



Press Release

YVONNE CHAKA CHAKA LEADS MALARIA MEMORIAL FOR BAND MEMBER AND CALLS ON COUNTRIES TO SUPPORT THE GLOBAL FUND

DURBAN, South Africa, July 1st 2006 – South African singer Yvonne Chaka Chaka paid a moving tribute to her former band member Phumzile Ntuli - and all others who have needlessly lost their lives to malaria - today at the EtheKwini Community Church, in Durban. The service took place following the unveiling of a special tomb stone at the Red Hill Cemetery, where Phumzile's body rests.

Surrounded by Phumzile's family and remaining band members, the artist and UNICEF Regional spokesperson on malaria acknowledged the devastating impact of this disease on individual's lives and urged the crowd to turn remembrance into action. "Let Phumzile's death not be in vain. Many are in desperate need of prevention and treatment. We must do more to fight this disease," said Chaka Chaka.

Yvonne Chaka Chaka became an active campaigner against malaria two years ago. Distraught by Phumzile's death, she discovered that millions of others - mainly women and children living in Africa - die each year from a disease which is preventable, treatable and controllable.

"The world is not sufficiently aware of the damage caused by malaria," she added. "The Global Fund is helping countries buy protective nets and treatments but it is desperately short of money. We have a responsibility to demand that donors and leaders keep their promises and make adequate funds available."

Coinciding with the 2nd *Partnership Forum* of The Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the subsequent Replenishment Conference (2- 5 July) in Durban, Phumzile's story stresses the urgency of financing the estimated US\$ 2.1 billion shortfall facing the Fund for 2006 -2007 in order to scale up programs against the three diseases. "South Africa must set an example, even a small amount donated by my own country will show our commitment to reducing the huge funding gap and encourage other donors," stated the artist.

The Global Fund provides more than half of all donor spending on malaria prevention and treatment such as Artemisinin-based Combination Therapies (ACT) - the most effective malaria treatment available to date - and insecticide-treated bed nets. It has already allocated, after five funding rounds, US\$1.2 billion for programs fighting the disease in more than 60 countries around the world.

In 2004, Phumzile traveled with her band to Gabon where she contracted malaria. Upon her return to South Africa she became ill. Four days later she fell into a coma from which she never recovered. She passed away on June 23rd 2004.

Over the years, Yvonne Chaka Chaka has been associated with various charities, and her generosity has benefited untold numbers of individuals and families in their daily struggles against AIDS, abuse and poverty. In April 2005, she was appointed UNICEF Regional Spokesperson on Malaria for Eastern and Southern Africa to advocate on behalf of children and women - the most affected by this disease. More recently, she joined the newly formed Gender and Malaria Network supported by the Roll Back Malaria Partnership..

The Roll Back Malaria Partnership

To provide coordinated international approach to fighting malaria, the Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM) (www.rollbackmalaria.org) was launched in 1998 by the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank. The Partnership now brings together governments of countries affected by malaria, their bilateral and multilateral development partners, the private sector, non-governmental and community-based organizations, foundations, and research and academic institutions around the common goal of halving the global burden of malaria by 2010. *Global Strategic Plan to Roll Back Malaria 2005-2015* (http://www.rollbackmalaria.org/forumV/docs/gsp_en.pdf)

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