

## Annual full-day discussion on the human rights of women

### Panel 1: Accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women: engaging men and boys in preventing and responding to violence against women and girls

*Concept note (as of 18 May 2017)*

<b>Date and venue:</b>	<b>13 June 2016, 9 a.m. - noon</b> , Palais des Nations, Room XX, Geneva (will be broadcast live and archived on <a href="http://webtv.un.org">http://webtv.un.org</a> )
<b>Objectives:</b>	<p>The panel will provide an opportunity to discuss existing experiences and promising practices of engaging men and boys in the prevention of – and response to – violence against women and girls. Initiatives and issues to be discussed include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) Analysis of masculinities, gender norms and social preconditions that increase the likelihood of male violent behaviour in patriarchal structures;</li><li>(2) Existing initiatives to promote non-violent, positive masculinities, parenting/fatherhood involvement programmes, school-based and community sexual violence prevention programs for young men and boys, mentorship in violence prevention programmes, group education programmes on gender roles within the family, et cetera;</li><li>(3) Existing evidence of the added value and impact of engaging men and boys in addressing violence against women and girls and harmful gender norms, at the individual and community levels;</li><li>(4) Gaps and challenges in engaging men and boys to prevent and end violence against women.</li></ol>
<b>Chair:</b>	<b>H.E. Mr. Joaquin Alexander Maza Martelli</b> , President of the Human Rights Council
<b>Opening statement:</b>	<b>Ms. Kate Gilmore</b> , United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>Keynote speaker:</b>	<b>H.E. Ms. Karen Ellemann</b> , Minister for Equal Opportunities and Nordic Cooperation, Denmark
<b>Moderator:</b>	<b>Ms. Lana Wells</b> , Brenda Strafford Chair in the Prevention of Domestic Violence, University of Calgary, Canada
<b>Panellists:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Ms. Dubravka Šimonović</b>, Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences</li><li>• <b>Mr. Anthony Keedi</b>, Masculinities Technical Adviser, ABAAD Resource Center for Gender Equality, Lebanon</li><li>• <b>Mr. Francis Oko Armah</b>, Youth Activist, Curious Minds, Ghana</li><li>• <b>Mr. Abhijit Das</b>, Co-Chair of MenEngage Alliance and Founder of Men's Action for Stopping Violence against Women, India</li></ul>
<b>Outcome:</b>	A summary report of the panel discussion will be prepared.
<b>Mandate:</b>	In its resolution 6/30, the Human Rights Council reaffirmed the principle of gender equality and the need for the full implementation of the human rights of women and decided to hold an annual full day of discussion on the human rights of women. Human Rights Council resolution 32/19 further called upon States to take effective action to prevent and respond to violence against women by engaging, educating, encouraging and supporting men and boys to take responsibility for their behaviour and to become active partners in the prevention and elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against all women and girls. The morning panel discussion will look at initiatives and issues in relation with engaging to men and boys towards the elimination of violence against women and girls.
<b>Format:</b>	The opening statements and initial presentations by the panellists, guided by the moderator, will be followed by an interactive discussion with States and observers intervening from the

floor. The list of speakers for the discussion will be established at the beginning of the panel and, as per practice, statements by high-level dignitaries and groups will be moved to the beginning of the list. States and observers, including representatives of civil society, take the floor for a 2-minute intervention each (total 45 minutes), followed by responses from panellists (15 minutes). A second round of interventions from the floor (45 minutes) will be followed by responses and concluding remarks from the panellists and the moderator (15 minutes).

To make the panel interactive, speakers are encouraged to focus their interventions on the themes of the panellists either by asking the panellists questions or sharing concrete examples and relevant national experience. Interpretation will be provided in the six United Nations official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).

**Background:** Despite widespread condemnation of violence against women and various efforts undertaken to eliminate it, violence continues to be a reality for women and girls throughout the world.

Violence against women and girls remains one of the most pervasive human rights abuses. In their lifetime, 35 per cent of women worldwide have been the victim of violence. Young women are particularly at risk for sexual violence, given that 50 per cent of sexual aggression worldwide is committed against girls under the age of 16. According to research by the World Health Organization, approximately 30 per cent of women report that their first sexual experience was non-consensual, and that increases to 45 per cent among women who were under 15 years old at the time of their first sexual experience.

Gender-based violence against women is one of the fundamental social, political and economic means by which the subordinate position of women with respect to men and their stereotyped roles are perpetuated, and is an obstacle to achieving equality between women and men, as well as to women's and girls' enjoyment of all their human rights. Inequitable and discriminatory gender norms tend to legitimate the control, domination and abuses of men over women. Addressing violence against women successfully requires dismantling the harmful social norms that perpetuate violence and condone it, which in turn requires the active engagement of all members of society. Men and boys can be powerful agents of change and beneficiaries towards more just, equal and inclusive societies, to the benefit of all. They can play an important role in understanding and challenging the stereotypes and harmful social norms that relegate both men and women to narrowly confined roles and result into a disproportionate burden of care work on women or violent socialization of boys, just to make two examples.

Strategies to address violence against women and girls therefore should look at the role of men and boys in challenging harmful cultural norms and examine how gender-based violence connects with gender socialization. It is key for men and boys to have the opportunity to join prevention efforts and recognize their own responsibility and ability to help in addressing violence against women.

The Commission on the Status of Women, in its 2017 agreed conclusions, recognized the importance of fully engaging men and boys as agents and beneficiaries of change for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. It also stressed the role of men as active partners in the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls.

**Background documents and resolutions:**

- [Human Rights Council resolution 6/30](#) (14 December 2007) on integrating the human rights of women throughout the United Nations system
- [Human Rights Council resolution 23/25](#) (14 June 2013) on accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women: preventing and responding to rape and other forms of sexual violence
- [Human Rights Council resolution 26/15](#) (26 June 2014) on accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women: violence against women as a barrier to women's political and economic empowerment

- [Human Rights Council resolution 32/19](#) (1 July 2016) on accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women: preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, including indigenous women and girls
- Commission on the Status of Women, [Agreed conclusions of the sixty-first session](#), “Women’s economic empowerment in the changing world of work” (2017)
- Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, [General recommendation No. 19 \(1992\) on violence against women](#)