

The Platform of independent expert mechanisms on the elimination of discrimination and violence against women (EDVAW Platform) calls on the UN Commission on the Status of Women to use women's human rights instruments and expert mechanisms to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

GENEVA (24 March 2021) – On the occasion of the 65th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, *the EDVAW Platform of 7 independent United Nations and regional expert mechanisms on elimination of discrimination and violence against women (UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, UN Working Group on discrimination against women and girls, Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention, Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in African, Inter-American Rapporteur on the Rights of Women)* * **jointly called upon all States, relevant stakeholders worldwide and the UN Commission on the Status of Women to adopt a human rights based approach to the implementation of strategies for the elimination of discrimination and violence against women and the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, as presented in their [joint publication](#) launched during this session.**

The adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in 1995, was an important step in developing a comprehensive international policy framework on women's empowerment, human rights and development. The Beijing Platform for Action includes 12 critical areas of concern, including women's human rights and violence against women.

Since the Beijing Conference, the UN Commission on the Status of Women has assessed the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action through a review process carried out every five years. During these reviews States have reaffirmed their commitment to its full implementation.

Since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action more than 25 years ago we have witnessed many positive changes for the realization of women's rights. However, we continue to be confronted with **persistent and systematic discrimination and violence against women that are deeply rooted in the fabric of societies**. Violence against women remains pervasive and normalised, and the growing backlash against feminism, gender equality and women's empowerment, poses additional challenges to Constitutional, legislative, policy and programmatic changes that are so urgently needed to implement fully the Beijing Platform for Action.

The Beijing Platform for Action is solidly anchored in the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women of 1993, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, of 1979, and its main values and principles are reflected in the CEDAW Optional Protocol, the Belém do Pará Convention, of 1994, the Maputo Protocol, of 2003, and the Istanbul Convention of 2011. The full implementation of the Platform therefore

requires the implementation of all of those instruments, under the guidance of the expert monitoring mechanisms gathered in this space. It also requires renewed encouragement by the Commission on the Status of Women to support States and other stakeholders.

The Commission on the Status of Women and States gathered at the Commission should consider the recommendations and implementation strategies proposed by our expert mechanisms, including the good practices and legal and practical solutions they have offered in a number of relevant thematic areas. In particular, those States facing similar implementation gaps and challenges should consider the recommendations provided by our expert mechanisms as tools including using reliable and comparable data to track progress and prevent rollbacks by anti-gender campaigns and movements that are threatening progress.

The Commission on the Status of Women must recognize the indispensable role played by our independent expert mechanisms and our fundamental contributions to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and other UN and regional women's rights instruments. While some of the EDVAW Platform expert mechanisms are already integrated in the deliberations of the Commission on the Status of Women, others attend on a voluntary basis and present their work at the numerous side events of the Commission (MESECVI, GREVIO) depending every year on their institutions' financial possibilities (SR WHR Africa, SR IAHR).

Taking into account the need to more systematically address the issue of discrimination and violence against women in the context of the deliberations of the CSW, and considering the contributions by our independent expert mechanisms in that regard, the Platform issues the following calls:

- **The Commission on the Status of Women should include discrimination and violence against women as a separate standing agenda item through 2030**, to be discussed each year in order to support States and other stakeholders in implementing commitments and recommendations on the elimination of violence against women and girls.
- The EDVAW expert mechanisms and the Commission on the Status of Women should expand cooperation and build synergy in order to focus on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and other international human rights instruments on the elimination of discrimination and gender-based violence against women and girls.
- The UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls should be formally invited to intervene at the official opening of the Commission on the Status of Women together with the Chairperson of CEDAW and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, as an integral part of the UN human rights mechanisms focusing on women's rights.
- The Commission on the Status of Women should, in addition to receiving oral statements, hold an interactive dialogue with the UN expert mechanisms (CEDAW, SRVAW, WGDAW), allowing them the opportunity to present their respective reports and recommendations to States.

- The Commission on the Status of Women should invite all women's human rights expert mechanisms to participate in the official panels of the Commission.
- Regional mechanisms such as MESECVI and GREVIO, as well as the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights Rapporteur on the Rights of Women should be invited to participate in relevant panels at the Commission on the Status of Women, and to other activities and side events on relevant topics.
- The Trust Fund on violence against women should present its reports to the Commission on the Status of Women and the Human Rights Council and establish cooperation with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women as entrusted by its founding resolution.
- The EDVAW Platform should be supported by the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights, UN Women, Council of Europe, the Organization of American States, the African Union and all UN Member States.

SIGNED

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Gladys Acosta, Chair of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

Elizabeth Broderick, Chair-Rapporteur of the UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls

Tatiana Rein Venegas, President of the Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI)

Marceline Naudi, President of the of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence of the Council of Europe (GREVIO)

Maria Teresa Manuela, Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa

Margarette May Macaulay, Rapporteur on the Rights of Women of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights