

Headline	Rai named UN ambassador for HIV AIDS plan		
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Rai named UN ambassador for HIV/AIDS plan

NEW YORK: The United Nations appointed Bollywood actress Aishwarya Rai Bachchan as a goodwill ambassador on Monday, with a mission to help stop new HIV infections in children and promote increased access to anti-retroviral treatment.

Rai, who gave birth to her first child in November, will work with the UN programme on HIV/AIDS — UNAIDS — advocating the “Global plan towards the elimination of new HIV infections among children and keeping their mothers alive”.

“Spreading awareness on health issues, especially related to women and children, has always been a priority for me,” Rai said in a statement.

“And now, as a new mother, I can personally relate to this — the joys

and concerns of every mother and the hopes that we have for our children.”

The plan Rai will be promoting focuses on 22 countries, including India, which account for more than 90 per cent of new HIV infections among children.

Of those, 21 are in sub-Saharan Africa, where the estimated number of children newly infected by HIV fell by 25 per cent between 2009 and last year, UNAIDS said.

Rai, who often features on “most beautiful” lists and is married to actor Abhishek Bachchan, won the Miss World crown in 1994.

She went on to build a successful Bollywood career with hits such as *Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam* and *Devdas*. She has also worked in Hollywood films and is a regular at the Cannes film festival. **Reuters**

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Aishwarya Rai with UNAIDS executive director *Michel Sidibé* as she addresses the media after being appointed a **goodwill ambassador** at the UN headquarters in New York on Monday. AP pic