



Joint Statement by the Core Group of Friends of a new Optional Protocol to CEDAW to eradicate violence against women and girls

7 December 2023

As we embark on the annual 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence, we express our collective alarm at the increase in violence against women and girls across the globe.

Reports abound on the recent rise of sexual violence taking place as a result of war and conflict. Incidents of violence against women and girls have increased since the Covid-19 pandemic. New forms of violence, such as online violence and technology-enabled violence, have become widespread. Estimates suggest that as many as 73 percent of women experience online violence. Levels of domestic violence remain high in every country in the world. Every 11 minutes, a woman is killed by her partner or a family member. Each climate catastrophe is followed by higher levels of multiple forms of violence perpetrated on women and girls.

We know, however, that conflict, climate change, and public health emergencies exacerbate violence, but they do not cause it. Violence against women and girls is entrenched in global norms, in every nation.

We therefore issue our urgent appeal to UN Member States to join the call for the creation, adoption, and implementation of a new Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) dedicated to eradicating violence against women and girls.

We stand ready to work with all UN Member States ready to deliver lives free from violence for every woman and girl everywhere.

The Honorable Samantha Marshall, Minister for Social Transformation, Human Resource Development and Youth and Gender Affairs, Antigua and Barbuda

H.E. Mr. Christian Guillermet Fernández, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Costa Rica to the United Nations

H.E. Mrs. Shara Duncan Villalobos, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Costa Rica to the United Nations

H.E. Mr. Paul Empole Losoko Efambe, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Mission of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations

H.E. Dr. Lansana Gberie, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Sierra Leone to the United Nations, Geneva