



March 22, 2006

Governor General of Canada becomes a Patron of the International Women's Health Program at the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada

Ottawa – The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) is pleased to announce that Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada, has agreed to be the Patron of the Society's International Women's Health Program.

The program was granted this honour in light of its aims and objectives to reduce maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity internationally. The program also maintains a partnership program within Haiti, the birthplace of Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean.

Women's Health has been a strong focus throughout the Governor General's distinguished career. Notably, in the late '70s and '80s, she helped establish a network of emergency women's shelters throughout Québec and elsewhere in Canada. She has also worked with aid organizations that assisted immigrant women and children.

"The Governor General's patronage is a distinguished honour for the SOGC's International Women's Health program. It recognizes the key role that the SOGC plays internationally in working to improve the quality of emergency obstetrical care," said SOGC Associate Executive Vice-President Dr. Vyta Senikas. "As well, the Governor General's patronage highlights the important work of the SOGC and its partners in working toward the achievement of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals to reduce rates of maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity."

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada welcomes the patronage of Her Excellency, and looks forward to working with the Governor General in promoting women's health internationally through leadership and collaboration.

The SOGC is one of Canada's oldest national specialty organizations. Established in 1944, the Society's mission is to promote excellence in the practice of obstetrics and gynaecology and to advance the health of women through leadership, advocacy, collaboration, outreach and education. The SOGC represents obstetricians/gynaecologists, family physicians, nurses, midwives and allied health professionals in the field of sexual reproductive health.

The SOGC has been active on the international scene since 1998, when it integrated into its mission the importance of pursuing excellence in international women's health and promoting safe motherhood and newborn health throughout the world. It is the Society's goal to ensure that every woman has the right to survive pregnancy and childbirth and has access to the care she needs to deliver a healthy baby through a safe pregnancy and childbirth

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Information:

Nancy Bickford, Acting Director, Communications and Public Education

Tel : (800) 561-2416 or (613) 730-4192 extension: 330

Fax: (613) 730-4314

E-mail address: nbickford@sogc.com Website: www.sogc.org

Liette Perron, Director, International Women's Health Program

Tel : (800) 561-2416 or (613) 730-4192 extension: 223

Fax: (613) 730-4314

E-mail address: lperron@sogc.com Website: www.sogc.org