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## **Worldwide campaign to end violence against women and girls**

*"When I left class... to get home, I was confronted by some officers, about 11 men... The first officer slapped me, kicked me and then I saw what looked like a gun butt coming... When I woke up in a dark room everything was gone... For 13 days, I was raped by I do not know how many men." (Female student interviewed in Liberia, April 2001)*

Between Valentine's Day (V-Day) on 14 February and International Women's Day on 8 March, tens of thousands of Amnesty International student activists will be linking up with one of the most radical political, social and theatrical campaigns of 2002 -- the V-Day College Campaign to end violence against women and girls

In collaboration with the International V-Day College Campaign -- part of the V-Day movement -- students in over 25 countries will be campaigning for a 12-year-old girl reportedly raped by a public official still in office in Guatemala, women political detainees tortured in Lebanon, students raped by government security forces in Liberia and Turkish activists on trial simply for speaking out against rape in custody.

"This is a really exciting opportunity for us to show our solidarity and take action for women who have been abused. Until women are free, none of us are free," said Jeselle M. Papa, a student activist coordinator from the Philippines.

Among highlights of the campaign will be an Amnesty International action campaign at performances of Eve Ensler's play "The Vagina

*Monologues' in the Philippines, an awareness raising campaign in Togolese schools, street actions in Venezuela, and an exhibition arranged by students in New Zealand which will be launched by Governor-General Dame Sylvia Cartwright on International Women's Day.*

*"We are campaigning for governments to honour their legal obligations to prevent violence and discrimination against women. Governments must send a clear message to perpetrators of violence against women that they will be brought to justice " Amnesty International said today.*

### **Background**

*Youth and students make up over half of the global Amnesty International membership which exceeds 1 million.*

*The international student campaign is part of Amnesty International's ongoing commitment to Women's Rights. The theme of Violence Against Women is increasingly becoming a very important issue for the organization.*

*The V-Day College Campaign brings student productions of "The Vagina Monologues" to colleges and universities around the world to raise awareness about violence against women and girls and funds for local anti-violence groups and women's organizations. The "V" in "V-Day" stands for victory over violence, Valentine's Day and vagina.*

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**For more information about the V-Day College Campaign, please visit [www.vday.org/college](http://www.vday.org/college). For more information on Amnesty International's international campaigns, please visit [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org).**

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