

KERASTASE CARE & PROTECT CAMPAIGN – CHEQUE PRESENTATION CEREMONY

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REMARKS

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Mr. Matthieu Juery
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Designers – Beatrice Looi, Donna Chew and Zang Toi

Dato'-dato', Datin-datin,

Members of the media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Every child has the right to a childhood free of abuse, exploitation and harm. Yet, each day, millions of children around the world endure violence, often at the hands of trusted adults. They are subjected to physical, psychological and sexual abuse in homes, schools, institutions, on the streets, in work situations, in conflict with the law, and in cyberspace.

All violence against children is unacceptable but the violence inflicted by trusted adults behind the closed doors of the home that should be the safest place for a child to be, must surely be the most insidious form of violence against children.

Children are victims of violence in their homes, not just at the hands of biological parents, but also adoptive or step parents, grandparents, older siblings, other relatives, guardians or care providers and neighbours. The prevalence and extent of violence against children in the home is extremely difficult to gauge. In Malaysia, the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development reported a total of 1,800 child abuse cases in 2005; an average of 5 reports each day. However this is probably the tip of the iceberg because most cases goes unreported. Only the extreme cases that require hospitalisation or which result in death are reported.

The United Nations Secretary General’s Study on Violence Against Children launched in 2006 has shed much needed light on this difficult subject. The Report stresses the need to prohibit all forms of violence and the importance of a coordinated national approach to the problem, always respecting and promoting the participation of children.

The challenge of ending violence against children requires a multidisciplinary approach combining strong responsive and preventive strategies which focus on the four “Ps”: **P**rotection of children, **P**revention of violence, **P**rosecution of criminals and **P**articipation of children.

The central message of this Report is that ***no violence against children is justifiable including those cloaked as “tradition” or disguised as “discipline”; and that all violence against children is preventable.***

There can be no compromise in challenging violence against children. Children’s uniqueness – their human potential, their initial fragility and vulnerability, their dependence on adults for their growth and development – make an unassailable case for more, not less, investment in prevention and protection from violence.

In Malaysia, UNICEF is working hand-in-hand with the Government, civil society, the private sector and the media to ensure a “protective environment” for all children free from violence, abuse and discrimination.

We are proud of our partnership with L’Oreal Malaysia for the Kerastase Care and Protect Campaign. Not only has Kerastase helped promote “care” messages to its clients through 115 salons nationwide, the company also mobilised the support of three very talented designers – Beatrice Looi, Donna Chew and Zang Toi to raise at least RM 30,000 for UNICEF’s child protection program in Malaysia.

Thank you L’Oreal. Thank you designers. We hope that your commitment will inspire others in Malaysia to take action and engage in meaningful partnerships and programs which will benefit children and young people in Malaysia.

Thank you.