



## On International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, UN spotlights ongoing campaign by the Secretary-General

(21 November 2008) – The United Nations will mark 25 November - the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women - with a number of special events at Headquarters and in the field, highlighting the Secretary-General's ongoing campaign to end violence against women.

“We need to do more to enforce laws and counter impunity,” Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in his message for the Day. “We need to combat attitudes and behaviour that condone, tolerate, excuse or ignore violence committed against women. And we need to increase funding for services for victims and survivors.”

Violence against women continues to persist as one of the most heinous, systematic and prevalent human rights abuses in the world. At least one out of every three women is likely to be beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused in her lifetime.

In February of this year, the Secretary-General launched a multi-year campaign - “UNite to End Violence against Women”- aimed at preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls in all parts of the world.

The UN General Assembly designated 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women in December 1999, encouraging governments, international organizations, civil society groups and non-governmental organizations to organize activities around the issue. Each year, the Day also kicks off the 16 Days of Activism, a worldwide effort by a broad range of stakeholders to raise awareness of gender-based violence, between 25 November and 10 December (International Human Rights Day).

### Special Events at UN Headquarters (25 November 2008):

The United Nations will mark this year's International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women with a number of events at Headquarters in New York (open to media):

- 10:00 a.m. **15 Years of the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences [1994-2009]:** A high-level event with representatives from the UN, governments and civil society, organized by the Office of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, its Causes and Consequences, the Office of the UN Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The panel will take stock of the achievements of 15 years of work of the Special Rapporteur and highlight some of the emerging issues and challenges. (Dag Hammarskjöld Library Auditorium; contact: musumba@unfpa.org)
- 12:30 p.m. **UNIFEM Press Conference:** The UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) will hold a press conference to announce the results of the “Say NO to Violence against Women” campaign, an Internet-based initiative that has been targeting 1 million signatures since last November. (Room S-226, following the daily noon briefing by the Spokesperson of the UN Secretary-General; contact: beatrice.frey@unifem.org)
- 1:00 p.m. **United Voices Say NO to Violence against Women:** Hand-over of the signatures collected under UNIFEM's Say NO to Violence against Women campaign to the UN Secretary-General. With UNIFEM Goodwill Ambassador Nicole Kidman and guest speakers from around the world. (ECOSOC Chamber, contact: beatrice.frey@unifem.org)
- 6:30 p.m. **Mika** - a play developed and performed by the theatre ensemble Tiyatroglobal, inspired by the UN Secretary-General's call to Unite to End Violence against Women. It seeks to demonstrate the diverse manifestations of violence against women and how we all can make a difference in creating a world where women are respected. The invitation-only event is organized by the Office of the UN Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) and the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE). (Trusteeship Council Chamber, contact: donlon@un.org)

For more information on the Campaign, the Day and events in the field: <http://endviolence.un.org>

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