



Media Representatives are cordially invited to attend a briefing on the Media Release below. The Acting Secretary General, Mr. David Stephens and other representatives of the South African Red Cross Society will be available to take your questions on Red Cross assistance provided.

Date: 21 May 2008 Time: 10h30

Venue: SARCS Johannesburg Branch, Seyble Building, 16th Floor, 41 de Korte Street Braamfontein (Contact for Directions: Nathan Banda, 011-339-1993 082-353-3738)

Johannesburg, May 21, 2008

Update on the R1 million Emergency Appeal Launched by The South African Red Cross Society in Support of Victims of Recent Urban Violence

South Africans demonstrate their spirit of *ubuntu* by supporting the South African Red Cross Society (SARCS) in its drive to provide emergency relief to the thousands of people affected by the recent acts of violence.

The SARCS Emergency Appeal was launched on Friday 16 May 2008, after it became evident that the numbers of affected people would continue to rise over the weekend. By 15 May 2008, the estimated number of people who had received assistance from SARCS was 3000. By Monday 19 May, this figure had risen to more than 6000.

SARCS volunteers and staff provide first aid and distribute mainly food, blankets and hygiene and baby kits. These Red Cross representatives have been working in shifts, often in dangerous and difficult conditions, providing relief and comfort to those affected by the violence.

The Society is preparing to launch an anti-discrimination campaign, based on International Humanitarian Law and promoting the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's Fundamental Principles of *Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity and Universality* for peace and harmony. It is hoped that this will promote a more long-term solution to the underlying causes of the ongoing violence.

Apart from the many donations, in cash and kind, from concerned South African individuals and families, there has also been generous support from Pick n Pay, MTN and Standard Bank.

However, needs are increasing and SARCS continues to appeal for further donations, in cash and kind. They urge the public to contact their nearest Red Cross branch for information on what items to donate and how (see www.redcross.org.za or call SARCS national office on 021-532-0202). Those wishing to donate cash are asked to use the following account:

Standard Bank, Account number: 071760563

Branch: Constantia, Code: 025309

For further information or to set up interviews, please contact:

South African Red Cross Society Provincial Office in Johannesburg: Mbuso Mthembu, Provincial Manager, Tel: 079 499 9590

South African Red Cross Society National Office in Cape Town: David Stephens, Acting Secretary General, Tel: 084 300 4497