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<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/index.htm>

## **United Nations Secretary-General's study on violence against women**

In December 2003, the General Assembly of the United Nations requested the Secretary-General to prepare an in-depth study on violence against women ([resolution 58/185](#)). The study will be presented to the *General Assembly in September 2006* for consideration.

The United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has responsibility for preparing the study, in close cooperation with relevant United Nations bodies, and by soliciting information from Member States and non-governmental organizations.

The process of preparation of the study is as important as the product. It is an opportunity to raise awareness, strengthen political commitment to tackling this pervasive problem, and enhance accountability for action. It is also an opportunity to put in place better monitoring for implementation of commitments in the study's follow-up phase.

The **goals of the study** are to:

- Highlight the persistence of all forms of violence against women in all parts of the world, and the unacceptability of such violence
- Strengthen political commitment and joint efforts of all stakeholders to prevent and eliminate violence against women
- Identify ways and means for better and more sustained and effective implementation of Government commitments and obligations to combat all forms of violence against women, and increase accountability.

The study will enhance the knowledge base with regard to the extent and prevalence of violence against women, and expose the gaps and challenges in the availability of data, including methodologies for assessing its prevalence. It will synthesize causes and consequences, including costs, of such violence. It will also identify good practice examples and effective strategies to combat violence against women. Importantly, the study will include action-oriented recommendations that encompass effective remedies and prevention and rehabilitation measures.

### **The preparatory process**

Work is ongoing to *synthesize the current state of knowledge* – this includes review of many different sources of information such as inputs from Governments, expert meetings, United Nations entities and bodies, and non-governmental organizations, as well as academic research – and *identify key challenges and recommendations* for action, and *highlight good practice examples*.

**Mechanisms** to ensure involvement of all stakeholders include:

- A *Task Force* consisting of representatives of United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations meets regularly to provide feedback and channel information
- A high-level *Advisory Committee* of experts on violence against women provides strategic guidance and advice
- *Consultations* with stakeholders provide opportunities to flag key issues to be addressed in the study
- An *online discussion* will take place during the fall of 2005 to increase opportunities for contributions by civil society.

**Governments**, entities of the **United Nations** system, and United Nations bodies such as the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and other special procedures, and human rights treaty bodies are invited to provide inputs. These should highlight key challenges, reasons for insufficient implementation of commitments, and examples of good practice. They are also encouraged to draw attention to the study as a vehicle for strengthening action against violence against women whenever possible.

**Non-governmental organizations** have a key role in the process. Drawing from their experience, NGOs should flag trends and highlight key issues requiring attention, and give examples of good practice in combating all forms of violence against women. They are invited to use the study as a vehicle to galvanize action and work within their communities, and with Governments at national, regional and global level towards a more determined, committed and effective effort to eliminate violence against women.

Available on the website <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/index.htm>:

- Resolution 58/185
- Preliminary outline for the study
- Composition of the Task Force
- Members of the Advisory Committee
- Inputs by Governments (responses to the questionnaire for the 10-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action, succinct inputs for the study, States parties reports under article 18 of the CEDAW Convention)
- Reports and background papers from expert group meetings convened by DAW
- Questionnaire to United Nations entities
- Guidance note for NGO inputs
- Schedule of consultations
- Calendar of events where the study will also be highlighted.