: Do you agree with these opinions on HIV/AIDS? Talk about them with your partner(s).

- a. HIV/AIDS is something that other people get, never me.
- b. HIV/AIDS is a Third World problem.
- c. Governments are doing their best to find a cure for HIV/AIDS.
- d. There is more than enough information to educate people about HIV/AIDS.
- e. Rich countries don't care that some countries have 25 percent infection rates.
- f. Contracting HIV should be made a criminal offense.
- g. HIV/AIDS is the most serious problem in the world today.
- h. HIV/AIDS is a taboo subject.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. South Africa's leader has been attacked for his policy on AIDS. | T / F |
| b. HIV/AIDS is not such a problem in South Africa. | T / F |
| c. Mr. Mbeki has been successful in controlling the AIDS problem. | T / F |
| d. South Africa's health minister advised HIV sufferers to eat spinach. | T / F |
| e. Five percent of South Africans have HIV. | T / F |
| f. Mr. Mbeki has said there is no link between HIV and sexual activity. | T / F |
| g. South Africa has for many years distributed drugs that help HIV. | T / F |
| h. Most South Africans do not have access to cheap drugs. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| a. leader | maddened |
| b. slammed | lessen |
| c. betrayal | low cost |
| d. sufferers | attacked |
| e. reduce | victims |
| f. angered | stop |
| g. link | disloyalty |
| h. prevent | guarantee |
| i. ensure | connection |
| j. cheap | boss |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. trade | HIV/AIDS problem |
| b. the country's out-of-control | there is a link |
| c. stop HIV/AIDS spreading | the effects of the virus |
| d. a failure | 45 million people are infected |
| e. to eat spinach to reduce | of HIV |
| f. Six million of South Africa's | union leader |
| g. refusing to believe | to cheap drugs |
| h. he failed to prevent the avoidable | throughout the country |
| i. drugs which reduce the effects | of leadership |
| j. ensure that people have access | deaths |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

S. Africa's Mbeki slammed over AIDS

BNE: A South African trade _____ leader has strongly attacked President Thabo Mbeki and his government _____ the country's out-of-control HIV/AIDS _____. The union's Zwelinzima Vavi slammed Mr. Mbeki for not helping to _____ HIV/AIDS spreading _____ the country. He said there was a "_____ of leadership" and "a betrayal of our people and our _____". Mr. Vavi also condemned the health minister for advising AIDS sufferers to eat spinach to reduce the _____ of the virus.

Six million of South Africa's 45 million people are _____ with HIV. Mr. Mbeki has _____ people for years by refusing to believe there is a _____ between sexual activity and HIV/AIDS. Many South African health workers say he _____ to prevent the avoidable deaths of millions. South Africa began to _____ drugs that reduce the effects of HIV only last year. This followed years of increasing _____ by activists. Mr. Viva said: "There is something very wrong when there is _____ about the need to ensure that people have _____ to cheap [drugs]."

throughout
over
effects
problem
failure
struggle
union
stop
pressure
distribute
angered
access
link
infected
silence
failed

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words **'trade'** and **'union'**.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "HIV/AIDS" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about HIV/AIDS.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| • trade | • 45 million |
| • out-of-control | • link |
| • slammed | • avoidable |
| • failure | • distribute |
| • condemned | • pressure |
| • reduce | • access |

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What did you think when you first read this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What is the difference between HIV and AIDS?
- d. Do you often read news articles on HIV/AIDS?
- e. What do the abbreviations "HIV" and "AIDS" mean?
- f. What do you know about HIV/AIDS in South Africa and the rest of Africa?
- g. What do you think of Thabo Mbeki's opinion that sexual activity and HIV are not linked?
- h. Where else in the world is HIV/AIDS a serious problem?
- i. How serious a problem is AIDS in your country?
- j. Should President Mbeki resign?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Are you surprised at anything you read in the article?
- d. What would governments in developed countries do if over twenty percent of their populations were HIV positive?
- e. Has the world forgotten countries that have high levels of HIV/AIDS?
- f. Do you think AIDS will ever disappear?
- g. How would you feel about Thabo Mbeki if you were South African?
- h. How did you first find out about the threat of HIV/AIDS?
- i. Have you ever had... / Would you ever have... a test for HIV/AIDS?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

HIV & AIDS PREVENTION: In pairs / groups, talk about the following solutions to prevent HIV/AIDS spreading. Are they good ideas? Would people in your country accept them? Write your own idea at the bottom.

SOLUTIONS	GOOD IDEAS?	ACCEPTABLE?
Regular testing and the carrying of "I'm HIV/AIDS-free" ID cards for all 16-40-year-olds.		
The government makes condoms freely available - everywhere.		
HIV/AIDS education classes to be held in schools, universities and workplaces.		
A government campaign to encourage people not to have sexual relations until after they are married.		
Regular TV commercials aimed to shock people into HIV/AIDS awareness.		
Making HIV/AIDS a criminal offense that carries a 15-year prison term.		
Your idea		

Change partners and tell each other the ideas you talked about.

Discuss which three ideas are best. How could they be made more acceptable?

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

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BNE: A South African trade union leader has _____ attacked President Thabo Mbeki and his government _____ the country's out-of-control HIV/AIDS problem. The union's Zwelinzima Vavi _____ Mr. Mbeki for not helping to stop HIV/AIDS spreading throughout the country. He said there was a "_____ leadership" and "a betrayal of our people and our struggle". Mr. Vavi also condemned the health minister for advising AIDS _____ to eat spinach to reduce the effects of the virus.

Six million of South Africa's 45 million people are _____ with HIV. Mr. Mbeki has angered people for years by _____ to believe there is a link between sexual _____ and HIV/AIDS. Many South African health workers say he failed to _____ the avoidable deaths of millions. South Africa began to distribute drugs that reduce the _____ of HIV only last year. This followed years of increasing _____ by activists. Mr. Viva said: "There is something very wrong when there is silence about the need to _____ that people have access to cheap [drugs]."

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on South African President Thabo Mbeki. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. HIV/AIDS AWARENESS: Make a poster that increases people's awareness of HIV/AIDS. Include things people can do to prevent contracting the virus. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

4. LETTER: Write a letter to South African President Thabo Mbeki about his policy towards HIV/AIDS. Make suggestions for how he might correct the situation. Read your letter to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T b. F c. F d. T e. F f. T g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| a. leader | boss |
| b. slammed | attacked |
| c. betrayal | disloyalty |
| d. sufferers | victims |
| e. reduce | lessen |
| f. angered | maddened |
| g. link | connection |
| h. prevent | stop |
| i. ensure | guarantee |
| j. cheap | low cost |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. trade | union leader |
| b. the country's out-of-control | HIV/AIDS problem |
| c. stop HIV/AIDS spreading | throughout the country |
| d. a failure | of leadership |
| e. to eat spinach to reduce | the effects of the virus |
| f. Six million of South Africa's | 45 million people are infected |
| g. refusing to believe | there is a link |
| h. he failed to prevent the avoidable | deaths |
| i. drugs which reduce the effects | of HIV |
| j. ensure that people have access | to cheap drugs |

GAP FILL:

S. Africa's Mbeki slammed over AIDS

BNE: A South African trade **union** leader has strongly attacked President Thabo Mbeki and his government **over** the country's out-of-control HIV/AIDS **problem**. The union's Zwelinzima Vavi slammed Mr. Mbeki for not helping to **stop** HIV/AIDS spreading **throughout** the country. He said there was a "**failure** of leadership" and "a betrayal of our people and our **struggle**". Mr. Vavi also condemned the health minister for advising AIDS sufferers to eat spinach to reduce the **effects** of the virus.

Six million of South Africa's 45 million people are **infected** with HIV. Mr. Mbeki has **angered** people for years by refusing to believe there is a **link** between sexual activity and HIV/AIDS. Many South African health workers say he **failed** to prevent the avoidable deaths of millions. South Africa began to **distribute** drugs that reduce the effects of HIV only last year. This followed years of increasing **pressure** by activists. Mr. Viva said: "There is something very wrong when there is **silence** about the need to ensure that people have **access** to cheap [drugs]."