The AIDS Institute is *Counting Malaria Out* on World Malaria Day April 25, 2010

**Washington, DC** – The AIDS Institute is honoring World Malaria Day by spotlighting the “Counting Malaria Out Campaign”. April 25th is the observance of World Malaria Day and this year, 2010, marks an important milestone in “Counting Malaria Out” which works to meet the short, medium, and long term goals of malaria control, elimination, and eventual elimination. In 2008, the Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Partnership kicked off the “Counting Malaria Out” campaign to intensify global efforts to reach the milestone of universal coverage by 2010 and to strengthen systems in endemic countries for sustained malaria control and elimination. The campaign calls on malaria endemic countries, RBM partners, and donors to put extra effort into comprehensively tracking progress toward universal coverage, near-zero deaths by 2015, and the gradual elimination of malaria.

Though malaria is an ancient disease, it still survives today. There are 3.3 billion people living in 109 countries who are at risk of contracting the disease – meaning it is a significant threat to half of the world’s population. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that between 350 and 500 million people are afflicted every year. Thirty-five countries are disproportionately affected and are responsible for 98% of the total Malaria deaths worldwide. They also contribute to approximately 96% of the total number of Malaria cases. Africa, alone, accounts for 71% of the global cases of Malaria and about 86% of the global deaths.

James Sykes, Director of Global Programs at The AIDS Institute, observed, “Malaria is curable and preventable and yet it still kills nearly a million people a year – mostly children under five years of age and pregnant women in sub-Saharan Africa”. Sykes went on to add, ‘malaria significantly aggravates the condition of HIV-infected people and increases HIV transmission while HIV increases the risk of infection with Malaria and decreases response to standard anti-malarial treatment. Since many of the malaria endemic countries in Africa are also heavily impacted by HIV/AIDS, it makes sense to have a comprehensive approach to both of these maladies. I think this is the objective of President Obama’s Global Health Initiative (GHI), but we must make sure that there is adequate funding for these programs to maintain the momentum and success we have seen in recent years in reducing the burden of malaria in many developing countries.”
Malaria is caused by a parasite of the Plasmodium species transmitted from the blood of an infected person and passed to a healthy person by the bite of a female Anopheles mosquito. First identified in 1880, there are four species of the Plasmodium parasite, each causing symptoms that vary in intensity and duration. Plasmodium (P) falciparum is the deadliest of the four – the other forms being P. vivax, P. ovale, and P. malariae. Almost 100% of malaria in Africa is caused by P. falciparum.

World Malaria Day is an opportunity to focus attention on this ancient plague. The AIDS Institute is helping to “count” the strides we collectively make towards eliminating Malaria. We can make the lives of every man, woman, and child count.

For more information:  [www.rollbackmalaria.org](http://www.rollbackmalaria.org) and [www.who.int/malaria](http://www.who.int/malaria).

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For more information and to become involved in AIDS advocacy work, please contact The AIDS Institute at:  
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The AIDS Institute is a national nonprofit organization that promotes action for social change through public policy research, advocacy and education.