



INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION  
114<sup>th</sup> Assembly and related meetings  
Nairobi, 4 to 12 May 2006



Third Standing Committee  
Democracy and Human Rights

C-III/114/DR-rev  
24 March 2006

**HOW PARLIAMENTS CAN AND MUST PROMOTE EFFECTIVE WAYS OF COMBATING  
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN ALL FIELDS**

**Revised preliminary draft resolution prepared by the co-Rapporteurs**  
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The 114th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Reaffirming* that violence against women constitutes a violation of women's human rights and fundamental freedoms,
- (2) *Stressing* that the causes and consequences of violence against women are intrinsically linked to longstanding gender inequalities that restrict the full enjoyment by women of their human rights,
- (3) *Recognizing* that women belonging to minority and indigenous groups, refugee women, migrant women, women living in rural or remote communities, destitute women, women in institutions or in detention, women with disabilities, elderly women, women in situations of armed conflict and girl children are especially vulnerable to violence,
- (4) *Alarmed* by the spreading of violence against women throughout the world, both in the home and in the workplace, including trafficking in women and girls and forced prostitution, sexual violence within and outside marriage, and certain traditional practices that are harmful to women,
- (5) *Stressing* the responsibility of States to act with due diligence to prevent human rights violations, investigate acts of violence, punish their perpetrators and support and protect their victims,
- (6) *Noting* that rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity are international crimes and should be repressed and punished as such,
- (7) *Reaffirming* that States cannot invoke any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations to eliminate violence against women,

(8) *Recalling* the importance of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) and its Optional Protocol (1999), of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993), and of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) as effective instruments to combat violence against women (VAW), and *noting* the existence of regional legal instruments on violence against women,

(9) *Noting* all relevant resolutions adopted by United Nations bodies, including Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security,

(10) *Noting* that violence against women hinders human development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals,

(11) *Stressing* that the eradication of violence against women requires preventive and responsive policies and actions and the involvement of all actors of society, including men,

(12) *Stressing* the key role of parliaments and parliamentarians in preventing and eliminating violence against women, and the need for States to cooperate with and support organizations working to eliminate violence against women, especially women's organizations;

1. *Urges* governments and parliaments to ratify international and regional instruments pertaining to violence against women, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol, and ensure full compliance with those instruments and with pertinent United Nations resolutions;
2. *Calls upon* parliaments to ensure that CEDAW State reports systematically include information on violence against women, in particular statistical data, information on legislation, support services to victims and other measures adopted to eliminate violence against women;
3. *Urges* parliamentarians to refer and make use of to the IPU/UN Handbook for Parliamentarians: The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol;
4. *Calls upon* governments to implement the United Nations General Assembly resolution 52/86 on Crime prevention and criminal justice measures to eliminate violence against women and, in particular, to punish all acts of violence against women, in the public and the private spheres, to establish courts specialized in hearing cases of such violence, and to establish a governmental body promoting the prosecution of all acts of violence;
5. *Calls on* governments, parliaments and non-governmental organizations to organize activities to promote public awareness of the problem of violence against women on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which is observed on 25 November each year;
6. *Encourages* governments and parliaments to establish observatories on violence against women, and to compile statistics to monitor the effectiveness of policies for the elimination of such violence;

7. *Encourages* the establishment of parliamentary bodies to monitor and evaluate all international and national measures designed to prevent and eradicate violence against women, and suggests that a rapporteur for these bodies submit an annual report before the plenary Assembly for information, debate and public circulation;
8. *Encourages* governments to develop a common basis for statistics on violence against women;
9. *Calls upon* governments and parliaments to enact and enforce legislation against the perpetrators of practices and acts of violence against women and children, including tough and clear measures to combat recidivism;
10. *Calls upon* parliaments to review legislation to detect practices and traditions that impede the attainment of equality between the sexes and to eliminate inequality in all spheres, in particular in education, health and access to property and land;
11. *Calls* for the promotion of nationwide awareness and educational campaigns to encourage changes in social and cultural attitudes regarding gender roles and to eliminate patterns of behaviour that engender violence; to that end, *encourages* cooperation with the media;
12. *Calls upon* parliaments to ensure that information on gender-related violence is available to all public agents involved in the prevention and prosecution of violence against women;
13. *Calls upon* parliaments to ensure that sufficient resources are allocated and clearly earmarked in the national budget for plans and programmes to eradicate violence against women in all fields;
14. *Urges* all States to cooperate with and support women's organizations working to eliminate violence against women;

#### **On domestic violence**

15. *Calls upon* governments and parliaments, if they have not yet done so, to develop and implement adequate legislation to combat domestic violence;
16. *Calls upon* governments and parliaments to develop national plans to combat domestic violence that include measures related to research, prevention, education, information and penalization, the prosecution and punishment of all acts of violence against women (including violence within marriage), attentiveness to social, financial and psychological support for victims (including children who witnessed domestic violence against their mothers), special support for the most vulnerable groups and effective legal tools to protect victims;

#### **On female genital mutilation/cutting**

17. *Calls upon* parliaments to spare no effort to end female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) within a generation;

18. *Recommends* that strategies for the abandonment of FGM/C be developed within the wider context of the promotion of human rights, the right to and development and the reduction of poverty;
19. *Calls upon* parliaments to work with civil society, traditional chiefs and religious leaders, women's and youth movements and governments to ensure complementarity in working towards the abandonment of FGM/C; and together with governments, to take measures to raise awareness about the issue;
20. *Calls upon* States that have not yet done so to consider adopting legislation outlawing FGM/C and to encourage the development of alternative rites to this practice;
21. *Calls upon* parliaments to take note of the Final Declaration adopted by the African regional parliamentary conference, Violence against Women: Abandoning female genital mutilation, the role of national parliaments, held in Dakar in December 2005, and to take all necessary measures for its dissemination and implementation;

#### **At the workplace**

22. *Calls upon* parliaments to ensure compliance with the United Nations General Assembly resolutions on Violence against women migrant workers and with General Recommendation No. 19 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, by increasing activities to prevent such violence, promoting and protecting the rights of migrant workers and by strengthening relations with countries of origin;
23. *Requests* parliaments to promote close cooperation between governments, employers and trade unions to achieve greater efficiency in preventing and eradicating all forms of violence against women in the workplace, including through the enactment of legislation that explicitly prohibits sexual harassment in the workplace where such legislation does not exist;

#### **On sexual violence**

24. *Calls upon* parliaments and governments to review the effectiveness, at the national and local levels, of legislation on sexual violence; further calls for the establishment of a policy exchange network to facilitate exchanges of policy options and experiences at the international level;
25. *Calls upon* parliaments and governments to make rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity crimes under their domestic legislation and repress them as such;
26. *Emphasizes* the value of effective correctional programmes to prevent recidivism, which is particularly high among sex offenders;
27. *Calls upon* parliaments, when debating methods for gathering evidence and devising measures to punish sex offenders, to give special attention to the difficulty

encountered by children and mentally disabled women - who are especially vulnerable to sexual violence - when they must testify in court;

**On human trafficking**

28. *Urges* those States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime along with its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children;
29. *Recognizes* that globalization has aggravated and accelerated human trafficking; and stresses the need to build international and regional cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination, through instruments such as memorandums of understanding and bilateral agreements as well as regional treaties such as the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings;
30. *Encourages* governments to establish legal mechanisms to protect the human rights of victims of trafficking, a considerable number of whom are illegal migrants who, because of their illegal status, do not report to the authorities and to ensure that they are not re-victimized by being held criminally liable;

**On violence in situations of armed conflict**

31. *Invites States* that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Geneva Conventions on the protection of victims of armed conflicts (1949) and their Additional Protocols (1977), the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and its Protocol (1967), the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and to withdraw any existing reservations, and ensure full compliance in law and in practice with these instruments;
32. *Calls upon* parliaments to intensify efforts, in cooperation with relevant international organizations such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the United Nations Fund for Children (UNICEF), and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), to improve systems to monitor and report violence against women and girls in armed conflict;
33. *Requests* parliaments and governments, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, to ensure a gender balance in military and peacekeeping operations, including the participation of women at the decision-making level in all peacekeeping and peace processes and to provide training in gender equality issues;
34. *Requests* parliaments and governments to ensure that all peacekeeping troops receive training in the United Nations code of conduct and international human rights law and humanitarian laws.