For Immediate Release
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13 Year-Old UNICEF Ambassador Bilaal Rajan Challenges World Youth To Help Haiti

Toronto, Canada – Bilaal Rajan, the grade nine student at Lakefield College School, UNICEF Canada Ambassador, youth activist, best-selling author and fundraiser, has issued a challenge to students all over the world to raise a minimum of $100 for the relief efforts in Haiti.

"Hundreds of thousands have died, and millions are without shelter, food, running water or medical attention. Young people have to get involved and help," says Rajan, the fundraising *wunderkind* who has raised millions of dollars for programs that help children in need all over the world. "I think the potential students have for raising millions of dollars throughout the globe is overwhelming."

Barely a teenager, the Toronto-based children's activist is already a force to be reckoned with. An accomplished writer, Rajan's book, *Making Change: Tips from an Underage Overachiever* (160 pages, Orca Book Publishers), shows people how they can take charge and make a difference in their communities, no matter what their age.

Rajan is adding an extra incentive for students to raise money. He will shave his head in honour of the school or student in Canada that raises the greatest amount of funds. "I'm looking forward to see what kinds of fundraising ideas young people come up with and how much money they can raise. Am I looking forward to going bald? Not so much. I hope the students are gentle," he laughs. In addition, Lakefield College School Headmaster David Thompson has agreed to shave his head as well if his students raise $35,000.

At 4, Rajan began his fundraising success by selling clementine oranges door-to-door raising money for victims of the 2001 earthquake in Gujarat, India. At 7, he founded Making Change Now, an organization dedicated to heightening awareness of youth issues and raising funds for children in the developing world. In March 2005, he was chosen as an official Child Representative and Ambassador for UNICEF Canada.

In 2004, Rajan launched his first UNICEF fundraising challenge, at the age of eight, called the *UNICEF Canada Kids Earthquake Challenge*, through which Canadian children raised more than $1.8 million to help those who were impacted by the earthquake and tsunami of south Asia. Canada's youth contributed again in May 2008 to those affected by the Myanmar cyclone through Rajan's *Me and You for the Children of Myanmar* UNICEF fundraising campaign.

All the proceeds raised by Rajan's Help Haiti Challenge will go to UNICEF and the organization's relief efforts in Haiti. "The challenges of the Haitian people won't go away overnight," he says. "But I know that students throughout the world will step up to the plate and make every effort to help those who are suffering in the country."

Bilaal Rajan is available for media interviews, live or by phone. Please contact the number below.

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