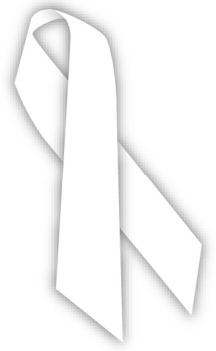


WHITE RIBBON

Making violence against women
a thing of the past



MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 25 July 08

ATTORNEYS-GENERAL TAKE A STAND ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Today all Australian Attorneys-General have taken a stance on one of the most widespread and serious human rights abuses in Australia by becoming White Ribbon Ambassadors.

White Ribbon Ambassadors play a key role in the White Ribbon Campaign as positive role models encouraging men to speak out about violence against women. All Attorneys-General are today making a personal pledge to not commit, condone, or remain silent about violence against women.

Andrew O'Keefe, Chairman of the White Ribbon Foundation says, "Men must know that when they speak out about violence they are not speaking alone. By speaking in one voice like this the Attorneys-General have said exactly that."

The Commonwealth Attorney-General, The Hon Robert McClelland said, "This is an important act by the nation's first law officers. It says with a clear, unequivocal voice that violence against women in any form is wrong and should be condemned."

The White Ribbon Campaign welcomes the Attorneys-General and hopes that their personal commitment will help in moving towards consistency and better practice across the judicial system nationally in how violence against women is handled by the courts. White Ribbon sees it as essential that violence against women is always treated as a human rights violation and a criminal offence.

The White Ribbon Campaign looks forward to significant improvements in this area with the pending *National Plan to reduce Violence Against Women and Children*.

The Attorneys-General making the White Ribbon pledge and signing up as Ambassadors are together at a Standing Committee of Attorneys-General (SCAG) meeting in Auckland today (Friday 25 July).

"Ultimately every man must make an individual choice to oppose violence against women. But the actions of the Attorneys-General make an unambiguous statement about where the legal and moral rights lie. And that kind of clear leadership should make every man's choice obvious," says Andrew.

The White Ribbon Campaign is working to end violence against women in Australia by engaging men and boys to actively oppose violence against women. Over the next four years, thanks to the support of the Commonwealth Government, White Ribbon will be developing education activities in rural and regional communities to promote culture-change.

As part of the White Ribbon Campaign, White Ribbon Day 25 November, the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, is a day where men can make a personal statement, by wearing a white ribbon, that they will not commit, condone or be silent about violence against women.

ENDS

For more information about White Ribbon visit: www.whiteribbonday.org.au or contact:

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