

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 8, 2005

Mr. Stephan Bekale
Executive Director
Hoops 4 Africa
1800 N. Kent Street
Arlington, VA 22209

Dear Mr. Bekale,

I write to offer my support for the mission of Hoops 4 Africa. As you know, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has devastated virtually every part of the African continent and is the worst public health threat that the world has ever known.

The United States has a moral obligation to forcefully respond to this crisis – both in Africa and around the world. I believe that to be effective, the response must involve a number of different entities, including individuals, governments (recognizing, however, that issues such as corruption and conflict can be limiting factors), international organizations, and, of course, NGOs.

According to its website, the mission of Hoops 4 Africa is “to provide education and training to youth with a global focus on HIV/AIDS education, awareness, and prevention and a domestic focus on leadership development and civic volunteerism.” I enthusiastically support this mission. These types of activities are important components of global efforts to combat HIV/AIDS. There is no question that more needs to be done in these areas.

Thank you for the invitation to write in support of the mission of Hoops 4 Africa. I appreciate your efforts on the critical issue of HIV/AIDS in Africa.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barack Obama', with a large, stylized initial 'B' and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Barack Obama
United States Senator