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Spanish actor Antonio Banderas' latest role: UNDP Goodwill Ambassador



Actor Antonio Banderas at UN Headquarters in 2009

17 March 2010 – Spanish actor Antonio Banderas is joining tennis superstar Maria Sharapova, soccer legend Zinédine Zidane and others as a Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations Development Programme ([UNDP](#)), it was [announced](#) today.

In his latest role, Mr. Banderas will advocate for the poor and push for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), eight globally-agreed targets with a 2015 deadline to halve world poverty, with a focus on Africa and Latin America.

"Poverty robs us of our potential as a people, preventing us from being all that we can be," he said, underscoring the importance of mobilizing all efforts to tackle the scourge.

Yesterday, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched a new [report](#), entitled *Keeping the Promise*, in which he unveils a new action plan aimed at getting governments, civil society actors, private businesses, philanthropy and the multilateral system to act "efficiently, effectively and collectively."

With just five years to go before the 2015 deadline, he said that progress has been uneven and without an accelerated action plan several Goals are likely to be missed in many countries.

“Despite hard economic times, despite lagging progress on many fronts, we can still achieve the Millennium Development Goals by our target date of 2015,” he **[told reporters](#)** at his monthly press conference in New York.

With a decade of efforts towards achieving the MDGs already under the world’s belt, “we know what works and what doesn’t,” with lessons learned on how to best utilize new technologies, national development policies and better governance, he noted.

As Goodwill Ambassador, Mr. Banderas hopes to raise the profile of the **[MDG Achievement Fund](#)**, set up in 2006 with a \$700 million contribution by Spain to accelerate progress on reaching the Goals.

UNDP Administrator Helen Clark welcomed the actor’s appointment. “His proven commitment to the causes of the less fortunate make him an ideal advocate for our work,” she said.

A passionate football fan, he said he is thrilled to join the ranks of Mr. Zidane and Didier Drogba, also UNDP Goodwill Ambassadors.

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