



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**STATEMENT
By**

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Fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women

General Discussion

United Nations

New York

Monday, 11 March 2013

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

Madam Chair,
Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to extend congratulations to you as Chair of the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women and to the members of the Bureau. My Delegation wishes to assure you of its full cooperation during our deliberations.

The Republic of Macedonia strongly supports the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls and hopes that the agreed conclusions from the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women will convey this message. We support action oriented policies and recommendations which focus on addressing the structural causes and risk factors to prevent violence against women and girls and to strengthen multisectoral services and responses to this problem.

We have come a long way forward in creating standards for gender equality, in advancing empowerment of women and in establishing overarching normative framework for addressing discrimination against women and girls. But, despite our efforts at international, national and local levels to eliminate violence as one of the worst forms of discrimination it still remains to be present in every society. The pervasiveness and the resistance of this phenomenon are due to the rooted, historically unequal power relations between women and men, rightly noted in the Secretary General's report on the "Prevention of violence against women and girls". The fact that the causes of this widespread problem are historically much older than the policies and the action we undertake to address it should, by no means, serve as an excuse for not achieving better results in eradicating the violence against women and girls.

The aggravating factor of the problem is its ubiquitous character, which can not link the violence exclusively to a certain geographical region, political system, the level of development, economic growth, culture or age. Usually, the phenomenon of violence is further exacerbated when countries and people face economic difficulties. There are many sad cases all across the world where women who are breadwinners have to struggle additionally since they are faced with violence at their workplace or at home and sometimes even at both places. For those women this 57th session of the Commission on the Status of women should make a difference.

Madam Chair,

The Republic of Macedonia aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union, but I would like to present some additional observations in my national capacity.

It gives me great pleasure to note that the Republic of Macedonia was the 17th country to present its commitment to the UN Women's COMMIT to end violence against women initiative. The Macedonian Government has committed to continue its efforts to address domestic violence via the effective implementation of the National Strategy for Prevention and Protection against Domestic Violence for the period 2012-2015. The leading role in the

implementation of the policies for prevention against domestic violence is given to a multisectoral national coordinating body to be established with representatives from the line ministries, Parliamentarians, civil society representatives, the National NGO Network working against violence perpetrated on women and domestic violence, as well as other relevant stakeholders.

This year the Governments efforts will concentrate on enhancing the legal and institutional framework for countering all types of domestic violence by strengthening the rule of law, with a particular emphasis on strengthening the capacities of the judges and public prosecutors for identifying and processing cases of domestic violence. In this context, another area of intense activities will be the enhancement of the access, the quality and the scope of services that provide support to victims of violence.

Madam Chair,

Last August the National strategy on gender-responsive budgeting was adopted which provides for more inclusive approach in addressing gender gaps and inequalities in policies, plans, programmes and budgets with the aim of ensuring that men and women are equally served by the public sector. This, as well, will have an effect on better addressing the problem of violence against women and girls.

In January this year the Government of the Republic of Macedonia adopted the National Action Plan on the implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. In the process of elaboration of the National Action Plan special emphasis has been given to the prevention of conflict and all forms of violence against women and girls. The goals of the NAP are focused on: 1) strengthening the gender perspective in peace, security and defense policies of the country, 2) increasing the participation and the role of women in peacekeeping (civilian and military missions) and 3) preventing violence against women in pre and post-conflict settings, as well as during humanitarian crisis caused by natural disasters. We are working actively at national and international levels in getting more women in decision-making, in negotiation, in mediation and thereby contributing towards the goals of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

The analyses conducted by our experts to inform both processes - the elaboration of the National strategy on gender-responsive budgeting and the elaboration of the National Action Plan on the implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325 were instrumental in collecting relevant data on the Macedonian specificities. They can, certainly, open new grounds for further research and more systematized data collection, enabling for deepening our understanding on gender equality and on the existing gaps. Both processes were technically and financially supported by UN Women and by our Austrian and Norwegian bilateral partners, respectively. This is an opportunity to extend to all of them our gratitude for their engagement and assistance and express our continuing support to the work of UN Women under the able leadership of Ms. Bachelet.

Use of information technology and social media can contribute to a more comprehensive outreach, which is a necessity in addressing violence against women and girls. The more frequent use of these means of communication by Macedonian agencies is noticeable. It helps in conducting their educational and awareness-raising activities, aiming at a wide coverage of the population as possible and reaching to all the stakeholders.

Madam Chair,

In the forthcoming period our attention will be focused on the post-2015 development agenda, which has a people centered approach to development. The issues of gender equality and empowerment of women fall naturally within its scope. Only countries that fully unlock the potential concentrate in their female population and stimulate its further development can advance fast. Wise leaders can not and should not neglect such potential. For those who have not yet done so, we appeal to rethink their policies and act swiftly to bring the needed changes about.

Madam Chair,

In closing let me mention that the Republic of Macedonia is a candidate for membership in the Human Rights Council for the period 2014-2016. Further promoting gender equality and empowerment of women will be high in our priorities for this candidature. If elected we'll invest maximum efforts in reaching the goal of world free of violence against women and girls together with dedicated men and boys.

Thank you.