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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**LEGAL AID SOUTH AFRICA CONTINUES TO FIGHT STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION
POST-AIDS CONFERENCE**

Moving forward from the 21st International AIDS Conference focus on *Access Equity Rights Now*, Legal Aid South Africa is proud to continue offering legal assistance at no cost to individuals who have been discriminated against based on their HIV or tuberculosis (TB) status. “This assistance is in the form of redress for rights violations, supporting access to HIV and TB treatment and prevention services, and ensuring protection from stigma and discrimination,” says Legal Aid SA Acting Spokesperson, Ms Janeske Botes.

Legal Aid SA and the South African National AIDS Council launched the HIV and TB Stigma Project at last year’s South Africa AIDS Conference. The Project is also supported by Section27, the International Labour Organization and Webber Wentzel. In the year since the Project’s launch, Legal Aid SA handled 180 matters relating to HIV/AIDS and 40 matters relating to TB (these matters were handled between 1 July 2015 and 10 March 2016).

“Access to legal aid and advice services for people living with HIV and TB, particularly those that are part of already vulnerable groups, is a critical concern in South Africa today. Legal Aid SA provides legal representation to low income and vulnerable sections of our population – the HIV and TB Stigma Project is an extension of this role. With concerns ranging from workplace stigma and discrimination; access to health services; information about HIV/AIDS and TB, as well as family and home stigma and discrimination, the matters that Legal Aid SA have handled in the last year speak to the legal assistance required by those who have been treated unfairly due to their HIV or TB status,” says Botes.

The HIV and TB Stigma Project offers a crucial service and continues to assist those that face stigma and discrimination due to their HIV and TB status. Legal Aid SA Paralegals will continue to be trained by Section27 to provide quality legal advice to people living

with HIV and TB. Through Paralegals based at our Justice Centres, Satellite Offices and Call Centre, we are able to offer a national network of assistance to those suffering from stigma and discrimination.

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Issued by the Communication Department of Legal Aid South Africa. For more information or interview opportunities, please contact the Acting Communication Executive and National Spokesperson Janeske Botes on 011 877 2153/082 569 3653 or Media and Marketing Manager Godfrey Matsobe on 011 877 2382/082 602 7199

Visit our website at www.legal-aid.co.za or call the Legal Aid Advice Line on 0800 110 110

Please be reminded that the name of our organisation **Legal Aid South Africa** is correctly abbreviated as **Legal Aid SA** and not as LASA. We respectfully request that you use the correct abbreviation **Legal Aid SA** which is representative of our mission to deliver quality **legal aid** services to the poor and vulnerable in South Africa.