

UN launches campaign harnessing support to end violence against women



UNIFEM Goodwill Ambassador Nicole Kidman

6 November 2009 – The United Nations kicked off a campaign today mobilizing people around the world to take part in a drive to stop the pandemic of violence suffered by women at the hands of men.

The UN Development Fund for Women (**UNIFEM**) launched a **website** to inspire individual efforts aimed at eradicating violence against women, such as reaching out to school students, volunteering at local shelters, advocating for legislation or donating funds for programmes that protect women and girls.

The Say NO – Unite to End Violence against Women initiative's website also aims to showcase the widespread problem – estimates say around 70 per cent of all women have been victim to some kind of violence – and demonstrate the groundswell of support by counting the number of deeds performed to combat the scourge.

"We know that violence against women is a problem with solutions," said UNIFEM Executive Director Inés Alberdi after visiting patients at a one-stop health clinic for women victims of sexual violence in Nairobi, Kenya, to jump-start the international effort.

"What I have seen first-hand today in Kenya is the impact of effective work at the grassroots level, yet there is an urgent need for governments to make this issue a top priority and take decisive action," said Ms. Alberdi.

Counting efforts by individuals, governments and civil society groups, the campaign has targeted 100,000 actions by March 2010 and 1 million by this time next year.

As an incentive, the luxury watch manufacturer OMEGA has pledged \$50,000 to the scheme for the first 50,000 actions registered on the website, thanks to efforts by UNIFEM Goodwill Ambassador Nicole Kidman.

Throughout November, the multi-lingual broadcaster Euro News will air a public service announcement with Ms. Kidman, which calls on every individual to say no to all forms of violence.

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