

## Football star Emmanuel Adebayor appointed as UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador

**Geneva, 23 March 2009** – Togolese football star Emmanuel Adebayor has been named as Goodwill Ambassador for the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). The Arsenal star and “African Footballer of the Year” will use his sporting popularity to raise awareness about the epidemic globally, including the importance of preventing new infections among young people.

Mr Adebayor became interested in working on AIDS after seeing the impact of the epidemic in his native Togo. “Young people are most affected by the epidemic around the world,” he said. “Many of these young people aren’t aware of HIV and the risk of infection, and don’t know how to protect themselves. I hope I can help change this in my new role as UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador.”

Mr Adebayor joins fellow footballer and UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador Michael Ballack, working together in an HIV awareness campaign, ‘On the pitch we compete – off the pitch we are uniting the world against AIDS.’

“Sports stars like Emmanuel are excellent role models for young people,” said Michel Sidibé, executive director of UNAIDS. “I am confident that he will use the same skill and determination he has on the field in teaching young people about how to protect themselves against HIV off the field.”

UNAIDS estimates that about half of all new HIV infections occur among young people aged 15-24 and that the key to reversing the epidemic is preventing infections among this age group.

For more information on UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassadors please visit:

<http://www.unaids.org/en/Partnerships/Advocacy+partners/SpecRep/>

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UNAIDS is an innovative joint venture of the United Nations, bringing together the efforts and resources of the UNAIDS Secretariat and ten UN system organizations in the AIDS response. The Secretariat headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland—with staff on the ground in more than 80 countries. Coherent action on AIDS by the UN system is coordinated in countries through UN theme groups, and joint programmes on AIDS. UNAIDS’ Cosponsors include UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank. Visit the UNAIDS Web site at [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org)