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**Thematic discussions: aspects of violence against women
that pertain directly to the Commission on Crime
Prevention and Criminal Justice**

**Workshop on Eliminating Violence Against Women:
Forms, Strategies and Tools****

**Background paper by the United Nations Crime Prevention and
Criminal Justice Programme Network (PNI)**

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- **Cross-cultural research on violence against women: Results of the International Violence Against Women Survey.** European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, affiliated with the United Nations (Heuni)

1. Over the past 15 years, the number of countries that have undertaken specialized surveys on violence against women has grown to at least 70. These surveys have made an important contribution toward raising public awareness about the magnitude and impacts of violence against women, and have been used to support policy formation and the development of services for women.

2. Internationally comparative data have been identified as a priority by numerous agencies, most recently the UN Secretary-General's report on all forms of violence against women (2006). Reliable comparative data are considered essential for monitoring progress among countries, identifying common risk factors, and developing appropriate responses at the national and international levels. The International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS) is an cross-nationally comparative survey that has been conducted in eleven countries to date. This presentation will focus on the results of the IVAWS for nine of these countries. The focus will be on the prevalence of violence against women, correlates of violence, impacts of violence, reporting to police and other services, and implications of the results for policy development. The challenges of survey research in different country settings will also be discussed.

- **Violence against Women and Girls during Armed Conflicts in Africa: Nature, Extent And A Way Forward.** United Nations Institute for the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI)

3. UNAFRI has carried out two studies on trafficking in persons in Nigeria and Uganda. Trafficking is one of the forms of abuse women and girls are exposed to during conflicts. This is the reason why the Institute decided to cover other forms of the violence women and girls suffer from during armed conflicts in Africa. Due mainly to financial and field (primary data collection) constraints, the Institute initiated a fact finding search from secondary sources. The examination of facts then gathered, revealed a varied nature and extent of the violence women and girls are subjected to during armed conflicts. Amnesty International's report (2005:4-5) provides a list of forms of abuse against women in conflict that helps to tell the nature and extent of the violence.

4. The constructed conceptual framework from the gathered material focuses only on the forms often reported by the victims or witnesses, which are: abduction, rape, sexual slavery, forced labour, murder and assaults. They appear to be the more apparent characteristic elements of the violence women and girls are subjected to during armed conflicts. The cases under study revealed a flagrant impunity of the authors of the above crimes. Indeed, these crimes are often ignored and rarely prosecuted (Amnesty International, 2004:35). Violence against women and girls during armed conflicts is not limited to a specific corner of the world. They may be exposed to it wherever armed conflicts break out. Nevertheless, the study focuses on the African region.

5. The assessment of the situation led to the observations that: (1) there is a flagrant impunity of the offenders due to weakened National Criminal Justice System; (2) there are viable international instruments that cater for this type of

violence; (3) there is a role to be played by the International Criminal Court (ICC); (4) there is a key role to be played by the field organisations in giving more visibility on the violence women and girls are exposed to, this is in order to get the International Criminal Court's Prosecutor well informed of and prosecute the violence. The study suggests that beside the programmes of activities of these field organisations and in conjunction with them, a crime prevention programme be initiated by UNAFRI, whose objectives include carrying out activities with other international organisations in matters of mutual concern, with regard to crime prevention and control, particularly those which relate to combating Transnational Organised Crime.

6. A way forward to reducing the denounced violence is to give more visibility to these types of crime and due attention to the role to be played by the ICC, field organisations (such as Human Rights Organisations) and other involved actors. This would definitely help in discouraging all offenders: those who physically commit them and those who, by wilful negligence or other unlawful reasons, allow them to do so. So there is need for advocacy, awareness and sensitisation campaigns for populations and local (civil, religious and military) authorities, through inter alia: printed and electronic (radio, TV, etc.) media; seminars, workshops and conferences; and other means such as drama. The presentation gives the opportunity to discuss mechanisms for more protection for victims and witnesses in order to encourage them report the crime they have suffered from or witnessed to the Prosecutor of the ICC. This will definitely help increase and improve accessibility to International Criminal Justice, and strengthen the National Criminal Justice.

7. The observed weakness of the National Criminal Justice (NCJ) in time of armed conflicts led us to think that such a vacuum may be effectively filled by the International Criminal Justice, given the fact that there are related legal international instruments, especially, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), which cater, among others, for the violence women and girls are subjected to. These instruments are examined in order to discuss their use and accessibility, as they appear to be the only viable instruments that may deter the potential offenders. Some few cases handled or being handled by the International Criminal Court show decisively the role the Court is expected to play, if for the Prosecutor of the Court, the visibility of such violence is increased.

- **Women, Girls And Terrorism.** International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme (ISPAC)

8. In seeking to define an agenda for the prevention and reduction of violence against women and girls in specific instances of terrorism, it is important for us to re-examine certain concepts and assumptions that have been useful to us in the past but now need to serve as a focus for the discussion of alternatives and reflection on how they might be adapted to accommodate the different realities of today. A reappraisal of the notions of terrorism, non-state, unconventional, armed conflict, security, personal security, gender as an analytical tool, gender-based violence and gender-based violence in the context of terrorism is needed, as we consider to what extent the legal framework of international law, human rights law and humanitarian law currently at our disposal is adequate to the task.

9. The combination of terrorism and gender-based violence against women and girls has a variety of implications that need to be considered before any decision can be taken with a view to redefine appropriate methods of intervention. In particular women and girls are seen as a significant tactical component of terrorist activity, and are set to become a basic resource of terrorist networks in the new century. We are aware of the great effort that has been made to create indicators that measure violence against women, especially the work undertaken by the UN group of experts. It is therefore considered to be important to create methods of measuring violence against women in terms of terrorism, gauging both the qualitative and quantitative criteria in order to include indicators of violence against women which have already been undertaken.

10. Recognising the importance of women's work in the formulation of international agendas and in particular in the areas of peace processes and promoting democracy, attention is drawn to the need for them to become more involved and their contribution highlighted in all the activities covered by the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its annexed Plan of Action, which makes no explicit reference to them.

11. In particular United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 calls for increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict and in peace processes; and calls on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict.

12. In our paper we set out some proposals (annex) for prevention, analysis and intervention in response to violence against women and girl victims of terrorism to realize and put in to action by different agencies with the objective of achieving synergistic cooperation and optimum use of resources by all the various entities concerned at international and regional levels, including Member States, non-governmental organisations and civil society general. Existing mandates relating to armed conflict and warfare should be used (where feasible) insofar as they are able to meet the needs of women and girl victims of terrorism; alternatively new and robust instruments will be required.

13. Finally, we emphasise that existing legislation and the empirical and analytical tools currently at our disposal are inadequate for the task, and likewise the methods that we are currently using to understand, respond to and investigate this problem. We therefore invite all parties concerned to offer their contributions.

- **Indicators to Address Violence Against Women Measuring the Criminal Justice Response.** International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy (ICCLR & CJP)

14. States are taking a number of varying initiatives to combat violence against women, including criminal justice responses. How do we know which initiatives are effective in addressing violence against women and whether in fact the scope, prevalence and incidence of violence against women are being reduced? The need for evidence based policy and practice is imperative. In order to do this, developing a set of indicators is seen as an important tool.

15. A set of indicators can be used by policymakers, service providers and the public to assist States in a variety of ways: in assessing the scope of violence against women; systematic monitoring; strengthening of a knowledge base; persuading policymakers; informing legislative and policy reforms; assisting with the development of strategies to address and eliminate the violence; measuring access to and quality of services, and monitoring progress.

16. There are a number of important efforts being undertaken at the international, regional and national level on developing indicators on violence against women. These efforts involve the discussion as to how using a set of indicators could enhance existing data collection methodologies, such as administrative and criminal statistics and surveys, to both measure the extent of violence against women and to measure the State's response to the problem. These discussions also set out the challenges as well as the disadvantages and advantages with data collection on different forms of violence against women.

17. This paper will provide a brief review of the international and regional efforts, such as the current recommendation at the Commission of Status of Women's meetings on developing an international set of indicators to measure violence against women and the recent work of the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women. In addition, the paper will also highlight the challenges in data collection and identifying criteria for such indicators.

18. The main focus of the paper will be on the development of indicators for measuring criminal justice responses to violence against women. It is proposed that the United Nations "*Model Strategies and Practical Measures to Eliminate Violence Against Women in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice*" which reflects an international consensus, can serve as a useful tool for defining a set of indicators that measures a comprehensive set of criminal justice strategies to combating violence against women. These strategies cover criminal law, criminal procedure, police powers, sentencing and corrections, victim support and assistance, health and social services, training, research and crime prevention.

- **Promoting Women's Safety: local strategies and promising practices to prevent violence against women.** International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC)

19. Much of the work which is undertaken to respond to the challenges of violence against women, focuses on private violence in families and relationships, and is rightly concerned with legislation, criminal justice responses and enforcement. This includes the development of specialized court services, protocols and training of police, prosecution, and judiciary, as well as strengthening support to victims.

20. National and regional governments play a major role in such initiatives, but as with many other types of crime and violence, the impact of violence against women is felt locally, and local governments have a major role in prevention.

21. This presentation starts from the premise that while violence against women, gender-based violence, takes many different forms, and occurs in both private and public settings, they have similar causal backgrounds. We use the term women's safety to refer to strategies and initiatives which work to prevent both public and private violence which may affect women and girls.

22. Promoting women's safety includes a range of approaches from public awareness and education to change attitudes, including initiatives with men and boys, selecting better data, strengthening local capacities and, improving urban design and the management of public space. But it also includes issues of governance, and how local governments and NGO's and civil society can work together more effectively in analyzing problems and developing strategic responses which take gender into account in the development and planning of interventions and programmes.

23. The presentation will examine the increasing range of tools which have been developed at local government level and working in a participatory way with civil society and community-based organizations to support strategic prevention, or focus on specific concerns among immigrant and minority communities, Aboriginal communities, and sex-trade and trafficking issues. They include local city toolkits, safety auditing and exploratory walks, manuals and guides, and observatories on crime trends in different regions of the world.

- **Coordinated Community Response in Violence Against Women.** National Institute of Justice (NIJ)

24. This paper examines the types of coordinated community responses and discusses their evaluation results. Overall, there is positive empirical support for the effectiveness of victim-focused coordinated community responses, which include those targeting sexual assault and domestic violence. However, generally, there is insufficient documentation of the implementation of coordinated community response models to conduct scientifically rigorous evaluations. Coordinated community responses and related evaluations are found in many parts of the world, including Australia, Canada, Germany, New Zealand, Scotland, United Kingdom, and United States.

What is a Coordinated Community Response?

25. Coordinated community responses have multiple forms in the research literature. Early models included coordination of stakeholders within the criminal justice system, while more recent models include coordination of all stakeholders. They are based on cooperation between various community and public safety agencies, such as police, prosecutors, judges, and healthcare workers, and have a stated common goal. Coordinated community responses are a specific coordinated response to a variety of public needs that involves governmental and non-governmental agencies. Although the models vary significantly, they have two key components; active stakeholder participation and consensus on the response to the problem.

26. Coordinated community responses are becoming a way of incorporating the multi-disciplinary perspectives necessary to comprehensively address crime and social problems. While the coordinated community response models originally developed primarily to address issues of violence against women, variations of the coordinated community response model are being crafted in a broad array of crime areas, including, for example, community victim-centered models, elder abuse models, federal terrorist-event response programs, and rural crime-prevention models. Smaller, community-based agencies, such as victim advocate groups or counseling centers, are frequently involved in coordinated community responses.

The common goals of coordinated community responses are centered on public or victim advocacy and safety. But, some programs have incorporated goals of broad social change (i.e. efforts to change an aspect of the community, such as the culture of permissiveness regarding domestic violence).

Are coordinated community responses effective?

27. Coordinated community responses represent a viable policy option in addressing public safety and public health concerns, but their variation in structure presents methodological issues for evaluation. Each model is designed to meet a specific need of the specific community and they vary widely from the original model. Additionally, the coordinated community response model is constantly being adjusted to attend to emerging community concerns. This lack of fidelity to the model causes methodological issues that must be addressed in order for the coordinated community response evaluation literature to evolve and provide more robust conclusions about effectiveness. As the research evaluation literature grows and the use of quasi-experimental design and multivariate statistical techniques with consistent operationalization of outcome measures increase, there will be beneficial impacts on understanding the effectiveness of these models. Important questions still remain about which types of programs are most effective, which types of victims (if any) the programs work best for, and which mechanisms are involved with program success.

How do I create a coordinated community response?

28. To understand coordinated community responses at the macro level, we can examine the elements necessary for the successful implementation of domestic violence coordinated community responses. Two required elements for success are the active participation of key stakeholders in the response, and consensus among those stakeholders about the most appropriate response. The first element, stakeholder participation, also explains why coordinated community responses are not present in every community, addressing the myriad public policy or social programs. Participation of and teamwork by key stakeholders is not always readily available, especially when the change in underlying beliefs about the issue is drastic. Additionally, the process of developing coordinated community responses include raising awareness of the issues and needs of the community and victim, changing current responses to these needs, and changing the relationship between agencies (both governmental and non-governmental) who have historically been in competition or at direct opposition. The second element, consensus among the stakeholders, follows after education of the issue is completed and change in attitude has occurred.

- **Exchange of judicial information for improved prosecution of violence against women and girls and timely victims' assistance.** United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)

29. Violence against women and girls persists in every country worldwide as an undiminished violation of human rights and a major obstacle to achieve gender equality, development and peace. The Secretary-General, through a multi-year system-wide campaign, is lending his leadership to increase the visibility and

unacceptability of violence against women as a violation of human rights and a significant impediment to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

30. No country is capable of defeating violence against women alone. In December 2006, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/143 on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women. In the resolution, the General Assembly urged the entities of the United Nations system to support the strengthening of national capacities and efforts on the collection, processing and dissemination of data for their possible use in the national plans of action against all forms of violence against women.

31. Although the knowledge base about all forms of violence against women needs to be strengthened, some progress has been made in documenting some of the most common forms, particularly intimate partner violence, sexual violence, female genital mutilation/cutting and child sexual abuse. However, there are still many forms of violence that remain largely undocumented. Under-documented forms of violence against women include, among others, femicide; sexual violence against women in armed conflict and post-conflict situations and trafficking in women for sexual and other exploitation. Statistics available in the area of trafficking in persons are notoriously unreliable. Many countries do not have trafficking legislation or have legislation that is inadequate. Even where legislation is in place, few traffickers are successfully prosecuted. There is often no centralized agency collecting data on human trafficking. Statistics may be reported by individual government agencies, by NGOs, the media or international or regional organizations, but these data sources are rarely linked and are often not comparable. Trafficked women rarely report their situation to the authorities and are often unwilling to cooperate with law enforcement officials if identified and rescued.

32. With regard to trafficking, several regional and national initiatives have begun to develop comprehensive databases to provide information on international trafficking routes, sources, transit and destination countries and on the numbers of trafficked victims and offenders. UNICRI has developed a wide expertise in the field of information/data exchange, especially in the area of counter human trafficking activities. Thanks to exchange information mechanisms it is possible to gather data to follow on the crime trend and address potential solutions as well as adopt new strategies and methodologies. Accurate and comprehensive data and other documentation are crucial in monitoring and enhancing State accountability for violence against women and for devising effective responses. Moreover, because human trafficking is an offence that frequently occurs across borders, States should take steps to ensure that they can cooperate and assist each other in the investigation, prosecution and punishment of offenders. Article 18 of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) establishes a comprehensive system for mutual legal assistance. UNTOC provisions and cover specific aspects of law enforcement cooperation such as extradition, gathering and transferring evidence, assisting investigations and prosecutions.

33. In light of all of the above, UNICRI will present a few examples of strategies and tools put in place to counter trafficking in minors and young women. In Costa Rica, UNICRI has set up, in cooperation with the local NGO Fundacion Paniamor, an operational information system to follow up cases relating to commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and trafficking, targeted at specialized Public Prosecutors' Offices, dealing with domestic violence and sexual

exploitation of minors' cases. The system is an important tool for data collection that can help such Prosecutors' Offices to build stronger cases against sexual exploiters and improve their investigating skills and strategies. In order to enhance the effectiveness of the State's response to violence against women, specialized courts can improve efficiency, minimize the burden on victims and improve case outcomes. UNICRI trainings to immigration officers and border police working on all borders of the country and to judges and prosecutors dealing with CSEC represent also a sound effort to avoid re-victimization of women in the criminal justice process, because they help in creating a system that respects the privacy, dignity and autonomy of all victims and is conducive to reporting.

34. In Nigeria, in the framework of a pilot programme ended in 2004, UNICRI has created the National Monitoring Centre on Trafficking in Persons (NMC) within the National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP). UNICRI is currently contributing to the creation of a comprehensive and integrated centralized database for the National Monitoring Center, to support the investigation and prosecution of trafficking cases and to ensure the compatibility of these data with those collected in Italy and other European countries.

35. In Thailand, UNICRI developed national database on human trafficking. The database has been conceived as an intranet website, providing holistic data on both the prosecution of cases and victims assistance. It is also an important tool in strengthening the exchange of information among stakeholders (including NGOs), and in helping government authorities in the formulation of policies as well as in their planning, monitoring and evaluation.
