

Edited by Gillian Paterson



# HIV

# PREVENTION

*A Global Theological Conversation*

**HIV PREVENTION:**  
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**Edited by**  
**Gillian Paterson**



**Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, Geneva**

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	Abstinence, Being faithful or Condom-use
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANERELA+	African Network of Religious Leaders living with or personally affected by HIV or AIDS
ARHAP	African Religious Health Assets Programme
ART	Antiretroviral Therapy
ARV	Antiretroviral
CABSA	Christian AIDS Bureau of Southern Africa
CAFOD	Catholic Fund for Overseas Development (UK)
CSW	Commercial Sex Worker
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAA	Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance
EHAIA	Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiative in Africa
FOCCISA	Fellowship of Councils of Churches in Southern Africa
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HIV+	Tests positive for Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IAC	International AIDS Conference
ICASA	International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa
ICRW	International Center for Research on Women
ICW	International Community of Women Living with HIV or AIDS
IDU	Injecting Drug User
INERELA+	International Network of Religious Leaders living with or personally affected by HIV or AIDS
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MSM	Men who have Sex with Men
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Fund for AIDS Relief (USA)
PLHA	Person/People Living with or affected by HIV or AIDS
PMTCT	Prevent/ing Mother To Child Transmission
REDBOL	Bolivian Network of people living with HIV or AIDS
SACBC	Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference
SAVE	Safer practices, Available medication, Voluntary counselling and testing, and Empowerment
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection/s
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	United Nations Joint Programme on HIV and AIDS
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USA	United States of America
UK	United Kingdom
UKZN	University of KwaZulu Natal
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
WCC	World Council of Churches
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization



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*Linda Hartke*

*Coordinator, Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance*

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## Foreword

# About This Book

This book is the work of thirty-five leading theologians and practitioners, from five continents and many church traditions, some of them living with HIV, who met near Johannesburg in January 2008 under the auspices of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA). The conversation that took place there was a new stage in an ongoing dialogue among Christian theologians and practitioners that began in December 2003. Then UNAIDS (the Joint United Nations Program on HIV and AIDS) organized an international workshop at Windhoek, Namibia,<sup>1</sup> whose aim was to sharpen theological responses to HIV and AIDS, especially in relation to stigma. The dialogue has continued in various forums and contexts, including the International AIDS Conferences in Bangkok (2004), Toronto (2006) and Mexico City (2008).

Focusing specifically on HIV prevention, the present conversation takes us a further step in this process. Outcomes, it is hoped, will include:

- (i) this book, which is designed to summarize the theological reflections and views that were articulated during the consultation and outline some common principles and values;
- (ii) the promotion of additional reflection in the future;
- (iii) a strategy for future networking and collaboration that will strengthen Christian theological reflection on HIV prevention and connect to other communities of faith and secular groups working on prevention; and
- (iv) steps to start a dialogue with other religions.

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<sup>1</sup> UNAIDS, *A Report of a Theological Workshop Focusing on HIV- and AIDS-related Stigma*, February 2005; [http://data.unaids.org/Publications/IRC-pub06/jc11119-theological\\_en.pdf?preview=true](http://data.unaids.org/Publications/IRC-pub06/jc11119-theological_en.pdf?preview=true)

Part One of this book opens with an invitation to enter the conversation: an invitation addressed to the churches, to UN agencies, to networks of people living with HIV and to other partners. Chapter 1 explores what it means to ‘do theology’ in relation to HIV prevention, and suggests some underlying themes that might support this exercise.

In an effort to make the book usable by organizations and individuals who are actually asking the theological questions, the decision was taken to divide the remainder of the material that came out of the discussions into three parts. Accordingly, Chapters 2 to 4 focus respectively on HIV prevention at global and national levels (Chapter 2); at community and interpersonal levels (Chapter 3); and at the level of the individual (Chapter 4).

The division of theological perspectives into the global, the communal and the personal should not be treated too literally. Any such categorization is bound to be arbitrary. For example, the fact that justice appears under ‘global and national’ should not blind us to the fact that concepts of justice are crucial to the agenda of communities and interpersonal relationships. We want also to stress that our theological thinking, in the broad context of our efforts to bring about God’s reign, must be a call to *integrate* the global, communal and local, not to *separate* them.

Part Two of the book consists of seven chapters in which individual theologians and practitioners reflect on particular theological issues that emerge, for them, from the issue of HIV prevention. These challenging and original chapters started life as individual presentations at the Johannesburg consultation. Each writer approaches the topic of HIV prevention through the lens of his or her own context, his or her own denominational home within the Christian family, and through the lens, too, of a particular theological sub-discipline, underlining the richness and theological diversity that exists within the prevention agenda.

In the Epilogue to this book, you will find some of the proposals for action that emerged from these conversations ('From Conversation to Action'), followed by a list of resources, source materials and publications which readers may find useful in following up some of the issues raised in these pages.

*Gillian Paterson, Editor*