

United Nations Nations Unies

New York Office of Sport for Development and Peace
Bureau de New York pour le Sport au service du Développement et de la Paix



UN Soccer Team Benefit Aids Earthquake and Hurricane Survivors

United Nations, New York, 21 November 2005 –The United Nations Soccer Club, in collaboration with the United Nations New York Office of Sport for Development and Peace and the United Nations Staff Relief Committee hosted a benefit soccer game between the United Nations Soccer Team and the Metropolitan All Stars Team on Saturday 19 November at the Metropolitan Oval soccer stadium in New York. The proceeds from the game were donated to aid the survivors of the Pakistan Earthquake and Hurricane Katrina.

The match raised nearly \$1000 for relief efforts in Pakistan, where 3.2 million people were left homeless after the earthquake struck on 8 October. To demonstrate solidarity for the survivors, Djibril Diallo, Director of the United Nations New York Office of Sport for Development and Peace, asked Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Acting Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, and Pakistan's Counsel General Haroon Shaukat to help kick off the game.

Several members of the United Nations community were also present to support the initiative. In the thrilling game, the United Nations Soccer Team came from behind to defeat the Metropolitan All Stars 2-1.

“Sport, due to its mass appeal and excitement,” said Mr. Diallo, “provides a channel to raise awareness about relevant issues. This makes it a powerful tool for promoting health, education, development, and peace.”

The soccer benefit was held in connection with the International Year of Sport and Physical Education 2005 (IYSPE 2005). IYSPE 2005 provides the United Nations and organizations with the opportunity to highlight the power of sport to contribute to the Millennium Development Goals, as well as promote the use of sport to defuse political tension and facilitate post-conflict reconciliation.

IYSPE 2005 seeks to encourage the use of sport to promote education, health, development and peace. “Sport can play a role in improving the lives of whole communities”, said UN Secretary- General Kofi Annan. “I am convinced that the time is right to build on that understanding, to encourage governments, development agencies

and communities to think how sport can be included more systematically in the plans to help children, particularly those living in the midst of poverty, disease and conflict.”

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For more information on the International Year of Sport and Physical Education (IYSPE 2005) and on the United Nations work in the area of sport for development and peace, please visit: <http://www.un.org/sport2005>