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Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Progress achieved with respect to the implementation of
General Assembly resolution 40/36 on domestic violence

Note by the Secretary-General

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*E/AC.57/1988/1.

INTRODUCTION

1. Conscious of the effects of crime on the physical and psychological well-being of its victims, the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders discussed the problems relating to victims of crime, under item 6 of its agenda, on the basis of two reports of the Secretary-General. 1/ On the recommendation of the Seventh Congress, the General Assembly adopted resolution 40/36 of 11 December 1985 on domestic violence.

2. By this resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to intensify research on domestic violence from a criminological perspective in order to formulate distinct action-oriented strategies that could serve as a basis for policy formulation and to report thereon to the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders in 1990.

3. By Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/10, section III, of 21 May 1986 the Secretary-General was further requested to submit to the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control, at its tenth session, a note on progress made with respect to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 40/36.

I. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN CONNECTION WITH GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 40/36

4. Since the adoption of these resolutions, numerous substantive activities have been undertaken by the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs at the United Nations Office at Vienna.

5. An Expert Group Meeting on Violence in the Family, with Special Emphasis on its Effects on Women was held at Vienna, from 8 to 12 December 1986, in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/14 on "violence in the family", and within the framework of General Assembly resolution 40/36. The Expert Group Meeting, organized jointly by the Branch for the Advancement of Women in close co-operation with the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, took full account of the deliberations and recommendations of the Seventh United Nations Congress and of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, at Nairobi, in 1985.

6. The identification of agenda items for the Meeting was guided by Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/14 and the comments made and concerns expressed by the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-first session in 1986, 2/ as well as those of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control at its ninth session in 1986. Thus, various aspects of violence in the family were discussed in order to obtain the following: (a) a better understanding of the nature and effects of physical violence and coercion against women in the family; (b) more information on existing forms of crisis intervention and the types of assistance available to women assaulted in the family; (c) greater appreciation of the role of socialization processes; and (d) improved responsiveness of criminal justice systems to the phenomenon.

7. One of the major conclusions of the Meeting, as reflected in its report, 3/ was that violence against women in the family crossed all divisions of class, income, race, culture and religion, and was, in the vast majority of cases, forced upon women by men. It was considered to be one of the many manifestations of unequal power structures and consequently of the unequal treatment

of women and men. It was therefore necessary to change structures that were conducive to the continuation of violence against women. It was also essential to provide appropriate responses for women who were at risk of physical, emotional and sexual abuse and victimization, with a view towards a multi-faceted and co-ordinated approach, at the national, regional and international levels.

8. The Meeting made numerous recommendations (see annex) with respect to both immediate and long-term crisis intervention, prevention, assistance and remedial measures on behalf of women victims of violence in the family. Thus, it stressed that the provisions of the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 40/34 of 29 November 1985, should apply with particular priority to this form of victimization.

9. The Meeting held working groups on each agenda item. A Working Group was held on agenda item 4 entitled "The responsiveness of criminal justice systems in preventing domestic violence and ensuring the fair treatment of women as victims of domestic violence" in response to General Assembly resolution 40/36 of 29 November 1985, which, inter alia, spelled out specific criminological measures to be taken in this regard. This Working Group included a number of prominent specialists in this field, and several members of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control.

10. The Working Group made specific, technical recommendations that would supplement those made by the General Assembly in resolution 40/36, in order to bring about a more effective response by justice systems, at all levels, to domestic violence against women. Moreover, the Working Group aimed to formulate recommendations that could serve as a basis for further work by the Committee, particularly at its tenth session, and by the Eighth United Nations Congress, while at the same time seeking to promote substantive complementarity, as well as co-ordination within the Secretariat, with respect to the question of domestic violence.

11. The Commission on the Status of Women, at its thirty-second session in 1988, considered the subject of violence against women under item 5 (c) of its agenda, entitled: "Peace: access to information, education for peace, and efforts to eradicate violence against women within the family and society" (E/CN.6/1988/6) and recommended a draft resolution on this subject for adoption by the Economic and Social Council. In this resolution, the Council requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the relevant recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting were brought to the attention of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control at its tenth session and that adequate documentation on the issue be prepared for the Eighth United Nations Congress, under the appropriate agenda item. Also, the Secretary-General was requested to ensure follow-up action through close collaboration between the Branch for the Advancement of Women and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Office at Vienna.

12. At its ninth session, in its capacity as preparatory body for the Eighth United Nations Congress, the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control had recommended that domestic violence be considered under topic IV of the Congress, because of its close substantive interlinkages with juvenile justice and delinquency prevention. Accordingly, the Interregional Preparatory Meeting on Topic IV, in its deliberations, considered the effects of domestic violence on children.

II. PROPOSALS

13. In the light of the progress achieved towards the formulation of distinct action-oriented strategies to prevent and control domestic violence, as called for in General Assembly resolution 40/36, the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control is invited to review the relevant recommendations presented by the Expert Group Meeting (see annex).

14. The Committee is also invited to consider further follow-up action, as deemed appropriate, to facilitate the discussion and action of the Eighth United Nations Congress on this matter.

Notes

1/ Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of women as victims of crime (A/CONF.121/16) and the report of the Secretary-General on victims of crime and abuse of power (A/CONF.121/9).

2/ The Commission recognized that violence in the family was a serious persistent world-wide problem that included physical, verbal, psychological, and sexual assault, coercion and abuse, and expressed the conviction that failure to take the appropriate measures to control violence in the family represented denial and condonation of the practice and contributed to its persistence.

3/ Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Violence in the Family with Special Emphasis on its Effects on Women, Vienna, 8-12 December 1986.

Annex

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON VIOLENCE IN THE FAMILY*

A. Introduction

5. Violence against women in the family is acknowledged to be a serious issue both in terms of magnitude and effect. The roots of violence against women within the family are structural. It is therefore important to change structures which are conducive to the continuation of violence. In keeping with the themes of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, it is believed important to create an environment which fosters equality, social justice, respect for the dignity of the individual, and peace. Such violence has immediate and traumatic effects for victimized women and long-term effects on the future of women and children, in the perpetration of further violence in families and in the community at large. It crosses all barriers of class, income, race, culture and religion. It is founded in the unequal treatment of women and men. Hence, any solutions must challenge those notions and provide appropriate responses for women at risk. The Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, a/ adopted by the United Nations World Conference at Nairobi in 1985 to mark the culmination of the United Nations Decade for Women, underlines these points.

6. The problem is complex and requires careful solutions. At base, the real answers lie within the greater notion of the inherent equality between women and men, and how each society respects that basic equality and ensures and enhances it in all its most fundamental aspects.

7. However, it is essential to provide immediate protection and assistance to women who are physically, emotionally, sexually, economically, or otherwise abused, victimized and exploited. Such protection must be co-ordinated and multi-faceted, and include legal, justice, health, social and community facilities, support and services.

8. The recommendations in this report, therefore, encompass solutions which are short-term and long-term, and which require regional, national and international action. However, they stress that interrelated and comprehensive structural measures are critical to ultimately eradicating the problem.

9. The Meeting emphasized the importance of the use of gender-neutral language, and the prevention of sex-stereotyping. The recommendations in the document, however, deal with violence exclusively against women in the family, in recognition of the fact that the overwhelming majority of the victims of violence in the family are women. This is also in response to the Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/14, which requests the Expert Group Meeting to emphasize the effects of violence in the family on women.

10. In many instances where women are subjected to violence in the family, children are also victimized. It is well known that children are victims of physical and sexual abuse in families, as well. However, it was agreed that this was a separate set of issues requiring different models of response. It is, therefore, recommended that priority consideration be given to recommending to Member States specific action in relation to measures to combat the physical and sexual abuse of children, particularly those to be taken by justice systems.

*These recommendations are taken from the report of the Expert Group Meeting (no symbol), which was not formally edited.

11. In line with General Assembly resolution 40/36 on domestic violence, the Meeting recognized and emphasized the important role played by the criminal and civil justice systems in ensuring the fair treatment of both female victims and offenders in cases of domestic violence, as well as in the prevention of such violence. Therefore, detailed recommendations were made on criminal justice and justice systems with special reference to domestic violence against women.

B. General recommendations

12. ...

13. The United Nations should present the recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting on Violence in the Family with Special Emphasis on its Effects on Women to the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control, as its tenth session in 1988, for its substantive consideration and action under the agenda item on domestic violence with a view towards its future consideration by the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders and its preparatory Meetings, and in the context of General Assembly resolution 40/36 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/10.

14. The provisions of the Declaration of Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 40/34 should apply with particular priority to the women victims of violence in the family. In particular, action should be taken to ensure that crime victims compensation schemes apply to women victims of violence in the family and that appropriate aid is available to those victims to enable them to take reasonable steps to protect themselves from further violence.

15. States which have not ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women b/ should be urged to do so, and those who have become States parties should be urged to comply with the provisions of the Convention.

C. International/regional level recommendations

1. United Nations

16. The United Nations, especially the Branch for the Advancement of Women, and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, and any other relevant officer of the United Nations system are urged to undertake research on the extent, prevention, and effects of violence against women in the family, and the effectiveness of the responses to it.

17. The United Nations Branch for the Advancement of Women should prepare and make available a kit on "violence against women in the family and in society".

18. The Branch for the Advancement of Women and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch should call a Meeting after five years in order to assess the progress made on these recommendations, and to act as a clearing-house for permanent international networking on this issue.

19. The World Health Organization, the United Nations International Children's Fund, the International Labour Organisation, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Social Defence Research Institute and other international and regional organizations dealing with health, family, security, and child-related matters, such as the Arab League, the Association of South-East Asian Nations, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Council of Europe, the Organization of American States, the Organization of African Unity, the South Asian Association for Regional

Co-operation, Pacific region's organizations, and the International Union of Family Organizations, are urged to make the issue of violence against women in the family a priority, and to direct their programmes to address this problem.

20. ...

21. The United Nations and its specialized agencies should assist in the dissemination of relevant information on this problem to Governments.

22. The United Nations should periodically review research findings in the field of violence against women in the family. This review will serve to inform Governments of the application of research and findings and will allow Governments to consider their relevance to their respective programmes and strategies to combat the problem. Such a review should be made part of the regular programme of work of the Branch for the Advancement of Women, and should be submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women every four years.

23. The United Nations should recommend to Member States that measures prepared or amended in response to these recommendations should be drafted in gender neutral terms to apply to women and men, although most victims of violence in the family are women.

24. The United Nations should support efforts to ensure that national, regional, and international co-operation as well as national policies to deal with violence against women in the family correspond to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

25. The United Nations programmes should continue to promote national, regional and international co-operation on violence against women in the family by:

- Serving as a "clearinghouse" for information relating to the nature and extent of the problem and effective strategies of prevention, assistance, and treatment, with respect to both the advancement of women and crime prevention and criminal justice, including enhancing co-operation with United Nations agencies, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and research and training institutions;
- Continuing its research activities from the perspectives of both the advancement of women and crime prevention and criminal justice, and in particular cross-cultural research, with a view toward developing and evaluating policies and strategies to combat violence against women in the family;
- Further developing research and evaluation methodologies and data-bases with respect to the criminal justice response to violence against women in the family;
- Rendering assistance with respect to the implementation of the provisions of the Declaration of Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power adopted by the General Assembly by resolution 40/34 and those of General Assembly resolution 40/36 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/10 concerning violence against women in the family;
- Assisting Member States in the development and evaluation of appropriate criminal justice legislation, practices and procedures relating to violence against women in the family and to the fair treatment of these women victims;

- Promoting the exchange of information and experiences between policy-makers and practitioners involved in any capacity with violence against women in the family.

26. Member States should set up administrative departments or multi-disciplinary boards with the task of looking after women victims of violence in the family and with powers to deal with such cases.

2. International/regional intergovernmental organizations

27. Funds should be earmarked for research into the nature, extent and effects of violence against women and the effectiveness of responses to it, especially work of a cross-cultural nature. The results of this research should be disseminated as widely as possible by traditional and non-traditional media, bearing in mind the necessity of translating the pertinent information into local languages, and into other communication forms suitable for non-literate audiences.

28. International organizations should expand programmes to give resource assistance to national efforts to raise public awareness of violent practices as a grave form of discrimination against women, and give priority to combating violence against women in the family within their programmes and ensure an exchange of ideas and experiences among their member countries. They should also co-operate with the United Nations and regional commissions.

D. National level

1. Criminal justice and justice systems

i. General

29. Governments should review on a continuing basis, as a matter of priority, their legislation, procedures and practices in order to harmonize them with the principle of equality of persons and more particularly of persons forming a family unit, and of fair treatment for women as victims of violence in the family. In the conduct of the review, the following factors should be borne in mind:

- Member States should not tolerate domestic violence against women;
- Men do not have a legal or moral right to control women's behaviour through physical assault or other forms of coercion;
- Assault against women within the family unit is equivalent to assault outside of it;
- Member States have a duty to protect victimized women in the family and their children and to help them, especially with concrete measures, to combat physical and sexual abuse of children.

30. Governments should ensure that violence against women in the family is regarded as a crime punishable by a penalty at least equivalent to that provided for a crime of equivalent violence committed outside the family unit. In relationships outside marriage, violence against women in the family should include violence within units formed by those relationships. These recommendations should apply to separated and divorced persons.

31. Governments should reform sexual assault laws, where it has not already been done, e.g. to protect female victims from irrelevant cross-examination on their prior sexual history and experience, to eliminate prejudicial warnings on the victims's delay in making the complaint and to eliminate any mandatory judge's warning in relation to a conviction based on the uncorroborated evidence of the victim.

32. Women's equal right to the family home should be recognized through the application or creation of measures to safeguard their rights. In cases of violence against women in the family, wives or mothers should have a priority right to the family home. The concept of the privacy of the home should not be used to deny protection to women, who should have the legal right to remain in their homes with their children in safety.

33. Elimination of violence against women in the family should be recognized to be in society's interest, and it should be recognized that the victim herself may be subject to further coercion preventing her from filing a complaint on her own behalf. Therefore, the State should guard her rights by prosecuting on her behalf or by allowing class action suits filed by women's groups, civic rights groups, and other sponsors. Governments should pursue policies of social justice aimed at the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

ii. Police

34. The role of the police should, where necessary, be redefined to place emphasis on their responsibility for taking action on violence against women in the family.

35. Interdisciplinary teams, made up of medical, social and legal personnel, should be set up and made available from the police at all times.

36. Informing the victims of violence in the family of their legal rights and available services should be mandatory for the police; and such information and services should be available in as many languages as may be required.

37. Police should be empowered to enter premises or contiguous place where violence against women in the family is alleged to be occurring or is likely to occur for the purpose of investigating or preventing the violence. This authority should be clearly defined, within limitations specified in international instruments, constitutional, and/or criminal law and procedure.

38. Police should ensure that every complaint of violence in the family is recorded in a manner that relates it to any other complaints received against the person committing the violence and to any other complaints of violence against the same person. This would facilitate investigations and preparation of evidence.

39. Close contact should be maintained by police with advisory centres and shelters for battered women, as well as other social service agencies with a view to increasing the effectiveness of responses to women victims of violence in the family.

iii. Orders of protection

40. Where an allegation of violence against women in the family is reported, procedures should be available at the instigation of police or other appropriate authority to prohibit, in a strongly enforceable way, access by the alleged offender to, or harassment of, the victim and her children.

iv. Courts

41. Governments should set up family courts or other judicial mechanisms to provide for private hearings and processing of cases involving interpersonal disputes or violence against women within the family.

v. Bail or conditional release

42. Bail or conditional release pending trial provisions should be used to ensure that authorities pay particular attention to the likelihood that a further offence may be committed while a person suspected of violence against women in the family is at liberty, on bail or conditional release pending trial.

43. A procedure should be instituted requiring the police or appropriate authorities to notify the victim of conditions of bail or conditional release pending trial.

vi. Prosecution

44. Where an inquiry by the police into an allegation of violence against women in the family produces evidence that would justify the laying of a charge in an allegation of equivalent violence committed outside the family, a charge should be laid and prosecuted ex officio by the appropriate public authority.

45. Prosecution of an offence involving violence against women in the family should be conducted expeditiously and, in the case of minor offences, without formality beyond that necessary to ensure fairness and justice.

46. Wherever possible, prosecution authorities should be given resources to include persons specially designated to prosecute offences involving violence in the family. Also, wherever possible, a single prosecutor should be assigned to prosecute such an offence and that person should remain responsible for the matter until its conclusion. Such prosecutors should co-operate closely with victims' service providers.

vii. Evidence

47. In proceedings relating to an offence involving violence in the family, except in special circumstances specified in law, no rule of evidence prejudicial to the interests of the victim should apply that would not apply at proceedings relating to an offence of equivalent violence not involving family members. The victim may be compelled to give evidence, thus reducing the onus on the victim to make the decision to give evidence and, therefore, the effect of pressure and threats against the victim.

viii. Sentencing

48. Where a person is convicted of an offence involving violence in the family, a full range of sentencing options should be available to ensure, as appropriate, the maximum protection of the victim and society, and the maximum resocialization impact for the offender. The gravity of the offence, the circumstances under which it has been committed and all other aggravating and mitigating circumstances should be taken into account in determining the sentence. Wherever appropriate, alternative sanctions should be available in addition to traditional sanctions. Examples of such alternatives are pre-trial diversion after a plea of guilty, suspension of sentence, probation,

conditional release, temporary or week-end detention. Each alternative cited should, as appropriate, be coupled with one or more of the following conditions, inter alia, that the offender:

- Be removed from home for a shorter or longer period of time;
- Submit to competent therapy, or attend self-help group sessions;
- Compensate the victim financially or otherwise;
- Work for the community (community service);
- Lose custody of children temporarily or permanently;
- Be forced to excuse him-/herself publicly through local media;
- Follow a specific educational programme or job training;
- Refrain from drug or alcohol use;
- Refrain from Meeting specified people who appear to instigate violent behaviour.

Breach of a condition should in turn be subject to punishment.

49. The judiciary should take into consideration at the time of sentencing a battered woman for retaliatory violence, including homicide, that she may have finally reacted physically to her aggressor within the family.

ix. Training and co-operation

50. Extensive training programmes including inter-disciplinary training should be provided both at the entrance level, and at appropriate in-service intervals, to ensure that police, prosecutors, judges, and other officers of the criminal justice system are sensitive to the special problems of women who are victims of violence in the family, are able to provide an appropriate response to those victims, and are aware of the requirements of victims and of the legal provisions and services available within the community to respond to those requirements.

51. Employment of women as police, in the judiciary, as prosecutors, and as health and social service providers to victims of violence against women in the family should be introduced and expanded, especially since in some countries it may be preferable to have female personnel deal with these issues.

52. Appropriate co-ordinative links should be developed and maintained between criminal justice professionals and special organizations involved in the provision of services to women victims of violence in the family to ensure the maximum level of sympathetic response. Wherever appropriate, the response of the professional community should be enhanced by the use of appropriately trained and sympathetic community members, especially those drawn from women's organizations. In particular, extended family and community ties should be utilized in all circumstances where they are appropriate.

x. Civil process

53. Civil process and procedures should adequately reflect the interest of women victims of violence in the family. In particular, they should provide reasonable protection of the interests of the victim in terms of custody of children, access to children and in economic terms as well.

xi. Criminal justice research and evaluation

54. Appropriate provisions should be made in national law for evaluation of laws, practices and procedures in relation to violence against women in the family and the results of those evaluations, in conjunction with the results

of continuous research into the causes and impacts of violence in the family, should form the principal base of continuous reform of laws, practices and procedures relating to violence against women in the family.

55. Adequate funding should be provided for research and evaluation.

56. In particular, research is needed on the following:

- Gender, family status and relationship, and age breakdown of all crime and victims of crime statistics should be recorded and readily accessible;
- Criteria for reporting and classification of offences involving violence against women in the family should be developed and as far as possible standardized, for purposes of measurement and comparability, as well as policy development and evaluation at national, regional and international levels;
- Legal and procedural reforms should have built-in evaluation mechanisms for assessing their effectiveness;
- Machinery for comparing the effect of measures to reduce violence against women in the family should be established and resourced at national, regional and international levels;
- Agencies or organizations should be designated at the national level to serve as "focal points" for research and policy development;
- Internationally co-ordinated research aimed at developing a cross-cultural perspective on violence against women in the family should be funded in order to gain insight into underlying factors across nations and cultures while acknowledging the cultural differences;
- Theoretical research on the influence of violence against women in the family should be undertaken to include the aspects of sexual abuse of women and children within and outside the family, among other issues;
- Research and evaluation activities should be intensified on all questions relating to violence against women in the family.

2. Resource support

57. Governments should make every effort to guarantee financial support to battered women who have no other sources of income. Women's equal access to existing social security and welfare provisions should be assured as an important part of a national policy of social justice.

58. Job training, re-entry and employment programmes should be structured to address the needs of battered women.

59. Adequate financial support for existing shelters and refuges should be provided by Governments and non-governmental organizations. Shelters or their local equivalent, such as a network of safe houses, should be created where they do not exist.

60. Governments should fund multi-media community education programmes in community languages.

3. Participation and co-operation

61. The problem of violence against women in general should be viewed as an important part of a national policy of social justice for the advancement of women. The main task of this policy is to ensure equal treatment between women and men within society in all fields, e.g. socio-economic, political, legal and cultural life. Women should be active participants in the development of that policy at all stages, including decision-making at all levels, and should participate fully in the implementation of such decisions.

62. All Governments should draw up coherent national strategies to combat violence against women in the family. They should establish policies and legislative measures in the health, social, cultural, economic and judicial fields to prevent and eliminate this form of violence, and also to increase public awareness.

63. Women victims of violence in the family should be given co-ordinated comprehensive assistance. Therefore, a focal point at the national level in each Government should be assigned the responsibility to deal with violence against women within the family and society. Policies should be elaborated and institutionalized to provide assistance.

64. Governments should ensure that research findings form an integral part of co-ordinated policy and programme development at all levels.

4. Health/treatment/good practice

65. Services and programmes to respond to violence against women in the family should be recognized as a primary health care need and included in primary health care manuals, education programmes, and in the training of primary health care workers.

66. Professional associations in medicine, nursing, law, therapy, social work, pastoral, education, and other relevant groups should develop codes of good practice for dealing with violence against women in the family.

67. Crime prevention agencies, and health and welfare agencies, should set up programmes for batterers, in recognition of the importance of providing treatment for them.

68. Perpetrators of violence against women in the family should have the opportunity to be educated to inculcate in them a sense of the dignity and respect due to others and to create public awareness in this regard.

69. Doctors and hospital personnel should, on the one hand, be sensitized to the various aspects of violence against women in the family, and on the other hand, when they consider it in the best interests of the victim, report cases of personal injury to the police independently of the victim who, under threat of further violence, may not be in a position to make this report.

70. Medical and para-medical personnel should be systematically trained in the identification, care, and follow-up of cases involving violence against women in the family and, for this purpose, training materials including guidelines, manuals, kits etc. should be developed in each country.

71. Governments should initiate pilot projects to try out new methods in the social, health, and legal sectors dealing with violence against women in the family.

5. Education/public awareness/images of women

72. Non-governmental organizations, both internationally, nationally, regionally and locally, should be encouraged to continue their excellent contribution especially in disseminating information and in supporting programmes aimed at combating the problem of violence against women in the family.

73. Unbalanced power relationships in the family, school, and society in general that lead to abuse, exploitation and violence against women and children should be eliminated through concerted measures on the part of the entire community.

74. Formal education systems should include instruction on preparation for family life and parental responsibilities, the teaching of peaceful conflict resolution in interpersonal relationships, and human rights. This should be integrated into the official school curriculum from the earliest grades onwards for both boys and girls.

75. Governments, non-governmental organizations, special groups, professional associations, within their responsibilities and powers, should take measures to eliminate the violence and degrading images and representations of women in society.

76. Public awareness on violence against women in the family should be increased by all Governments, non-governmental organizations and special groups. Governments should themselves disseminate, as well as encourage and assist organizations - governmental and non-governmental - to disseminate information aimed at combating violence against women in the family so as to ensure that the public is aware of the problem.

77. Innovative methods of informal education and consciousness raising, such as street theatre, wall art and the like, should be encouraged and facilitated.

78. Media should be encouraged by monitoring or self-monitoring to avoid conveying the message that violence against women in the family is acceptable or is a trivial matter, and be encouraged to promote gender equality, human rights, and social change to ensure equal treatment of women.

79. Regional commissions should organize seminars at the grass-roots level to help women speak out about the problem of violence in the family, in order to de-stigmatize this problem and to facilitate communication concerning its consequences and possible solutions.

80. Governments should encourage and support an examination and publication of the role of women's contribution to their country's historical development, and undertake initiatives to introduce non-gender-specific language and gender-specific information in all official communications and materials including text books.

81. Both formal and informal education programmes should be reviewed to provide an effective approach towards inculcating the values of equality of roles, dignity and rights.

82. Educational curricula at all levels should be reviewed and reformulated so as to emphasize the principles of gender equality, partnership, tolerance, mutual respect, self-reliance and self esteem.

83. A comprehensive programme should be evolved to improve the knowledge and skills of women in communications techniques in order to encourage their advancement into decision-making positions in this field.

84. Monitoring systems and guidelines should be created through the related professional associations, appropriate to each country, to guide the media from the point of view of the prevention of violence against women both within and outside the home.

85. Teachers should be systematically oriented towards imparting, and trained in skills to impart to students, values of equal rights and responsibilities, mutual respect, partnership, tolerance, understanding and peaceful conflict resolution.

Notes

a/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10).

b/ General Assembly resolution 34/180 of 18 December 1979.