



**REPORT OF THE
ASIA-PACIFIC REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE
57TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

5-6 FEBRUARY 2013

BANGKOK

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I. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

1. The Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women was held during 5 and 6 February 2013 in Bangkok. The Meeting was jointly organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, in cooperation with the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism Thematic Working Group on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women.

2. The objectives of the Meeting were to prepare participants for the 57th session of Commission on the Status of Women by: (a) enhancing their understanding of the achievements, remaining obstacles and emerging challenges with respect to ending and preventing violence against women and girls in Asia-Pacific through cross-country sharing of experiences and practices; and (b) identifying priorities, common strategies and ways forward, including through regional cooperation, to address the obstacles and challenges for the elimination and prevention of violence against women and girls at the national and regional levels.

3. The Meeting was attended by representatives of the following 12 member States of the Asian and Pacific region that serve on the Commission on the Status of Women: Bangladesh; China; Georgia; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Malaysia, Mongolia; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation and Thailand.

4. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies attended: ITU, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, and UNICEF.

5. The following civil society organizations were represented: Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development; Asia Pacific Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS; Asia-Pacific Women with Disability United; Asia-Pacific Women with Disability United; and Indigenous Women's Network of Thailand.

6. The list of participants is contained in Annex I to this report.

II. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

7. The Meeting elected the following officers:

Chair: Ms. Emmeline L. Verzosa (Philippines)

Rapporteur: Ms. Mashitah Binti Ahmad Sabri (Malaysia)

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

8. The Meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the Meeting.
2. Election of the Chair.
3. Adoption of the agenda.

4. Introduction of the priority theme for the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women: “Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls”.
5. Presentation of recommendations from the Expert Group Meeting on Prevention of Violence against Women (17-20 September, 2012, Bangkok)
6. Roundtable: Sharing of experiences on elimination and prevention of violence against women and girls in Asia-Pacific: achievements, remaining obstacles and emerging challenges.
7. Working Groups.
 - a) Multisectoral services and responses for women and girls subjected to violence;
 - b) Prevention of violence against women and girls.
8. Identification of common strategies and ways forward.
9. Adoption of the report.
10. Closing of the Meeting.

**IV. INTRODUCTION OF THE PRIORITY THEME FOR THE 57TH SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN:
Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls**

9. The Meeting had before it the document entitled “Report of the Secretary-General on Prevention of violence against women and girls” (E/CN.6/2013/4) and “Report of the Secretary-General on Multisectoral services and responses for violence against women and girls” (E/CN.6/2013/3), which was introduced by a representative of the joint ESCAP/UN Women secretariat.
10. The following issues were highlighted as requiring further attention by member States:
 - Addressing harmful stereotypes, norms and attitudes that are based on gender inequality and contribute to, and cause, violence against women;
 - Addressing legal barriers and strengthening the administration of justice to ensure the elimination of stigma associated with victims and reduction of secondary victimization;
 - Enhancing knowledge and understanding of the causes and consequences of violence against women by the law enforcement and justice sectors to ensure systematic implementation of laws and procedures in addressing violence against women;
 - Collecting data on prevalence and risk factors of violence, and undertaking mapping exercises to identify good practices, gaps and emerging challenges in the provision of services and responses; and

- Addressing the specific needs of women who face multiple forms of discrimination, including indigenous and ethnic minority women, women with disabilities and women living with and affected by HIV.

V. PRESENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON PREVENTION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (17-20 SEPTEMBER 2012, BANGKOK)

11. The Meeting had before it the document entitled Report of the Expert Group Meeting on the Prevention of Violence against Women” (EGM/PP/2012/Report), which was introduced by a representative of the joint ESCAP/UN Women secretariat.

12. The following issues were highlighted:

- The need to transform unequal power relations that are the root cause of violence against women and accelerate attainment of gender equality;
- The importance of women’s economic, social, educational and political empowerment and gender equality in preventing violence against women and ensuring exit options for survivors;
- The importance of engaging the media to transform harmful stereotypes and ensure gender sensitive reporting;
- According priority to policies and programmes and ensuring adequate resource allocation for prevention and response services;
- Strengthening institutions to ensure accountability for the effective implementation of laws and policies that prevent, protect and respond to violence against women; and
- Developing and strengthening approaches within the justice sector that promote perpetrator accountability, including through appropriate psycho-social and educational programmes.

VI. ROUNDTABLE: SHARING OF EXPERIENCES ON ELIMINATION AND PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN ASIA-PACIFIC: ACHIEVEMENTS, REMAINING OBSTACLES AND EMERGING CHALLENGES

13. A Roundtable was held on experiences on elimination and prevention of violence against women and girls, focusing on achievements, positive approaches, remaining obstacles and identification of ways forward for the elimination and prevention of violence against women and girls in Asia-Pacific. The Roundtable was moderated by the Regional Director, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

The panelists were:

- Ms. Yuniyanti Chuzaifah, Chairperson, National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan), Indonesia;
- Ms. Suneeta Kar Dhar, Director, Jagori, India;

- Ms. Lara Fergus, Independent Consultant, Australia; and
- Mr. James Lang, Programme Coordinator, Partners for Prevention.

14. The following key issues were discussed by panelists and participants:

- Effective administration of justice response was an essential contributor to prevention and ending the culture of impunity;
- Women’s organizations have played a leading role in advocacy and the provision of services and have built successful partnerships with state and non-state actors;
- Harmful constructions of masculinity characterized by men’s perceived entitlement to, and control over, women’s bodies, voice and choices were key drivers of violence against women;
- Promotion of positive and nurturing forms of masculinity, including care giving and equal sharing of responsibilities within the family, should be an intrinsic component of prevention strategies;
- Engaging influential leaders in all sectors, including religious leaders and youth leaders, was critical for championing zero tolerance for violence against women;
- Comprehensive, coordinated and multisectoral approaches were essential to effectively address the root causes and consequences of violence against women; and
- Gender sensitive and culturally appropriate approaches were required to ensure the inclusion of women in peace building and conflict prevention and resolution, through which women’s heightened vulnerability to violence could be addressed, in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.

VII. IDENTIFICATION OF COMMON STRATEGIES AND WAYS FORWARD

15. The Meeting recognized that violence against women was a manifestation of unequal power relations between women and men and, therefore, the elimination of gender inequality and other forms of social and economic exclusions must be promoted.

16. In addition, the Meeting agreed that a holistic approach, spanning the continuum of prevention and multisectoral responses was necessary to address violence against women.

17. The representatives of the CSOs delivered statements on the outcome of the CSO consultations. The statements are contained in Annex II to this report.

18. The Meeting adopted the following recommendations pertaining to:

- (a) Prevention of violence against women and girls; and
- (b) Multisectoral services and responses for women and girls subjected to violence.

Recommendations

Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls

A. Political commitment and leadership

- (1) Call on the highest levels of national leadership to adopt a systematic and holistic approach to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls and to coordinate multisectoral institutional mechanisms.
- (2) In consideration of the intersectionality of multiple forms of discrimination, call on States and international entities to pay particular attention to the needs of, inter alia, women living with disabilities, women living with and affected by HIV, indigenous women, rural women, migrant workers, and other vulnerable groups.

B. Global legal and policy frameworks

- (3) Work towards the universal ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and withdraw all reservations to the Convention and ratify or accede to its Optional Protocol.
- (4) Increase accountability, including through comprehensive reporting to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.
- (5) Work towards the universal ratification of:
 - Convention on the Rights of the Child
 - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
 - International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
 - International Labour Organization Convention No. 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers
- (6) Reaffirm national commitment to all relevant international instruments and outcome documents, including, inter alia, the Beijing Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of The International Conference on Population and Development and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- (7) Integrate and prioritize the elimination of violence against women into the effort to promote gender equality and women's empowerment as a cross-cutting theme within the post-2015 development framework.
- (8) Consider proposals to develop a global implementation plan to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls.

C. National legal, policy frameworks and resources

- (9) Urgently abolish discriminatory laws and practices that create a context for violence against women and girls.
- (10) Urge States to adopt and implement comprehensive national action plans and policies, with specific timelines and benchmarks, that promote gender equality and address violence against women and girls, including prevention measures.

(11) Call on States to allocate adequate resources and establish all appropriate mechanisms to ensure the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of laws and policies, as well as coordination among different multi-stakeholders.

(12) Develop regulations to address new forms of violence against women, including violence through electronic media.

D. Social norms

(13) Engage men and boys in awareness-raising and adopt measures and programmes to promote equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women in child-rearing and parenting, domestic work and caregiving in order to strengthen gender equality and transform social norms.

(14) Develop educational programmes, including sexuality education, that promote gender equality, human rights and skills-building for respectful relationships, which is accessible for all and at all levels of education, including non-formal educational settings, and sporting clubs and organizations; review school curricula and textbooks to promote gender equality; and promote the specialized training of teachers and the overall capacity-building of schools in order to foster a culture of gender equality, human rights and non-violence, including through the involvement of parents and communities.

(15) Carry out community mobilization activities to challenge gender stereotypes, beliefs, behaviours and attitudes that condone such violence and discrimination, such as early and forced marriages, missing girls at birth, female genital mutilation and honour crimes; raise awareness of the unacceptability of violence; and promote gender equality and respect for human rights.

(16) Enhance legal literacy and awareness for women and men with the intent to create broader and deeper understanding of women's human rights, legal guarantees and entry points for protection and redress for women subjected to violence.

E. Institutions and capacity development

(17) Ensure that public and private workplaces are safe, encourage women's participation and leadership; and promote gender equality through collaboration with employers and workers, regulatory and oversight frameworks and reforms, codes of conduct, protocols and procedures, as well as through awareness-raising and capacity-building.

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