Ending Violence against Women: Prevention and response to Femicide/Gender-related Killings of Women

CSW 61 Side Event

Wednesday, 15 March 2017, 1.15 to 2.45 PM
Millennium Hotel, Room Riverview

Background

The Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences (hereafter the Special Rapporteur) has defined femicide, or the gender-related killing of women in her report to the General Assembly (A/71/398) as the killing of women because of their sex and/or gender. It constitutes the most extreme form of violence against women and the most violent manifestation of discrimination against women. The gender-related killing of women is a clear violation of women’s rights, including the right to life, freedom from torture and to a life free from violence and discrimination. It is a global phenomenon that takes place in both private and public spheres and results from, among other things, intimate partner violence, armed conflict, dowry disputes and the protection of family “honour”. The gender-related killing of women is often the final and most serious consequence of pervasive discrimination, in particular, acts of violence.

According to UN Women, globally, some 60,000 women and girls are killed every year, often as an escalation of domestic violence. In 2014, considering 25 countries in Latin America, 2,089 women were reported victims of femicide, as a study from Gender Equality Observatory in Latin America and the Caribbean shows. As a response to this type of violence, Governments have started to take action, along with civil society and women’s movements that are helping to create awareness on this matter. Recently, 16 countries—almost half of the countries in the region—have adopted legislation to ensure that femicide is properly investigated and punished.

The Special Rapporteur has identified femicide as a priority of her mandate and to focus on prevention and on the use of data as a tool to that end. On 25 November 2015, to mark International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, she called upon all States to establish a femicide watch or a “gender-related killing of women watch”. She proposed that data on the number of femicides or cases of the gender-related killing of women should be published annually, on 25 November. Each gender-related killing of women should be analysed carefully to identify any failure of protection, with a view to improving and developing further preventive measures. In the collection, analysis and publication of such data, States can work together with non-governmental organizations and independent human rights institutions working in the field, representatives of victims and other relevant international organizations and stakeholders. To gather more information and support the ending of impunity, together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Women has developed a model protocol that reveals service gaps. The protocol will be initially used for the investigation of femicide in Latin America, where the number of countries with high rates of femicide is growing.
CSW Side-event

Collective work to eliminate Femicide/Gender-related killings of women must become a global trend. It is not one sector’s responsibility, but a collective and concerted effort. Many actors have called for recognition by governments of the scale and implications of violence against women and girls, commitment to collect the data with which to quantify it, the provision, not only of services for survivors and victims, but also by increasing judicial action efficiency to sustain and achieve case closure and conviction, including creative and constructive efforts to prevent and to punish all violent crimes against women and girls. CSW presents an opportunity to raise awareness of all actors, Governments, UN, Civil Society, private sector as well as the general public, on the tools and methodologies that exist to prevent and respond to Femicide and to take stock of innovative approaches and good practices all around the world.

Building on their ongoing collaboration on the subject and on their expressed commitment to address Femicide as a priority, the Government of Chile, the Special Rapporteur and UN Women are proposing to organise a CSW side-event, bringing together experts, Member States and other relevant actors, to provide an overview of the latest policy development on femicide, as well as good practices. This event should also contribute to highlight some key trends and challenges, as well as opportunities to step up efforts for preventing and eliminating gender-related killings.

Expected outputs

The CSW side-event will aim at contributing to:

- Raising awareness of key stakeholders of the latest research policy and programme development; Share the actions taken by the government of Chile and of El Salvador to combat femicide;
- Informing the latest work of the Special Rapporteur; and
- Collecting good practices and identifying evidence of what works to prevent and respond to femicide.

Content of the event

The CSW side-event will take place on Wednesday March, 1.15 to 2.45 p.m. at the Millennium Hotel, Room Riverview, 28th Floor, East Tower.

Speakers:

- Her Excellency Ms. Claudia Pascual, Minister of Women and Gender Equity, Government of Chile.
- Ms. Yanira Argueta Martínez, Executive Director of Institute for Women Development, Government of El Salvador.
- Ms. Dubravka Šimonović, Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its causes and consequences.
- Ms. Adriana Quiñones, Representative of Guatemala Country Office, UN Women.
- Moderator: Ms. Luiza Carvalho, Director, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, UN Women.

Participants:

The event will be open to Government Representatives, UN agencies, civil society, private sector, etc.