

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **“MELLO GETS WARM WELCOME TO GUYANA AS WORLD CUP FEVER HITS GUYANESE”**

**Georgetown, Guyana, UNICEF Tuesday February, 2007** -- It was a hot day, blessed with brilliant sunshine when Mello touched down in Guyana, last Friday, beginning a ten-day tour as the official mascot of the ICC Cricket World Cup 2007. Wearing the bright red AIDS ribbon, Mello's participation in this leg of a Caribbean-wide tour is aimed at supporting the ICC/UNAIDS/UNICEF partnership to use the CWC 2007 as a vehicle to assist in combating HIV/AIDS, highlighting prevention and overcoming stigma and discrimination.

A suave looking Mello made his debut at the Timehri International Airport, treated to sweet Caribbean-style renditions of steel pan music and greeted by students from the Redeemer Primary School. Nodding, and waving and shaking hands with the obviously amused children, Mello later joined officials of UNICEF, the Local Organising Committee (LOC) and the media, making their way to the Guyana National Cricket Stadium, for the first ever match to be played at the spanking new facility.



**“This is all I have” – Mello checking in with Immigration at the Timehri International Airport.**

As overpowering as he may seem, “Mello” quickly got into the swing of things and freely interacted with the large crowd that had assembled to witness the friendly contest and have a first hand look at the facility.



Mello also participated in the Children's Costume Parade on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup>, part of the Mashramani celebrations for 2007. Riding amidst some 3,000 children, all in brilliant, attractive costumes, Mello's message was very strong and visible – **Put Children First**. Over the next five days in Guyana, Mello is expected to make several appearances including the launch of the UNICEF/Scotia Bank and Guyana Cricket Board Kiddies Cricket Tournament and several visits to schools advocating love, care and protection of people affected and infected by HIV.

Hosted by UNICEF and the Local Organising Committee, Mello will give much needed support to the Global Campaign *Unite for Children, Unite Against Aids*. His visit here is in an effort to reach audiences in CWC countries, particularly children and young people around HIV/AIDS, and generally to advocate for the redoubling of efforts towards an AIDS free generation.

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Guyana Here I come.....



Mello and Mash – Leading the Children's Costume Parade



Welcome to Guyana Mello – UNICEF Representative Johannes Wedenig gives Mello a grand tour of UNICEF Guyana after his arrival in Guyana.



*About UNICEF*

UNITE FOR CHILDREN  UNITE AGAINST AIDS

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*UNICEF is on the ground in 155 countries and territories to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence. The world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments.*

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