

News & Highlights

Fifty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women, UNHQ New York, 2-13 March 2009

Violence against women was a recurring concern at the session and was addressed in the Commission's panel discussions, outcomes and parallel events.

The Commission's agreed conclusions on the session's priority theme "The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS" acknowledge the need to address violence against women holistically, including through recognition of its link with other issues such as HIV/AIDS. They encourage the involvement of men and boys in the prevention and elimination of violence against women.

In its resolution on "Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS", the Commission expressed concern about the increased vulnerability of women and girls to HIV and AIDS due to a number of factors, including violence against women. It urged Governments to strengthen their legal, policy, administrative and other measures for the prevention and elimination of such violence.

The Commission agreed on its multi-year programme of work for 2010-2014. "Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls" will be the priority theme in 2013. In 2011, the Commission will evaluate progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions from 2007 on "The elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against the girl child".

As mandated by the Human Rights Council, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, made a presentation to the Commission and held a dialogue with Member States. www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw53/off_statements/Erturk_s.pdf

The Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice held a joint dialogue on "Addressing violence against women through legal reform", on 5 March 2009. In her opening remarks, UN Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro

spoke about the importance of harnessing the power of the law to stop the deadly scourge of violence against women. www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/

Visit: www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/53sess.htm

Fortieth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, UNHQ New York, 24-27 February 2009



**8 March 2009: International Women's Day (IWD) –
"Women and men unite to end violence against women
and girls" – rallies around the Secretary-General's**



Feature Item: The Secretary-General's Campaign *UNiTE to End Violence against Women*_____

"We must unite. Violence against women cannot be tolerated, in any form, in any context, in any circumstance, by any political leader or by any government. The time to change is now. Only by standing together and speaking out can we make a difference."

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

On 25 February 2008, the Secretary-General of the United Nations launched his Campaign *UNiTE to End Violence against Women, 2008 – 2015*, with the overall objective to raise public awareness and increase political will and resources for preventing and responding to all forms of violence against women and girls – in all parts of the world. The Campaign's duration through 2015 – the target for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – underscores that violence against women and girls constitutes an obstacle to development.

The Campaign provides a collective platform in an unprecedented level of global mobi



In its first year, the Campaign focused on advocacy and awareness-raising, and on mobilizing resources to support various activities. A Campaign logo and poster have been developed and are available in the official languages of the United Nations. A Campaign website has been launched and related media documents have been disseminated, and a United Nations communications plan is in place. All stakeholders are invited to register their Campaign contributions on the website under "what's happening?"

The Secretary-General has encouraged the Heads of United Nations entities to actively contribute to the Campaign and to implement activities, within given timelines and resources. To help emphasize the national focus of the Campaign, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme is inviting Resident Coordinators to lead their Country Teams to further the campaign at the local level. United Nations Information Centres/Services are also supporting the Campaign through targeted activities at the national level.



Database Update

On 5 March 2009, Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro launched the Secretary-General's database on violence against women, hailing the database as the first global 'one stop shop' for information on measures undertaken by Member States to address violence against women.

This publicly accessible and searchable database, developed in response to General Assembly resolution 61/143, provides information on all aspects of Member States' work to address violence against women, including:

- § Legal frameworks;
- § Policies, strategies and programmes;
- § Institutional mechanisms;
- § Preventive measures and training;
- § Research and statistical data; and
- § Other measures undertaken, such as engagement in international/regional initiatives, and the creation of specialized police, prosecutors, and courts.

Upon launching the database, DSG Migiro noted "I know that decision makers look for good practices or examples from other countries. This is important when developing an action plan, working on a new law or setting up a stronger coordination mechanism. Non-governmental organizations, for their part, take advantage of success stories from around the world to lobby parliamentarians and ministers. This database will encourage exchange on initiatives and ideas, and the transfer of promising practices. It will facilitate learning and show how progress is being made. The database will also help us understand what remains to be done. I hope it will inspire all of us to redouble our efforts to put in place the policies, services and other measures necessary to tackle violence against women."

As at 2 March 2009, 61 States had submitted their responses to the questionnaire, which constitutes the primary source of information for the database. At the time of the launch, the responses of 34 States had been entered into the database. The remaining responses are being entered on an ongoing basis. Member States that have not yet submitted their responses are invited to do so at their earliest convenience, and all Member States are encouraged to rliesfo



Other resources:

Programming to Address Violence against Women, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 2009. www.unfpa.org/public/site/global/lang/en/pid/1913

UNFPA Strategy and Framework for Action to Addressing Gender-based Violence, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 2008. www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/documents/publications/2009/2009_add_gen_vio.pdf

The Multiple Faces of the Intersections between HIV and Violence against Women, Development Connections, UNIFEM, Pan American Health Organization, Inter-American Commission of Women and the Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network, 2008. www.dvcn.org/Documents/HIVVAW4.pdf

Intimate Partner Violence: High Costs to Households and Communities, International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) with funding support from UNFPA, 2009. www.icrw.org/docs/2009/Intimate-Partner-Violence-High-Cost-to-Households-and-Communities.pdf See also *The Economic Costs of Violence against Women: An Evaluation of the Literature*, Expert brief commissioned by the Division for the Advancement of Women in preparation for the Secretary-General's Study on violence against women, 2005. www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/expert%20brief%20costs.pdf

2008 Gender Report Card of the International Criminal Court, Women's Initiative for Gender Justice, 2008. The report assesses the implementation by the Court of the gender-specific mandates, including in regard to violence against women. www.iccwomen.org/news/docs/GRC08_web2-09v3.pdf

The "Inventory of the United Nations system activities on violence against women", prepared by the Division for the Advancement of Women, provides updates for the period of October 2008 to February 2009. www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/v-inventory.htm