

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Umlazi's Sukuma Primary School Receives R67 000 towards the Basketball Court Refurbishment from the South African Muslim Charitable Trust

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Sport offers young people and, especially, the disadvantaged youth of South Africa numerous positive life experiences, including a sense of belonging, fair play and respect, and its contribution towards youth empowerment cannot, therefore, be over-emphasised.

This was the view of Mr Gaf Osman, a Trustee of the South African Muslim Charitable Trust (SAMCT), at the recent hand-over of a refurbished basketball court at Sukuma Primary School in Umlazi, south of Durban recently. "Sport provides the ideal medium for reaching-out to, particularly, society's at-risk youngsters, those mired in poverty and those coming from single - or worse - no parent homes. Engaging at-risk youngsters in sport, rather than allowing them to roam the streets, has the effect of reducing the potential for criminal activity and other anti-social behaviours. Indeed, sport helps with developing problem-solving skills and the ability for peers to work together as a team," he said.

The school's only basketball court was built more than 10 years ago when PeacePlayers International - South Africa was founded at the educational institution. This organisation, established in 2001, assists KwaZulu-Natal's young people to follow a safe and successful path in a society severely impacted by HIV/AIDS, high levels of unemployment, crime and both cultural and social divides.

Mr Gaf Osman said the organisation's philosophy of providing children a sports-based education, teens the opportunity to develop leadership skills and communities with a constituency of skilled, confident mentors for the next generation, was 'to be roundly applauded.' He added: "Sport plays an exceptionally important role in education in South Africa. Sadly, however, the basketball court at Sukuma Primary School, although heavily used, has lacked necessary maintenance, meaning that it has slipped into a state of disrepair. PeacePlayers International - South Africa has led the drive to bring the court back to its former glory, so enabling sport to again become a catalyst for empowerment at Sukuma Primary School."

The SAMCT recognised the many positive influences sport has on individuals and communities and was, accordingly, keen to assist in efforts to restore sport to its rightful place at Sukuma Primary School, said Mr Gaf Osman.

The organisation, created in 2008, was established to provide funding, services and other resources to improve the lives of the vulnerable, deprived and disadvantaged. It has successfully delivered sizeable assistance solutions throughout the country, irrespective of race or religion and supports needy organisations in the fields of health, social development, poverty alleviation and education.

Mr Gaf Osman said: "We were pleased to accede to PeacePlayers International - South Africa's application for assistance by making available a sum of R67 000 towards the total refurbishment of the school's basketball court and hope this humble contribution will serve to encourage Sukuma Primary School's learners to get active, remain active and take on-board the life-skill lessons sport has to offer."

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For more information about SAMCT or Sukuma Primary School basketball court refurbishment donation, contact: **Rasheeda Motala**: Social Responsibility Co-ordinator - Tel: +27 31 364 9183.