



High-Level Meeting on violence against women and girls

Thursday, 12 March, 10.00 a.m. – 1.00 p.m. and 3.00 – 6.00 p.m.

Concept Note

Background

In its [resolution](#)¹ on the revitalization of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the Economic and Social Council encouraged the Commission to strengthen its catalytic role in advancing gender equality and the rights and empowerment of all women and girls through convening an annual High-Level Meeting across a set of critical cross-cutting issues, starting with violence against women and girls at the seventieth session, followed by women's economic empowerment and poverty eradication, and women's participation in decision-making.²

For many years, Governments, the UN system, academia and civil society organizations have been researching, analyzing and developing legislation and policy to address and prevent violence against women and girls, one of the most widespread, persistent, and devastating human rights violations in the world. Since 2009, the [Global Database on Violence Against Women and Girls](#) has documented how Member States are translating commitments into action through the development of laws, policies, and programmes. Mandated by a General Assembly resolution, this Database is essential for tracking implementation of global and regional commitments, measuring progress toward achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and, critically, as we enter the final years of the 2030 Agenda, highlighting where accelerated action is most urgently required.

Globally at least 1 in 3 women experience physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime.³ Though this data reveals the widespread nature of violence against women, it is an underestimation as sexual violence continues to be under-reported and not all forms of violence are captured. This figure has

¹ E/RES/2026/2 of 19 September 2025

² Ibid, para. 14.

³ [Global database on Violence against Women and Girls | UN Women Data Hub](#)

remained largely unchanged in the last two decades and progress in reducing violence has been very slow.⁴

While this reality is concerning, decades of evidence show the power of comprehensive approaches to end violence against women, where laws are accompanied by policies and resources and implemented through prevention and response programmes. For example, countries with domestic violence laws report significantly lower prevalence rates of violence — 9.5 per cent, compared to 16.1 per cent in countries without such laws.⁵ Prevalence rates are 2.5 times lower where comprehensive prevention and response measures are in place.⁶

Objective, Format and Participation

The High-Level Meeting comes at a critical moment, as the United Nations marks its 80th anniversary. It also takes place soon after the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2025 UNiTE Campaign and 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, which focused on addressing one of the fastest-growing forms of violence – violence against women and girls that occurs through or is amplified by the use of technology.

It provides an opportunity for Member States and other key stakeholders to accelerate action on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and advancing the Pact for the Future. Exchanging good practices, challenges, and lessons learned that can be scaled up, as well as tangible actions necessary to eliminate gaps that allow violence against women and girls to persist is critical in accelerating the implementation of the Platform for Action.

The aim of the Meeting is to accelerate implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action by translating commitments into action through comprehensive and interactive exchanges amongst Member States on their efforts to end violence against women and girls.

The 6-hour meeting, which will take place on Thursday, 12 March 2026 during the high-level week, will be divided into two 3-hour sessions as follows:

Morning session, 10.00 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.

- Opening Statement by the Chair
- Statement by the UN Women Executive Director
- A 25-minute opening dialogue involving Ministers from 5 Member States representing the five UN regional groups. Ministers will share experiences, lessons learned, latest evidence and successful strategies to address violence against women and girls, including prevention and response.

⁴ WHO on behalf of the interagency working group on violence against women estimation and data (VAW-IAWGED), 2025, [Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates, 2023 - Global and Regional and national prevalence estimates for violence against women and global and regional estimates for non-partner sexual violence against women](#)

⁵ UN Women. 2024. [Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The gender snapshot 2024](#)

⁶ UN Women. 2025. [Ending violence against women and girls: Global commitments, local actions](#)

Afternoon session, 3.00 – 6.00 p.m.

A 25-minute moderated technical panel discussion featuring five high-profile experts and practitioners from academia, UN entities and women's rights organizations, as well as victims/survivors representing the five UN regional groups. This discussion will present latest evidence and successful strategies for addressing priority concerns related to violence against women and girls, including prevention and response, taken by Member States.

The morning and afternoon opening dialogues will help frame the discussion and set the stage for an interactive ministerial dialogue where Member States will have the opportunity to share persistent challenges, best practices, lessons learned, and suggestions for the way forward around the identified priority concerns on ending violence against women and girls.

Given the limited time available, interventions should be limited to 3 minutes or less. The time limit will be strictly implemented, including through the muting of microphones once the time limit is reached. Every effort will be made to accommodate Ministers, Vice-Ministers and other high-level officials from capitals first.

Guiding Questions

Member States are invited to consider the following questions in their responses to help focus the interactive dialogue:

1. Measures on prevention of violence against women and girls

- What measures has your country taken to address the root causes of violence against women and girls, including through legal and policy reform, transforming institutional cultures and social norms across different sectors (e.g., education, security, transportation), in online and offline settings?
- Please focus on promising practices, including harnessing the role of technology. How can these promising practices be replicated and scaled up? What are persistent challenges?

2. Measures on responses to violence against women and girls

- What measures has your country taken to respond to the needs of victims/survivors of violence against women and girls across the health, justice, policing and social services and coordination of these services, including providing assistance towards longer-term support?
- Please focus on promising practices, including supporting civil society and women's rights organizations to address different forms of violence against women and girls and harnessing the role of technology. How can these promising practices be replicated and scaled up? What are the persistent challenges?

3. Measures on multi-sectoral action plans and gender-responsive budgeting

- What key promising practices has your country taken to support the formulation of fully funded whole-of-government national action plans on violence against women and girls' prevention and response?
- What measures has your country taken in allocating sufficient funding for this work? What are the persistent challenges?