

High-Level Meeting on violence against women and girls

12 March 2026, 3.00 – 6.00 p.m.

Speaker biographies:

Patsili Toledo-Vasquez is a member of the CEDAW Committee, where she co-chairs the Working Group on Gender-based Violence against Women. She is Adjunct Lecturer in Gender and Criminal Justice at Pompeu Fabra University in Spain, and her doctoral research and publications have focused on legal responses to femicide. As a consultant, she was the drafter of CEDAW General Recommendation No. 35 on Gender-based Violence against Women, adopted in 2017.

Janet Ramatoulie Sallah-Njie is a distinguished legal practitioner and Commissioner of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa, having previously served as its Vice-Chairperson. She has over thirty years' experience in the legal field, including as Solicitor General and Legal Secretary of The Gambia, and serves as a Lecturer at the Gambia Law School.

Humberto Carolo is the Chief Executive Officer of White Ribbon in Canada, with over 20 years' experience as an international expert working with men and boys to prevent gender-based violence. He sits on the External Advisory Council for Canada's Department of National Defence, Ontario Government's Domestic Violence Death Review Committee, Global MenEngage Alliance, and contributes to UN initiatives on engaging men and boys.

Lara Aharonian is a feminist activist and women's rights defender with over two decades of experience advancing survivor-centered approaches to ending violence against women and girls. She co-founded the Women's Resource Centre and helped establish the country's first crisis center for survivors of sexual assault. She also co-founded Women's Fund of Armenia, supporting grassroots women's organizations through participatory grantmaking.

Nighat Dad is a Pakistani lawyer, Founder and Executive Director of the Digital Rights Foundation, a non-profit organization focused on cyber harassment, data protection and free speech online in Pakistan and South Asia. In 2023, she was appointed to the United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Artificial Intelligence, where she contributes to global discussions on the ethical and inclusive governance of AI technologies.