



# PREVENTING AND ELIMINATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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STAKEHOLDERS' FORUM  
13 - 14 December 2012

## ABOUT CSW

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. A functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), it was established by Council resolution 11(II) of 21 June 1946.

The Commission has been instrumental in promoting women's rights, documenting the reality of women's lives throughout the world, shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women, and encouraging the United Nations system to incorporate a gender perspective in all areas of work.

During the Commission's annual two-week session, representatives of Member States, civil society organizations and entities of the United Nations system gather at United Nations Headquarters in New York. They discuss progress and gaps in the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the key global policy document on gender equality, as well as emerging issues that affect gender equality and the empowerment of women. Member States agree on further action to be taken to accelerate progress and promote women's enjoyment of their rights in political, economic and social fields.

UN-Women supports all aspects of the work of the Commission. The entity prepares the documentation for the session including forward-looking recommendations to further expand the global

normative framework. It supports Member States in their deliberations to help them reach consensus on further actions to be taken. And it supports Member States, at the national level, to follow-up and implement commitments made and agreements reached on gender equality and women's empowerment. UN-Women also facilitates the participation of civil society representatives in Commission meetings.

At its fifty-seventh session, from 4 – 15 March 2013, the Commission will discuss the following themes:

- Priority theme: "Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls"
- Review theme: "The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS" (CSW53)
- Emerging issue theme: "Key gender equality issues to be reflected in the post-2015 development framework"
- Preview theme for 2014: "Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls"

For more information, please visit:  
[www.unwomen.org/csw/csw57](http://www.unwomen.org/csw/csw57)

## SUMMARY

On 13 - 14 December 2012, UN-Women convened a Stakeholders' Forum on preventing and eliminating violence against women. The purpose of the Forum was to engage a range of stakeholders in the preparations for the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women ("CSW57"). More specifically, the Forum aimed to raise awareness of existing commitments and standards for ending violence against women; create a platform for sharing ideas and strategies that bring results; identify key areas where consensus needs strengthening; and foster dialogue and build alliances to accelerate the implementation of the expected outcomes of CSW57.

The present report summarizes the key messages from the discussions and participants' expectations and commitments for the outcome of CSW57.

The Forum's opening session was followed by five interactive panel discussions and a closing session. Panellists with various institutional backgrounds and experiences engaged in dialogue with lead discussants and participants, highlighting good practices, key areas for future work and next steps to end violence against women and girls.

The five panel discussions focused on the following themes, supported by [discussion notes](#):

- Existing global commitments for prevention and elimination of violence against women
- Ensuring leadership, coordination and meeting the resource challenge for ending violence against women
- Tackling causes and risk factors to prevent violence against women and girls: what works
- Ensuring inclusive policies and strategies to eliminate violence against all women and girls: what works
- Integrated service delivery and multi-sectoral responses: good examples

As part of the Stakeholders' Forum, a Survivors' Forum provided opportunities for survivors of violence to discuss how they used their experiences to create change in their communities and to promote legislative and policy reform. The survivor testimonies highlighted the importance of including survivor voices in policy development and implementation.

Over 500 participants attended the [event](#), including eight Ministers or Heads of national machineries for gender equality and several capital-based experts, 30 ambassadors and many New York-based delegates, as well as representatives from civil society and United Nations agencies. Participants engaged in open and frank discussions on the critical importance of reaching strong agreed conclusions on the priority theme of CSW57.

The Forum was successful in mobilizing champions, bringing together policymakers, advocates and practitioners from the field, and in sensitizing government delegates to forge consensus towards the reaffirmation and deepening of the normative framework on ending violence against women, accelerating its implementation and ensuring accountability for compliance with commitments. Participants took full advantage of this opportunity to share experiences and lessons learned, to highlight good practices and to identify some of the key issues and challenges in efforts to realize a life free of violence for all women and girls.

Participants voiced confidence that the exchanges helped build a solid foundation for a successful outcome at CSW57 and energetic follow-up and political commitment to implement norms and replicate good practices especially at the national level. In sum, three overarching messages were clear:

- There is a continuous need to strengthen norms and standards for preventing and addressing all forms of violence against women and girls, at global, regional and national levels. The upcoming CSW is a prime opportunity to do just that, hence not having agreed conclusions is not an option.
- Much greater focus is needed on implementation and enforcement of the existing normative framework, especially at the national level, to ensure accountability. Such action needs to be holistic, coordinated, multi-sectoral and involve all stakeholders.
- Expanding and strengthening the institutions, mechanisms and tools, as well as capacities that are needed to make this implementation happen expeditiously is indispensable.

## KEY ELEMENTS FROM THE DISCUSSIONS AND OUTCOME EXPECTATIONS

### OPENING SESSION

UN-Women Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Lakshmi Puri, *opened the Forum*. She highlighted the pervasive nature of violence against women and girls, emphasizing that eliminating violence against women should be a common effort and achievement. She presented the progress made in the elaboration of a global normative framework for the elimination of violence against women and girls, with particular attention to human rights conventions, General Assembly resolutions and outcomes of global conferences. At the same time, she pointed to the persistent gap in the implementation of this framework and translation of these documents into concrete national action, such as strengthened protection and prevention measures and an ecosystem of policies, laws and measures, targeted infrastructure, investments and scaling up the provision of multi-sectoral services.

Ms. Puri emphasized the need for political commitment and encouraged Member States to take advantage of CSW57 as a political platform to bring about progress in strengthening the normative framework and accelerating implementation. She invited all stakeholders to collaborate towards a successful outcome at CSW57, and to share their expectations and commitments for CSW57.

The Chair of CSW57, H.E. Ms. Marjon V. Kamara, Permanent Representative of Liberia to the United Nations, referred to violence against women as a serious global phenomenon despite the progress made so far in addressing it. She welcomed the focus of CSW57 on this issue and saw this Forum as an opportunity to share and exchange ideas candidly and constructively. Calling for policies of zero tolerance for violence against women and girls, she was optimistic that the Forum would heighten the prospect of a successful outcome of CSW57.

### PANEL 1:

#### SETTING THE STAGE – EXISTING GLOBAL COMMITMENTS FOR PREVENTION AND ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

##### MODERATOR:

**H.E. Mr. Néstor Osorio**, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations

##### PANELLISTS:

**H.E. Mr. Henry Leonard Mac-Donald**, Permanent Representative of Suriname to the United Nations and Chair of the Third Committee of the sixty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly

**H.E. Mr. Herman Schaper**, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations

**Ms. Dubravka Šimonović**, Member, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

**Ms. Hibaaq Osman**, Founder and CEO of Karama; Member of UN-Women's Global Civil Society Advisory Group

The following key messages emanated from the presentations and ensuing discussions:

- A strong international legal and policy framework is in place, in particular instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol, and regional conventions which are legally binding and mutually reinforcing. The most recent General Assembly resolution on intensification of efforts to eliminate violence against women (A/RES/67/144) demonstrated the priority that the international community gives to this issue. To strengthen the normative framework and enhance accountability, a protocol to CEDAW could be considered.
- Advocates for gender equality, and for action to end violence against women, utilize the international legal and policy frameworks as key tools in their efforts. Therefore, it is important to achieve the universal ratification of CEDAW and the withdrawal of reservations, because the action of each State sets an example for others.
- The implementation of the existing normative framework remains a major challenge. All national legislation and related action to eliminate violence against women should be in line with international standards. Stronger global norms should galvanize national governments and civil society to work for more effective laws and their accelerated and effective implementation.
- Culture, tradition or religion can never be invoked to condone or justify discrimination or violence against women.

- International cooperation is important in supporting implementation of the global normative framework, and donors should prioritize gender equality and the fight against violence against women in their aid programmes.

The following expectations for CSW57 were suggested:

- CSW57 must adopt agreed conclusions that reinforce existing norms and standards and contain concrete actions that can be implemented. Issues such as education, women's sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights, and their role in, or link to preventing and ending violence against women should be covered.
- Non-governmental organizations must be given the opportunity to play a stronger role in the discussions at CSW57.
- CSW57 should step up efforts to engage men and boys, given their role in ending violence against women.
- Ways should be explored to strengthen the link between the Commission on the Status of Women and the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

## PANEL 2:

### ENSURING LEADERSHIP, COORDINATION AND MEETING THE RESOURCE CHALLENGE FOR ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

#### MODERATOR:

**H.R.H. Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein**, Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations

#### PANELLISTS:

**Ms. Annette Musu Kiawu**, Deputy Minister for Research and Policy of the Ministry of Gender & Development, Liberia

**Hon. Ms. Sandra Falconer**, Minister with Responsibility for Information (Office of the Prime Minister), Jamaica

**Ms. Liz Forsyth**, Partner, Government Advisory Services, KPMG

**Ms. Charlotte Bunch**, Founding Director and Senior Scholar, Center for Women's Global Leadership; Member of UN-Women's Global Civil Society Advisory Group.

The following key messages emanated from the presentations and ensuing discussions:

- Government at the highest level must take leadership for ending violence against women and girls. Other persons in positions of authority, such as traditional, religious and community leaders also have a key role to play in changing attitudes and stereotypes and working for the prevention of violence against women in communities. States should support grassroots leadership, including among traditional, religious and youth leaders.
- Ending violence against women requires the engagement of all sectors of society. Civil society, especially the women's rights movement, has played a key role in bringing the issue of violence against women to the fore, at both national and international level, and demanding action to end it.
- Partnerships between governments, public officials and non-governmental organizations are important to achieve change. Equally crucial is close cooperation with other stakeholders such as the judiciary, academia, employers and the media. National policies and action plans on violence against women can successfully ensure coordination among all actors and reinforce multiple efforts.
- Violence against women comes at a great cost to the victims and society. Investing in ending violence is cost-effective, and more use should be made of cost-benefit analyses. Costing standards should be developed at the global level. Adequate resources must be devoted to efforts to end gender-based violence and to overcome resistance to women's empowerment, both at the national level and in the framework of international cooperation. Resources should also be directed to monitoring and evaluation efforts.
- Violence against women must be addressed comprehensively, and across a range of policies and sectors. Many sectoral policies should integrate prevention and response measures.
- Awareness-raising and education are critical for ending violence against women, and they must involve both men and women. Men's groups play an important role in this regard, and greater efforts to mobilize men and boys are needed. Awareness-raising efforts should focus strongly on engagement at the community level.

The following expectations for CSW57 were suggested:

- CSW57 should be seen, and used, as an opportunity to increase the engagement of the business sector in the prevention of and response to violence against women.
- The agreed conclusions of CSW57 should address the issue of sexual violence in conflict, and serve as a building block for the discussion of this issue in the framework of the G8 in 2013.

### PANEL 3:

#### TACKLING CAUSES AND RISK FACTORS TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS: WHAT WORKS

##### MODERATOR:

**H.E. Mr. Yusra Khan**, Deputy Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations

##### PANELLISTS:

**H.E. Ms. Mariama Sarr**, Minister of Women, Children and Women's Entrepreneurship, Senegal

**H.E. Ms. Olivia Muchena**, Minister of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development, Zimbabwe

**H.E. Ms. Aparecida Gonçalves**, National Secretary for Ending Violence against Women, Brazil

**Ms. Kate Gilmore**, Deputy Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

**Ms. Soon-Young Yoon**, Chair, NGO Committee on the Status of Women New York

The following key messages emanated from the presentations and ensuing discussions:

- The root causes of violence against women include patriarchal culture, sociocultural practices and discriminatory attitudes, unequal distribution of power between women and men, and women's financial dependence on men, among others. It is essential to address these root causes to effectively eliminate violence against women and reach sustainable solutions.
- Legal and policy frameworks are a starting point for tackling such root causes as they contribute to and can accelerate and facilitate systemic change.

Laws that incriminate domestic violence and ban female genital mutilation are good examples. Such laws must not only be enacted but implemented and enforced. Laws must be popularized and made known to all members of society. Creative means (e.g. musicians, art, etc.) are effective to this end.

- Fundamental changes in attitudes and behaviour must occur, for which a focus on individuals and communities is necessary. Such a focus should be grounded in solid legal and policy frameworks. Awareness-raising on the rights of women is also necessary to this end.
- Education is a key tool for cultural and attitudinal change, in particular the early education of children and youth. Public education, mass mobilization and increased engagement of men and boys are all necessary in tackling the root causes of violence against women.
- Strong alliances between all stakeholders, including government, political groups, civil society and other public and private organizations and institutions should be forged to address the root causes of violence against women and girls from different entry points. Civil society organizations, for example, perform an important role by conducting awareness-raising activities at a local level.
- National and international indicators on violence against women should be used.
- Addressing violence against women is a 'whole-of-UN-community' agenda, and the leadership of UN-Women in this effort is instrumental and welcomed.

The following expectations for CSW57 were suggested:

- CSW57 should result in agreed conclusions that go beyond describing the situation of violence against women; the agreed conclusions should focus on the causes of violence and propose strategies to address such causes; and should cover domestic violence.
- Non-governmental organizations should be able to participate as observers in the negotiations to ensure that they remain engaged and interested in doing work on the ground in follow-up to the session.

## PANEL 4:

### ENSURING INCLUSIVE POLICIES AND STRATEGIES TO ELIMINATE VIOLENCE AGAINST ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS: WHAT WORKS

#### MODERATOR:

**H.E. Mr. Alexander Lomaia**, Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations

#### PANELLISTS:

**H.E. Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury**, State Minister for Women and Children's Affairs, Bangladesh

**Ms. Tarcilia Rivera Zea**, Founder and President of the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI/IIWF); Member of UN-Women's Global Civil Society Advisory Group

**Mr. Todd Minerson**, Executive Director, White Ribbon Campaign; Member of UN-Women's Global Civil Society Advisory Group

The following key messages emanated from the presentations and ensuing discussions:

- Women who face multiple forms of discrimination are particularly vulnerable to violence, including specific forms such as economic violence and racism. Such groups include women with disabilities, indigenous women, migrant women, adolescent girls and older women, among others. These groups are too often invisible, so it is crucial for laws and policies to have targeted provisions that respond to their needs.
- Interventions to prevent and respond to violence against *all* women and girls, no matter what their circumstances, must be comprehensive because marginal interventions bring only marginal results.
- Partnerships between governments and civil society are essential to ensure that women facing multiple forms of discrimination are effectively protected from violence. In particular, close engagement with the concerned women themselves and their organizations is needed in policy formulation and implementation because they are best placed to express their concerns, advise on effective solutions, and disseminate information. This engagement should not be limited to laws and policies focused on violence against women but also encompass other areas, including sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights, and economic development policies.

- It is important to acknowledge that men do not constitute a homogenous group. Men and boys are part of the solution, and interventions must be responsive to differences among them. Men and boys are increasingly taking part in addressing violence against women, with the current conversation focusing on how to engage them, rather than why. Initiatives targeting men as perpetrators must be evidence-based, and should not divert scarce resources from women's organizations.

The following expectations for CSW57 were suggested:

- CSW57's agreed conclusions should cover the needs of not just some, but of all groups of women that face multiple forms of discrimination, including indigenous women and women living in poverty. CSW57 should encourage the participation of these women in the session so that they can voice their concerns. CSW57 should also address the need for specific data on the forms and scope of violence that these women face.
- CSW57 should recommend concrete strategies for engaging men and boys in ending violence against all women and girls.
- CSW57 must include a focus on violence against women in conflict.

## PANEL 5:

### INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY AND MULTI-SECTORAL RESPONSES: GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

#### MODERATOR:

**H.E. Ms. Anne Anderson**, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations

#### PANELLISTS:

**H.E. Ms. Mervat el-Tallawy**, President of the National Council for Women, Egypt

**H.E. Mrs. Vanda Pignato**, First Lady and Presidential Secretary of Social Inclusion, El Salvador

**Mr. Andrei Sinelnikov**, Deputy Director, National Centre for the Prevention of Violence (ANNA), Russian Federation

**Ms. Marja Ruotanen**, Director of Justice and Human Dignity, Council of Europe



The following key messages emanated from the presentations and ensuing discussions:

- Strong public policies have proven to significantly decrease incidences of violence against women and girls when they were effectively implemented.
- There are many good practice examples of effective service delivery, for different settings and circumstances. For service delivery and responses to be effective, they should be provided in the victims/survivors' language and be accessible to as many victims/survivors as possible, including those in remote areas or those living in poverty. Free national helplines, for example, have resulted in increased accessibility of services.
- Forming strong partnerships with the private sector and civil society is a key aspect of successful multi-sectoral responses. The private sector's involvement is especially important in dealing with violence against women in the workplace. Increased coordination and communication between all stakeholders can lead to better results.
- The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence is an example of comprehensive standards that aim to prevent violence against women, to protect victims and to prosecute perpetrators.

The following expectations for CSW57 were suggested:

- CSW57 should result in agreed conclusions with action-oriented recommendations to help the international community move forward in rejecting violence against women and girls.
- CSW57 should encourage the participation of civil society organizations which reflect the values of the United Nations.
- CSW57 should place greater emphasis on implementation to achieve tangible results for women and girls.

## SURVIVORS' FORUM

### MODERATOR:

**Ms. Antonia Parvanova**, Member of the European Parliament and the Vice-President of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) (Bulgaria)

### PANELLISTS:

**Ms. Mayerlis Angarita**, Head of Narrar para Vivir - Narrating for Living Foundation; survivor of conflict related violence (Colombia)

**Ms. Sacide Akkaya**, Representative of KA-MER; survivor of domestic violence (Turkey)

**Ms. Cathy Eatock**, Senior Policy Officer, Aboriginal Affairs, Government of Australia; survivor of child sexual assault (Australia)

**Ms. Autumn Burris**, Independent Consultant working on human trafficking; survivor of prostitution, sexual assault, rape and domestic violence (USA)

**Ms. Maria da Penha** (via video statement), Founder of Instituto Maria da Penha; survivor of domestic violence (Brazil)

The following challenges and key messages emanated from the presentations and ensuing discussions:

- Ongoing structural challenges for addressing violence against women and girls persist, such as lack of understanding of gender-based violence; culture of devaluing women and girls; absence of land restitution/property ownership laws and where they exist, lack of knowledge about them; perceived gender roles that justify violence against women, such as honour killings and other societal norms and practices.
- Other challenges include poor access to justice; community pressure to not press charges against perpetrators; community unwillingness to deal with, or address, the issue of men's anger; lack of youth programmes which address violence; historical prejudices regarding indigenous communities, which have created racist structures of dominance that encourage violence against women and girls in indigenous communities; absence of survivor policies.
- With regard to trafficking, lack of laws that deal with the *demand side* of human trafficking and with



the profit motive with regard to trafficking remains a challenge. Outreach and awareness campaigns should be implemented, and information distributed in accessible public spaces. Victims need to know how and if the laws protect them. The profit motive that drives trafficking must be addressed and dealt with.

- In many circumstances pertaining to post conflict situations, men lead the negotiations. The exclusion of women in negotiations and political processes has meant that the issue of violence against women is been neither adequately represented nor highlighted as a prevalent problem.
- There is a need to reframe policy discussions on violence, to focus on women as survivors and as leaders trying to promote changes and *not only as* victims.
- Since solutions and policies are influenced by political considerations and are also political, it is important to make space for survivor voices, with the view to ensure that policies are informed by the real experiences of women survivors.
- Working with men and boys is critical. With this in mind, male voices and views must be heard to fully comprehend the issue and address it in its entirety. Zero tolerance of violence against women and girls, along with principles of respect, must be an educational goal, at all levels, and starting with early education.
- There should also be space to discuss violence against particular groups of women, such as indigenous women, who face multiple challenges associated with their identities. Therefore, States should consider how to address violence women and girls on the basis of their identities.
- Social media and other forms of media should be utilized by policy makers to creatively promote values that support gender equality and prevent violence against women and girls.

The following expectations for CSW57 were suggested:

- CSW 57 must focus on accountability for implementation of existing standards and commitments on ending violence against women.
- Survivors' experiences *must* inform policies.

- Economic empowerment measures for women must be an essential part of strategies for ending violence against women and girls.
- CSW57 should call on States to encourage partnerships among non-governmental organizations, international organizations and the legal profession, and the judiciary.

## CLOSING SESSION

In her *closing statement*, UN-Women Executive Director Ms. Michelle Bachelet highlighted key issues, remaining challenges as well as expectations and commitments towards CSW57. She emphasized the need for greater political prioritization, resources and tackling of root causes to see progress in the elimination of violence against women and girls. She stressed the importance of partnerships between Government officials and other stakeholders. Ms. Bachelet urged CSW57 to adopt agreed conclusions that would reinforce existing norms and standards and contain concrete, implementable actions.

The Chair of CSW57 concluded that the Forum had been an enlightening opportunity to deepen knowledge and insights which would help CSW to reach agreement and see a successful outcome. That outcome should then be used to bring about concrete changes in the lives of women.

The President of the Executive Board of UN-Women, H.E. Mr. Kim Sook, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, shared his observations from his field visit to Haiti and Guatemala in July 2012, where he had witnessed the consequences of violence against women, but also women's resilience and empowerment. He expressed the Executive Board's support for CSW and hoped that its fifty-seventh session would result in robust normative and policy directions as well as concrete recommendations to eliminate violence against women and girls.