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**Regarding:** Call for submissions to all stakeholders regarding the gap in incorporating and implementing the international and regional standards related to violence against women

***1.    Do you consider that there is a need for a separate legally binding treaty on violence against women with its separate monitoring body?***

Yes. Currently, there is no legally binding international document that specifically addresses violence against women and girls. A treaty and monitoring mechanism will both set a global standard for the prevention of violence and the prosecution of violations, ensuring that women and girls will be protected from these human rights violations.

***2.    Do you consider that there is an incorporation gap of the international or regional human rights norms and standards?***

Yes. In the absence of a legally binding international treaty, governing bodies may choose to opt in or opt out of implementing existing non-legally binding recommendations that address violence against women and girls (e.g., CEDAW General Recommendation). Although regional legally binding treaties exist, there is not unifying document that can be implemented in all regions.

***3.    Do you believe that there is a lack of implementation of the international and regional legislation into the domestic law?***

Yes. The implementation of general recommendations as related to violence against women and girls is grounded in the political will of member states. Therefore, the safety and protection of women and girls varies greatly within and across regions and is dependent upon political will. Implementation of domestic policies would be strengthened by a legally binding document holding all governments to a specific level of account.

***4.    Do you think that there is a fragmentation of policies and legislation to address gender-based violence?***

Yes. There is no single, comprehensive legal definition of what constitutes violence against women and girls in any UN human rights treaty. Therefore, the creation of specific legislation to prevent violence against women, and to monitor and prosecute violations, is not mandatory across nations, leaving women and girls born into some nations at greater risk of experiencing violence than others. Further, domestic policies (or the absence thereof) are influenced by a range of religious or cultural practices which may hinder effective protection.

***5.    Could you also provide your views on measures needed to address this normative and implementation gap and to accelerate prevention and elimination of violence against women?***

An international, legally-binding Treaty on Violence against Women and Girls should be constructed and implemented in tandem with a monitoring body. This treaty can expand on existing recommendations and work with CEDAW and other established international and regional monitoring mechanisms. As an international society, we also must recognize that violence against women and girls occurs at both the structural (or social) system level and at the individual (or family) level. All violence against women and girls constitutes a breach of their human rights. Altering established patterns of structural and individual violence against women and girls can be achieved through legislation, enforcement, and education implemented in all nations and regions regardless of specific religious, cultural, or political affiliations.