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Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council**

14/12

Accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women: ensuring due diligence in prevention

The Human Rights Council,

Reaffirming and building upon its resolution 11/2 of 17 June 2009,

Reaffirming its resolution 7/24 of 28 March 2008 and all resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights on the elimination of violence against women, and recalling General Assembly resolution 64/137 of 18 December 2009 on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, and all other resolutions of the Assembly and the Commission on the Status of Women relevant to the elimination of all forms of violence against women, and Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 and 1820 (2008) of 19 June 2008,

Reaffirming also the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Cairo Programme of Action, the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”, and the declarations adopted at the forty-ninth and fifty-fourth sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women,

Underscoring the fact that the duty of States to exercise due diligence to prevent violence against women and girls includes using all appropriate means of a legal, political, administrative and social nature that promote the protection of human rights and ensuring that acts of violence are considered and treated as illegal acts for which adequate, effective, prompt and appropriate punishment and remedies are available,

* Reissued for technical reasons.

** The resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council will be contained in the report of the Council on its fourteenth session (A/HRC/14/37), chap. I.

Recognizing that power imbalances and structural inequality between men and women are among the root causes of violence against women, and that effective prevention of violence against women and girls requires action at all levels of government, the engagement of civil society, the involvement of men and boys and the adoption and implementation of multifaceted and comprehensive approaches that promote gender equality and empowerment of women, and integrate awareness, education, training, political will, legislation, accountability, targeted policies and programmes, specific measures to reduce vulnerability, data collection and analysis, monitoring and evaluation, and protection, support and redress for victims,

Recognizing also that violence against women is one of the factors impeding progress towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals,

Recognizing further the importance of the full participation of women in the development of effective policies and programmes relating to the prevention of violence against women,

Acknowledging that confronting and changing the harmful attitudes, customs, practices and gender stereotypes that underlie and perpetuate violence against women are fundamental to ensuring effective prevention,

Stressing that the realization of all human rights by women and girls, such as those regarding education, access to health, economic participation, access to the labour market, conditions of work, disparities in salaries and compensation, public and political participation, access to decision-making processes, inheritance, financial services, including loans, nationality and legal capacity, ownership of land, property, housing, social security and cultural life, supported by appropriate responses dealing with legal literacy, skills training and access to productive resources, is a key factor in preventing violence against women and girls, and that, in many instances, the different treatment of women before the law has resulted in the lack of equal opportunities for them in these areas,

Deeply concerned that all forms of discrimination, including racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination and disadvantage, can lead to the targeting or vulnerability to violence of some women and girls, including women belonging to minority groups, indigenous women, refugee and internally displaced women, stateless women, migrant women, women living in rural or remote communities, women living in slums and informal settlements, women living in conditions of poverty, women in institutions or in detention, women with disabilities, elderly women, widows and women in all situations of armed conflict, women who face trafficking, sexual or labour exploitation, and women who are otherwise discriminated against, including on the basis of their HIV/AIDS status,

Concerned that the threat or risk of being exposed to violence may constitute a barrier to women and girls realizing their right to education,

Alarmed that, in situations of armed conflict, women are particularly exposed to various forms of violence, including sexual violence, and recognizing the need to intensify efforts to prevent such violence in accordance with international humanitarian law and human rights law,

1. *Stresses* that States have the obligation to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls, and must exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of violence against women and girls and provide protection to the victims, and that failure to do so violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms;

2. *Calls upon* States to enact and, where necessary, reinforce or amend domestic legislation and take measures to enhance the protection of victims, to investigate, prosecute,

punish and redress, including by ensuring access to adequate, effective, prompt and appropriate remedies, the wrongs done to women and girls subjected to any form of violence, whether in the home, the workplace, the community or society, in custody or in situations of armed conflict, to ensure that such legislation conforms with relevant international human rights instruments and international humanitarian law, to abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices that constitute discrimination against women, and to remove gender bias in the administration of justice;

3. *Also calls upon* States to place a high priority on strengthening and implementing legal and policy measures that promote the full enjoyment by women and girls of all human rights, particularly those aimed at eliminating discrimination against women, promoting gender equality, empowering women and promoting their autonomy, including with regard to land, property, marriage and divorce, child custody and inheritance, and to promote equal access to literacy, education, skills training and employment opportunities, land, credit, agricultural extension, adequate housing, just and favourable conditions of work, and business and leadership skills training;

4. *Further calls upon* States to take all measures to empower women and strengthen their economic independence, including through their full participation in the development and implementation of socio-economic policies and poverty eradication strategies, and through recognition of the value of the unremunerated work by women to better protect themselves against violence and, in this regard, to give priority to and to promote their access, without discrimination, to education, training, economic opportunity and economic advancement;

5. *Urges* States to adopt and implement policies and programmes that enable women to avoid and escape situations of violence and prevent its recurrence, and that provide, inter alia, financial support and affordable access to safe housing or shelters, childcare and other social supports, legal assistance, skills training and productive resources, and to make these services accessible to women and girls with disabilities;

6. *Also urges* States to promote, at all levels, environments and communities that are safe for women and girls, and to support the efforts of civil society and other stakeholders towards this end, including by taking measures designed to enhance personal security and reduce the risk of violence in the community, in the home and in the workplace, in particular those that eliminate barriers to safe access to schools and other educational settings, drinking water sources and sanitation facilities, workplaces and livelihoods, and participation in the life of the community;

7. *Further urges* States to publicly condemn violence against women and provide visible and sustained leadership at the highest levels to prevent all forms of violence against women and girls, and, in particular, in efforts to confront the attitudes, customs, practices and gender stereotypes that lie at the core of discriminatory and harmful acts and practices that are violent towards women, such as female genital mutilation, forced and early marriage, femicide, crimes committed in the name of honour and crimes committed in the name of passion;

8. *Calls upon* States to support initiatives undertaken by women's groups, international and non-governmental organizations, the private sector, media, faith and community groups and other relevant civil society actors aimed at promoting gender equality and the full enjoyment of all human rights by women and girls, and raising awareness of and preventing violence against women and girls;

9. *Urges* States to devote the resources necessary to ensure effective and ongoing outreach, awareness-raising, education, training and engagement with relevant stakeholders who have an important role in the prevention and early response to warning signs of violence against women and girls, including government officials, community and

religious leaders, and health, education, justice and law enforcement personnel, including prison personnel;

10. *Encourages* States to integrate gender analysis into policymaking to better understand the potential impact of policies on women and their contribution to eliminating violence against women and girls;

11. *Urges* Governments to identify and address the effects of all forms of discrimination that combine to heighten the vulnerability of women and girls to violence and include targeted, compounded and structural discrimination;

12. *Urges* States to enhance efforts to involve men and boys in initiatives to prevent violence against women and in highlighting the unacceptability of violence against women;

13. *Stresses* that women should be empowered to protect themselves against violence and, in this regard, that women have the right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters relating to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence, and urges States to take legislative and policy steps in this regard;

14. *Urges* States to strengthen initiatives that would increase the capacity of women and adolescent girls to protect themselves from HIV infection, including by providing HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support services, to ensure protection from and prevention of stigma and discrimination, and to cooperate with United Nations bodies, programmes and specialized agencies and international and non-governmental organizations in this regard;

15. *Also urges States* to take appropriate legislative and policy steps to investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of all forms of rape;

16. *Urges* States and the United Nations system to give attention to and encourages greater international cooperation in systematic research and the collection, analysis and dissemination of data, including data disaggregated by sex, age, disability and other relevant information on the extent, nature and consequences of violence against women and girls, as well as on the impact and effectiveness of policies and programmes aimed at combating this violence and, in this context, also urges States and the United Nations system to regularly provide information for inclusion in the Secretary-General's database on violence against women;

17. *Encourages* States to implement Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008);

18. *Also encourages* States to create gender-sensitized training and education programmes and other appropriate measures for their armed forces, civilian police, peacekeeping units and humanitarian personnel that include instructions on their responsibilities towards the civilian population, particularly women and children, as well as mechanisms to ensure adequate safeguards to prevent violence against women and full accountability in cases of misconduct involving their personnel;

19. *Urges* States to establish or strengthen plans of action to eliminate violence against women and girls that clearly delineate government accountabilities for prevention and are supported by the necessary human, financial and technical resources, including, where appropriate, time-bound measurable targets, to promote the protection of women against any form of violence, and accelerate the implementation of existing plans of action that are regularly monitored and updated by Governments, taking into account inputs by civil society, in particular women's organizations, networks and other stakeholders;

20. *Notes with appreciation* the work of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, and takes note of her recent report on reparations for women subjected to violence;

21. *Decides* to include in the annual full-day discussion on women's human rights, at its seventeenth session, in consultation with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, the theme of violence against women and girls, with an emphasis on prevention, with a view to sharing good practices and identifying remaining gaps in the area of prevention, and requests the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare and disseminate a summary of the proceedings;

22. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to prepare a compilation of good practices in efforts aimed at preventing violence against women, in consultation with the Special Rapporteur, States, civil society and other relevant stakeholders, and to present a report thereon during the annual full-day discussion on women's human rights at its seventeenth session;

23. *Looks forward* to the contribution that the new composite United Nations entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women can make to the prevention and elimination of violence against women;

24. *Decides* to continue consideration of the issue of the elimination of all forms of violence against women, its causes and consequences, as a matter of high priority, in conformity with its annual programme of work.

36th meeting

18 June 2010

[Adopted without a vote.]
