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Drogba, Bono, Nike team up to support AIDS charity

LONDON: Chelsea striker Didier Drogba teamed up with U2 frontman Bono on Monday to launch an initiative to fight HIV and AIDS.

On the eve of World AIDS Day, sports manufacturer Nike announced a partnership with the "Red" brand and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria which is designed to coincide with the 2010 World Cup in South Africa.

Nike will sell special red laces under the banner "Lace Up. Save Lives", the proceeds of which will be split equally between the Global Fund and soccer-based community programmes aimed at educating people about AIDS.

"It was important to me to be involved in the Red campaign because I'm from Africa," Ivory Coast international Drogba told a news

conference in London.

"It's a big honour and pleasure for me to be linked with Bono and try to help him save some lives. AIDS and HIV is something that really destroyed Africa, and people don't really realise how easy it is to save lives - only two pills a day, which is 40 cents."

Drogba scored twice as Premier League leaders Chelsea beat London rivals Arsenal 3-0 on Sunday and put his goals down to the red laces he was wearing for the game.

"I think the red laces really helped me, especially for the free kick. I was really proud to have a chance to show the laces and after the game people were calling me: 'Why were you wearing red laces?' and I had to explain to them."

The laces will be available around the world from Dec. 1.- Reuters

SINGER BONO (left) and footballer Didier Drogba pose for photographers after a news conference to launch a partnership between Nike and (RED) in London, November 30, 2009. The two groups will unite to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS through the sale of red coloured laces and other products in the run-up to the soccer World Cup.
 PHOTO:REUTERS

