

ECOSOC Round Table on violence against women
8 July 2008, 4 – 6:00 pm

Speaking notes of the Chairperson of CSW and Moderator of the ECOSOC Round Table on violence against women

- Thank the ECOSOC and its Vice President for the Coordination segment for deciding to have a Round Table discussion on violence against women.
- The Secretary-General's in-depth study, presented to the General Assembly in October 2006, and the subsequent resolutions of the General Assembly (A/RES/61/143 and A/RES/62/133) have accelerated the momentum for action in this critical area of concern to Member States and other stakeholders. Member States continue to emphasize their strong support for this work and the effective implementation of these resolutions and related global policy commitments.
- The resolution of the General Assembly invited the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions to discuss, by 2008, the question of violence against women in all its forms and manifestations and to set priorities for addressing this issue in their future efforts and work programmes.
- Member States have consistently reiterated that violence against women is a violation of human rights. Violence against women in all its forms and manifestations has devastating impact on victims, as well as on victims' families, communities and societies at large. It is a scourge that affects women in all countries around the world. It is rooted in the unequal power relations between women and men, and efforts to prevent and address such violence must be grounded in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Responses to violence against women must be systematic, comprehensive, multi-sectoral and sustained. Responses must be supported by strong institutional mechanisms and adequate financing. Political will and leadership at the highest level are critical for bringing about the necessary societal change where violence against women, in any form, will no longer be acceptable, or condoned.
- This round table discussion is an important opportunity for ECOSOC to assess the responses of functional commissions to the mandate provided by the GA in this critical area. It is in particular an opportunity for ECOSOC itself to take a leadership role in the common effort to tackle the global scourge of violence against women; and to set priorities for addressing this issue in its future efforts and work programme.
- Since the adoption of the resolution, several functional commissions have implemented follow-up activities.

- During this round table, the Chairpersons of the functional Commissions are invited to provide examples of steps taken so far, and how they intend to address this issue in the future.
- The Moderator proposes to proceed as follows: each of the Chairpersons will be invited to make brief opening comments of 3-5 minutes, reflecting on the impact and linkages between violence against women and the implementation of the mandates of their respective commission. He encourages the Chairpersons to present examples, how they have addressed the question of violence against women, and where they see future opportunities for contributing to the common challenge of addressing violence against women.
- Following the Chairpersons' opening remarks, Council Members and Observers will be invited to provide comments and make recommendations on the role of the Council in addressing this challenge within its own mandate, including in its oversight function in regard to the functional commissions. Towards the end of the meeting, Chairpersons of the commissions will be given an opportunity to respond to any questions raised or provide additional comments and reflections, and the Moderator will make some concluding remarks
- The Moderator gives the floor to
 - Chairperson of the Commission on Population and Development, Ms. Elena Zúñiga, of Mexico, who is joining the discussion via video link from the office of the United Nations Information Service in Mexico City. Mme Zúñiga, you have the floor.

CHAIR SPEAKS VIA VIDEO LINK

- Vice-Chairperson of the Commission on Social Development, Ms. Lorena Gimenez (Venezuela)

VICE CHAIR SPEAKS

- Chairperson of the UN Statistical Commission, Mr. Pali Lehohla

CHAIR SPEAKS

(Moderator)

- Unfortunately, the Chairperson or a representative from the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice was unable to join us for the round table today. However, the Commission on Crime Prevention has a long-standing record of attention to this issue and has extensively dealt with the responsibilities of the criminal justice system to enhance protection of victims, strengthen victims' access to justice and prevent impunity of perpetrators. Based on the

work of that Commission, the General Assembly adopted *Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence Against Women in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice* in 1997.

- The Moderator notes that as CSW Chair, he had the opportunity to participate in the CCPCJ thematic debate on violence against women last April. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice recognized that effective and integrated criminal justice responses to all forms of violence against women and girls require close cooperation between all key stakeholders, including law enforcement officials, prosecutors, victim advocates, medical professionals and forensic scientists.
- The CCPCJ decided to convene an intergovernmental expert meeting to review the Model Strategies, in order to reflect current developments and research, new approaches and prevention tools and good practices. The meeting will be organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in cooperation with the Commission on the Status of Women and other stakeholders.
- The Moderator, as Chair of CSW, adds that the Commission on the Status of Women is committed to work on this issue. CSW has regularly considered aspects of violence against women in relation to priority themes before the Commission, for example in 2007, in relation to elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child. CSW has addressed violence against women in relation to HIV/AIDS; has focused on female genital mutilation as well as on forced marriage and the girl child. The Chair of the Statistical Commission has referred to the long-standing interaction between the two commissions. It is hoped that the CSW in 2009 will also continue to consider the question of indicators on violence against women.
- The Commission on the Status of Women was very honoured that the Secretary-General of the United Nations launched his global campaign to end violence against women at the opening meeting of our fifty-second session on 25 February 2008, in the presence of many ministers of gender equality and an unprecedented number of representatives from the NGO community from around the world. Express the expectation that CSW will bring its ongoing support to the Campaign.
- Moderator opens the floor and invites comments and recommendations from Council Members and Observers.