

**Sixty-third session of the General Assembly
Third Committee
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**Introductory Statement
by
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prevention measures. It highlights the role of national action plans with measurable goals and monitoring mechanisms and the need for integrated services for victims. Work to address violence against women needs to be adequately funded and supported by leadership at the highest levels. There is an urgent need for regular and systematic evaluation of the impact of all initiatives taken so as to better understand their effectiveness and contribute to the development of good practice. Such impact evaluations should form the basis for corrective action, and consequently, for improved implementation of laws and policies.

Several intergovernmental bodies have responded to the invitation of the General Assembly to discuss the question of violence against women within their respective mandates, and some of them will continue these efforts at future sessions. For example, the Statistical Commission is undertaking work on indicators on violence against women and will continue consideration of related proposals at its session in 2009. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice has initiated a review of its 1997 Model Strategies on violence against women. These and similar efforts should be commended and further encouraged.

Last year's report on intensification of efforts to eliminate violence against women focused on the follow-up activities of the entities of the United Nations system to implement resolution 61/143 (document A/62/201). An update on UN system activities was distributed to the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2008, and a further update, i.e. the Inventory of activities, is before the Third Committee, as requested in resolution A/RES/62/133 of December 2007. 22 offices and entities and three inter-agency mechanisms provided contributions about steps taken between February and August 2008. Further information will be submitted to the CSW in March 2009.

Member States have taken extensive measures to prevent and combat trafficking in women and girls (see A/63/215). They have strengthened legal frameworks and put in place strategies for better coordination and cooperation with different stakeholders. Importantly, they have reinforced prevention efforts, and enhanced action to prosecute perpetrators, protect and support victims and collect data. The General Assembly held a thematic debate on human trafficking on 3 June, which helped to generate fresh impetus among Member States and other stakeholders to strengthen cooperation and fully implement existing international agreements. United Nations entities have stepped up their efforts, and have enhanced coordination and partnerships with a range of actors. The report calls for a comprehensive, multidisciplinary and gender-sensitive approach to combating trafficking in women and girls, which includes all relevant stakeholders. In addition to legislation that criminalizes all forms of trafficking in persons, prevention and protection and support for victims should also be covered in law. Policies and strategies should incorporate coordination and monitoring measures to support implementation.

Let me turn to the third report before the Committee, namely document A/63/216 on eliminating rape, which was prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 62/134 of 18 December 2007. In addition to Member States, 16 entities of the United Nations system responded to a request for information. The report points to the international

legal and policy framework, the work of expert and judicial bodies, as well as of intergovernmental bodies – most recently the action taken by the Security Council in resolution 1820 (2008), which focused on sexual violence in conflict situations.

The report summarizes measures in place at national level, including those relating to protection; the justice system; specialized support and services for victims; and prevention and data collection. As requested by the resolution, United Nations entities highlighted measures taken to support all efforts to address rape, including through the regular collection, analysis and dissemination of data; to integrate the needs of victims into humanitarian assistance programmes; and to provide resources for efforts to eliminate violence against women.

The report concludes that measures to eliminate rape and other forms of sexual violence form part of the holistic approach taken by States towards the elimination of all forms of violence against women.

Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished delegates

Since I last had the opportunity to address this Committee, the Division has continued to expand its work on violence against women. We are building the coordinated database on violence against women, mandated by GA resolution 61/143, and have recently sent to all Member States a detailed questionnaire to gather information for this database. I encourage all Member States to submit their responses as soon as possible so that the information can be included in a timely manner. We intend to launch the database at the 53rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2009, and will continue to update it as new and additional information becomes available. The questionnaire will shortly become available also in the other UN languages. A brochure on the database has been distributed to delegations.

I am also very pleased that the first issue of our newsletter “Words to Action” on violence against women has been issued. In future, this will be a quarterly electronic

special session of the General Assembly (A/63/217), was prepared in response to Assembly resolution 62/137 and ECOSOC resolution 2006/9.

The report outlines progress made by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and their subsidiary bodies, in advancing the global policy agenda on gender equality and the empowerment of women. The report examines the extent to which these intergovernmental bodies have mainstreamed gender perspectives in their own work. The report also examines the impact of the outcomes of the Commission on the Status of Women in the work of entities of the United Nations system.

As in past sessions, gender perspectives were most prominent in the outcomes of the 62nd session of the General Assembly in areas such as human rights and social

indigenous women, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty”. The International Day of Rural Women comes the day before World Food Day which this year will focus on world food security and the challenges of climate change and bioenergy.

I would like to inform delegates that th