

Annie Lennox, UNAIDS International Goodwill Ambassador

The world renowned Scottish singer songwriter and women's activist Annie Lennox was named International Goodwill Ambassador for the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) on 2 June 2010. With an award winning career spanning several decades, Ms. Lennox is one of the world's most outstanding musical voices. Now, she renews her commitment to speak out for women and girls affected by the HIV epidemic.

"The daily brutality faced by millions of women and girls is unacceptable," said Ms Lennox. "If we are to end the cycle of human devastation triggered by the AIDS epidemic, we must address the rights of women and girls and challenge their second class citizen status, which puts them at greater risk of HIV." Ms Lennox is a dedicated activist and campaigner working for social justice with numerous organisations. In October 2007, she launched her own "SING" campaign, working to raise awareness and support for women and children affected by the AIDS pandemic in Southern Africa.

She has previously supported UNAIDS, participating in the launch of a five-year action plan aimed at ending gender inequalities and human rights violations.

"How can anyone not be moved by Annie Lennox and her voice? I am sure with her incredible passion and presence, she will raise awareness of the terrible toll HIV has taken on women and girls," said UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé, "With her amazing energy, she will make sure international, national and community leaders challenge the injustice of gender inequality."

The lack of access to quality sexual and reproductive health services contributes to the high number of deaths among women of the reproductive age.

In her role as International UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador, Ms Lennox was in Washington D.C. with Mr Sidibé, from the 7-9 of June to participate in the Women Deliver 2010 conference and 2010 Global Business Coalition conference. She used these events to advocate for a global movement to focus on the HIV-specific needs of women and girls as well as to empower women and girls so that they can better protect themselves from HIV.