

International Day on the Elimination of Violence against Women – 25 November

Joint call by UN Rapporteur on Violence against Women and all other global and regional mechanisms to end femicide and gender-based violence

GENEVA (22 November 2016) – Speaking ahead of the **International Day on the Elimination of Violence against women**, the *United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences*, the *Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*, the *Inter- American Special Rapporteur on violence against women*, the *Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa*, the *United Nations Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice*, the *Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI)* and the *Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence* of the Council of Europe (GREVIO), * as key global and regional women's rights expert mechanisms, jointly call for intensification of international, regional and national efforts for prevention of femicides and gender based violence.

Violence against women is rooted in inequalities and discrimination against women and its prevention and eradication must be grounded in gender equality and empowerment of women.

Violence against women, as a form of discrimination against women and a human rights violation is prohibited both by the global human rights instruments – such as the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women** - and by the regional treaties, such as the **Belém do Pará Convention, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of women in Africa (Maputo protocol), and the Istanbul Convention.**

Monitoring work at both global and regional levels has shown that:

- Femicides or gender related killings of women, and sexual and other forms of gender based violence against women and girls are widespread and persistent human rights violations.
- There is widespread impunity due to the lack of implementation of the global and regional instruments on women's rights and violence against women and the failure to turn these into real protection of every woman and girl.
- There are significant gaps and shortcomings in national legislation and prevention systems often combined with tolerance of such violence, exacerbated by a lack of reliable and disaggregated data, the absence of adequate risk assessments, and concealment and underreporting of gender-related killings, rapes and other forms of gender based violence against women.

All States must, as a matter of urgency and in collaboration with civil society and other stakeholders, step up their efforts to prevent and eradicate femicides, rapes and other forms of gender based violence against women and girls.

All stakeholders are urged to guarantee each and every woman and girl a life free from violence by applying holistic integrated policies on:

- **PREVENTION:** fully endorsing, incorporating and implementing global and regional treaties on women's rights and violence against women (CEDAW and its Optional Protocol, the Belém do Pará Convention, the Maputo Protocol and the Istanbul Convention);
- **PROTECTION:** providing shelters and safe places, crisis centers, protection orders and services for women and their children survivors of violence and integrating gender perspective in the work of legal professionals and law enforcements officials dealing with violence against women;
- **PROSECUTION,** including sanctions of perpetrators and providing redress and reparations for the victims and their families.

The experts also welcome the call of the *UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women*, to establish a "Gender-Related Killing of Women (Femicide) Watch" and to publish every year on the International Day on the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November) the number of femicides or gender-related killing of women, disaggregated by age and sex of the perpetrators, the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim(s), as well as information on the perpetrators' prosecution and punishment.

Establishing a "Femicide watch" to collect, analyse and review data at the national, regional and global level will place a much needed emphasis on prevention. Each femicide should be carefully examined to identify any failure of protection, with a view to improving and further developing preventive measures. In addition, a "Femicide watch" by its mere existence would increase awareness about femicides and other forms of gender-based violence against women and galvanise actions for its prevention. States should increase their efforts to use all available global and regional women's human rights instruments and experts' mechanisms to put in place effective systems to prevent and end femicide and gender-based violence against women and girls.**

ENDS

(*) *The group of United Nations and regional women's human rights mechanisms:*

Ms. Dubravka Šimonović, UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/SRWomen/Pages/SRWomenIndex.aspx>

Ms. Lucy Asuagbor, Special Rapporteur on Rights of Women in Africa of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights

<http://www.achpr.org/mechanisms/rights-of-women/>

Ms. Margarette May Macaulay, Commissioner and Rapporteur on the Rights of Women of the Inter-American Commission:

<http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/women/default.asp>

UN Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/WGWomen/Pages/WGWomenIndex.aspx>

UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW): <http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/cedaw/pages/cedawindex.aspx>

The Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence of the Council of Europe (GREVIO):
<http://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/grevio>

The Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI):
<http://www.oas.org/en/mesecevi/about.asp>

() Report of the Special rapporteur to the General Assembly of the United Nations on the modalities of establishing femicide watch ([A/71/398](#))**

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For the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights: Ms. María Isabel Rivero ([+1 202 370 9001](tel:+12023709001) / mrivero@oas.org)

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