



Statement on Femicide of the Academic Council on the United Nations System and the Small Arms Survey at the 21st session of the CCPCJ

Your Royal Highness, Madame Chairperson, distinguished delegates of the Member States and the NGO community, I am speaking on behalf of the Academic Council on the United Nations System and the Small Arms Survey.

This week we had a side-event raising awareness on the growing and shattering phenomenon of *femicide*. We would like to commend the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, which produced an excellent Global Study on Homicide in 2011, including horrifying statistics about the murdering women.

In many countries, while the overall rate of homicide may be declining, there has been an increasing rate of *femicide*. *Femicide* may be a cause of intimate partner/family related disputes (as reported in Europe, North America, and Africa). It can also take the form of dowry deaths, honour killings, and deliberate targeting of women in conflict areas or zones of extreme lawlessness. Selective abortions or the killing of girl infants is an alarming issue. A recent documentary film (“It’s a girl”) explores the question of why 200 million girls are missing. “It’s a girl!” become the deadliest words in the world.

The common denominator in all these cases is that perpetrators are rarely punished.

We are greatly alarmed by the fact that violence against women is the most frequent and less punished crime in the world, since in some countries many *femicides* are rarely investigated and prosecuted.

We are concerned about the existing tension between cultural justifications for restricting women’s human rights and the imperative of recognizing women’s human rights, including the right to be free from violence.

We deeply regret state inaction with regard to the proper functioning of the criminal justice system, which constitutes a lack of compliance with human rights obligations, and deplore that by failing to hold perpetrators accountable, impunity not only intensifies the subordination and



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powerlessness of women, but also sends a message to society that male violence against women is both acceptable and inevitable.

In view of existing General Assembly resolutions regarding violence against women, we would encourage a resolution at the next session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, which would specifically deal with the criminal justice system's fight against impunity for the murder of the women.

This resolution would encourage Member States to collect and share relevant information on *femicide*, both at the criminal justice level, and regarding legislation.

We would urge Member States to design, implement and evaluate programs that could prevent *femicide*, as well as to keep their respective legislations under constant review.

We would remember Member States to promote the implementation of the updated Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (A/RES/65/228), as well as the provisions of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development.

We would encourage the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to raise awareness among United Nations agencies and Member States regarding *femicide*, bearing in mind a holistic approach, including education, health, development, humanitarian, and peacebuilding measures, and to assist and support Member States in developing and adapting measures and strategies at the national, regional and international levels addressing the issue of femicide as a violation of the fundamental human right to life.

We would recommend the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes to continue to gather data provided by Member States on their efforts to implement the above mentioned strategies.

We would urge close collaboration between the United Office on Drugs and Crimes, academic institutions and non-governmental organizations, which provide practical assistance to protect vulnerable women, and push for both prevention and protection programs.

We consider *femicide* to be a phenomenon which deserves the full attention of the international community, and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in particular, and would gladly welcome you comments, suggestions, and support of this idea of a resolution.

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Thank you, Madame Chairperson.

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