Women's Rights at the Crossroads: Strengthening International Co-operation to Close the Gap between Legal Frameworks and their Implementation

Organised by the Council of Europe in co-operation with the office of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its causes and consequences, and with the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers

CONFERENCE

: **SPEAKERS BIOGRAPHIES**
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Mandate of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its causes and consequences

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Thorbjørn Jagland was the President of the Storting (Norwegian Parliament) from 2005 to 2009. He is a member of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, which awards the Nobel Peace Prize every year. He has held two of the most influential governmental positions in Norway: Prime Minister (1996-97) and Minister of Foreign Affairs (2000-2001). After serving as Foreign Minister, he was Chairman of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and the enlarged Foreign Affairs Committee in the Storting for four years (2001-2005). He also served as Chairman of the EEA Consultative Committee during this period (2000-2005). In addition, he has held a number of other parliamentary positions, such as head of the Storting's Delegation for Relations with the European Parliament for six years. He was a member of the Storting for 15 years. Mr Jagland was Leader of the Norwegian Labour Party for ten years (1992-2002), and Party Secretary of the Labour Party for five years (1987-1992). He is currently the Chairman of the Board of Directors at the Oslo Centre for Peace and Human Rights, and Member of the International Board of Governors at the Peres Center for Peace. He served as Vice-President of the Socialist International 1999-2008, and Chair of the Social International Middle East Committee from 2000 to 2006. He was a member of the Sharm El-Sheikh Fact-finding Commission (The Mitchell Commission) from 2000 to 2001. Over the last 20 years, Thorbjørn Jagland has published widely on a range of issues, in particular on European and international affairs. He has published four books in Norway: My European Dream (1990), Letters (1995), Our Vulnerable World (2001) and Ten Theses on the EU and Norway (2003). He holds a degree in Economics from the University of Oslo (1975). Thorbjørn Jagland was elected Secretary General of the Council of Europe in September 2009. In June 2014, he was re-elected, and his second term in office commenced on 1 October, 2014. He was born on 5 November 1950 in Drammen, Norway. He is married to Hanne Grotjord and they have two children.



Marlène Schiappa, Secretary of State for equality between women and men and the fight against discrimination, France. Born on 18 November 1982 in Paris. University education: Graduated in communication & new media, with a specialisation in electronic writing. Professional background: Secretary of State to the Prime Minister, in charge of equality between women and men, until 16 October 2018; Assistant, then in charge of monitoring new media for the Euro RSCG agency; Journalist for Yahoo.fr; Editorial Director of a press agency; Creator of the "Maman travaille" network; Novelist and essayist. Electoral mandates: Deputy to the Mayor of Le Mans, Jean-Claude Boulard, Equality Delegate from 2014; Community Advisor, French Tech Delegate in Le Mans Métropole.



Dubravka Šimonović was appointed as United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences in June 2015 by the UN Human Rights Council for an initial three years' tenure (maximum tenure of six years). She started her tenure on 1 August 2015. Ms Šimonović was a member of the CEDAW Committee between 2002 and 2014, and served as its Chairperson in 2007 and 2008, its follow-up Rapporteur from 2009 to 2011 and as the Chairperson of the Optional Protocol Working Group in 2011. For a number of years she headed the Human Rights Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Croatia and was posted as the Minister Plenipotentiary at the Permanent Mission of Croatia to the United Nations in New York. She was also the Ambassador to the OSCE and United Nations in Vienna, Austria. She was the Chairperson of the UN Commission on the Status of Women between 2001 and 2002 and also worked as a member of the UNIFEM Consultative Committee. At the regional level she was the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council of Europe's Task Force to combat violence against women, including domestic violence in 2006 and 2007. Between 2008 and 2010, she co-chaired the Ad hoc Committee (CAHVIO) that elaborated the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. Ms Šimonović holds a PhD in family law from the University of Zagreb. She is the author of several books and articles on women's rights and violence against women. She also lectured at the Harvard Law School, Nottingham University, Urban Morgan Institute for Human Rights (University of Cincinnati) and at the Women's Human Rights Training Institute organised by the Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation. Dubravka Šimonovic is a Visiting Professor in Practice in the Centre for Women, Peace and Security at LSE.



Feride Acar is professor of political sociology and gender and women's studies. For many years, she has been working for the promotion and protection of women's human rights, at the international level, as an academic, a researcher and an independent expert. She is currently (2011-2015) member of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) where, in the past too (1997-2005), she has served as member, Rapporteur, Vice-Chair and Chairperson (2003-2005). Professor Acar was one of the independent experts of the Council of Europe Task Force that recommended the making of a European Convention on violence against women. She also served (2006-2011) as the Turkish delegate in the negotiations and drafting of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention). She has been elected (2015) as member of the GREVIO, the monitoring body of the Istanbul Convention. She is the author of works on women's human rights; women in education and academia; women and Islamist politics; as well as social and political movements and Turkish political life. She received her BS from Middle East Technical University and her MA and Ph.D from Bryn Mawr College, Pa., USA.



Dunja Mijatović was elected Commissioner for Human Rights on 25 January 2018 by the Parliamentary Assembly and took up her position on 1 April 2018. She is the fourth Commissioner, succeeding Nils Muižnieks (2012-2018), Thomas Hammarberg (2006-2012) and Alvaro Gil-Robles (1999-2006). National of Bosnia and Herzegovina, she has been working to promote and protect human rights for the past two decades, thus acquiring extensive knowledge in the field of international monitoring, in particular as regards freedom of expression. Prior to her appointment as Commissioner for Human Rights, she has served as OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (2010-2017), Director of Broadcast of the Communications Regulatory Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2001-2010), Chair of the European Platform of Regulatory Agencies (2007–2010) and of the Council of Europe's Group of Specialists on Freedom of Expression and Information in Times of Crisis (2005-2007).Dunja Mijatović has regularly given lectures in national and international fora and has been awarded several human rights prizes. She has also being active in supporting NGO activities in the field of human rights education and asylum.



Hilary Gbedemah, Chair of Committee for the elimination of discrimination against women (CEDAW) has over 44 years' experience as a lawyer in private legal practice, lecturing in law, administration and human rights' and legislative advocacy on various themes and laws including the Domestic Violence Act, Property Rights of Spouses Bill and the Intestate Succession Bill. She is currently Rector of the Law Institute, Labone Accra, in Ghana and Senior Adjunct Fellow at Ghana's Institute of Economic Affairs, Ghana's policy think-tank. She produced and presented a paper to ILO with chapters on prostitution and trafficking of girls. She formed an entrepreneurial club 'Women on the Move' to assist young women in business. Hilary has worked with traditional authorities as a Legal Advisor to the Ketu Queen-mothers' Association, a member of the Asogli Traditional Council's Gender and Children's Committee (2000 -2007), and trained members of Royal Care and Support (ROCAS) which is an association of traditional rulers with membership drawn from Ghana, Nigeria and the Cameroons (2010) on national and international instruments on violence especially harmful traditional practices. She is a member of various boards including ActionAid Ghana, and the Ghana Red Cross Society, and recently, the High Level Working Group on access to Justice (under the auspices of the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), The Hague, Netherlands).



Sylvia Mesa Peluffo is a psychologist with a Master's Degree in Women's Studies. A Costa Rican born in Uruguay, she is a Feminist activist, who serves as the President of the Feminist Network Against Violence Against Women, chapter in Costa Rica. She is currently working at the University of Costa Rica, where she teaches a Postgraduate Course in Women's Studies. Furthermore, Sylvia Mesa Peluffo is a researcher at the University of Costa Rica Centre for Research in Women's Studies, and the Coordinator of the Interdisciplinary Team for the Attention of Victims of Sexual Harassment as part of the Institute of Research in Education. She is a member, as part of civil society, of the Monitoring Commission of the National System for the Care and Prevention of Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence. She has conducted research and has numerous publications regarding violence against women and on sexual and reproductive rights. Previously, she worked in the Gender Violence Area of the National Institute of Women. She has been a consultant for UNICEF, IOM, ILO and OAS.



Lucy Asuagbor (Cameroon) has served in the judiciary of her country for nearly 30 years at different courts and levels. She is currently judge at the Supreme Court of Cameroun. Ms Asuagbor has also served at the African Commission on Human and People's Rights since 2004, currently as Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa, as Chairperson of the Working Group on communications, and previously as Chairperson of the Working Group on the Rights of Persons living with HIV/Aids, as Special Rapporteur on the rights of human rights defenders in Africa and as member of the Committee against torture. Ms Asuagbor holds a B.A. in Law from the University of Lagos, Nigeria, an LLM of International Maritime Law from the University IMLI of Malta, and a Diploma from the École de la magistrature of Cameroon.



Ivana Radačić (PhD in Law), Chair of the Working Group on Discrimination against Women in Law and Practice of the United Nations. She is a senior research assistant at Ivo Pilar Institute of Social Sciences in Zagreb and a part-time lecturer at the University of Zagreb. Her research and teaching areas are women's rights; gender equality; human rights; and gender, sexuality and the law. She has published extensively in these areas in leading international journals and books, and she has authored the book Sexual violence – Myths, Stereotypes and the Legal System (TIMpress, 2014). She has taught at various universities in Europe, Central America, Australia and New Zealand. She also teaches at the Women Studies Centre (Zagreb) and the regional Women's Human Rights Training Institute (Sofia). Dr Radačić has co-operated with international

institutions and NGOs on human rights research, training and litigation and has been involved with drafting national human rights laws and policies. She also worked at the European Court of Human Rights and has litigated women's rights cases before it. She is the Council of Europe expert on women's rights, and has co-authored a training manual for judges on women's access to justice. She served as an expert member of the Parliamentary Committee on Gender Equality. Dr Radačić plays violoncello and djembe and practices five rhythms dance.



Margarette May Macaulay, Rapporteur on women's rights, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, is a citizen of Jamaica and was elected as Commissioner on 16 June 2015, by the Organization of American States (OAS) General Assembly, for a four year mandate that started on 1 January 2016 and ends 31 December 2019. Margarette May holds a Bachelor of Law degree from the University of London and is currently an attorney in private practice. She serves as Mediator in the Supreme Court of Jamaica and an Associate Arbitrator, in addition to serving as a Notary Public. She served as a Judge for the Inter-American Court of Human Rights from 2007 to 2012, contributing to the formulation of the Court's Rules of Procedure.



Ruth Halperin-Kaddari, is an expert on family law and international women's rights, and is the Founding Director of the Rackman Center for the Advancement of the Status of Women at Bar-Ilan University Law Faculty in Israel, where she serves as an Associate Professor. In December 2018 she completed three terms on the UN Committee on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), during which she also served twice as the Vice-Chair of the Committee, and as the Chair of the Working Group on Inquiries. A graduate of Yale Law School (LL.M.; J.S.D.), she has published extensively in her areas of expertise, including family law in Israel, legal pluralism, feminism and halacha, and international women's rights, and is a recipient of numerous national and international research grants and prizes, including a grant within the H202 and the ERA framework (2019), two major grants from the Israel Science Foundation (2000, 2005) and the US State Department's Woman of Courage Award (2007). Her book on Women in Israel was published by University of Pennsylvania Press. She is a renowned speaker in academic as well as in professional forums, and has served on several occasions as an expert witness on Israeli family law in international tribunals. She has also served for five years in a national role as the Chair of the Advisory Committee to the Authority for the Advancement of Women at the Prime-Minister's Office. In 2018 she was named on Apolitical's 100 most influential people in gender policy around the world. In July 2007 she has been awarded with the International Award for Woman of Courage by the State Department of the United States. In November 2014, she was the recipient of "Ot Katan" Award for the Advancement of Gender Justice through Voluntary Work, awarded by the Ruach Nashit NGO in Israel; in March 2016 she was awarded with the Rappaport Prize for Women Generating Change in Israeli Society; and in

January 2017 she received the Knights of Quality Government Award by the Movement for Quality Government in Israel.



Marko Bošnjak was born on 12 March 1974 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. He began his studies at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Law (1996). He has been a research assistant (1996-2002), research fellow (2002-2006) and senior research fellow (2006-2008), at the Institute of Criminology, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Law. He completed a judicial traineeship at the Court of Appeal in Ljubljana (1998-2000). He holds a masters' degree from the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Law (1999). He passed the State Judicial Exam in 2001 and holds a Ph.D. in Law from the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Law, 2002. He has been an independent advisor (2002-2006) and superior advisor (2006-2008) at the Constitutional Court of Slovenia. He was Assistant Professor for criminal law and criminology at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Law (2005-2015), a lecturer at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana (2006-2012). From 2008 to 2011, Marko Bošnjak was an expert member of the Council for Criminal Law in the Ministry of Justice of Slovenia. He has also held posts of Attorney specialised in criminal law (2009-2016) and Associate Professor of criminal law, Head of the Criminal Law Department, European Law Faculty in Nova Gorica, Slovenia, since 2012. He has been a Judge at the European Court of Human Rights since 30 May 2016.

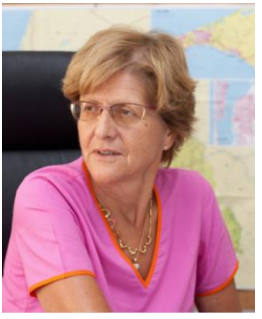


Françoise Brié is an expert in programmes to combat and prevent violence against women at the national and the international level. She has been Director of the Fédération Nationale Solidarité Femmes (FNSF) since July 2017, an association that manages the national helpline, 3919 Violences Femmes Info and runs a network of 67 associations in France specialising in monitoring women victims of violence and their children in day care or in residential centres. The FNSF also manages a security system for women most at risk; an observatory to analyse data from 3919 and associations; and a justice and housing service. She represents FNSF in dealings with the various ministries and for advocacy actions. Previously, she was director of the association L'Escale-Solidarité Femmes (Hauts-de-Seine) from 2004 to 2017, a shelter and accommodation centre for women victims of violence. She was a member of the High Council for Equality between Women and Men from 2013 to 2019 (Violence Commission and Egater Group) responsible for drafting opinions on gender-based violence and gender inequalities in all territories, as well as for evaluating public policies. Elected in 2015 and 2019 as a member of GREVIO (Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence). She is a representative on European and international networks for the defence of fundamental rights (Women Against

Violence in Europe, Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)). As programme director or project manager, she has carried out numerous investigations and worked for various humanitarian and human rights associations, particularly those working on women's issues in Africa and the Middle East (Aide Médicale Internationale, Fondation France Libertés, Fédération Internationale des Droits de l'Homme, Médecins Sans frontières). She is the author of several articles and reports (women, minorities, displaced persons and refugees). She has co-ordinated several public health programmes in France and internationally (2 years in Malawi, 2 years in Iran and Iraq, 1 year in Haiti, 6 months in Angola) after having been a midwife for 10 years. She holds a DEA in Geopolitics, History, Civilisations, and a Master's degree in Health and Social Sciences - Public Health.



Carmen Comas-Mata Mira is a member of the United Nations Subcommittee on the prevention of torture. She is also the head of International Affairs in the Office of the Ombudsman, which is the institution in Spain that is responsible for the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture. She is also the Technical Secretary of the Ibero-American Federation of Ombudsmen (FIO), a forum which brings together more than 100 Ombudsman Offices from the region. Under her mandate as head of the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture Unit (from 2009 until 2013), she launched the Unit's activities, developed the training of her staff and more than four hundred visits to places of detention were made. She was the expert appointed by the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation and Development (AECID) in 2011, to help ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT) in Peru. She has been the leader of 4 twinning projects for the capacity building of the Ombudsman institutions in Kazakhstan, Armenia, North Macedonia and Turkey. She has also participated as a representative of the institution in various projects of the Council of Europe concerning the strengthening of national human rights structures and European NPMs. She holds a Law degree and a Master in European Community Law from the Autonomous University of Madrid.



Bianca Maria Pomeranzi has served as senior gender and development advisor and head of the Gender and Human Development section for the General Directorate for Development Cooperation of the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs dealing with negotiations and implementations of the International Agreements on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment as the Beijing Platform for Actions. She promoted policy dialogues and programmes on women's human rights and gender-based violence against women with partner governments in different countries (Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Palestine, and Senegal) and was the head of the Italian Development Cooperation Unit for Western Africa (Dakar 2010-2011). Elected as member of the CEDAW Committee (2013-2016), she focused her studies on the economic and social rights of women, actively promoting the inclusion of the CEDAW principles for non-discrimination in the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.



After completing her post-graduate studies in law (DESS), **Nicole Ameline** pursued a career in the ministerial cabinets, then in the regional and local civil service, before becoming a Member of the French Parliament, where she was continuously re-elected from 1993 to 2017. (Law Commission and Foreign Affairs and Defence Commission); Minister in charge of decentralisation in 1995, Minister in charge of Maritime Affairs in 2002, then Minister of Parity and Professional Equality until 2005, Nicole Ameline was committed to Women's Rights in the world at an early stage. Appointed Ambassador in charge of Social Issues and Globalisation, she was France's Delegate to the ILO from 2005 to 2007. Nicole Ameline, elected within CEDAW, President (2013/2014), is currently Vice-Chairperson of CEDAW, as well as Chair of the Working Group on SDGs and the Working Group with the IPU. Nicole Ameline is very committed to promoting professional equality in conjunction with the international private sector and conducts development policies on the ground, particularly in the Mediterranean.



Alia El-Yassir is UN Women Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia and Representative to Turkey since September 2018. She has been working with UNIFEM/UN Women since 1997. She previously worked as the UN Women Special Representative in the occupied Palestinian territory, managing a complex portfolio of programmes and projects, as well as supporting the UNCT and HCT on establishing coordination mechanisms for tackling gender equality and women's empowerment issues. She is part of the UNDG roster of gender experts and has supported other UNCTs in this capacity. Before joining UN Women, she briefly worked with UNDP and was engaged in the education field. In addition to volunteering with a number of women's and human rights NGOs, she has worked on educational media for children. Alia El-Yassir graduated from McGill University in Montreal and pursued post-graduate studies in Education and Anthropology, with a specialisation on Gender Studies at Ben Gurion University of the Negev



Ambassador Meglena Kuneva has been serving as a Head of the EU Delegation to the Council of Europe since September 2018. Her efforts focus on ensuring the best possible co-ordination between the EU and the Council of Europe in the fields of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. She chairs the EU co-ordination meeting, aimed at aligning EU Member States' positions on current and upcoming issues. She works on establishing a common European position, shared by both the EU and the Council of Europe. At the Bulgarian national level, Ambassador Kuneva has held the positions of: Deputy Prime Minister of European Policies Co-ordination and Institutional Affairs; Minister of Education and Science; Minister of European Affairs; Special Representative to the Convention on the Future of the European Union; and Chief Negotiator with the EU at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Moreover, she has been elected as a Member of the Bulgarian Parliament three times and also as a Member of the European Parliament in 2009. At the European executive level, Ambassador Kuneva has served as a European Commissioner for Consumer Protection between 2007 and 2010. In 2008 she was awarded 'European Commissioner of the Year' as well as 'European of the Year' for promoting consumer rights in digital environment. In 2010 she was appointed as a Special Advisor on passenger rights to European Commission Vice-President Siim Kallas. In 2017 the European Commission nominated her as a member of the Committee of Independent Eminent Persons. Ambassador Kuneva has also received honours and awards from several EU Member States for her achievements and contributions. She holds degrees in law and environmental law from Sofia University and several diplomas from programmes in The Netherlands, UK and USA. She was born in Sofia, Bulgaria, is married and has a son.



Katarzyna Wolska-Wrona is a lawyer, working in the area of gender-based violence since 2009. She was a member of the Polish Government’s delegation to the Ad Hoc Committee for preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (CAHVIO). From 2012 to 2014, she was the legal expert responsible for co-ordination of the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by Poland. She is currently a seconded national expert in the European Institute for Gender Equality working in the Gender-based Violence Programme.



Jacqui Hunt is the Europe and Eurasia Director of Equality Now, an international human rights organisation which uses the law to protect and promote the rights of women and girls around the world. A lawyer herself, Jacqui launched the Europe office of Equality Now in 2005 and has spearheaded several of Equality Now's successful campaigns. Equality Now's main areas of focus are promotion of legal equality and an end to harmful practices, sex trafficking and sexual violence with a cross-cutting focus on adolescent girls. Every five years to coincide with governments' review of achievement of commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action, Equality Now issues its *Beijing+* report giving examples of remaining sex discriminatory laws that affect all areas of women's lives in all regions of the world and arise out of stereotypes of what a woman's role should be and how she should behave. Such stereotypes have also influenced the drafting of laws on sexual violence. Equality Now's recently released report *Roadblocks to Justice: How the Law is Failing Survivors of Sexual Violence in Eurasia* builds on its global report on sexual violence *The World's Shame: The Global Rape Epidemic – How Laws Around the World are Failing to Protect Girls and Women from Sexual Violence*.