

United Nations

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**United Nations Commission on the Status of Women
Fifty-seventh session
4 - 15 March 2013
New York**

INTERACTIVE EXPERT PANEL

on

Women and Girls

Tuesday, 5 March 2013 from 3:00pm to 6:00pm

Focus: Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls

From Ideas to Action:

Preventing Violence against Women and Girls

**Feed-back on the Expert Group Meeting on Preventing Violence against
Women and Girls**

A

agenda for CSW57. The group included practitioners, advocates, academics, activists and educators and researchers. We also had a small number of observers including two from government; and the entire process was supported by an

- The impacts of the current global economic crisis which include displacement, mass migration and increased levels of deep poverty - we know that this in turn increases the vulnerability of girls and women to multiple forms of abuse including trafficking and sexual exploitation.
- The on-going normalisation of violence against women and girls which is exacerbated by other social inequalities, militarisation, extreme nationalism and a growth in all forms of religious fundamentalisms.
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frameworks which also have requirements for preventing violence against women and girls. So given that we have the foundations and structures, what are we waiting for? What is going wrong?

Brief Summary of Key Findings

In the key finding section we note that it is not all doom and gloom. We know that many women's organisations and other civil society organisations have been engaging in prevention work for a long time, and indeed recent research suggests that it is feminist activism which has had the single biggest impact on effecting change around violence against women and girls; and we know that over the last few years, prevention has begun to make its way into the agenda through national strategies and action plans; and in many ways the richness of the discussions at the

Firstly, a Global Implementation Plan to End Violence against Women and Girls (with a particular focus on prevention). Let me immediately state that this is not an attempt to replace or dilute the existing policy and legislative frameworks. The plan would be launched in 2015 in order to support the post-2015 development agenda, and would provide a mechanism which operationalises the current policy, legislative and normative frameworks in a coordinated and outcomes focussed way.

Secondly, integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls - While as a group of experts we may have been ambitious i.e. we want to end violence against women and girls in a generation. We were also pragmatic in that we recognise that a global implementation plan requires development time and effort. So experts recommend that, in the immediate and short term, States, work in partnership with donors, funder, international and regional institutions, women's and other civil society organisations to *'develop, implement, evaluate and monitor coordinated, multi-sectoral and sustained prevention strategies, alongside and reinforcing strategies to improve the response to existing violence.'*

Thirdly, the global financial crisis and geopolitics – work around violence against women and girls, and especially work around prevention, is easily a soft-target for funding cuts. But given the disproportionate impacts of the global economic crisis on women and the increased risks of violence and the pressure on services, it is essential that States prioritise investment in programmes which not only support survivors but which create attitudinal shifts. We cannot afford for one of the main tragic legacies of this period to be the harming and murdering of thousands of girls and women. If this happens then the consequences will be with us for generations to come.

I have tried to condense the work of five days, numerous documents and a fifty-one page report into this short presentation. It is impossible to have done justice to all of that effort and the excellent document that was produced but I hope that I at least gave you a sense of it and that you will read more. All that is left therefore is to thank the organisers, the experts, too many to name, the wonderful drafting committee,

and especially our consultant Lara Fergus who worked tirelessly to help us pull of this together.

In closing let me say this, as we negotiate and debate over these two weeks, let us remember that girls and women are not statistics or words on documents, we are over half of the world's population and we are at risk simply because we are women – this is unacceptable. Violence against women and girls is preventable, and the time to act is not in ten years, it is now.