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PRESS RELEASE

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SCREENING

**PRESS RELEASE ON THE DECISION OF THE
GOVERNMENT NOT TO INSTITUTE COMPULSORY OR
SYSTEMATIC SCREENING**

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The National AIDS Council welcomes the Government's decision to refrain from instituting obligatory HIV screening in connection with prenatal and prenuptial medical examinations and during national military service. This decision is in accord with the Opinions issued by the National AIDS Council in December 1991 and by the Haut Comité de la santé publique [High Committee for Public Health] and the Comité consultatif national d'éthique [National Ethics Advisory Committee] in March 1992.

On grounds connected to ethics, law, effectiveness and fact, compulsory screening is not the best way to protect public health. On the contrary, there is a need to encourage physicians and other health and welfare professionals to increase, through personal dialogue in a relationship of trust, the frequency with which they suggest testing and offer information, guidance and advice, later providing the necessary psychological and medical follow-up.

Note :

In a press release issued on April 1, Mr. Durieux, the Minister with delegated responsibility for public health, made known the Government's decision not to institute obligatory HIV screening, but to develop a scheme for the encouragement of voluntary screening.