



PRESS RELEASE

BUILDING PEACE THROUGH SPORT – AFRICAN UNION AND PEACE ONE DAY UNITE ON PEACE DAY

With a few days to go until Peace Day, 21 September, the African Union and Peace One Day, an NGO dedicated to the promotion of global peace, have partnered with the goal of uniting the African continent through football.

On 21 September, communities across the continent will be pulling out their team shirts and vuvuzelas for the second time this year, as they come together to unite in the spirit of Peace Day. These community-led football matches will unite Africans, young and old, from North to South, East to West, with the aim of promoting and contributing to conflict resolution and peace-building on the continent.

“Sport plays a critical role in peace building, enabling children, women and men in broken societies to share a common language and a spirit of fair play that transcends divisions and despair that are the consequences of conflict,” said Ramtane Lamamra, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security.

The power of football to unite and inspire was visible throughout Africa’s first FIFA World Cup, hosted this year in South Africa. The continent’s unified support for the tournament and love of the game overwhelmed many of the issues that often challenge Africa’s peace and stability.

The **One Day One Goal** initiative, created by Peace One Day with the support of PUMA.Peace, aims to see football matches played in every country of the world on Peace Day. Last year, over 700 matches took place in 200 countries.

Jeremy Gilley, Founder of Peace One Day, said: *“One Day One Goal matches celebrate cooperation, unity and the power of football to bring people together on Peace Day. This year, we want to instigate hundreds of matches across Africa, celebrating football’s power to unite the continent in this year of the inaugural African World Cup.”* The African Union has enlisted a number of Peace Ambassadors to encourage public participation in Peace Day activities, which, in addition to the One Day One Goal football matches, include a one-minute silence, peace lessons in schools, and various cultural events.

“Football is a magical game, with an extraordinary capacity to move people and unite communities. It teaches cooperation, teamwork and solidarity while striving for a common goal, both on and off the pitch,” said Michael Essien, Peace Ambassador for the 2010 Year of Peace and Security in Africa.

2010
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Essien is one of a number of professional sportsmen endorsing the Year of Peace and Security and the One Day One Goal initiatives. Others include Abedi Pele, Sadok Sassi and Rabah Madjer, former international football stars.

The **African Union** and **Peace One Day** invite everyone on the continent to organise or participate in a match or tournament on Peace Day. Information on Peace Day and how to organise a community match is available at www.peaceoneday.org, and further information on the Year of Peace and Security in Africa can be found at www.makepeacehappen.net.

Notes to Editors

Year of Peace and Security in Africa

On 31 August 2009, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU), meeting in Tripoli, on the occasion of the Special Session on the Consideration and Resolution of Conflicts in Africa, declared 2010 to be the Year of Peace and Security on the continent, proclaiming in paragraph 9 of the Tripoli Declaration:

"...We are determined to deal once and for all with the scourge of conflicts and violence on our continent, acknowledging our shortcomings and errors, committing our resources and our best people, and missing no opportunity to push forward the agenda of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction. We, as leaders, simply cannot bequeath the burden of conflicts to the next generation of Africans".

Peace One Day

Peace One Day is a not-for-profit organisation that seeks to promote global peace, through film, music, education and sport. Peace One Day organises and initiates annual events and activities that raise awareness about the causes and consequences of conflict and that promote peace-building, including film making, concerts, and football matches.

One Day One Goal

Peace One Day's *One Day One Goal* initiative, supported by **PUMA.Peace**, aims to encourage football (soccer) matches all over the world on Peace Day. Teams are often created with a mix of players from different cultures or communities. One Day One Goal matches celebrate cooperation, unity and the power of football to bring people together on Peace Day.

Last year, there were over 700 One Day One Goal football matches involving over 75,000 participants in all 192 UN Member States and beyond. This year, POD is aiming to repeat the successful 2009 campaign to instigate at least one football match in every UN Member State on Peace Day and increase the number of matches within each country; POD also aims to manifest matches all over the world that focus on using football to strengthen communities and support peace-building efforts, and to instigate hundreds of matches across Africa celebrating football's power to unite the continent in this year of the inaugural African World Cup.