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South Africa to beef up World Cup condom supply

SUN CITY, South Africa: Condom supplies would be beefed up at the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, which has more HIV cases than any other country, a top medical officer said on Monday.

"There's going to be a large number of people who will be descending onto the country. There's going to be a spirit of festivity and... there could be a more than usual demand for measures such as condoms," said Victor Ramathesele, general medical officer for South Africa's 2010 organising committee.

"So there are measures in

place to ensure that the condom supply is going to be ramped up during this tournament," he told reporters.

South Africa has the world's largest HIV caseload with 5.7 million people carrying the virus, according to the UN AIDS agency.

Speaking after a football medicine conference, chairman of FIFA's medical committee, Michel D'Hooghe said the football body was targeting AIDS prevention as well as malaria and tuberculosis.

"In every competition of

FIFA, when we send information to the participating teams, we also take very clearly the attention of the dangers in the countries and that's not only in South Africa," he said. "Here it is perhaps more frequently present than in other countries but we have to be careful everywhere in the world."

South Africa, which hosts the continent's first World Cup in June and July, now boasts the world's largest anti-retroviral programme after years of government failure to roll out the life-saving drugs. — AFP