



Chicago World Cup, LLC

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Soldier Field to host World Cup Festival and amateur World-Cup-Style soccer tournament to Celebrate Africa.

One month of celebrations in Chicago to lead to July 11th Festival.

CHICAGO (May 10, 2010) – As the 2010 FIFA World Cup soccer tournament is about to kick-off in South Africa, Chicagoans have already started to [Celebrate Africa](#) in a way that they never celebrated a Soccer event before.

For the first time in history, the FIFA Soccer World Cup will be hosted on the African Continent. “[Celebrate Africa](#)” has been designed to promote the World Cup and this year’s host country in the Chicagoland area over a period of eight weeks, in a joint venture of the South African Consulate General and the Chicago World Cup, LLC.

The program will contribute to the integration of the international communities in the United States via the development of Soccer, the most popular sport in the World, and the fastest growing sport in the United States.

Starting June 11, 2010, [Celebrate Africa](#) will offer four weeks of celebrations and public broadcasting of FIFA World Cup games in various popular venues in Chicago. These multiple events will feature activities such as Soccer tournaments, multi-cultural festivals with ethnic food, interactive soccer and sports related activities, as well as international live entertainment, special World Cup contests and soccer fan challenges.

Among the most anticipated events are the June 11 broadcast of the opening game between South Africa and Mexico at Daley Plaza, the June 12 all day event at Montrose park featuring “England vs USA”, and the July 11 all day World Cup Final Festival in Soldier Field, featuring the finals of the fifth annual Chicago World Cup Soccer tournament. The [Chicago World Cup](#) will bring together forty-eight national teams made up of international and local amateur soccer players living in the Chicagoland area. Only thirty-two teams will qualify to play in the finals at Soldier Field.

Charles Manual, Consul Economic of South Africa in Chicago and co-chair of Celebrate Africa, wants “the FIFA golden trophy to stay in Africa when an African country wins the World Cup for the first time this summer”. In Chicago, Mr. Manuel works tremendously hard to encourage all African communities to participate in the World Cup celebrations. “One of the best ways for the African communities to show their passion for the World Cup and their pride of being African is to attend our events and enter an amateur national team in the [Chicago World Cup](#) tournament to win it!” Mr. Manuel said.

“Many foreigners yearn to stay connected with their motherland country,” said Pascal Bedrossian, honorary president of the Chicago World Cup tournament, and former MLS Chicago Fire midfielder, French Ligue 1 player and “Coupe de France” winner. “The tournament helps its participants to meet up with their countrymen and share their national pride and passion for the beautiful game. They could take home their own world cup trophy.”

“We have seen the passion for the [FIFA World Cup](#), here in Chicago, every time we have taken Zakumi, the Vuvuzelas and our South African booth set-up out to Soccer and Social events” said Sandra Stoner, Trade assistant at the South African Consulate in Chicago and project manager of the “Celebrate Africa” program. “Zakumi is our six feet tall official mascot and the Vuvuzelas are those long colorful horns used by South African fans to support their team. They are part of the South African experience we have been bringing to Chicagoans for weeks, and will keep bringing through our World Cup Official Celebrations” said Stoner.

Companies such as [The Coca-Cola Company](#), [NASCAR](#), Chicago-based [Fellowes](#) and Chicago Based [Wilson](#), have signed on to support the World Cup celebrations and the Chicago World Cup soccer tournament.

“US-based companies have realized that 33 million people living in the United States are born outside the country and have no interest whatsoever in some of the American sports” says Sebastien Labat, former French track and field athlete and founder of the Chicago World Cup in 2006. “We immigrants all share an incredible passion for Soccer, and every four years the FIFA World Cup brings us together, makes us paint our faces, wear our national team jerseys and wave our country flags. We have started to see US citizens do the same and more and more corporate sponsors understand and support our grassroots efforts! We are very excited”.

Fransie Cooper was born in South Africa. She was not a big soccer fan when she moved to Chicago three months ago with her husband and three children to become Consul Political of South Africa. One of her missions is to make sure that Americans know more about her home country. “Besides the opportunities for building relationships, hosting the FIFA World Cup is a great chance for South Africa to shine around the world and attract people and businesses” said Cooper, “people have not heard that much in the news about South Africa since Nelson Mandela was released 20 years ago! Now the country is free, safe, and ready to host thousands of visitors and soccer fans from around the globe. For those who can’t go this time, we’ll try to make them love our country by bringing them a piece of the 2010 FIFA World Cup through our “Celebrate Africa” program.”

[ChicagoWorldCup LLC](#) has gathered the international communities of Chicago for popular events such as the Chicago World Cup adult soccer tournament and Chicago French Bastille Day Festival every year since 2006. In 2010, the Chicago World Cup launched EthniCity Soccer, the first-ever national adult amateur world cup soccer tournament in the United States. EthniCity is targeting 33 million members of the expat and international communities and 17 million soccer players and fans in the U.S. to take part in the competition and this year’s celebrations. ChicagoWorldCup LLC’s objectives are to help integrate foreign and expat communities in the U.S.; to support development and practice of amateur soccer in North America; to support the U.S. bid to host the 2018/2022 FIFA World Cup; and to support the U.S. team during the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

[The South African Consulate General in Chicago](#) represents the Government of the Republic of South

Africa in the Midwest Region of the United States and is responsible for consolidating the relationship between the fourteen (14) states in the Midwest and the South African Government. The Consulate endeavors to promote South Africa as an Investment and Tourism destination and as the proud host of the 2010 FIFA World Cup from June 11 to July 11, 2010.

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Official Event Websites:

<http://www.africachicago.com>

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