

**EMBAROGED UNTIL TUESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER – 10:00 BST**

## **World Netball Names Malawi Netball Player Mary Waya As Its Official Heart Ambassador As It Aims To Grow, Play, and Inspire**

Following the International Netball Federation's (INF) official rebrand to World Netball, the international governing body has announced the appointment of Mary Waya as an official ambassador representing its 'Heart' value which represents a commitment to fostering friendship and respect through a shared love of netball.

Waya started playing international netball for Malawi at the tender age of 14 and has since become the nation's most high-profile player having played in more than 200 international matches. These include competing in two World Netball Series, three Commonwealth Games and two Netball World Cups. Following the 2007 World Netball Championships where the Malawian team finished 5<sup>th</sup>, their highest ever placing, Waya became known for pioneering Malawian netball on the international scene.

In addition to being an international netballer, Waya is also an international coach for the Tanzania National Netball team and off the court has become a role model to millions of women around the world. Through the set-up of her 'Mary Waya Foundation' – a non-profit sports academy in Malawi that aims to empower local African women through sport – Waya has created opportunities for young women and girls to develop and form lasting friendships through the sport of netball. The foundation supports players by developing them as future netballers by improving their skills and assisting with education.

Commenting on the announcement, World Netball President Liz Nicholl CBE said:

“Mary is a role model for millions in Africa through her legacy as an international netballer, coach, and entrepreneur. Her vision to inspire and motivate young women and girls to become confident women through her Foundation demonstrates why Mary is the perfect ambassador to represent our ‘Heart’ value. By educating others, providing opportunities, and showcasing the power of sport, Mary is using her experience and life lessons to give back to the community. Her commitment is incredibly impressive and I look forward to working with Mary to grow, play and inspire others around the world through netball.”

Commenting on her role, Mary said:

“I am extremely honoured to have been invited to become the World Netball Heart Ambassador. I am passionate about the sport and want to use it to create role models that can go back into their communities and motivate others to be the best version of themselves in their everyday lives. World Netball’s strategic plan outlines how the governing body will harness the power of netball to change lives and I look forward to working with them on this.”

World Netball has revealed 5 of its ambassadors who represent the organisation’s newly launched Values of Excellence, Teamwork, Heart, Integrity, Courage, Athlete and Leadership. Together, the Values reflect World Netball’s commitment to operating within an ETHICAL framework. To view the ambassadors already announced, click [here](#).

To find out more about the Mary Waya foundation, click [here](#).

## ENDS

### Media Contact:

Grace Watson: [grace.watson@worldnetball.sport](mailto:grace.watson@worldnetball.sport)

### Image:

**Image needed**

### Notes to Editors:

World Netball is the sole, internationally recognised, governing body for netball affiliated to GAISF, the International World Games Association and the Association of Recognised International Sports Federations (ARISF), receiving funding from the International Olympic Committee.

World Netball creates a better world through netball, inspiring netballers to embrace opportunities and achieve their potential. Netball is played in more than 100 countries around the world with 76 National Netball Associations affiliated to World Netball. The associations are grouped into five Regions – Africa Netball, Americas Netball, Asia Netball, Europe Netball and Oceania Netball – each with a respective Regional Federation. Regional Federations are an integral part of the global governance structure and assist in the implementation of World Netball policies and the development of the sport in their respective regions.

For more information visit [www.worldnetball.sport](http://www.worldnetball.sport)