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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ban Ki Over the Moon!

Happiness movement to reach 100 million people for UN's First #HappyDay.



Happy Heroes bring light to dark places. Above: Stuart Semple's HappyCloud (see media enquiries)

A global happiness coalition launches today, at the beginning of a week of activities to mark the first ever UN International Day of Happiness, 20 March 2013.

The initiative, dubbed #HappyDay, has already reached 500,000 people, including several public figures. The campaign focuses on celebrating Happy Heroes - the people and organisations who bring happiness to others.

All 193 member states of the United Nations adopted a resolution calling for happiness to be given greater priority on a global scale, which the campaign is supporting. At the high-level meeting at UN Headquarters, Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon said

'We need a new economic paradigm that recognizes the parity between the three pillars of sustainable development. Social, economic and environmental well-being are indivisible.

Together they define gross global happiness.'

The Gross National Happiness Centre in Bhutan, famous for the unique measure of its country's progress, is among 35 international happiness partners and scores of events in approximately 20 countries taking place to celebrate the **Day of Happiness**. Sir Elton John's 14-year-old protégé Tallia Stone, and Buddhist leader His Holiness Karmapa Thaye Dorje are among those to lend their support to the campaign. Nearly 20,000 people have already signed the **Happiness Pledge**, to create more happiness in the world. Confirmed events for the Day of Happiness range from:

- **Happy Heroes at the House of Lords** - happiness economist Lord Richard Layard honours the heroes who bring happiness to other people's lives
- **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
- **Screenings of the award-winning 'Happy'** documentary in places ranging from Peru to Madrid, and from LA to a coffee shop in Bedford!
- **Teams of schoolchildren in Bhutan**, drawing and painting their Happy Heroes, with the heroes celebrated by sharing tea and a happiness meditation
- **Inspiring local events to spread happiness**, including a positive message flash mob in a busy London train station, a 'laughter challenge' in Hong Kong, and free hugs being offered on the street in Washington DC!

#HappyDay heads Dr Mark Williamson, Director of Action for Happiness, the mass movement to promote happiness - and Farhad Mohit, Founder of Cheers - the world's first happiness app - are hopeful the campaign can help spread the message of happiness to 100 million people. Dr Mark Williamson says,

'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.'

Dr. Ha Vinh Tho, Program Coordinator of the Gross National Happiness Centre in Bhutan, says his #HappyHeroes are Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh, Prime Minister of Bhutan Jigme Y. Thinley, and his granddaughter Sofia. To find out why, and for more Happy Heroes, see www.dayofhappiness.net/happy-heroes/

Interviews, images, media enquiries

- Happiness experts, Happy Heroes, celebrities and others are available for interview, including Dr Mark Williamson and Farhad Mohit. For all media and interview enquiries, including attendance at Happy Heroes at the House of Lords, please contact:

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- Artist Stuart Semple has released some of his HappyCloud images exclusively for the #HappyDay campaign and are available for use by the press. The collection can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/cyon4pe>

HappyCloud is a temporal sculpture / performance piece in which Stuart released thousands of smiley faced eco-friendly clouds made of helium soap and vegetable dye into the sky. Originally performed from outside Tate Modern in London, the clouds were released just as the UK recession hit and his intention was to lift the spirit of anyone who saw them. To spread some happiness throughout the skies.

Quotes

- Tallia Stone was phoned by Sir Elton John to sing live at his gig and has become a global star since. Her Happy Heroes are her family, and Sir Elton and David Furnish and Ella Fitzgerald. Tallia says 'Summertime' was the first song I learnt as my dad is a jazz pianist, so the power of music and singing for me is an essential ingredient of happiness.' To find out why, and for more Happy Heroes, see www.dayofhappiness.net/happy-heroes
- 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.'

Notes to editors:

- All information, including quotes, images, details of events and other press material available at www.dayofhappiness.net
- The 500,000 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.
- 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.
- The campaign asks people to ACT for #happyday: Affirm the happiness pledge, Cheer #happyheroes and Take part on the day, using the cheers celebrations on <http://dayofhappiness.net/happy-heroes/> and use the hashtags #happyday and #happyheroes on twitter
- United Nations Adopts International Day of Happiness www.prweb.com/releases/Internationaldayofhappiness/prweb9652737.htm
- UN Secretary-General Calls for "Gross Global Happiness" as a Measure of Sustainable Development: <http://uncsd.iisd.org/news/un-secretary-general-calls-for-gross-global-happiness-as-a-measure-of-sustainable-development/>
- The Gross National Happiness Centre in Bhutan, with explanation of the concept by the Prime Minister www.gnhbhutan.org/
- The award winning 'Happy - The Movie': www.thehappymovie.com
- Dr Mark Williamson is Director of Action for Happiness - a movement of people taking action to create a happier society, which has 80,000 members and followers in 130 different countries. More at www.actionforhappiness.org/
- Farhad Mohit is Founder of Cheerful, inc., and the brains behind www.chee.rs. Farhad also founded DotSpots in 2008, Shopzilla in 2004 and BizRate.com in 1996. He led BizRate.com and Shopzilla from launch to profitability and through a successful \$562 sale.
- Day of Happiness partners include: Gross National Happiness Centre in Bhutan,

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TEDxTeen, Peace One Day, Pay It Forward, Delivering Happiness, 'Happy' the Movie, global tolerance, The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation, Happy City, Wake Up, Service Space, Guerilla Hugs, The Happy Startup School, vInspired, The Happiness Initiative, Happathon, A Good Week, A Million Smiles, Mental Health Foundation, Young Foundation, School of Life, Barrett Values Centre, Positive News, Empathy and Compassion in Society, Mind With Heart, Mental Wealth UK, Tenzin Gyatso Institute and Happy Ltd.

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