



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION PRETORIA

MEDIA RELEASE

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Australia supports global efforts to end violence against women

Around the world, as many as one in every three women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or abused in some other way - most often by someone she knows, including her husband or another male family member.

“Australia sees violence against women as a significant human rights violation that severely limits women’s social, economic and political participation in their communities”, said the Australian High Commissioner to South Africa, HE Mr Graeme Wilson, in Pretoria today.

“Australia has a zero tolerance policy for violence against women in Australia. Internationally, Australia’s aid program supports our partner countries in their own efforts to end violence against women”, Mr Wilson said.

Mr Wilson said Australia’s current contribution to the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women was US\$6.7 million over 3 years (2012-15). The UN Trust Fund focused on supporting the implementation of laws, policies and action plans that addressed violence against women and girls, and supported a range of civil society projects, including two current projects in Africa (Malawi and Cape Verde). Through UN Women, Australia also supported women’s peace-building and advocacy initiatives, including in Liberia, South Sudan and Uganda.

Mr Wilson added that, more broadly, the Australian Government’s development assistance program was committed to ensuring the integration of gender equality into all of its investments. In particular, the Australian development assistance program in Africa focused on promoting gender equality through the following initiatives:

- (a) ensuring female farmers were aware of their land rights and had access to agricultural support through better technologies;
- (b) providing women and children with better health services through modern family planning methods, child vaccinations and safe and clean delivery services;
- (c) targeting women to actively participate in and lead community managed water and sanitation facilities; and
- (d) providing grants to civil society organisations working to promote the economic and social empowerment of women.

In South Africa, the Australian High Commission currently supports a number of civil society projects aimed at addressing gender inequality, including skills training and sustainable income generation projects for women in rural areas, and an advocacy project related to women’s reproductive health rights.

For more information, see www.dfat.gov.au

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