



PRESS RELEASE

EMBARGO: 18:30 CET, 25th January 2012

Yvonne Chaka Chaka Becomes First African Woman to Receive World Economic Forum's Crystal Award

For humanitarian work for women and children, in particular for malaria control

Davos, 25 January 2012 – Yvonne Chaka Chaka, renowned singer-songwriter and Goodwill Ambassador for the Roll Back Malaria Partnership, has become the first African woman to receive the World Economic Forum's Crystal Award. The Award is given each year to successful artists who have used their art to 'improve the state of the world', according to the Forum.

Ms Chaka Chaka was presented with the award during the opening ceremony of the Forum's Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland by Hilde Schwab, co-founder of the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurs. During the presentation, Ms Schwab commended Ms Chaka Chaka for her tireless work for major global health issues affecting women and children, in particular malaria control.

'The theme for this year's Davos meeting, The Great Transformation: Shaping New Models, confronts today's global leadership challenge that requires new models, bold ideas and personal courage to ensure that this century improves the human condition rather than caps its potential' said Ms Schwab. 'Yvonne Chaka Chaka is someone who delivers these qualities. For many years Yvonne has used her voice to draw attention to the causes that will change the lives of millions - from ending apartheid to improving maternal and child health. Yvonne has clearly understood her opportunities to do good and the access her powerful voice allows, through both song and conversation, to reach and influence those who can act. The World Economic Forum is honoured to present her the Crystal Award.'

The Crystal Awards initiative came from a suggestion to Klaus Schwab by the musician Yehudi Menuhin 17 years ago. Since then the award has been given to 'exceptional individuals who have made a difference in the world of arts and culture, and have reached out to other cultures.' Previous winners have included, amongst others, actor Richard Gere, cellist Yo-Yo Ma, and producer, composer and musician, Quincy Jones.

Ms Chaka Chaka described how pleased she was that, through the Forum, global business, political and academic leaders acknowledged the impact that investing in major health issues has had on global prosperity and growth. 'Evidence continues to show the clear economic returns from keeping families healthy. But you don't have to be an economist to realise that if children stay healthy they can go to school and grow up to be productive members of their communities, their parents don't have to miss work to look after them, and tough choices don't have to be made between buying medicines or food. And if parents stay healthy, they don't have to miss work or worse still, leave their children orphans. If we're serious about improving global prosperity, we need to be serious about solving

some of the obstacles in our way. Global health problems such as malaria, are certainly in our way. It is important we continue to communicate, inform and educate people.'

Raised in Soweto under South Africa's apartheid regime, Ms Chaka Chaka has a twenty-seven year music career which has produced twenty-one albums, making her one of Africa's top artists. Ms Chaka Chaka was the first black child to appear on South African television and she has since shared the stage with top stars including Bono and Beyoncé. Nelson Mandela wrote to Ms Chaka Chaka from prison describing how her music was sustaining him, and credits her with a vital role in ending apartheid. Ms Chaka Chaka's receipt of the Crystal Award marks the twentieth anniversary since Mr Mandela attended the WEF Davos meeting. In 2011 Ms Chaka Chaka was ranked eighth on Forbes magazine's list of the most influential African celebrities.

Her recent documentary film, *A Motherland Tour - A Journey of African Women*, took her on a world tour to promote the successes of those engaged in the daily battle against HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria. Most recently, at the end of 2011, Yvonne teamed up with previous Crystal Award winner and fellow Roll Back Malaria Goodwill Ambassador, Youssou N'Dour, to record *Proud to Be* for Interpol to raise public awareness of the dangers posed by counterfeit medicines.

Ms Chaka Chaka's campaign against malaria - a preventable and curable disease which still kills over 2,000 children a day in Africa - began when her band member died from the disease in 2004. Ms Chaka Chaka became the first Goodwill Ambassador for the global Roll Back Malaria Partnership. She is also UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador for Malaria in Africa, United Nations MDG Envoy for Africa, and was chosen by Nelson Mandela as the first ambassador for his children's fund. Ms Chaka Chaka established her own charity, the Princess of Africa Foundation, and is the recipient of the Rotary Paul Harris Fellowship Award.

Media Contact: The RBM Secretariat
Pru Smith – Geneva
Mobile: +41 79 477 1744
Direct: +41 22 791 4586
Email smithp@who.int

Princess of Africa Foundation
Tel: +27 11 463 5986
www.princessofafrica.com

The Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM) is the global framework for coordinated action against malaria. Founded in 1998 by UNICEF, WHO, UNDP and the World Bank and strengthened by the expertise, resources and commitment of more than 500 partner organizations, RBM is a public-private partnership that facilitates the incubation of new ideas, lends support to innovative approaches, promotes high-level political commitment and keeps malaria high on the global agenda by enabling, harmonizing and amplifying partner-driven advocacy initiatives. RBM secures policy guidance and financial and technical support for control efforts in countries and monitors progress towards universal goals. The RBM Secretariat is hosted at WHO in Geneva, Switzerland.