

## UN chief launches campaign in Africa to eradicate male violence against women



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launches campaign to End Violence Against Women

30 January 2010 – Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today called on the support of African leaders to give new impetus to his campaign to end the violence suffered by women on the continent, which he called the “unsung heroines” of development in the region.

“We know African women are often a linchpin keeping families, communities, and nations together,” Mr. Ban said at the African launch of his “**UNiTE** to End Violence against Women” campaign in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

African women are the “driving force to overcome poverty, reduce hunger, fight illiteracy, heal the sick, prevent the spread of disease and promote stability,” he said in a **message** read on his behalf by Cheick Sidi Diarra, UN High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.

“But far from being empowered, women are all too often subjected to horrific abuse and violence,” stressed Mr. Ban, urging leaders to address the violence through the eradication of discrimination.

The Secretary-General's UNiTE campaign, launched in 2008, 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.

He noted that more than 5 million people have signed the “Say No to Violence Against Women” initiative, which spotlights the physical and sexual abuse experienced by up to 70 per cent of all women from men in their lifetime – the majority from husbands, intimate partners or someone they know.

“They are now looking for answers from us, from you, to uphold their right to live lives free of this threat,” said Mr. Ban.