

## Caribbean region joins UN campaign to end violence against women



11 October 2010 – Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today encouraged everyone in the Caribbean to get involved in the quest to end violence against women – a scourge which affects one in every three women in the region during her lifetime.

“This campaign must involve everyone, from schools and street markets to parliament and the courts of justice,” Mr. Ban said at the Caribbean launch of the **UNiTE** campaign, which brought together ministers, civil society representatives and artists from around the region.

Launched by the Secretary-General in 2008, the campaign calls for all countries to put in place strong laws, action plans, preventive measures, data collection, and systematic efforts to address sexual violence by 2015.

In a **message** delivered by Gladys Acosta of the UN Development Fund for Women (**UNIFEM**) at the launch in Barbados, Mr. Ban noted that he launched the campaign out of a belief that women and girls around the world deserve better.

Since then, regional initiatives have been launched in Latin America and Africa, and the Secretary-General has also set up a Network of Men Leaders which works to challenge destructive stereotypes, embrace equality, and inspire men and boys to speak out.

“No country is immune from gender-based violence, which is abhorrent in its own right, and can prevent girls from getting an education and women from earning a living,” he stated.

“Sadly, it is clear that women in the Caribbean region suffer high levels of such violence,” he added. “According to recent statistics, one in every three women will experience violence in a personal relationship in her lifetime. Prosecutions and convictions remain very low.”

He said the UNiTE campaign can build on the work that has already been done by the UN, national governments and others to raise awareness, build partnerships and have a greater impact on prevention, protection, justice and services for the victims of gender-based violence.

"Violence against women must not be tolerated, in any form, in any context, in any circumstance, by any political leader or by any government. There can be no exceptions, no excuses and no delay."

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