

**Launching of the Secretary-General's study on all forms of violence against women
by
Ms. Rachel Mayanja
Assistant Secretary-General
Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women**

New York, 9 October 2006

Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished delegates,
Colleagues and friends,

I would like to add some comments to the comprehensive presentation by Mr. José Ocampo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs by focusing on implementation of commitments, and accountability for action to end violence against women and prevent it from occurring.

Let me begin by stating that the study is the product of a collaborative effort between Member States, United Nations entities and civil society. The involvement of, and inputs by Member States were critical. The study draws on contributions from Governments received specifically for the study, their responses to Beijing+10, and reports of States Parties under the CEDAW Convention. We organized consultations and briefings to highlight linkages between the issue of violence against women and other objectives pursued by the Organization, such as the Millennium Development Goals.

Non-governmental organizations have been critical players throughout this process. They made very valuable inputs and challenges, and their enormous capacity for advocacy, outreach and awareness-raising were critical in building knowledge on violence, and in preparing the ground for follow-up at the national and international levels.

The process has also contributed to better inter-agency coherence and coordination of a broad range of efforts by the United Nations system. As a result an inter-agency task force on violence against women arising out of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality was established. During a workshop held last December, an agreement was reached on the main areas for practical action, and in particular in support of Government action at the national level. We will be moving expeditiously in implementing this agreement.

The process benefited enormously from expert input and advice, particularly from the ten members of the Advisory Committee and the two expert meetings we convened in collaboration with WHO and ECE, as well as UNODC.

We have reached out to other partners – human rights treaty bodies and mechanisms, regional organizations, individual researchers – and their ideas and commitment have helped to sharpen focus, mobilize action and contribute to the momentum.

As a result of these efforts, over the last two years, a political momentum to carry out the study's recommendations in a comprehensive, systematic and coordinated manner has been generated. The process of preparation of the study drew together the stakeholders – Governments, UN entities, NGOs, the private sector and academia active in fighting violence against women. It created stronger networks, partnerships and alliances across borders and across issues. We used this period to flag the issues, identify challenges, gaps and shortcomings, and pave the way forward. Women at the grass root level acquired knowledge and experience in working with the United Nations. The preparation also showed that no one policy will trigger the end of violence against women. A comprehensive approach is needed to systematically address the linkages between violence, discrimination, development, human rights, and peace and security. Consultative mechanisms involving experts and representatives from United Nations entities and civil society were established early in the process, and are expected to carry forward the momentum into the follow-up phase.

We are especially pleased about the many concrete plans that are already in place to carry forward the work. To give just two examples: Later this fall, ECLAC will present a regional report to reinforce the message and recommendations of the Secretary-General's study. Next week, a coalition of non-governmental organizations, working on indigenous women's issues, plan to launch its own companion report on violence against indigenous women.

Allow me to conclude by thanking the many Member States, United Nations entities, non-governmental organizations, advocates, academics and researchers that have contributed to the study. My special thanks go to those Member States that made financial contributions to make this study possible.

We must ensure that measures of accountability are introduced which emphasize individual, community and national responsibility for eliminating violence against women. We must also ensure that sufficient resources are allocated for prevention and intervention with regard to all forms of violence against women. In the first place, I call on all Member States, the United Nations system and civil society to provide the leadership needed to sustain the momentum generated by the preparatory process for the study and to carry it forward into an effective, sustained and systematic follow-up effort.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.
