

Beat: Entertainment

Monaco's Princess consort Charlene expecting first child

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USPA News - Princess consort Charlene of Monaco and her husband, reigning monarch Prince Albert II, are expecting their first child by the end of the year, the royal palace announced on Friday, nearly three years after the couple married in the tiny European city-state. The couple announced the news in a two-sentence statement released by the royal palace, saying the birth is expected to take place at the end of this year.

"T.S.H the Prince and the Princess of Monaco are delighted to announce the pregnancy of H.S.H. Princess Charlène," the statement said. Friday's announcement ends recent speculation as to why Charlene had still not provided a heir to the Monegasque throne after nearly three years of marriage. Prince Albert II, 56, married Charlene Wittstock, 36, at the Prince's Palace in July 2011. The prince first met Charlene, a former South African Olympic swimmer who was born in present-day Zimbabwe, at a swimming competition in Monaco in 2000. They announced their engagement in June 2010. The Principality of Monaco is the world's second smallest state with a population of just under 36,500 people. Prince Albert II has served as the country's head of state since April 2005 and Princess Caroline, the eldest child of monarch Prince Rainier III and Princess consort Grace, is first in line to the throne until the birth of Charlene and Albert II's child.

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