

AUDREY HEPBURN

International Film star and Academy Award winner, Audrey Hepburn, became an official UNICEF spokesperson in 1988. In 1989, she was named Goodwill Ambassador, and immediately set off to visit drought-stricken Ethiopia. At the press conference announcing her appointment, Miss Hepburn stated, "I can testify to what UNICEF means to children because I was among the recipients of food and medical relief right after World War II. I have a long-lasting gratitude and trust for what UNICEF does."

Even before her appointment as UNICEF Ambassador, Audrey Hepburn participated in fund-raising and advocacy activities, supporting UNICEF greeting card sales, and appearing at benefit events in Tokyo and Macao. On the mission to Ethiopia in 1988, senior UNICEF officials accompanied her into Eritrea and Tigray, the provinces worst-affected by the drought. She met many of the displaced population, learned about transportation and logistics operations and the needs at food distribution centres, and saw much-needed water supply systems being renovated and made usable with UNICEF assistance.

At a London press conference immediately after leaving Ethiopia, Miss Hepburn spoke with great feeling about the problems and the particular needs of women and children which she had witnessed first-hand. It was the first of many interviews and meetings with the press which took place during the next few weeks. She undertook a schedule that included as many as fifteen print and broadcast interviews a day, in the US (including visits with important members of the U.S. Congress), Canada, Switzerland, Finland, the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy.

In April of 1988, Miss Hepburn represented UNICEF at the International Children's Day celebration in Turkey, and in October, she travelled to South America. In Venezuela, she visited UNICEF-assisted pre-school activities as well as training programmes for women, ending her visit with a well-attended press conference. In Ecuador, she saw several projects in Quito involving pre-school education and child-care programmes as well as services to street children, all supported by UNICEF. Miss Hepburn was a special guest at the launching of an important Andean region development programme, PROANDES.

Then in February 1989, Miss Hepburn visited Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Mexico. In remote mountain villages of Guatemala she inaugurated the first new drinking water system and visited a rural health center. The Honduras visit offered the opportunity to see a new drinking water system in an urban slum area, which is so successful it actually produces income for the community. In El Salvador, she saw self-help efforts in health and education, including a radio literacy project for the rural population. In Mexico, as in the other three countries, she saw a full range of child survival and development programmes.

Advocacy was an important aspect of this trip. Miss Hepburn launched the 1989 *State of the World's Children Report* and awarded the National Media Prizes. She met individually with the Vice-President of Guatemala, and Presidents of Honduras and El Salvador for important sessions concerning programmes to benefit the children of Central America. Later Miss Hepburn was invited

to Washington, D.C. to testify at Hearings of the House Foreign Operations Sub-Committee and the House Select Sub-Committee on Hunger. She also met President and Mrs. Bush, as well as several senators and representatives.

She then departed for the Sudan to witness Operation Lifeline Sudan. After a courtesy call on the Prime Minister, she waved good luck to the first barge of food and medical supplies leaving on the Nile from Khartoum en route to Kosti, and the first 18 wagons of a train of provisions from Rabak station. She also travelled the difficult roads to the rebel-held Southern Sudan, where she met with rebel leaders. There were also visits to camps for displaced persons in Muglad and El Mereim, where Miss Hepburn witnessed the plight of the displaced in the Sudan. Upon her return in April, she reported her findings to the UNICEF Executive Board.

In October 1989, Audrey Hepburn completed an extensive UNICEF mission which began with an advocacy and fund-raising trip throughout Australia to assist the National Committee. Then she travelled to Thailand where she met with press and visited programmes for Bangkok's underprivileged children. Her next stop was Bangladesh where in various locations she visited UNICEF-assisted projects in immunization, formal and non-formal education, slum improvement and women's programmes. She also met with high level government and health officials, as well as press and broadcast media.

Audrey Hepburn has been of tremendous assistance to fund-raising and advocacy efforts of a great many UNICEF National Committees including Australia, Canada, France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, United Kingdom, and the United States. In addition, every year since 1988, she served as host for the "Danny Kaye International Children's Awards" show taped in the Netherlands and seen throughout the world.

During 1990, she participated in a series of US fund raising concerts, appearing with Michael Tilson-Thomas and the New World Symphony, and was honoured at a dinner by the Washington D.C. Advisory Council. On 30 September, she actively participated at the World Summit for Children at the United Nations, giving a series of press and broadcast interviews. Later that year, after advocacy and fund-raising appearances in Australia and New Zealand, she travelled to Viet Nam where she witnessed UNICEF-assisted immunization, water and education programmes. This mission was followed with a press conference in Paris on her return. For the December launch of the 1991 *State of the World's Children Report* she was again in New York, taking a major role through media interviews.

In January 1991, she participated with UNICEF National Committees in a Geneva meeting to discuss follow-up actions to the World Summit for Children. In February and March, she took part in benefit functions and interviews in Atlanta, Cleveland, Dallas, and New York. In May, she again joined Michael Tilson-Thomas, and the London Symphony, in a benefit for the U.K. Committee.

As part of the Day of the African Child commemoration in June, she launched the UN set of Child Rights stamps in Geneva, and contributed her own design to the First Day Cover. She received another recognition of her professional achievements in June, when she was honoured at Lincoln Center by the New York Film Society.

On 30 September, the first anniversary of the World Summit for Children, Miss Hepburn spoke at the Rome meeting of "Mayors as Defenders of Children." She then hosted the Certification Ceremony for Universal Child Immunization at the UN on 8 October, and participated in a number

of related media activities. December found her in Wiesbaden, Germany to conclude a year-long fund-raising drive, then in Brussels for the launch of the 1992 *State of the World's Children Report*.

Miss Hepburn began 1992 with a major fundraising and media tour in the United States, in January and February. In March, she participated at the Summit of First Ladies in Geneva and in April, she gave a keynote address at events in Indianapolis and at Brown University. She received special honours from the British Academy of Film and Television Arts in March and in May, from the Variety Clubs International at a gala in New York.

In September, she visited first war- ravaged and drought-stricken Somalia and then refugee camps in Northern Kenya. This mission was followed by extensive media activities in Nairobi, London, Geneva, Paris, and the US. She also did television and radio spot announcements encouraging support for the "Week of Tranquility for Children" in former Yugoslavia.

In December 1992, Miss Hepburn was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Bush. January 1993 brought other major honours: the Humanitarian Award from the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE), and the Screen Actor's Guild Award. In January, it was also announced that she would be presented with the Academy Award for Humanitarian Service at the Oscar ceremony in April.

Audrey Hepburn was born in Belgium, the daughter of a British father and Dutch mother. After brief training in ballet in Amsterdam and London, she won an audition for the musical *High Button Shoes*. Soon after, a small part in a French film led to an invitation from Colette to play the title role in her new play *Gigi*, about to be produced on Broadway.

That same summer, Miss Hepburn won a major role starring with Gregory Peck in the film *Roman Holiday*, for which she won an Academy Award. She received best actress nominations also for *Sabrina*, *The Nun's Story*, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, and *Wait Until Dark*. Her other successful films include *Funny Face*, *My Fair Lady*, *Charade*, *Two for the Road*, and *Robin and Marian*. She retired from her active film career in 1965, when her eldest son started school and could no longer travel with her. Director Steven Spielberg lured her back for a role in *Always* in 1989.

Audrey Hepburn, the mother of two grown sons, Sean and Luca, died peacefully at her home in Switzerland on 20 January 1993.