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

Written statement* submitted by Network of Women's Non- governmental Organizations in the Islamic Republic of Iran, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[30 May 2023]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Global Surge of Domestic Violence with a Special View of Germany

Introduction

Domestic violence is an epidemic of global proportions that has devastating physical, emotional, financial and social effects on women, children, families and communities around the world, it is directed by men against women exclusively because they are women. This gender-based violence is a violation of women's rights, mainly the right to life, prohibition of inhumane or degrading treatment, right to private and family life, right to a fair trial, and prohibition of discrimination.

It is violence that attempts to establish or enforce gender hierarchies and perpetuate gender inequalities. It is one of the most pervasive human rights violations of our time and a form of discrimination that results in or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women.

The effects of violence on a victim's health are far-reaching and devastating. Women who are battered may suffer from a variety of medical problems, from depression to chronic pain; they may also be at an increased risk of sexually transmitted diseases or unplanned pregnancies. They may need to miss significant amounts of work due to medical problems. Domestic violence may be fatal. Worldwide, 40-70% of all female murder victims are killed by an intimate partner. Victims of domestic violence are more likely to take their own lives. Domestic violence also contributes to other forms of violence against women; women who experience violence at home may be more willing to look for and accept an uncertain and potentially risky job abroad, placing them in danger of being trafficked.

Domestic Violence in Germany

Femicide, meaning the killing of women by a partner or ex-partner, is widespread in Germany. Compared to other EU countries, Germany has the highest number of annual cases overall. However, in terms of the number of cases per 100,000 inhabitants, Germany is in the EU average. According to the official police crime statistics (PKS), between 122 and 147 women have been killed by their partners every year for the past five years (a total of 815 women from 2015 to 2020). Every third day a woman is killed by her partner or ex-partner and at least one attempted assassination is registered in the police statistics every day. Femicide is not a specific criminal offense in Germany and the cases of killing women are often not classified as murder or punished with high penalties against the background of gender-specific abuse of power and control.

In Germany there is no legal definition of killing a woman because of her gender; Femicide is not explicitly codified in either civil or criminal law. The gender-neutral approach in German legislation makes no explicit reference to femicide or to the gendered characteristic of female killing.

These risk constellations point to a German cultural context in which some (educated) men do not accept the achievements of women toward gender equality, although there has been limited public controversy about gender equality as such. Violence was seldom found in relationships where housework was shared equally, while the dominance of the male partner in decision-making correlated with violence and its severity. The higher level of violence for women in migration is so clearly linked to the educational and economic disadvantage that a direct attribution to culture would be questionable. Furthermore, traditional attitudes, behaviors and stereotypes as well as a lack of understanding of the gender dynamics of intimate partner femicide (IPF) hamper preventive measures and early and effective interventions.

Based on a report by the Ministry for Family Affairs, the number of reported acts of violence among couples and ex-partners in Germany rose more sharply during the COVID-19 crisis year 2020 than in previous years. Authorities registered 146,655 cases of domestic violence nationwide in 2022, an increase of 4.9 percent on the previous. Violence between partners in Germany may have increased during COVID-19 lockdowns because these situations "made it harder for victims to report and harder for outsiders to notice acts of violence in their environment.

In the year 2021 alone, 143,604 cases of domestic violence occurred; On average, 20% of girls and women over the age of 15 in Germany confirm that they have experienced physical or sexual violence. In the year 2021 alone, 143,604 cases of domestic violence occurred; On average, 20% of girls and women over the age of 15 in Germany confirm that they have experienced physical or sexual violence. Given that Germany has presented itself as a peace-loving state and supporter of women's rights in the international level, it is expected to respect the basic and human rights of citizens, especially women.

Recommendation

- Recognizing the concern of domestic violence as an urgent problem deserving focused attention and concerted action,
- Aware that domestic violence is a critical problem that has serious physical and psychological effects on individual family members and jeopardizes the health and survival of the family unit,
- To take all possible steps to prevent domestic violence in the national and international levels,
- To ensure fair treatment of and effective assistance to the victims of domestic violence by German officials,
- To increase awareness and sensitivity concerning domestic violence, in particular by fostering the education of criminal justice for German women,

Finally, the Network of Women's Non-governmental Organizations in the Islamic Republic of Iran recommend the Human Rights Council to facilitate exchanging good practices, lessons learned, information, experience and research findings between governmental and non-governmental organizations regarding domestic violence, and available means to facilitate the exchange of information concerning domestic violence and the means of curtailing it.