



Press Release

27 January 2005

UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, Angelique Kidjo, to join Africa Unite Celebrations



UNICEF/HQ 03-0135/Markisz

West African singer, songwriter and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, Angelique Kidjo, will be in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for Africa Unite, a month-long celebration in February commemorating the 60th birthday of legendary Reggae superstar, Bob Marley.

Kidjo describes the music of Bob Marley as powerful on many levels and credits Marley with having opened her eyes to global issues. "Being born in an African city, it was difficult for me to have a clear understanding of the entire world. Bob Marley, with lyrics that everyone can understand, gives you many tales of injustice, discrimination and slavery. Of equal importance were Bob Marley's melodies, harmonies and arrangements. His songs were masterpieces. Every song has a little something that makes it unique".

Kidjo, herself one of the most electrifying performers in the world today, is participating in what has been hailed as 'an international historical event.'

Kidjo will take part in discussions with young people on day three of the three-day 'Africa Unite Symposium' (February 2- 4). The symposium will bring together artists, intellectuals and youth for deliberations on Africa's past, present and future through the prism of Bob Marley's songs including, 'Africa Unite', 'No Woman No Cry' and 'Redemption Song'.



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Says Kidjo, “The Africa Unite Symposium is a good vehicle for us to draw attention to the problems of Africa; to the issues relating to the youth and women of Africa; and also to the Diaspora, the link between the continent and its people all over the world.”

The symposium is being organised by The Bob Marley and Rita Marley Foundations, the African Union, the World Bank, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

On Friday, February 4, Kidjo will perform at a UNICEF Benefit for the Bob Marley Youth Development Centre. She will also perform on Sunday, February 6, at the Africa Unite Concert at Meskel Square.

Angelique Kidjo, who became a UNICEF Goodwill ambassador on July 25, 2002, is one of the music world’s most forward thinkers, with a deep commitment to children and young people. In her lyrics, Kidjo has explored the topics of race, environment, homelessness and the need to integrate. Says Kidjo, “Young people are the hope of my continent. When I watch the children of Africa, all dreams seem possible.”

Kidjo is among an eclectic group of intellectual and artistic talents congregating in Addis Ababa for the celebrations. Other distinguished guests will include the Marley family, the I-Threes, Luciano and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, Danny Glover, among others.

Africa Unite kicks off on 1 February 2005. The month-long celebration includes art exhibitions, a film festival and concerts.

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