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UN Secretary General joins wife Nane on visit to Thuthuzela Care Centre for rape survivors in Mannenberg

Cape Town, 14 March 2006 – In a surprise move, Secretary General Kofi Annan today joined his wife Mrs. Nane Annan on her visit to the UNICEF supported 24-hour Thuthuzela Care Centre (TCC) at the GF Jooste Memorial Hospital in Mannenberg, a Cape Town township.

The Thuthuzela Care Centres, co-managed by the Departments of Health, Justice, Social Development, Correctional Services, Housing and the South African Police Services provide an integrated and multi-sectoral framework for action to prevent and respond violence against women and children, especially care and support for rape survivors.

UNICEF, in a joint programme with sister development agency the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), has supported the South African Government in the implementation of the Thuthuzela Care Centre concept since 2002, with funds from the Royal Danish Government.

The Mannenberg centre is one of 10 TCCs linked to the country's specialized sexual offences courts, all providing services to rape survivors. The centre sees some 180 cases of rape per month of which approximately 3 cases per month are boys and the youngest child, just 6 months old.

The Secretary General and Mrs. Annan met and talked with service providers, doctors, prosecutors, case managers, court preparation officials, doctors, nurses and counsellors, all of whom are part of the process of providing care for women and children that survive rape. Their objective was to learn more about this flagship and much admired integrated approach that allows for better care and more humane treatment for rape survivors, and for the

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improved conviction rate of perpetrators of sexual violence.

After a presentation and tour of the centre led by hospital head Dr. Gio Perrez and the Thuthuzela care team, Secretary General and Mrs. Annan commended the programme on its success saying they were impressed by the integrated approach to prevention, care and response to rape for women, girls and boys adopted by the centres.

South Africa experiences high levels of violence against women and children. The findings of the ongoing UN Secretary General Study on Violence against Children echo similar atrocities against children throughout the world. Of particular concern is the strong link between gender-based violence and HIV infection.

South Africa is a leader in innovative programmes to address sexual violence with a pioneering approach to the care of rape survivors which has been hailed internationally. The programme's training and methodology are being adopted in several countries of eastern, southern, and west Africa, Brazil, Thailand, Mexico and Chile.

Amongst the high level delegates on the visit, were South Africa's Minister of Justice, Hon. Brigitte Mabandla, Western Cape MEC Health Mr. Peter Uys, Danish Ambassador Mr. Thorben Brylle, Advocate Thoko Majokweni, Special Director of the National Prosecuting Authority and United Nations Resident Coordinator Ms. Scholastica S. Kimaryo.

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