

Twenty-five years of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women: the femicide watch initiative and the role of international and regional mechanisms in its prevention

A side event convened by the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its causes and consequences on the occasion of the 63rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women

13 March 2019, New York

16:45 – 18:00, UNHQ CR1

Concept Note

Femicide is defined as the killing of women because of their sex and/or gender. It constitutes the most extreme form of violence against women and an offence to human dignity, fostered by the dominance of patriarchal societies, the persistence of harmful gender stereotypes and unequal power relations between women and men. Femicide remains one of the main causes of murder among women. More than half of the 87.000 women killed in 2017 died at the hands of those closest to them. Of that figure, 30.000 women were killed by their intimate partners.

Since its establishment in 1993, the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women has paid particular attention to the issue of femicide through country visits and thematic reports. The current Special Rapporteur on violence against women, Ms. Dubravka Šimonović, has prioritized the prevention of femicide through the use of data on violence against women. In 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”. In her report presented at the 71st session of the General Assembly ([A/71/398](#)) in 2016, the Special Rapporteur further elaborated on the modalities for the establishment of the femicide watch and/or observatory as an interdisciplinary panel of experts that collect and analyse data on femicides with the aim of preventing it. In November 2018, the Special Rapporteur called on all States to submit femicide related-data and many States have already submitted information. On 25 November 2018, the Special Rapporteur and international and regional mechanisms working on violence against women and girls, which are part of a thematic platform launched in March 2018, have called on all States to end the global epidemic of femicide, showing the magnitude of the problem which affect too many women worldwide.

Several movements that have arisen recently, such as the #MeToo and #NiUnaMenos, have showed that violence and discrimination against women take various forms and are wide-spread through all layers of society. They have also shown that mobilizing and speaking out collectively against violence against women can be a powerful tool in the quest for equality and society free from violence.

On the margins of the 63rd session of the CSW63, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women would like to convene a side event with the members of the platform to evaluate the progress on the prevention on femicide and possible strategies aimed at enhancing the protection and promotion of women’s human rights.

The main objectives of this event include:

1. Evaluate the progress made in preventing gender-based killings by international and regional mechanisms as well as the remaining challenges;
2. Share good practices and lessons learnt toward ending to femicide;
3. Discuss key recommendations for preventing and ending femicide and the key role that everybody can play in strengthening the protection of women and girls.

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Agenda

Moderator

- *Ms. Dubravka Šimonović*
Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences

16:45 – 17:00

Opening:

- *Ms. Dubravka Šimonović*
Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences

17:00 – 17.45

Panel Discussion

The panel will address the steps undertaken at the regional and international level on the prevention of femicide, the collection and analysis of femicide data, the challenges ahead and what it must be done to prevent the most violent killing of women

- *Ms. Feride Acar, President of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence of the Council of Europe (GREVIO)*
- *Ms. Bandana Rana, Vice-Chair of CEDAW*
- *Ms. Margarette May Macaulay, Rapporteur on the Rights of Women of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (OAS - IACHR)*
- *Ms. Sylvia Mesa Peluffo, President of the Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI)*
- *Ms. Ivana Radačić, Chair of the Working Group on Discrimination of Women in Law and Practice*

17:45 – 18:00

Q&A

Concluding remarks

- *The Permanent Representative of the Republic of Croatia to the United Nations*