

The Belgian Committee for Aid to Refugees (CBAR), The Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRS), The Belgian Red Cross, The Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (Fedasil), The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in collaboration with The NPO "Friendly Foot"

BELGIAN CELEBRITIES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS KICK OFF WORLD REFUGEE DAY

Brussels, 31 May 2010 –Belgian celebrities and asylum seekers will kick off World Refugee Day – Sunday June 20, 2010 – in a friendly football match played in Brussels.

World Refugee Day on 20 June is a celebration for refugees and the Belgian public. This year, under the motto "**Fair Play for Refugees**", the above mentioned organizations are co-organizing a football match with mixed teams of asylum seekers and famous Belgian football players, such as **Alan Haydock, Jérôme Nzolo, Mbo Mpenza, Faris Haroun, Thierry Witsel, Jérôme Vanderzijl, Habib Habibou** and in the presence of **Robert Waseige**. The aim of the match is to enable the asylum seekers to experience the joy of sport and instill in them a sense of confidence and pride, thereby helping them to rebuild their lives.

The football game and the festive award ceremony will be presented by UNHCR Special Volunteer **Francesca Vanthielen**, a Belgian actress and TV presenter, together with **Pierre Kompany**, himself a former refugee, and father of football star Vincent Kompany.

Millions of people around the world have fled their homes because their *lives* or *freedom* in their homeland are in jeopardy. Some men, women and children are persecuted because of their race, religion, nationality or political opinion, and need protection. Asylum is a fundamental right which, in 2010, is still very relevant to our times. World Refugee Day serves not only as an occasion to commemorate this, but also to mark Belgium's long-standing tradition of providing protection to refugees and asylum seekers.

Ten years ago, the General Assembly of the United Nations designated June 20 as World Refugee Day, in honour of refugees around the world. Since that day, World Refugee Day has been celebrated every year in over 100 countries.



This event is co-organized by the Belgian Committee for Aid to Refugees (CBAR), the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRS), the Belgian Red Cross, the Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (Fedasil), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the NPO "Friendly Foot"

DATE AND LOCATION

The friendly football match will take place on **Sunday June 20, 2010** at the **Guy Thys football stadium**, 6 rue Baron Dhanis, 1040 Brussels (Etterbeek).

Admission is free of charge.

PROGRAM

Sunday, June 20, 2010
Guy Thys football stadium (Etterbeek)
Gates open: 14:00
Start of match: 15:00
Award ceremony: 16:15
Animation for children

Information for the press

For more information about this event, please contact one of the following press agents:

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