

MEDIA ADVISORY

Women Living Courage – A KAIROS Tour

For Immediate Release

Wednesday, October 12, 2011

(Toronto) KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives (KAIROS) launches a tour of women human rights defenders to raise awareness about the impact of armed conflict on the lives and rights of women and girls and to make visible the violence faced by women in migrant and Indigenous communities in Canada. The tour highlights the essential role women play as peace builders.

The tour underscores Canada's responsibility to promote the application of United Nations resolutions on women, peace and security (such as UNSCR 1325) and to ensure the meaningful participation of women in all aspects of peace-building. KAIROS calls on Canada as a donor country to increase political and financial support to women's organizations working in conflict zones as an effective strategy to help resolve conflict and build lasting peace.

WHO: Featuring KAIROS global partners -

- Chantal Bilulu is Program Coordinator for Women and Children and advisor to the legal clinic combating gender-based violence of *Héritiers de la Justice* in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).
- Rebecca Nyagai Kafi, representative of the Sudan Council of Churches, ordained Deaconess of the Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church, Chair of its General Women's Group Office.
- Vernie Yocogan-Diano a human rights and community activist from the Cordillera region of the Philippines and an Indigenous woman (Kankanaey-Bontoc).

WHAT: Public forums with women leaders from the DRC, Sudan and the Philippines who live in conflict zones, in dialogue with Indigenous and migrant women in Canada

WHERE: **Victoria** – Friday, October 14, 6:30–9:00 PM, Philippine Bayanihan Community Centre, 1709 Blanshard St. (one block south of Save-On Food Memorial Centre)

Vancouver – Saturday, October 15, 6:30–9:00 PM, St. Michael's Anglican Church, 409 Broadway East

Regina – Thursday, October 20, 6:00–9PM, Christ Lutheran Church, 4825 Dewdney Ave

Winnipeg – Friday, October 21, 7:00–9:30 PM, Micah House, 1039 Main St. (at Magnus Ave)

Kitchener – Wednesday, October 26, 6:00 to 8:00 PM, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 54 Queen St North

Montreal – Thursday, October 27, 6:00—10PM, Trinity Memorial Anglican Church, 5220 Sherbrooke St. West

WHEN: October 11-29, 2011

Further information on the tour, local contacts and details of local sponsors for the forums are available on the KAIROS website at

<http://www.kairoscanada.org/dignity-rights/women-of-courage-2/>

WHY: In the Democratic Republic of Congo, women's daily challenges of poverty and hunger are multiplied by an epidemic of rape – a common weapon in the ongoing resource war.

The Republic of South Sudan is the world's newest country. And yet, for all of the optimism created by its founding, it is also a country where 90 percent of women can neither read nor write and where women die in childbirth in shocking numbers.

In the Philippines many face the daily challenges of poverty and hunger. Those who confront the powers that impose this economic hardship also face pervasive violence.

In Canada Indigenous women and girls are five times more likely to face violence and disappearance than are non-Indigenous women. Migrant workers are particularly vulnerable to violence in the workplace.

Women are disproportionately affected by violence and militarism. Still, they bring unique perspectives and strategies to help communities and nations put an end to violence. This role is rarely recognized and women are largely absent from official peace initiatives and negotiations.

By sharing their courageous stories, the women participating in the Living Courage Tour will inspire concerned Canadians and call for action from the Canadian government. KAIROS is a church-based social justice organization focusing on human rights and sustainability.

<http://kairoscanada.org/en/>

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