



Geneva

29/10/2019 - 18:00

Statements on behalf of the EU

## **UNECE Beijing+25 Review Conference - Item 6. Ending violence against women and girls: lessons and solutions from the region**

Thank you, Mme. Moderator,

On behalf of the European Union and its Member States, I would like to thank the panelists for this valuable discussion.

Violence against all women and girls is a gross violation of human rights, which may occur at any time in any place. In the EU alone, research indicates that half of all women have experienced verbal, physical or online sexual harassment. Violence infringes upon the bodily autonomy of women and girls and is a source of tremendous physical and psychological pain and suffering and a root cause of gender inequalities. The EU remains strongly committed to putting an end to this violence, in Europe and around the globe.

The EU has put substantial actions in place to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls, and our actions are bearing fruits. Legislation and practical measures enhance the protection of survivors within the EU, such as the mutual recognition of protection measures. The EU invests heavily in awareness raising initiatives, facilitates the exchange of good practices and conducts extensive research.

When it comes to our global commitment, we would like to highlight the joint EU-UN Spotlight Initiative, launched in 2017. With an initial EU investment of EUR 500 mln. the initiative targets sexual and gender-based violence, addressing female trafficking, domestic violence, and femicide. This initiative is already being rolled out in thirteen Latin American and African countries and other thirteen will start implementation in the next year in the Caribbean, Pacific, and Asia. This project demonstrates that it can be highly effective to work in partnerships. We call on all partners to join the EU-UN Spotlight initiative, and help put an end to all forms of violence against women and girls. Considering the importance of civil society actors to Spotlight's success, Spotlight has earmarked 10% of overall funding at regional level to civil society organisations.

25 years after the signing of the Beijing declaration we still face many challenges. Within the EU, data gaps mask the true scale and nature of sexual and gender-based violence. Investing in the gathering and analysis of gender responsive data, remains essential in the design and implementation of effective policies.

On a global level, the EU is concerned about the backlash against women's rights and gender equality in recent years. The emergence of regressive movements has had numerous negative impacts on institutional, legal, educative, and policy frameworks aimed at preventing and combating violence against women and girls, particularly when it comes to the Istanbul Convention. We are also concerned about the alarming level of repetitive violence against LBT women and girls, and against other vulnerable groups of women. Trans-women are especially likely to face hate-motivated harassment, including verbal abuse, humiliation, and social exclusion.

On behalf of the European Union and its Member States, I would like to pose the following question to the panelist:

The EU realizes the crucial importance of intersectionality in order to eliminate violence against all women and girls, and takes action accordingly. What can be done to step up the global efforts to incorporate intersectionality into objectives and programs aimed at eliminating violence against all women and girls?

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