

"On 11 August, we will mark a tremendous milestone: **one full year without a single case of polio caused by wild poliovirus in Africa.**

The magnitude of this achievement can hardly be overstated. A polio-free Africa has been within sight, so near and yet so far, for over a decade. The hard work and commitment that have brought us to this point have been nothing short of heroic. Tens of thousands of health workers reached hundreds of millions of children with vaccine, in some of the most difficult conditions imaginable. Together, we have done what once seemed impossible: We have stopped polio in Africa.

Yet this progress, momentous as it is, is still fragile. As long as polio exists in the two remaining endemic countries of Pakistan and Afghanistan, the virus still has the potential to spread and to spark new outbreaks. Now, more than ever, we need the power of all of Rotary to carry us through to the end: not just a polio-free Africa, but a polio-free world.

Wherever you live, whether your country has just conquered polio or has been polio-free for decades, we need your voice, and your help. I ask all of you to read and use the materials in this tool kit to find ways to raise awareness in your community, and beyond. We need every Rotarian, in every Rotary club, to be talking about polio: making sure that media outlets report on our progress and our elected officials see polio eradication as a global priority. Your grassroots work helps drive the increased media coverage we have seen in the past year, which in turn drives global backing of our work to eradicate polio. Together, we will keep polio front and center in our communities and on our national agendas, keeping up the energy and the momentum that will push us through to the finish.

The battle in Africa has, for the moment, been won, but we need the strength of every Rotarian to help us win the war.

Together, we will End Polio Now and truly *Be a Gift to the World.*

Warm regards,

K.R. Ravindran

President, Rotary International