



Words to Action:

Newsletter on violence against women

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News & Highlights

25 November 2010: International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

The 11th International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women was marked by a series of high-level statements and events at UNHQ and around the world.

- In his message for the International Day, Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, stated:

“This year’s observance highlights the role the business community can play – from developing projects to providing direct financial support to organizations working to end violence and embracing the principles of corporate social responsibility ...The word is spreading: violence against women and girls has no place in any society, and impunity for perpetrators must no longer be tolerated. On this International Day, I urge all – Governments, civil society, the corporate sector, individuals – to take responsibility for eradicating violence against women and girls.”
UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, 25 November 2010.

<http://www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday/sgmessages.shtml>

- UN Women Executive Director, Michelle Bachelet, delivered a message for the International Day, affirming:

“Stopping violations of women’s human rights is a moral imperative ... Joining in the efforts to stop violence is everybody’s responsibility. Governments, private enterprises, civil society groups, communities and individual citizens can all make essential contributions. Men and boys must be active in encouraging respect for women and zero tolerance for violence. Cultural and religious leaders can send clear messages about the value of a world free of violence against women.”
UN Women Executive Director, Michelle Bachelet, 25 November 2010.
<http://www.unwomen.org/2010/11/to-end-violence-against-women-we-must-all-join-together/>

- UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, and UNFPA Executive Director, Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, also delivered messages for the International Day, available respectively at:
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=10560&LangID=E>
<http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/news/pid/6951>

- Official observance at UNHQ of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, “Leadership of the Corporate Sector in Ending Violence against Women and Girls”, 23 November 2010. Speakers included UN Women Executive Director, Michelle Bachelet, H.E. Joseph Goddard, Permanent Representative of Barbados to the United Nations, and Debi Nova, grammy award nominee and artist from Costa Rica. In his keynote address, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stressed how corporate executives are finding new ways

to address violence against women and welcomed those initiatives. A panel discussion was moderated by Ms. Juju Chang of ABC News and included Ms. Margery Kraus, Chief Executive Officer, APCO Worldwide, Ms. Sharon D’ Agostino, Vice-President, Corporate Contributions, Johnson & Johnson, and Ms. Shupe Makashinyi, Equality Now, Zambia.

http://www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2010/101123_Women.doc.htm
http://www.unifem.org/news_events/event_detail.php?EventID=360

Resolutions relating to violence against women adopted at the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly

- Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women (A/RES/65/187): The resolution highlights activities undertaken by Member States and calls for further efforts, including translating national strategies into concrete programmes and actions, and a more comprehensive, multisectoral and sustained approach. The resolution places an increased focus on prevention in laws, policies and programmes and their implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Trafficking in women and girls (A/RES/65/190): The resolution builds on past efforts and further emphasizes the need for prevention, protection and support for trafficked women, criminalization of all forms of trafficking in persons, and further enhanced cooperation, including by sharing knowledge and best practices.
- International Widow’s Day (A/RES/65/189): The General Assembly decided to observe International Widow’s Day on 23 June each year.
- Strengthening crime prevention and criminal justice responses to violence against women (A/RES/65/228) and United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules) (A/RES/65/229): Through these resolutions, the General Assembly adopted, respectively, the updated Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice; and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders, known as the “Bangkok Rules”. See: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/65/resolutions.shtml>

UN Security Council adopts resolution on women and peace and security

On 16 December 2010, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1960, which called upon parties to armed conflict to make specific and time-bound commitments to combat sexual violence, including issuance of clear orders through chains of command prohibiting sexual violence and the prohibition of sexual violence in codes of conduct and other means, and also called on those parties to timely investigate alleged abuses and hold perpetrators accountable.



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It requested the Secretary-General to monitor the implementation of such commitments and regularly update the Council.

<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/sc10122.doc.htm>

The resolution is available at:

http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc_resolutions10.htm

Tenth Anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, October 2010

In October 2010, various events were held at UNHQ and throughout the world to commemorate the tenth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325

- On 26 October 2010, the Security Council held an open debate on women and peace and security to mark the anniversary, during which it heard from over 90 speakers. The open debate resulted in a Presidential Statement, in which the Council supported taking forward the set of indicators contained in the report of the Secretary General (S/2010/498) for use as an initial framework to track implementation of resolution 1325. <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/sc10071.doc.htm>

The Presidential Statement is available at:

http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/PRST/2010/22

- Open Days on Women, Peace and Security, organized by DPKO, DPA, UNDP and UNIFEM, now UN Women: Women from civil society and senior UN leaders in conflict-affected countries participated in 25 dialogues on conflict resolution and peacebuilding in June, July and August 2010. The purpose was to seek women's views on means of improving implementation of resolution 1325. A report providing an account of the Open Days is available at http://www.unifem.org/materials/item_detail.php?ProductID=183

Launch of United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking, Especially Women and Children, UNHQ New York, 4 November 2010

The Trust Fund was established to provide humanitarian, legal and financial aid to victims of trafficking in persons (see, the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, adopted by the General Assembly in July 2010 (resolution 64/293)). In launching the Trust Fund, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated: "...when you traffic and enslave a woman or girl, you hold the future hostage. Our efforts today will identify more victims, particularly women and children, who can get the help and care they so desperately need, reintegrate into society, and ensure they never again become a victim". Joining him were Hollywood stars and humanitarian activists, Demi Moore and Ashton Kutcher, President of the General Assembly, Joseph Deiss, Executive Director of UNODC, Yury Fedotov, former trafficked victims, and New York Times journalist-author and Pulitzer Prize-winner, Nicholas Kristof. <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/sgsm13230.doc.htm>
<http://www.ungift.org/knowledgehub/stories/november2010/un-launches-trust-fund-for-victims-of-trafficking-in-persons.html>

Global Consultation "Delivering as One on Violence against Women: From Intent to Action", New York, 3-4 November 2010, hosted by UNFPA

The primary objective of the global consultation was to present lessons learned from initiating the joint programming on violence against women which is being undertaken in 10 pilot countries

under the Inter-agency task force on violence against women of the Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality. The conference, which brought together various stakeholders, including UN entities, NGOs and government officials, also provided a platform for representatives from the 10 pilot countries to share experiences on the joint programming initiative. Participants developed a set of key recommendations for joint programming on violence against women.

http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ianwge/taskforces/tf_vaw.htm

<http://link.brightcove.com/services/player/bcpid62616837001?bclid=0&bctid=677550680001>

Launch of Safe Cities programme in five cities around the world, 22 November 2010

UNIFEM (now part of UN Women) launched the Global Safe Cities Free of Violence against Women and Girls Programme in five cities around the world: Quito, Ecuador; Cairo, Egypt; New Delhi, India; Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea; Kigali, Rwanda. Each city will test new strategies to stop epidemic rates of violence against women and girls in urban areas. The programme will focus on slum areas and the poorest urban dwellers. Each city will contribute to developing a comprehensive model for stopping the diverse forms of violence against women and girls. The model will be offered for adaptation by other cities around the world.

http://www.unifem.org/news_events/story_detail.php?StoryID=1189

Expert workshop on the elimination of all forms of violence against women - challenges, good practices and opportunities, Geneva, Switzerland, 24-25 November 2010

OHCHR organized the workshop in accordance with the request of the Human Rights Council in its resolution 11/2 on accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women. The workshop aimed at discussing specific measures for overcoming obstacles and challenges that States may face in preventing, investigating, and prosecuting violence against women, and punishing the perpetrators; and measures for providing protection, support, assistance and redress for women subjected to violence. Five substantive panel sessions were held on challenges, good practices and opportunities regarding: prevention of violence against women; investigation of violence against women; protection of women subjected to violence; prosecution of violence against women and punishment of perpetrators; remedy and reparation for women subjected to violence.

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/women/workshopVAW.htm>

New EU website dedicated to the fight against trafficking in human beings

Launched on 22 December 2010, the website is intended to be a one stop shop at EU level for practitioners and the public interested in knowing more about trafficking and how it is being addressed within the EU. The website will include national information pages of all EU Member States with factual information on legislation, action plans, coordination, prevention, assistance and support to victims, investigation and prosecution and international coordination.

http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/intro/news_intro_en.htm

<http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/>



Feature Item

Reparations for women who have been subjected to violence¹

By Rashida Manjoo

Introduction

The notion of a right to reparation is located within the framework of the law of remedies and most human rights and humanitarian law treaties provide for a right to a remedy. The law of remedies can serve both individual and societal goals, with the underlying purposes including corrective justice, deterrence, retribution and restorative justice. A good example of standard setting principles can be found in the “Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and serious violations of International Humanitarian Law”, which was adopted by the General Assembly in December 2005. The Basic Principles start with the premise that “the State is responsible for ensuring that victims of human rights violations enjoy an individual right to reparation”. It elaborates that reparations must be proportional to the gravity of the violation and can include the following forms: restitution (measures to restore the victim to his/her original situation before the violation); compensation (for any economically assessable damage as appropriate and proportional to the gravity of the violation); rehabilitation (including medical and psychological care as well as legal and social services); measures of satisfaction (including, among others, the verification of the facts and full and public disclosure of the truth, the search for the whereabouts of the disappeared, public apologies, judicial and administrative sanctions against persons liable for the violations, commemorations and tributes to the victims); and guarantees of non-repetition (including measures to contribute to prevention). The Basic Principles define the contours of State responsibility for providing reparations to victims for acts or omissions which can be attributed to the State. This means that States are responsible for their failures to meet their international obligations even when substantive breaches originate in the conduct of private persons, as States have to exercise due diligence to eliminate, reduce, and mitigate the harms and consequences of violations of human rights.

Reparations in the context of violence against women

Thinking about women as potential beneficiaries of reparations the first hurdle we identify is that much of the violence women experience predates the conflict and then continues to aggravate the discrimination of women and girls in the post-conflict scenario. Even in non-conflict scenarios, we can see that acts of violence against women such as assault and sexual violence are part of a larger system of gender hierarchy that can only be fully grasped when seen in the broader structural context. This explains why adequate reparations for women cannot be just about returning them to where they were before the individual instance of violence. Women also often bear the brunt of the consequences of violence that targets them, their partners and dependants. Because violence has a disparate and differentiated impact on women and on different groups of women, there is a need for specific measures of redress in order to meet their specific needs and priorities. Given the fact that violence perpetrated against individual women generally feeds into patterns of pre-existing and often cross-cutting structural subordination and systemic marginalization, it is important that measures of redress link individual reparation and structural transformation.

Relevant legal developments

Amongst others, both the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW) place upon the State the duty to prevent, investigate, punish and provide compensation for all acts of violence wherever they occur. Article 4 of DEVAW states that women who are subjected to violence should be informed about and provided with access to the mechanisms of justice, as well as to just and effective remedies for the harm that they have suffered, as provided by national legislation.



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The obligation to provide adequate reparations involves ensuring the rights of women to access both criminal and civil remedies as well as the establishment of effective protection, support and rehabilitation services for survivors of violence. The notion of reparation may also include elements of restorative justice and the need to address the pre-existing inequalities, injustices, prejudices and biases or other societal perceptions and practices that enabled violations to occur, including discrimination against women and girls. CEDAW in article 2 requires States parties to condemn discrimination against women in all its forms and pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women. The Convention requires States to take positive measures to eliminate all forms of violence against women and makes clear that States parties should take effective legal measures, including penal sanctions, civil remedies and compensatory provisions to protect women against all kinds of violence. The Committee's concluding observations on States parties' reports increasingly address reparations.

Some States and regional human rights systems in their legislation and jurisprudence have started to recognize the responsibility of the state for providing reparation to the victim in cases of lack of due diligence. The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women contemplates that States must undertake to establish fair and effective legal procedures for women who have been subjected to violence as well as the necessary legal and administrative mechanisms to ensure that women subjected to violence have effective access to restitution, reparations or other just and effective remedies (art. 7 f and g). The Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003) expressly states that women who are subjected to violence via violations of their rights to life, integrity and security of the person should have access to reparations including rehabilitation (art. 4) and obliges the State to create mechanisms to increase the participation of women in planning, formulation and implementation of post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation (art. 10). The European Convention on the Compensation of Victims of Violent Crimes imposes an obligation on States parties to provide compensation for victims and their dependants, when such compensation is not fully available by other means, and when the offender cannot be prosecuted or punished. The Convention does not include a specific gendered perspective of the crimes considered and only covers material damages and not non-economic loss.

In November 2009, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights affirmed and embraced the concept of gender sensitive reparations with a transformative aspiration in its groundbreaking decision in the *Cotton Field v. Mexico* case. The State of Mexico has been mandated to provide a variety of reparations measures to the victims, including monetary compensation, symbolic redress but also a wide set of future looking guarantees of non-repetition. The decision recognized for the first time that in a situation of structural discrimination, reparations should aim at transforming such situation, thus aspiring not only to restitution but also to correction.

Conclusion

The little attention devoted to reparations, both at a substantive and procedural level, for women who suffer violence, contrasts with the fact that women are often the target of both sex-specific and other forms of violence, not only in times of conflict but also in ordinary times. In view of the structural and multiple forms of discrimination that women face during conflict and post-conflict as well as in times of peace, reparations cannot be just about returning women to the situation in which they were found before the individual instance of violence, but instead should strive to have a transformative potential. This implies that reparations should aspire, to the extent possible, to subvert instead of reinforce pre-existing patterns of cross-cutting structural subordination, gender hierarchies, systemic marginalization and structural inequalities that may be at the root cause of the violence that women experience before, during and after conflict.

¹ This is an excerpt from the 2010 annual report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its causes and consequences presented to the 14th session of the Human Rights Council in June 2010. It focuses on the subject of 'Reparations for Women subjected to Violence' in contexts of peace, conflict, post-conflict and transitional justice.



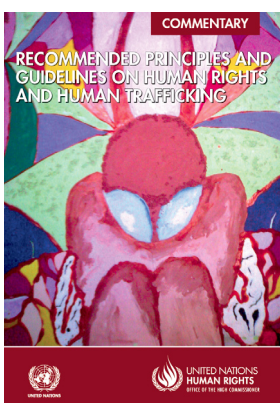
Database update

As of 31 December 2010, 106 responses to the questionnaire on violence against women had been received from Member States. The secretariat has continued to receive useful updates from Member States.

Member States that have not yet submitted a response to the questionnaire are encouraged to do so at their earliest convenience so that more detailed information can be reflected in the database.

The Secretary-General's database is available on line at: <http://www.un.org/esa/vawdatabase/>

Feature Resource



Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking: Commentary (OHCHR), 2010

The 2002 Recommended Principles and Guidelines were developed by OHCHR to provide practical, human rights-based policy guidance on the prevention of trafficking and the protection of victims of trafficking. This 2010 Commentary sets out a comprehensive analysis of the Recommended Principles and Guidelines in the light of both general principles of international law and the specific rules that relate directly to trafficking. The Commentary aims at providing further concrete guidance on the prevention of human trafficking and the protection of victims of trafficking.

http://bangkok.ohchr.org/news/events/humantrafficking_16122010.aspx

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/PUBLICATIONSRESOURCES/Pages/RecentPublications.aspx>

Other resources:

- **1325+10 Women Count for Peace (UNIFEM now part of UN Women), 2010.**

This collection of papers brings together a body of analytical and advocacy work undertaken over the last five years, grounded in programming that has helped advance the women, peace and security agenda in policy and practice. The collection includes papers on gender issues in early warning, peace processes, peacekeeping, post-conflict planning and financing, and transitional justice. The papers describe a range of ongoing efforts to strengthen the UN's capacities to promote peace and prevent violence.

http://www.unifem.org/materials/item_detail.php?ProductID=186

- **An analytical review: 10 years on from the adoption of the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol (Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons), 2010**

This joint publication provides an overview of mandates and activities of member organizations of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT), and a gap analysis within the various fields of work related to trafficking in persons undertaken over the last 10 years. The publication also offers recommendations for coordinated future action to combat trafficking in persons.

<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/inter-agency-coordination-group-against-trafficking-in-persons-icat.html>

- **State of World Population, From Conflict and Crisis to Renewal - Generations of Change (UNFPA), 2010.**

The release of the 2010 edition of the State of World Population report coincides with the 10th anniversary of UN Security Council resolution 1325. The report highlights how women in conflict and post-conflict situations as well as in emergencies or protracted crises are faring a decade later. The report explores how conflict and protracted humanitarian emergencies affect women and girls—and men and boys—and shows how many women and young people have overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles and have begun rebuilding their lives and laying the foundation for peace and renewal of their societies.

<http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/publications/pid/6801>

The report is available at:

http://www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/documents/publications/2010/EN_SOWP10.pdf



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● ***Religion, Culture and the Politicization of Honour-Related Violence: A Critical Analysis of Media and Policy Debates in Western Europe and North America (UNRISD), 2010.***

This paper analyses how media, parliaments and other state institutions, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) conceptualize honour killing and honour-related violence in order to uncover how such conceptualizations inform policy responses. The analysis reveals three main trends: discussions that link honour killing to Islam and/or the backwardness of immigrant communities in ways that lead to the stigmatization of entire immigrant communities; culture-blind portrayals of honour-related violence as domestic violence or violence against women that do not pay attention to cultural specificities; and debates that are contextually specific, framing honour-related violence as a contextually informed form of violence against women that occurs within particular immigrant communities but where this violence does not essentialize the culture and practices of those communities as a whole.

[http://www.unrisd.org/unrisd/website/document.nsf/\(httpPublications\)/E61F80827BF3409FC1257744004DC465?OpenDocument](http://www.unrisd.org/unrisd/website/document.nsf/(httpPublications)/E61F80827BF3409FC1257744004DC465?OpenDocument)

● ***The World's Women 2010: Trends and Statistics (UN DESA/Statistics Division), 2010.***

This is the fifth issue of The World's Women which was produced to coincide with the first-ever World's Statistics Day, 20 October 2010. The report includes a chapter on violence against women, with the following key findings:

- Violence against women is a universal phenomenon;
- Women are subjected to different forms of violence – physical, sexual, psychological and economic – both within and outside their homes;
- Rates of women experiencing physical violence at least once in their lifetime vary from several per cent to over 59 per cent depending on where they live;
- Current statistical measurements of violence against women provide a limited source of information, and statistical definitions and classifications require more work and harmonization at the international level;
- Female genital mutilation – the most harmful mass perpetuation of violence against women – shows a slight decline;
- In many regions of the world longstanding customs put considerable pressure on women to accept abuse.

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/wwVaw2010.htm>

The report is available at:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/WW_full%20report_color.pdf

Upcoming Events

● ***22 February – 4 March 2011: 55th session of the Commission on the Status of Women***

The Commission's priority theme this year is "Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work". Many side and parallel events organized by Member States, UN entities and NGOs will take place during this two-week period.

For the latest information, see: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/55sess.htm>

● ***24 February 2011: Formal launch of UN Women***

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) will be formally launched during the 55th session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

● ***Launch of UNiTE newsletter during the 55th session of the Commission on the Status of Women***

The UN Secretary-General's campaign "UNiTE to End Violence against Women" will launch the UNiTE newsletter containing highlights of the campaign. The newsletter will be available at: <http://endviolence.un.org>

About Words to Action

Words to Action is a newsletter produced by UN Women. It disseminates information on actions undertaken by Member States and UN entities to address violence against women. For more information, see <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/v-newsletter.htm> or contact wordstoaction@un.org.

To subscribe, visit:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/v-newsletter-register.asp>