



For immediate release

## **SURF SECURES SCOTTISH SUPPORT**

**(London, November 2006)** The Rwandan Survivors Fund (SURF) has led its first official visit to Scotland. As a guest of the Lindean Trust, SURF Founder and Director, Mary Kayitesi-Blewitt, spoke to students at Selkirk High School before attending a dinner in aid of SURF as guest of honour in Edinburgh, which raised £8000.

In an address to the Selkirk students as part of a special Africa Big Issues Day, Mary urged the audience to never 'look the other way' when confronted by evil and injustice:

**"I didn't want to be like the killers, I wanted to do something positive. If you listen to something good in you, you will respond positively. Think for yourselves and don't be led. One person can make a difference, no matter how difficult the situation might appear at first. Always think: 'Could I make a difference?' Don't look away."**

The following evening Mary attended a charity dinner in the Signet Library, Edinburgh, attended by 200 people, and at which £8,000 was raised for SURF. The event was organised by Iain Macdonald, an Edinburgh solicitor who is also a trustee of the Lindean Trust. Over the past four years the trust has funded three SURF projects in Rwanda, including the building of houses for orphans, as well as the establishment of a mobile nursing team to deliver home-based care to HIV+ widows and orphans in Rwamagana.

Commenting on the visit, Director of SURF, Mary Kayitesi-Blewitt, said:

**"The visit was an invaluable opportunity for SURF, not only for the funds that it raised but more importantly for the support that it has mobilised. The fact that students of Selkirk not only relate to, but care for, young survivors in Rwanda is testament to the bond between us all. The warmth of the reception, and the interest that people demonstrated, I hope bodes well for SURF - to build on these foundations to engage even more people in Scotland to support survivors of the genocide in Rwanda."**

- END -

**For more information visit:**

SURF: <http://www.survivors-fund.org.uk>

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**Notes to editors:**

**Over the past year, SURF has:**

- Provided grants for 5000 households for Income Generating Projects.
- Built over 70 homes for child-headed households, giving shelter to 5 survivors.
- Provided vocational training to 360 children, and supported 370 children with school fees.
- Built 22 mass graves, giving thousands of victims of the genocide a decent burial

SURF is supported amongst others by the Department for International Development; Comic Relief; The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund; The Elton John AIDS Foundation; The Funding Network and The Pears Family Charitable Foundation.

In 2007 we hope to build 500 new homes for survivors, a further 23 mass graves and to complete work on the Resource and Testimony Centre.

SURF is a registered UK charity (no. 1065705/5).