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MEDIA CALL FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**LONDON
18 March
2013**

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Olympic Heroes give away gold medals at House of Lords.



Where and when:

- **Breakfast and gold medals:** 9am, Tuesday 19 March. Archbishops Room, Millbank House, 1 Millbank, Westminster, London SW1P 3JU.
- **Medals, photos, filming and interviews:** 10am, Tuesday 19 March. Abingdon Green, outside the Houses of Parliament

Media places are limited, confirmation required.

Olympic and community heroes will be honoured by Lord Richard Layard in a gold

medal ceremony at the House of Lords, only to give away their medals to their own Happy Heroes for the first UN International Day of Happiness.

Part of the UK-led initiative, dubbed #HappyDay on Twitter and social media, a global happiness coalition launches to celebrate all of the events taking place on the first **Day of Happiness**. The initiative has already reached over 1,000,000 people, including Nelson Mandela's grandson and Elton John's protégé, and aims to reach 100 million people with a message of bringing happiness to others, and launch a Happiness Relay around the world.

At the House of Lords

- **Olympic Heroes Desiree Henry and Adelle Tracey** - two of the young athletes who lit the cauldron at the London 2012 opening ceremony
- **Lord Richard Layard** - Happiness economist, co-editor of first World Happiness Report, co-founder of Action for Happiness, the organisation behind the initiative
- **British community heroes** (see notes)
- **Jennifer Stoute** - Olympic medalist and gold medal Commonwealth champion, 'Rebel' in Gladiators

Why: 20 March marks the first ever UN International Day of Happiness (#HappyDay), affirmed by all 193 member nations at the UN. The global Happy Heroes (#HappyHeroes) campaign focuses on those who bring happiness to others and aims to reach 100 million people. In a special message for the first #HappyDay, Ban Ki Moon asks us to 'renew our pledge to help others. When we contribute to the common good, we ourselves are enriched.'

By giving away their medals and celebrating their Happy Heroes online, the heroes hope to spread a global Happiness Relay. The public are invited to join the Happiness Relay by cheering their own Happy Heroes on dayofhappiness.net, making #happyday the world's biggest ever celebration of happiness.

What: Breakfast and gold medal ceremony hosted by Lord Richard Layard. The Happy Heroes - those who bring happiness to others - including Nelson Mandela's grandson and Olympic heroes, will all give their medals away within 24 hours, and will ask their Happy Heroes to do the same, starting a global 'Happiness Relay'. The ceremony will include expert talks on the importance of Happiness, a special

Happy Hero to Me video song from Elton John's protégé Tallia Storm. In front of the Houses of Parliament, Desiree Henry, Adelle Tracey and other Happy Heroes will receive their medals.

The #HappyDay coalition is made up of 35 international happiness partners, scores of events in approximately 20 countries taking place to celebrate for the **Day of Happiness**. Other #HappyDay in the UK and around the world include:

- CSV (the UK volunteering and learning charity) will celebrate their 150,000 volunteers as #HappyHeroes with a virtual voluntary sector tea party (#voluntea) between 11am-12pm on 20 March
- Happathon - a global hack for happiness - in New York City, San Francisco, Indianapolis, Oslo, Tokyo, London and Bogota, to launch a 12-month project to globally crowdsource a vision for the Happiness Economy
- Happy Startup School hand out plantable seeded paper with inspirational quotes at lunchtime on 20 March in London's Square Mile
- Teams of schoolchildren in Bhutan, drawing and painting their Happy Heroes, with the heroes celebrated by sharing tea and a happiness meditation
- Happiness-related documentary screenings in countries around the world, including UK, Peru, Mexico, Nigeria, Spain, Brazil, Australia, Italy, India
- Interactive events including a positive message flash mob at Liverpool Street station, laughter in Hong Kong, to free hugs in Washington DC! More on www.dayofhappiness.net/take-part

Media enquiries

Happiness experts, Happy Heroes, Olympic heroes, celebrities and others are available for interview.

For all media, interview and image enquiries, including attendance to the House of Lords, please contact: **Simon Cohen, 0751 538 7314, simon@globaltolerance.com**
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Quotes, Notes and Happy Heroes

Ban Ki Moon, UN Secretary-General:

‘On this first International Day of Happiness, let us reinforce our commitment to inclusive and sustainable human development and renew our pledge to help others. When we contribute to the common good, we ourselves are enriched.’

<http://www.un.org/en/events/happinessday/sgmessage.shtml>

Dr Mark Williamson, Executive Director, Action for Happiness:

‘Creating a happier society requires action at all levels - from political leaders and institutions, but also from us as individual citizens too. When we do things to bring happiness to others, everyone benefits. With the help of Cheers, and an amazing group of partners all around the world, we hope to reach 100 million people with this message, and respond to Ban Ki Moon’s inspiring call for gross global happiness.’

Kweku Mandela - Nelson Mandela’s grandson, who created, with Joseph Peter, this Mandela Happiness Mosaic, created by the smiles of people from every country in Africa.

<http://www.josephpeter.com/index.php#mi=2&pt=1&pi=10000&s=0&p=3&a=0&at=0>

His Happy Heroes are his mother Maki Mandela - ‘She has never stopped being source of inspiration to people’, Kathy Eldon who worked with her daughter to create Creative Vision Foundation, and Mary Fisher, who he describes as ‘one of the world’s leading HIV/AIDS activists and one of the most amazing people I have ever met.’

Natalie Samarasinghe, Acting Executive Director, United Nations Association - UK, says ‘The aims of the United Nations – peace, development and human rights for all, better standards of life in larger freedom – all serve one objective: happiness for all people, everywhere...We commend the efforts of the new global happiness coalition in seeking to bring a smile to the ‘Happy Heroes’ who serve others, and to raise awareness of this important new international day.’

His Holiness Karmapa Thaye Dorje is the 29-year-old head of the Karma Kagyu

lineage and the third most senior leader in the Tibetan Buddhism. His Happy Heroes include his parents. His Holiness says 'For my life, they have sacrificed everything, their time, their youth, they have given up so much. Yet they have never had any day of regret - in fact they rejoice and wish that every day will pass by more and more peacefully than the next.'

Full list of those being honoured as Happy Heroes at the House of Lords

- Lucy Roberts - After recovering from years of serious drug and alcohol addiction she now helps others in their recovery. She has been a long-term volunteer and key part of the team at Action for Happiness. She's also been a hero aunty to her little nephew who's recovering from cancer.
- Kim Macleod - having tragically lost her son to meningitis, Kim now runs various happiness-related groups in Glasgow and last year organised and hosted Scotland's very first Happiness day
- Ian Morris - teacher at Wellington college where he has pioneered the idea of classes to teach happiness and wellbeing - and inspired schools all around the world to do the same.
- Henry Stewart - Set up training company Happy Ltd, built around the idea that people work best when they're happy. Happy has since won numerous awards for customer service and for being one of the best places to work in the UK.
- Chris Cullen - mindfulness teacher and psychotherapist, based at the Oxford Mindfulness Centre, currently running a mindfulness course for MPs and Lords in Westminster.
- May Gabriel - May is probably one of the most inspiring teenagers you'll ever meet; at just 17 she's made the [http://www.itsokcampaign.co.uk/ blog](http://www.itsokcampaign.co.uk/blog), which brings joy, happiness and support to thousands and thousands of teenagers.
- She's single handedly stood up and done something to combat teenage depression.
- Adrian Bethune - teacher at John Stainer primary school in Brockley giving children mini-neuroscience lessons about how their minds work and how they can look after them, through adopting a positive mindset and meditation.
- Desiree Henry - 200m World Youth Champion and young athlete chosen to light the 'Flame of Unity' at London2012.

- Adelle Tracey - 800m and 400m young athlete chosen to light the 'Flame of Unity' at London2012.

Notes to media

- The Day of Happiness (www.dayofhappiness.net), is the only campaign celebrating all events happening around the world to celebrate the Day of Happiness. It's a global campaign to celebrate the very first UN International Day of Happiness, powered by Action for Happiness, in partnership with Cheers.
- The 1,000,000 figure is the cumulative reach for Cheers created for the 'HappyDay' and 'HappyHeroes' celebrations on Cheers, which can be found at www.chee.rs/celebration/happy-day and www.chee.rs/celebration/happy-heroes (1,1138,000 at time of writing). Please note: these figures do not include the thousands of #happyday tweets or other messages the campaign receives every day. The campaign hopes to reach 100 million people through the Cheers technology. The campaign will share the results directly with the United Nations.
- **Action for Happiness** is a movement of people committed to building a happier society, co-founded by Lord Richard Layard, and bringing together the latest scientific research and leading experts from the fields of psychology, education, economics, social innovation and beyond. www.actionforhappiness.org
- **Cheers** - the world's first and only happiness app, the 'like' button for the real world and official digital partner of the Day of Happiness www.chee.rs. Cheer your Happy Heroes by [downloading the app](#), or online at the Happy Heroes and Happy Day celebrations via www.dayofhappiness.net. Check out the celebrations:
<http://www.chee.rs/celebration/happy-day>
<http://www.chee.rs/celebration/happy-heroes>
- Celebrate the Day of Happiness using the [#happyday](#) hashtag
- Bhutan's '**Gross National Happiness Centre**' (partner of the Day of Happiness campaign)

http://www.gnhbhutan.org/about/gross_national_happyness_centre.aspx
and the UK's 'Well Being Index' <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/user-guidance/well-being/index.html>

- In July 2012, the **United Nations General Assembly** adopted **Resolution 66/281** which decreed that the **International Day of Happiness** would be observed every year on 20 March.

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