

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Celebrities join push for action on the Millennium Development Goals**

UNITED NATIONS, 1 September 2010 – Actors, singers, athletes and other celebrities are joining the push for action against extreme poverty, hunger and disease, the United Nations announced today.

With only five years left until the 2015 target date for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – the eight anti-poverty goals world leaders agreed to at the Millennium Summit in 2000 – the UN is leading a collective effort to accelerate progress towards the Goals.

A UN Summit in New York on 20-22 September will bring together close to 150 Heads of State and Government, joined by leaders from the private sector, foundations and civil society, to commit to an action agenda to achieve the MDGs.

A group of UN Goodwill Ambassadors and Messengers of Peace with a track record of speaking out against poverty are now adding their voice to the call for action. Among those who have joined the effort are the following (shown in parentheses is their nationality and which UN agency they are affiliated with):

Goodwill Ambassadors **Goedele Liekens** (Belgium / UN Population Fund (UNFPA) / media star), **Angelique Kidjo** (Benin / UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) / singer), **Ronaldo** (Brazil / UN Development Programme (UNDP) / football player), **Didier Drogba** (Côte d'Ivoire / UNDP / football player), **Liya Kebede** (Ethiopia / World Health Organization (WHO) / model); **Zinédine Zidane** (France / UNDP / football player), **Michael Ballack** (Germany / Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) / football player), **Anggun** (Indonesia / Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) / singer), **Tetsuko Kuroyanagi** (Japan / UNICEF / actress, author, TV host); **Her Majesty Queen Rania** of Jordan (UNICEF), **Paul Tergat** (Kenya / World Food Programme (WFP) / runner); **Toumane Diabate** (Mali / UNAIDS / musician); **Nawal El Moutawakel** (Morocco / 1999 UNICEF Morocco National Ambassador / athlete), **Catarina Furtado** (Portugal / UNFPA / actress), **Ricky Martin** (Puerto Rico / UNICEF / singer); **Maria Sharapova** (Russia / UNDP / tennis player), **Antonio Banderas** (Spain / UNDP / actor), **Emmanuel Adebayor** (Togo / UNAIDS / football player), **Craig David** (UK / WHO / singer), **Annie Lennox** (UK / UNAIDS / singer), **Don Cheadle** (US / UN Environment Programme (UNEP) / actor), **Mia Farrow** (US / UNICEF / actress) and **Carl Lewis** (US / FAO / runner); and UN Messengers of Peace **Paulo Coelho** (Brazil, author), **Midori Goto** (Japan, violinist) and **Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein** of Jordan.

"I thank these outstanding leaders for joining our push to advance progress towards the Millennium Development Goals," UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said. "They are household names who are bringing the message of global justice and solidarity to homes and communities around the world."

Some of the celebrities will be attending the UN Summit later this month. Their ongoing activities include media interviews and appearances at events and in videos and public service announcements. A number of them have joined the UN online campaign to spread the word. To find out more, follow @WeCanEndPoverty on Twitter.

**For more information** on the Millennium Development Goals, Summit and activities of the group of Goodwill Ambassadors and Messengers of Peace, as well as a list of UN System media contacts, please visit [www.un.org/millenniumgoals](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals).

**Media contacts:**

Pragati Pascale, Tel: +1 212 963 6870, e-mail: [pascale@un.org](mailto:pascale@un.org); Martina Donlon, Tel: +1 212 963 6816, e-mail: [donlon@un.org](mailto:donlon@un.org); UN Department of Public Information

To request an interview with one of the Goodwill Ambassadors, contact the media office for the relevant UN agency; for UN Messengers of Peace, contact Joanna Piucci, [piucci@un.org](mailto:piucci@un.org), Tel: +1 212 963 7346 or Carlos Islam, [islamc@un.org](mailto:islamc@un.org), Tel: +1 212 963 2985