

Press Release

From: Ghana Protect the Goal Partnership

To: All Media Houses

Ghana Unveils Unprecedented Rally around “Protect the Goal” World Tour

Accra, 19 May 2014 -- The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), in partnership with Ghana AIDS Commission and the Ghana Football Association and in close collaboration with the Ministries of Youth and Sports as well as Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts has announced an official stopover of the “Protect the Goal” campaign World Tour in Ghana. This Global Tour, which runs under the slogan “From Soweto to Bahia” will take a “Protect the Goal” football from South Africa towards Brazil, around the occasion of the 2014 FIFA World Cup.

UNAIDS, in cooperation with FIFA and the Governments of Brazil and South Africa have announced the kick-off of the world tour of the UNAIDS/FIFA *Protect the Goal (PtG) Ball*. *Protect the Goal* campaign, which was first launched at the 2013 African Cup of Nations, is a campaign to raise awareness around HIV prevention and encourage young people to get actively involved in both the national and global response to HIV through the promotion of safer sexual practices.

The official world tour kick-off event was held at the Soccer City Stadium, the largest stadium in Africa, during the South Africa-Brazil international friendly on 5th March 2014. The world tour will continue its journey through the 32 qualified countries to the 2014 FIFA World Cup final in Brazil, including five African countries – Algeria, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria.

The Ghana Protect the Goal Campaign (GH-PtG) was endorsed by H.E. President John Dramani Mahama, Asamoah Gyan, the Captain of the Black Stars, and the UN-RC on 03 January 2013. GH-PtG highlights the value of football as a tool for social change. It emphasizes the importance

of individual and social responsibility and features individuals and organizations that play an important role in advocacy for HIV awareness and prevention by linking HIV to football.

The Ghana Protect the Goal Campaign, driven by the 'practice safe sex' strategy has three key evidence based messages which are:

- Use Condom
- Know Your HIV Status
- Reduce Sexual Partners

The PtG World Tour

In its World Tour, the "PtG Global Ball" has embarked on an exciting journey from South Africa where President Jacob Zuma appended his signature in solidarity with UNAIDS at the Soweto Soccer City Stadium during an international friendly match between Brazil and South Africa.

The "Global Ball" is currently travelling through the other African Nations of Cameroon, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire and Algeria and will arrive in Ghana on 21st May. It will travel to the other Nations on the other continents before finally landing in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil, on June 9th 2014.

As the "PtG Ball" travels on its Global Tour, it will be signed by the Heads of State of each of these countries to symbolize their renewed commitment to accelerate the UNAIDS vision of a world with Zero New HIV Infection, Zero Discrimination and Zero AIDS-related deaths.

When the Global Ball arrives in Ghana It will be officially signed by HE John Dramani Mahama in the afternoon of the 23rd of May 2014 at the Office of the President, Flagstaff House.

Some other activities have been earmarked and these include an online discussion on HIV prevention with particular emphasis on the GH-PtG messages. This will be facilitated by Blogging Ghana. There will also be a special screening by UNAIDS of the movie, "Love or Something Like That", which is themed around HIV prevention, condom use, discordant couples and the devastating effects of HIV related stigma on individuals and their relationships.

The GH-PtG campaign has also collected over 150,000 signatures from youth, celebrities and other high profile celebrities so far in collaboration with National Youth Authority.

A press interaction will be held on the morning of Friday 23rd May 2014 at the Alisa Hotel at 9am with national authorities and the Global Tour Team. The global Tour Team will also be having a meeting with youth leaders on 24th May, as well as some courtesy calls on select officials of the country.

About the Ghana Protect the Goal Team

The Protect the Goal Team is made up of representatives from the UNAIDS, Ghana AIDS Commission and the Ghana Football Association. The Team is responsible for the various activities of the Protect the Goal in Ghana.