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Upcoming Asian Cup matches to highlight plight of world's hungry – UN



5 January 2011 – Several matches during the upcoming Asian Cup football tournament, which opens in Doha, Qatar, on Friday, will be dedicated to the fight against hunger and poverty, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization ([FAO](#)) [announced](#) today.

The three matches – the opening match between Qatar and Uzbekistan, as well as two subsequent matches played by the host nation – are part of the Asian Football against Hunger campaign.

“A Match Day against Hunger is being organized so that players and football fans can deliver a message that uses the power of football and calls upon all nations, all leaders and all people of goodwill to unite efforts, to mobilise resources and to help us win this cause for the most basic right, the right to food,” said Saad Aied Al-Otaibi, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for the Near East.

Mr. Al-Otaibi will represent FAO at the event, which is the result of a partnership agreement between the agency and the Asian Football Confederation.

Ahead of the event, organizers are urging soccer fans to sign an online petition calling on governments to give priority to the elimination of hunger as well as to mobilize donations for FAO’s TeleFood community-level food production projects.

Since its inception in 1997, the TeleFood initiative has collected more than \$9 million and has financed over 1,000 projects in over 100 countries around the world.

Donations received for TeleFood go directly to poor farmers, who receive the tools to grow crops, raise livestock and fish, and to process food to sell it at a better price.

FAO's online petition and global outreach initiative – “The 1billionhungry project” – has so far attracted over 3.2 million signatures since it was launched in May 2010.

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