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Ball Fetes 10 Years Fighting HIV

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The AIDS Foundation East-West in collaboration with the Association of European Businesses and the Dutch Embassy is hosting the Red Ribbon Ball, a black tie event to promote awareness of the HIV epidemic in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, as well as fete the foundation's 10th anniversary.

Award-winning television host and foundation board member Vladimir Pozner will direct the event, to take place at the Grand Ballroom of the five-star Swissotel Krasnye Holmy on Saturday.

The ball will feature prominent speakers on social and health policy in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, as well as bring together members of the media, NGOs and the local business community.

AIDS Foundation East-West will welcome guests with a Red Ribbon cocktail at 6:30 p.m. and screen a special 10th-anniversary film. Live music will be played by a balalaika ensemble.

Dutch Embassy Plenipotentiary Onno Elderenbosch will appear as a guest of honor and open the buffet. After dinner, there will be an auction for photos by Dutch photographer Adriaan Backer as well as a luxury stay at Swissotel Krasnye Holmy. Guests will also have the chance to bid on a breakfast with Pozner himself.

AIDS Foundation East-West is a Dutch NGO working in Eastern Europe and Central Asia to reduce the impact of HIV on vulnerable populations. The organization works with prisons, health care providers and local communities throughout eight countries in the region. It promotes a stigma- and discrimination-free approach to treatment and prevention.

"We want to show that HIV is still a big issue in Eastern Europe and raise awareness that Russian companies should take responsibility for fellow citizens," said Anke van Dam, director of operations and programs.

"The Russian government assures that people get treatment when they are already ill, but the main challenge in terms of finding funding is to sponsor prevention campaigns, like promoting the use of clean needles, which is an extremely sensitive topic in Russia."

The Red Ribbon Ball is on Saturday from 6:30 p.m. to midnight at Swissotel Krasnye Holmy, located at 52 Kosmodamianskaya Naberezhnaya, Bldg. 6. Single entry: 4,000 rubles ($130). For more information, contact Judith Zaal at judith_zaal@afew.org or +31 206-381-718.

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