



UN COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN 57 DRAFT AGREED CONCLUSIONS – UN WOMEN

[New York, March 15, 2013] – At the conclusion of the [57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women](#), UN Women welcomes the outcome of the meeting. The Agreed Conclusions are a testimony to the commitment of Member States to do the right thing, to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls. In the last two weeks during the meeting in New York, and in the lead-up to this session, we witnessed global engagement and mobilization, high-profile advocacy by civil society, and determined leadership by many Member States. Expectations of the world's women and girls were extremely high for this session of the Commission.

Violence against women is a universal problem that requires, and has now received, a universal response. Violence occurs in multiple forms in all countries and settings; it harms women and their families and communities, impedes development, and costs countries billions of dollars annually in healthcare costs and lost productivity. In 2003, when the Commission took up violence against women and human rights, Member States were unable to reach agreement. Thus I am particularly heartened that agreement was reached this year to end violence against women and girls. This agreement comes in unison with rising voices worldwide saying enough is enough.

The document adopted by the Commission condemns in the strongest terms the pervasive violence against women and girls, and calls for increased attention and accelerated action for prevention and response. UN Women welcomes the important focus on prevention, including through education and awareness-raising, and addressing gender inequalities in the political, economic and social spheres. The best way to end violence against women is to stop it from happening in the first place.

The document highlights the importance of putting in place multi-sectoral services for survivors of violence, including for health, psychological support and counseling, social support in the short and long term. It draws attention to the need for services to protect the right to sexual and reproductive health. Punishment of perpetrators is also highlighted as a critical measure to end impunity, as is the need to improve the evidence base and availability of data to inform an effective response.

By adopting this document, governments have made clear that discrimination and violence against women and girls has no place in the 21st century. They have reaffirmed their commitment and responsibility to undertake concrete action to end violence against women and girls and promote and protect women's human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The agreement is one step more for realizing the rights and dignity of women and girls. But we cannot stop here. We need to do so much more. Words now need to be matched with deeds, with action. Now is the time for implementation and accountability. We must continue moving forward with courage, conviction and commitment.

UN Women, together with our partners in the UN system, will continue to advance the rights of women and girls through strong and coordinated support. We will work with Member States to turn the Agreed Conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women into concrete results for women and girls.

We will move forward and build on the basis of the international agreements on women's rights reached over many years, as articulated in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and other agreements and treaties.

There is no turning back. We will keep moving forward to the day when women and girls can live free of fear, violence and discrimination. The 21st century is the century of inclusion and women's full and equal rights and participation.

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