



Interactive dialogue

Freedom from violence, stigma, and stereotypes

Tuesday, 18 March 2025, 10.00 - 11.30 am

Concept note

Overview

Violence against women and girls remains one of the most urgent and widespread human rights violations, affecting individuals, families, communities, and society at large. This phenomenon has been exacerbated by various interlocking crises, disproportionately impacting marginalized women who face multiple forms of discrimination. Rapid technological advancements have introduced new risks and intensified existing forms of violence, particularly affecting women in public life. Online platforms have become avenues for spreading misinformation and reinforcing harmful social norms and misogynistic attitudes, further driving violence against women and girls.

At the time of its adoption in 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action represented a groundbreaking vision of hope for the realization of women's and girls' human rights and the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls.

As the world counts down to 2030, ensuring that women and girls are free from violence, discrimination, stigma and stereotypes is essential to achieving Goal 5 on achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and its target on eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, and unlocking progress across all of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.¹

Format and participation

The interactive dialogue will be chaired by Ms. Dúnia Eloisa Pires do Canto (Cabo Verde), Vice-Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women. A moderator will support the Chair.

This interactive dialogue will bring together different stakeholders including government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC and the United Nations system. The dialogue will start with presentations by experts including victims and survivors of violence, followed by sharing good practices in prevention and responses including of legislative reforms and other contributions from Member States and non-governmental organizations.

Following the presentations, the floor will then be open for comments and questions from Member States and other stakeholders in an interactive dialogue. Panelists would respond to any questions posed and make short concluding comments, time permitting. The Chair will wrap up and close the meeting.

¹ Equality Institute, *Sustainable Development Goals and Violence Against Women and Girls*, 2021.
https://equalityinstitute.org/media/pages/projects/sustainable-development-goals-and-violence-against-women-and-girls/973e85decd-1699836267/sdgs-and-vawg_eqi_final.pdf

Member States will participate in the dialogue on a voluntary basis. No speakers' list will be kept. UN-Women will facilitate an online application process for representatives of NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC. The list of NGOs proposed for participation in the event will be distributed to Member States through respective Bureau members.

Leading questions

Participating stakeholders in the interactive dialogue are invited to address the following questions:

1. What progress has been made in preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls over the last 5 years? What are the key gaps and challenges in the implementation of global and national policies addressing violence against women and how can they be addressed?
2. What are the most effective interventions to prevent and respond to gender-based violence and how can they be scaled up globally? What good practices exist in dismantling deep-rooted gender stereotypes and transforming harmful social norms and practices? How can we better engage men and boys to transform patriarchal masculinities?
3. What examples can be identified of effective whole-of- government national action plans (NAPs) with multi-sectoral budgeting across relevant sectors? What role do NAPs play in coordinating and accelerating efforts to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls?
4. What role can civil society and women's rights movements play in supporting member states in the implementation of their commitments to prevent and eliminate VAWG, and how can the UN support women's rights movements and partnerships to effectively prevent and eliminate violence against women?
5. How can governments strengthen accountability frameworks to address human rights violations and ensure access to justice for survivors of gender-based violence whilst ending impunity?

Outcome

The outcome of the discussion will be in the form of a summary by the Chair of the Commission, prepared in consultation with the regional groups, through the members of the Bureau.



Interactive dialogue

Freedom from violence, stigma, and stereotypes

Tuesday, 18 March 2025, 10.00 - 11.30 am

Speaker bios

Moderator: Ms. Delphine Schantz: is the Representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) New York Liaison Office. Ms. Schantz previously worked at the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) as Chief of the Africa Section and, before that, as Senior Legal Officer and Coordinator for Countering Financing of Terrorism. Ms. Schantz is also very familiar with UNODC's work and mandate, having managed in a previous assignment the UNODC Global Programme against Money Laundering and Proceeds of Crime.

Dr. Emma Fulu, The Equality Institute: is the Founder and Director of The Equality Institute, a global expert on gender equality and violence prevention. She has led major initiatives, including the What Works to Prevent Violence program and the UN Multi-Country Study on Men and Violence. Previously, she worked across government, the UN, and civil society on gender-based violence.

Selma Hadžihalilović, Fondacija CURE: is a feminist activist with nearly 30 years of experience advocating for women's rights. She coordinates advocacy projects at the CURE Foundation, coordinates the BiH Women's Network, and is active in international feminist and peace-building networks, dedicating her career to supporting survivors, advancing gender equality, and promoting feminist activism.

Clarice Tavares, InternetLab: is a researcher at the Anthropology of Law Research Center (NADIR) at the University of São Paulo and currently oversees research projects and institutional representation at InternetLab. She works on online violence, data justice, privacy, surveillance, and inequalities.

Laisa Bulatale, Fiji Women's Rights Movement: is the Programme Director of the Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM), and is passionate about legal advocacy and addressing human rights issues for women and girls in her country. Laisa is a keen researcher and has produced publications for FWRM particularly in the area of women's health, economic status, and older women's issues.

Joy Watson, COFEM: is a senior researcher and writer focused on public policy, social equity, and violence prevention. She has advised the South African Parliament and the Human Science Research Council and has led civil society advocacy initiatives. Her research has informed media and policy, and she is the co-author of *Nasty Women Talk Back* and *Striving for Social Equity*.