

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

Background

We congratulate the United Nation to make Violence Against Women and Girls as main theme of this session.

First, let me repeat my words during the Stakeholder Preparatory Forum for CSW: "it is upfront shame on humanity to still have women and girls who suffer from violence, while all UN efforts have been contributing towards the Member States realization and respect of all human rights".

Violence against women and girls is a phenomenon affecting all societies worldwide. It is the most widespread human rights violation of our times, claiming millions of

VAWG & Arab Spring

With the tremendous changes the Arab region witnessed after the Arab Spring revolution, women of the Arab Spring, despite being at the heart of the social movements, continued their struggle to maintain control over the next phase of the revolution. Arab women dreamed of a nation with dignity and liberty while sustaining women's full human rights.

The true fact entailed new types of socio-economic violence and oppression against women in the region, especially with the emergence of new religious fundamentalist movements all over the Arab transitional countries. Misinterpretation of religion and culture are selected as tools against women, making them sources and victims of the political tectonic shift.

Egypt Case

On the local level, Egyptian women were marginalized, after the revolution from power when;

- only men were appointed to draft an interim constitution,
- when no fairly representation of women existed within the Founding Committee for Drafting the constitution,
- when the 64-seat quota for women's representation in parliament was abolished,
- when the number of women in the first people's assembly were 9 out of 508,
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Women Political Participation & VAWG

The relation between women political participation and VAWG is significant, as the greater gender equality achieved; the lower level of violence against women and girls exists. It is very important to increase women political participation because;

- Women are capable of explaining better the needs, rights and problems women are facing, and also conduct greater attention to gender related issues.
- Women will protect any legislation in their favor.
- Women's active participation would change the overall understanding of the people towards women's rights.
- Women would encourage other women attitudes towards their political participation and their perception towards their role in society.

Enhancing women's political participation means more progress in laws and policies that address key human rights concerns counting gender-based violence, especially women are more capable of evoking the kind of details that are required to protect women from violation.

Taking into account, the root causes of VAWG which persist in cultural stereotypes, abuse of religious and traditional practices; so strategies, policies and programs for enhancing women political participation should be tailed in accordance with the realization and understanding of the challenges women are facing.

Future Actions

- A new legislation addressing VAWG has been prepared with accurate definition of sexual harassment; to cover all forms of violence against women, to intensify penalties and fill the gap in the application of existing laws.
- A legal observatory unit for women's rights will be established to monitor all legislations and ensure its adherence to the principle of equality and respect of women's rights, while tracking any violation or deviation in the implementation of laws.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Gender and human rights should be framed in a global context; in a method that investigates the relation between women's oppression and the global economy, inter-governmental relations, and state practices.

The international community is committed to put an end to such violence. It is not adequate to pass new legislations criminalizing violence against women to solve the problem, but finding comprehensive solutions for other interrelated factors on the international, regional, and local level is fundamental to enable structural change.

It is important to:

- Develop an international solidarity to protect women from new liberalism including religious fundamentalism that leads to women discrimination and suppression;
- Establish a special funding mechanism for ending VAWG in all conflict, humanitarian and development settings;
- Create an international legal observatory machinery at UN to monitor, review and assess practices of VAWG at member states and recommend measures should be taken to end VAWG;
- Enhance the states to formulate and implement policies closer towards women's rights.