



## **2016 Asia-Pacific Regional Commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women Concept Note**

### **Investing in Ending Violence against Women and Girls is the Key to Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals**

28 November 2016

10:45 -12:15 hours

UNCC Conference Room 3, Bangkok

#### **1. Background and general context**

The 25<sup>th</sup> of November marks the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and the start of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. In support of this civil society initiative, each year, the [United Nations Secretary-General's campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women](#) (UNiTE) calls for global action to increase worldwide awareness and create opportunities for discussion about challenges and solutions. In recent years, the UNiTE Campaign has utilized the colour orange as a unifying theme running through all of its global activities. Orange is one of the official colours of the UNiTE Campaign and in the context of its global advocacy, is used as a symbol of a brighter future, free from violence against women and girls. Last year, as part of the initiative '*Orange the World: End Violence against Women and Girls*', hundreds of activities took place in over 90 countries, with 177,000 tweets and Instagram posts using the hashtag #orangetheworld from 84,500 different users reaching 311 million unique Twitter and Instagram users across the world. To bring further visibility to the issue, many iconic buildings and landmarks around the world were lit orange, including the European Commission Building in Belgium, the Council of Europe Building in France, the ancient Abu Simbel Temples in Nubia, southern Egypt, the India Gate Monument in New Delhi, the Maiden Tower in Istanbul, Turkey, and the archaeological site in Petra, Jordan.

In 2015, a new global development agenda was accepted by all countries and is applicable to all. Through its 17 goals, the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) guides global policy and action for the next 15 years. The Agenda recognizes gender equality and the empowerment of women as a key priority and pledges that "no one will be left behind".

Goal 5 of the agenda aims to "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls" and includes for the first time *specific targets to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls*. All goals are integrated and indivisible, therefore their achievement is also fully dependent on ensuring parallel and interconnected implementation of the efforts to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls. For this reason, throughout 2016, the UNiTE Campaign, through its Orange Days, is highlighting a

theme each month around a specific Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) as it relates to violence against women and girls.

The global theme for all **UNiTE Campaign activities for this year is to raise money for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls.** This focus will aim to create advocacy opportunities to highlight the need for greater and more sustainable financing to end violence against women and girls at global, regional and country level, in the particular context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework. **The focus will aim to generate a global conversation on costing and results, and on what works in initiatives that are aiming to prevent and end violence against women and girls.**

#### **UNiTE advocacy objectives for 2016:**

- A. Focus government attention on the need for, and results of, adequate financing for programmes to prevent and end violence against women in the context of the SDG target on violence against women; and
- B. Call for concrete monetary commitments to address the prevention of, and response to, violence against women and girls.

## **2. 2016 Asia-Pacific Regional Commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women**

At the regional level, under the framework of the UNiTE Campaign, the UN System will use the opportunity of the Asia-Pacific Regional Commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women to bring the issue of violence against women and girls to the top of the policymaking agenda. The Asia-Pacific UNiTE Campaign is coordinated through the Regional Coordination Mechanism Thematic Working Group on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (RCM TWG-GEEW), co-chaired by UN Women and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and supported by the UNiTE Secretariat in UN Women. The regional commemoration of this day will be held on 28 November 2016 as part of the SDG Week which is being organized by ESCAP. During the period of 28 November – 2 December 2016, a number of events will be held at United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok to highlight the various SDGs. The ESCAP SDG Week will facilitate dialogue among experts, policymakers, researchers and other stakeholders on challenges involved in the effective implementation of the sustainable development agenda as well as identify tools and support available to strengthen peer learning and capacity development to take forward progress on the 2030 Agenda.

By incorporating the Regional Commemoration as part of the SDG Week, especially as one of the first major events of the week, it is expected to attract a wider range of stakeholders and audience who will be attending the events of the week. Expected delegates include Heads of UN agencies in Bangkok, UN staff members, regional inter-governmental organizations and local CSOs, diplomatic community, academia, media, and youth groups.

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