The significance of the annual celebration of National Human Rights Day on 21 March highlights the historical event on 21 March 1960, when people from all over the country took to the streets to protest against the Pass Laws. People were protesting against unfair laws and were really demanding their human rights. Many of these rights are now included in our Bill of Rights:

- Equality (section 9)
- Human dignity (section 10)
- Freedom of Expression (section 16)
- Assembly, demonstration, picketing and petitioning (section 17)
- Freedom of Association (section 18)
- Freedom of movement and residence (section 21)

International Children’s Day
South Africa as being a signatory of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child annually celebrates this day with all other countries in the world. The day is used to focus on creating awareness around children rights and responsibilities and includes initiatives from both government departments and civil society organizations and structures.

National Youth Day & Day of the African Child

This day previously known as Soweto Day and now known as National Youth Day is a day when young people celebrate the achievements of political freedom as well as highlighting the negative issues still impacting on youth development.

Today youth are celebrating the achievements the past struggle has resulted in. Their role now is not to stage uprisings in protest but setting the trends for future generations and leaving behind a legacy of growth and prosperity. The youth see the need to progress within the global community along with their counterparts.

The Day of the African Child


August

| 9 | NATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY |

Former President Nelson Mandela declared 9 August a public holiday “in celebration of the struggles of the women over past decades and as a rejuvenation of our commitment to strive for a society free of all kinds of discrimination, more especially discrimination against women.”

Women’s day serves as a platform for the issues that affect women to be highlighted, i.e. the high levels of violence against women and children, especially sexual violence, the powerless position of women as the victims of HIV/AIDS, the plight of women living in poverty, etc. Celebrating Women’s day is a recognition of the role that women have played in the past, and assisting to create awareness regarding the contribution women continue to make in our society.

November

<p>| 1 | NATIONAL CHILDREN’S DAY |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25-10 Dec</td>
<td>SIXTEEN DAYS / THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY FIVE DAYS OF ACTIVISM FOR NO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NATIONAL CHILDREN’S DAY**

Our country annually celebrates the National Children’s Day on the 1st of November. The Office on the Rights of the Child: Presidency coordinates the national event that is normally rotated amongst the different provinces. This year the Premier of the Northern Cape Province will be the host on the 6-8 November 2008.

All Provincial ORC’s are expected to participate in the national event and also to have a provincial event of which our Province plans to have it on the 1st November 2008 in Ceres, Cape Winelands District.

**SIXTEEN DAYS / THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY FIVE DAYS OF ACTIVISM FOR NO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN**

The period of 25 November to 10 December is internationally known as the “16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence”. The annual 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Against Women Campaign has been an organizing strategy by individuals and groups from around the world to call for the elimination of all forms of violence against women. Growing out of the Global Center’s first Women’s Global Leadership Institute in 1991, the campaign links violence against women and human rights, emphasizing that all forms of violence, whether perpetrated in the public or private sphere, are a violation of human rights. The dates that participants chose for the Campaign symbolically make this link: November 25 marks the International Day Against Violence Against Women and December 10 is International Human Rights Day.

Although the campaign name refers to “gender violence”, any form of gender-based violence against men is also included. The nature of the majority of violent crimes in South Africa however forces us to specifically emphasize violence against women.

**The White Ribbon Campaign** is the largest effort in the world of men working to end men’s violence against women. Wearing a white ribbon is a personal pledge never to commit, condone nor remain silent about violence against women. This campaign starts on November 25.

The Western Cape will this year be hosting the Opening Event on the 22 November 2008 which will be held in Beaufort West.

**December**
1981 was declared the International Year of Disabled Persons by the United Nations. The South African Government did not recognize this year. It was, nevertheless, promoted by the NGO sector with the adopted theme of “Full participation and Equality”. It was this that gave rise to the development of a disability rights movement in the country.

The most important outcome of the International Year of Disabled Persons (1981) was the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, adopted by the United Nations General assembly in 1982. The purpose of the World Programme of Action was to promote effective measures for the prevention of disability, rehabilitation and the realization of equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.

International Day of Disabled Persons is celebrated annually on 3 December as a direct result of the above-mentioned developments.

The International Day of Disabled Persons in South Africa will be linked to the African Decade on Disability over the following 10 years ending in the year 2009/10. The overall theme that was identified for this purpose is: “DISABILITY RENAISSANCE from poverty to social, economic and political empowerment”.

December 10, 1948 was the day on which the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was signed by member nations of the United Nations in New York. The members of the UN hoped that the horrors of World War II could be avoided if a universal code of human rights governed the behaviour of individuals and countries. The Universal Declaration is not just another international document. It is the primary proclamation of the international " community’s commitment to human rights as a common standard of achievement for all people and all nations.” It is a day to honour the highest aspirations and renew our promise to conquer the worst of human cruelty.
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

DERRICK SCHROEDER
ROOM 1-07, 15 WALE STREET, CAPE TOWN
Tel: 483-4004/082 9010125
Fax: 021 - 483-2698
E-mail: Dmschroe@pgwc.gov.za

BOMKAZI MAFUYA
ROOM 1-05, 15 WALE STREET, CAPE TOWN
Tel: 021 - 483-8225
Fax: 021 - 483-2698
E-mail: Bmafuya@pgwc.gov.za