

DRAFT KEY MESSAGES

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM UNITE AGAINST WOMAN AND CHILD ABUSE

1 We need to unite in a people's contract to fight violence against women and children

- All sectors of our society should unite to fight against woman and child abuse. Government on its own cannot defeat this scourge
- All South Africans should challenge the social acceptance of domestic violence:
 - Most violence against women and children is done in family homes and by people known to the victims, so families and communities need to help expose the perpetrators.
 - Men and boys who do not abuse should be affirmed as ambassadors of no violence against women and children
 - All forms abuse - physical, emotional and verbal – are unacceptable
- Crime fighting partnerships with government help empower survivors and victims of abuse and sensitise them to their rights. They help broaden access to trauma and counseling facilities for victims of violence.
- So Government will further strengthen such partnerships as Victim Support Groups (between SAPS and Business Against Crime) and Community Policing Forums

2 Government is unwavering in its commitment to fight violence against women and children

- The Sexual Offences Bill, soon to be passed, will broaden the definition of sexual violence and help ensure that heavy sentences will be imposed on perpetrators who have been charged and convicted
- More and more police officers are undergoing specialised training so that they deal sensitively with cases of violence against women and children
- There are now over 40 specialised Sexual Offences Courts and they will be expanded throughout the country. Government will also establish at least two Community Courts in each province by March 2005 to speed up cases awaiting trial and improve the conviction rate

- Government is finalising the Victims Charter and the Victim Support Services Programme will be implemented by the end of 2004.

3 We call upon all South Africans to break the silence against all forms of women and child abuse

- By wearing the white ribbon during the 16 days of activism, South Africans will demonstrate their support for a society that rejects violence against women and children. It is an act of solidarity with victims and survivors of violence
- We appeal to all South Africans to participate in the 16 Days of Activism events in memory of the survivors and victims of violence
- We all have a responsibility to help defeat this scourge . When we witness violence against women and children in our homes, workplace or neighbourhood we should speak out and unite to stop it.

4 Let us extend the 16 days of activism into the festive season

- Increased violence over the festive period means we must sustain the campaign and ensure that services and support are accessible during this period to reduce this violence.