

PRESS RELEASE

Women's football teams 'Give AIDS the Red Card' to keep children free from HIV

GENEVA, 24 June 2011—Captains of national football teams competing in the upcoming FIFA Women's World Cup 2011 soccer championship in Germany are signing up to the *Give AIDS the Red Card* appeal in support of a global plan to eliminate new HIV infections among children by 2015. The *Give AIDS the Red Card* appeal, which was launched by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) one year ago at the FIFA 2010 World Cup in South Africa, uses the power and outreach of football to unite the world around stopping new HIV infections in children.

UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé said, "As the most important international competition in women's football, this tournament provides a platform to raise global awareness about the campaign to keep babies from becoming infected with HIV, and their mothers from dying from AIDS."

Every day more than 1000 babies are born with HIV. However with access to HIV counseling and testing for pregnant women and their partners, and treatment when needed, the risk of transmission can be brought down to less than 5%.

On signing the pledge, team captains appeal to football players and fans across the world to 'celebrate life and support the global campaign to prevent mothers from dying and babies from becoming infected with HIV'.

The FIFA Women's World Cup 2011 is taking place from 26 June to 17 July. So far five captains have signed the appeal; Faye White (England), Sandrine Soubeyrand (France), Rebecca Smith (New Zealand), Ingvild Stensland (Norway), and Christie Rampone (United States).

"One of the great things about representing our country on the big stages is the opportunity for us to support causes we care about," said U.S. Women's World Cup Team captain Christie Rampone. "I signed onto a global campaign called *Give AIDS the Red Card* which helps to generate political action towards ending the AIDS epidemic among babies and young children around the world. I am confident about linking this noble cause with the game we all cherish."

Rampone, who is among the more experienced U.S. players and will be playing in her fourth World Cup added, "UNAIDS asked the U.S. soccer team to help lead this campaign around the world, and we are happy to lend our support on a global stage to a global problem. The UN wants to end pediatric AIDS by 2015 and so do we!"

The captains of the other competing teams, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Equatorial Guinea, Germany, Japan, DPR Korea, Mexico, Nigeria, and Sweden, will also be

encouraged to become “Red Card Advocates” by signing the appeal during the tournament and publicize global efforts to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV by 2015.

There are 34 million people globally living with HIV, of whom 22.5 million are in sub-Saharan Africa. Despite progress towards the goal of eliminating new HIV infections among children , in 2009 alone there were 370,000 children born with HIV, bringing to 2.5 million the total number of children under 15 living with HIV.

The 2011 Women’s World Cup is one of several high-profile football championships, including the 2012 African Nations Cup and UEFA Euro 2012, leading up to the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil, that can provide platforms for raising wide awareness about the campaign to eliminate HIV in children.

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UNAIDS

UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, is an innovative United Nations partnership that leads and inspires the world in achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. Learn more at unaids.org.