



UN Annex Building Plot 4609, Corner of Beit/Andrew Mwenya Roads Rhodespark
P.O. Box 32346, Lusaka, Zambia. Tel: (260-1) 255322/255336, 255398,
Fax: 252863 E-mail: registry@zm.afro.who.int

6th November 2005

**STATEMENT BY THE WHO REPRESENTATIVE DR
STELLA ANYANGWE ON THE OCCASION OF THE
OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE HIV/AIDS CARTOON BOOKLET
“STAND UP FOR HUMAN RIGHTS” ON STIGMA AND
DISCRIMINATION IN ZAMBIA AT IMBOELA STADIUM,
SUNDAY 6Th NOVEMBER 2005**

THE GUEST OF HONOUR
REPRESENTATIVES FROM UN AGENCIES IN ZAMBIA
REPRESENTATIVES FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS
THE PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF HEALTH
THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, CENTRAL BOARD OF HEALTH
THE FAZ PRESIDENT
THE PROVINCIAL HEALTH DIRECTOR, LUSAKA
THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF HEALTH, LUSAKA
DISTINGUISHED INVITED GUESTS
MEMBERS OF THE PRESS
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO BE PART OF THIS IMPORTANT EVENT
MARKING THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE HIV/AIDS CARTOON BOOKLET
ON STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION “HIV/AIDS STAND UP FOR HUMAN
RIGHTS.”

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION OF ZAMBIA (FAZ)
FOR ACCEPTING THE REQUEST FROM THE WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATION TO HOST THIS LAUNCH AND FOR THE GREAT EFFORT
THEY HAVE MADE IN ORGANIZING THIS WONDERFUL EVENT.

THE BOOKLET WE ARE LAUNCHING TODAY WAS PUBLISHED BY THE
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION IN COLLABORATION WITH UNITED
NATIONS OFFICE FOR THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

(OHCHR) AND THE UNITED NATIONS JOINT PROGRAMME FOR HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). IT WAS DEVELOPED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE WORLD AIDS CAMPAIGN FOR 2002-2003 AND THE "3X5" INITIATIVE WHICH AIMS TO PROVIDE THREE MILLION PEOPLE LIVING WITH AIDS WITH ANTI RETROVIRAL THERAPY BY THE END OF 2005.

PROMOTING AND PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CONTEXT OF HIV/AIDS IS ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE AN EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO THE EPIDEMIC. FOOTBALL IS RECOGNISED AS A MEDIUM TO DISSEMINATE IMPORTANT HUMAN RIGHTS AND PUBLIC HEALTH MESSAGES TO THE YOUTHS AND INDEED TO ADULTS. IT IS THE UNIVERSAL NATURE OF FOOTBALL THAT LED WHO, OHCHR AND UNAIDS TO BEGIN THIS CARTOON WITH A DIALOGUE AMONG YOUTHS AT A FOOTBALL FIELD. THIS SETTING HAS RELEVANCE FOR COMMUNITIES AROUND THE WORLD, ITS PRESENCE IN THE CARTOON PROMOTES THE INCORPORATION OF MANY CULTURES INTO A DIALOGUE ON HIV/AIDS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, HIV/AIDS IMPACTS NOT ONLY ON THE PHYSICAL HEALTH OF INDIVIDUALS BUT ALSO THEIR MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL IDENTITY. THE STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION SURROUNDING HIV/AIDS CAN BE AS DESTRUCTIVE AS THE DISEASE ITSELF. THE CARTOON ILLUSTRATES HOW LACK OF AWARENESS ABOUT HIV/AIDS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO STIGMA, DISCRIMINATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS.

DISCRIMINATION BASED ON SEX, GENDER ROLES AND OTHER GROUNDS CAN HINDER PEOPLE'S ABILITY TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM HIV INFECTION AND PREVENT PEOPLE FROM ACCESSING TREATMENT, CARE AND SUPPORT. IN ORDER TO MAXIMISE THE OUTREACH OF THIS CARTOON, WHO, UNAIDS AND OHCHR HAVE WIDELY DISTRIBUTED THE CARTOON.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, TODAY WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT ON THE EFFECT OF STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION ON THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV/AIDS AND THE EFFORT OUR COMMUNITIES ARE MAKING TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM. WE SHOULD BE REMINDED THAT STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION CONTINUE TO POSE BARRIERS TO HIV PREVENTION AND TREATMENT. AS LONG AS WE ALLOW THESE TO EXIST, THE EPIDEMIC WILL CONTINUE TO RAVAGE OUR COMMUNITIES.

PEOPLE WITH HIV/AIDS ARE REGULARLY BLAMED, SHUNNED, ISOLATED, MISTREATED OR REJECTED BY THEIR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES. SOCIAL, CULTURAL OR RELIGIOUS REASONS ARE USED AS PRETEXTS FOR DISCRIMINATION AND STIGMATIZATION. THOSE INFECTED SHUN TREATMENT AND CARE SO AS TO AVOID SUSPICION. AS A RESULT, THEY ARE DENIED TREATMENT, HAVE DIFFICULTY

GETTING JOBS AND HOUSING OR MAY EVEN BE REFUSED SCHOLARSHIPS OR ENTRY INTO A FOREIGN COUNTRY.

STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION SHOULD BE ADDRESSED SERIOUSLY BECAUSE IT IS ALSO PART OF THE CONTINUUM OF THE SOLUTION TO HIV/AIDS AS ABSTINENCE, FAITHFULNESS, VOLUNTARY COUNSELING AND TESTING, TREATMENT, USE OF CONDOMS, ETC. STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION MAKE HIV INFECTION DIFFICULT TO DISCUSS AND DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH. DENYING THE EXISTENCE OF THE DISEASE FUELS THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS.

THERE IS NEED TO ADDRESS STIGMA AND REMOVE THE HOSTILE CLIMATE AROUND HIV/AIDS. WE SHOULD THEREFORE CREATE MORE PUBLIC AWARENESS TO REDUCE THE FEAR AND PREJUDICE, INVOLVE PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS AND EMPOWERING THEM IN VARIOUS ACTIVITIES, PROVIDING ACCESS TO PREVENTION AND CARE, COUNSELING AND SUPPORT, TRAIN HEALTH WORKERS, AND OBSERVE CONFIDENTIALITY AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS.

IT IS ESTIMATED THAT CLOSE TO 40 MILLION PEOPLE ARE CURRENTLY LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS. OF THESE, AN ESTIMATED 25.4 MILLION ARE IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA. WORLDWIDE, AN ESTIMATED 2.2 MILLION CHILDREN ARE ESTIMATED TO BE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS.

THE "3 BY 5" INITIATIVE, A GLOBAL STRATEGY THAT IS TARGETED AT GETTING THREE MILLION PEOPLE ON ANTI- RETROVIRAL DRUGS BY THE END OF 2005 WAS ANNOUNCED ON 21ST JULY 2003 BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION DR. JONG-WOOK LEE. AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY SPECIAL SESSION ON HIV/AIDS ON 22ND SEPTEMBER 2003, WHO DECLARED THE LACK OF ACCESS TO HIV TREATMENT A GLOBAL HEALTH EMERGENCY. THE "3 BY 5" STRATEGY AIMS TO EXPAND ACCESS TO ANTI-RETROVIRAL DRUGS . WE CANNOT ACHIEVE THESE GOALS IF WE ALLOW STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION TO THRIVE.

THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION IS NOW WORKING TO FURTHER INTEGRATE A HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH TO ITS WORK BY DEVELOPING A WHO STRATEGY ON HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS. THE IDEA IS TO DEVELOP A CONCRETE STRATEGY THAT IS MEANINGFUL AND RELEVANT TO THE WORK ON HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN COUNTRIES.

GUEST OF HONOUR SIR, I AM AWARE OF THE GOOD POLICIES AND STRATEGIES THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF ZAMBIA HAS PUT IN PLACE TO PROMOTE SPORT IN THE COUNTRY. IT IS MY SINCERE HOPE THAT THE USE OF THIS CARTOON IN FOOTBALL AND OTHER SPORT WILL

STIMULATE MORE ACTION AGAINST HIV-RELATED STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION AT ALL LEVELS IN SOCIETY.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, ALLOW ME TO REMIND YOU AGAIN THAT STIGMA HURTS, IT PREVENTS THOSE AFFECTED FROM SEEKING INFORMATION AND CARE AND FUELS THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS, LET US JOIN HANDS IN STAMPING IT OUT OF OUR COMMUNITIES.

“REMEMBER, SPORT UNITES US, STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION DIVIDES US”

I THANK YOU.