

**DAVID BECKHAM LAUNCHES WORLD’S FIRST VOICE PETITION**

 **TO END MALARIA**

* **New film using AI technology reveals David Beckham speaking nine languages – calling on people to join the world's first voice petition to end malaria.**
* **The petition aims to get the attention of world leaders ahead of critical funding decisions for the Global Fund, to tackle malaria in six months’ time.**

*Link to film available*[***here***](http://bit.ly/2JFJi95) *and behind the scenes film* [*here*](http://bit.ly/2Ov0v3X)

*Link to voice petition* [***here***](http://www.petition.malariamustdie.com)

*Images and case studies available*[***here***](https://www.malariamustdie.com/)

**London 9 April 2019:** In a new short film, that harnesses ground breaking AI technology, David Beckham launches the world’s first voice petition to end malaria for the campaign *Malaria Must Die, So Millions Can Live.* Instead of collecting signatures, the campaign asks people around the world to use the power of their voice to demand action by visiting malariamustdie.com and recording the message ‘Malaria Must Die’.

In the short film, produced by Ridley Scott Associates, David appears to speak nine languages as he invites people to add their voices to help end one of the world’s oldest and deadliest diseases. But the voices are not all his own. Instead, using emerging AI video synthesis technology, we hear David speaking the voices of men and women from around the world, including malaria survivors and doctors fighting the disease.

Through David, we hear nine global languages spoken and the voices of eight others, including Dr Elvis Eze, Marie Murorunkwere, Hussein Omar and Jean Bosco Niyonzima, who have survived malaria and are using their stories to help raise awareness about malaria’s devastating effects.

**Dr.Elvis Eze** whose voice features in the film speaking Yoruba, a language spoken in Nigeria said: “My life changed when I worked at a hospital in Lagos, Nigeria and I saw the intolerable toll of malaria. It doesn’t have to be this way. I now work for the NHS in the UK and have seen how this is a global challenge. Through the Voice Petition, we each have a chance to inspire change wherever we are”.

Each language and voice represent a part of the world affected by malaria, past or present; from the UK, which was historically affected by malaria, to China, a country on the brink of elimination, to Nigeria, where the malaria toll is the heaviest with close to 300 lives lost every day, mainly young children.

The ‘Malaria Must Die’ campaign is designed to amplify the voices of those affected by malaria and gives everyone the opportunity to speak out. Each voice collected via the petition will contribute to a unique piece of audio art known as a sound sculpture, grabbing the attention of leaders in a unique and memorable way. It will be delivered to world leaders ahead of critical funding decisions for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in six months’ time.

David Beckham is a founding member of Malaria No More UK Leadership Council and a committed champion in the fight against malaria with over a decade of support for Malaria No More UK. In his long-term role as a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador he has seen the impact of malaria on people’s lives in countries such as Sierra Leone.

**David said:** “I have been working with Malaria No More UK for over 10 years and to be a part of this campaign and to help share some of the real stories behind malaria is really important to me. Dr Elvis Eze who was with us on set has suffered with malaria many times and as a doctor, he has seen how dangerous this disease can be. For me, it was so important to learn how he is using his experiences to raise awareness of malaria with young people in the UK and abroad. It’s unacceptable that malaria still kills a child every two minutes so please add your voice to the petition.”

**Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, The President of the Republic of Ghana,** attended the Malaria Summit in London last year and says: “Our ultimate objective is for Ghana to become malaria free, but there is no standing still in the fight against malaria, an old enemy. I welcome the next phase of this campaign, and the innovative approach to inspire support. In Ghana, innovation underpins our strategy, which includes being one of the three countries piloting the new malaria vaccine this year.”

**Dr Winnie Mpanju-Shumbusho, Board Chairperson, RBM Partnership to End Malaria and Former Assistant Director General, World Health Organisation** said: “2019 is a critical year for malaria. If we are going to win our fight against this devastating disease and save millions of lives, we must act now. This is a global fight. If we are going to be the generation that ends malaria we need to work together. World leaders are meeting this year to make important decisions around the Global Fund that will determine our ability to defeat malaria. I hope that people from every corner of the globe will lend their voice to this petition; together we will be impossible to ignore.”

The Voice Petition is the call to action for the next phase of the *Malaria Must Die* campaign, launched by Malaria No More UK in February 2018 in the run up to the London Malaria Summit, that was held during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in April 2018. The Malaria Summit featured commitments worth over $4.1bn to fight malaria and was followed by a historic CHOGM commitment to halve malaria across the Commonwealth by 2023.

**Marie Murorunkwere**, whose voice features in the film, speaking Kinyarwanda, a language spoken in Rwanda said: “I have seen and lived with malaria my whole life. I suffered so many times as a young girl growing up in Rwanda. The disease took the life of my precious younger brother when he was just two years old. Then I lost friends to the disease when I lived in a refugee camp in Goma in the Congo. You learn to live with the loss but the memories of those I loved stay with me forever.”

History shows that ending malaria is achievable with the right resources and action. 150 years ago, all countries except in Antarctica had endemic malaria within their borders. Since then half of these have now successfully eliminated malaria, most recently Paraguay and Uzbekistan who were certified malaria free in 2018. Since 2000 a combination of powerful new tools, increased investment and strengthened international political commitment including from the UK, has cut malaria deaths globally by more than 60%, saving almost 7 million lives, mainly young children.

However, progress is not inevitable. History has also proven that malaria will return with a vengeance if not sufficiently controlled. The decisions made now by political leaders – backed by strong public support - will determine this trajectory.

The film has been produced by a world class pro bono team convened by Malaria No More UK and Ridley Scott Associates Amsterdam with Director Juriaan Booij. Leading partners include digital ad agency R/GA, London based technology company Synthesia and Dentsu Aegis Network.

ENDS

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

The film opens with David speaking in English but then the unexpected happens as he begins to converse fluently in Spanish, Kinyarwanda, Arabic, French, Hindi, Mandarin, Kiswahili and finally Yoruba.

**The film script:**

**English by David Beckham:** Malaria isn’t just any disease. It’s the deadliest disease there’s ever been

**Spanish by Juan David:** It is said to have killed half the people who ever lived

**Kinyarwanda\* by Marie Murorunkwere:** More than 50 billion of us

**Arabic by Hussein Omar:** And it still kills a child every two minutes

**French by Jean Bosco** **Niyonzima:** But we can end it. We have the knowledge. We have the opportunity

**Hindi by Subhranil Banerjee:** We just need more action

**Mandarin by Xiaxiuan Zhu:** We need to make the world’s leaders pay attention

**Kiswahili\*\* by Judith Mwaya:** So we’re launching the world’s first voice petition

**Yoruba\*\*\* by Elvis Eze:** Your voice can help end malaria.

**English by David Beckham:**

Speak up and say ‘malaria must die’.

One voice can be powerful

But all our voices, together?

Then they will have to listen”.

Add your voice to the Voice Petition at [www.malariamustdie.com](http://www.malariamustdie.com)

\*Kinyarwanda is a dialect spoken in Rwanda, a country that has made great strides in the malaria fight and which co-hosted the Malaria Summit, London, 18.04.18

\*\*Kiswahili (Swahili) is a major Bantu language spoken in 7 African countries including those with high malaria burdens Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Mozambique and Uganda.

\*\*\*Yoruba is a language spoken in Nigeria – the country carrying the heaviest burden with 25% of all cases and deaths

 **About Malaria Must Die, So Millions Can Live:**

*Malaria Must Die, So Millions Can Live* is part of the global drive to see progress accelerate. The next milestone is the replenishment of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria taking place this October in Lyon, France. Pledges from donor governments, implementing countries and the private sector to the Global Fund will be invested to save lives in nearly 140 countries and have so far helped reduce deaths from AIDS, TB and malaria by one-third in countries where the Global Fund invests since 2002. For malaria, the Global Fund provides almost 60% of all international financing and a successful replenishment for the Global Fund will therefore be essential to future progress against this disease, including efforts to halve malaria across the Commonwealth by 2023.

Malaria Must Die is a global campaign backed by a wide coalition of organisations and celebrities who are calling upon leaders to prioritise the fight against malaria, or risk undoing decades of unprecedented progress. It aims to inspire support and build a strong mandate for bold political action to end malaria for good. Malaria No More UK is convening the campaign on behalf of the global malaria community.

**About Malaria No More UK:**

Malaria No More is a UK charity determined to end malaria by inspiring the UK public, businesses and government to fight for a malaria-free world. www.malarianomore.org.uk / @malarianomoreuk

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