

Your Excellency  
Mr. Thanddiwe Profit- Mclean  
Ambassador of South Africa  
Avenida Luís Bivar, 10  
1269-124 LISBOA

Lisbon, March 2009

Excellency,

I am writing to Your Excellency to express my concern about the situation of survivors of domestic violence, especially in rural areas in your country, described in an Amnesty International (AI) report. This report reflects the research undertaken by the organization in 2006 and 2007, with testimonies of several women who, to varying extents, had experienced incidents of violence from intimate partners or strangers and had difficulties to access places of safety and social support, as they are very few in these areas.

I welcome the renewed dialogue between the authorities and National Shelter Movement and I urge your government to continue consultations in order to develop appropriate policies reflecting women's needs. Despite this renewed dialogue and the increase of domestic violence shelters, there are still not sufficient appropriate shelters, particularly in rural areas, to provide emergency and longer-term refuge. I therefore urge you to:

- Prioritise the funding of shelters, with sufficient trained staff, with the support of national government and local business or other funders;
- Ensure that women experiencing domestic violence are able to have access to the protection of shelters on an emergency short-term basis and on a longer-term basis of six to nine months as, to allow them time to locate new accommodation, obtain skills and find employment;
- Establish systems to assist the police in order to maintain an updated list of shelters.

Yours sincerely,