

New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations



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New Zealand Statement on Violence Against Women

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Combatting violence against women is a major priority for New Zealand both domestically and internationally. New Zealand welcomes the report of the Expert Group on combating violence against Indigenous women and girls. New Zealand is thoroughly committed to the elimination of all forms of violence against women, and we support the strategies within the report which we hope will ensure that indigenous women's rights are enshrined within policy and practice. New Zealand was proud to cosponsor the inaugural resolution on the Commission on the Status of Women on indigenous women.

Along with many other states, New Zealand faces significant challenges in turning the tide of violence against indigenous women. Maori women are three times more likely than non-Maori women to face assault and threats from an intimate partner. The high rate of incarceration in New Zealand for Maori women is similarly a threat to their wellbeing and resilience. Violence against women and in particular indigenous women must end.

Violence against women is associated with a significantly increased risk of mental, reproductive and physical health problems, teen pregnancy and self-inflicted harm and suicide. Violence against women is not simply a social issue – its impacts are widespread. The economic cost of family violence to the New Zealand economy was recently estimated at \$1.2 billion per year. It was by far the most costly crime per incident.

New Zealand defines family violence broadly. Breaking the silence and reporting of family violence is also both increasingly encouraged and recorded.

New Zealand is taking a number of measures to combat violence against women some of which I will briefly touch on today.

The Domestic Violence (Enhancing Safety) Act 2009 strengthens the responsiveness of criminal justice agencies to victims of domestic violence. This has enabled New Zealand Police to issue on the spot protection orders which ensure the immediate safety of victims by removing the alleged violent person from the

home for a period of up to five days in order to enable victims to seek permanent protection including long-term court orders.

The Campaign for Action on Family Violence, the It's not OK campaign, is a community-driven effort to reduce family violence in New Zealand which is being led by the Ministry of Social Development and the Families Commission, in association with communities. It is supported by ACC , and the New Zealand Police . The campaign includes a television and social media campaign led by a variety of community leaders including Maori which promote the message that violence is not okay but it is okay to ask for help in order to challenging attitudes and behaviour and removes barriers to talking openly about the issue. This simple message has been effective in encouraging more people to take action on family violence, particularly Māori and Pacific women.

We are building on research and documenting evidence on what works to reduce the impacts of sexual violence including on sexual coercion/violence, resilience and healthy relationships with a particular focus on Māori perspectives. This has included a report on what is known about young Māori in relation to resilience and sexual coercion. This Māori-centred review has provided us with a clear understanding of current knowledge and highlights significant research gaps around young Māori and sexuality. The review provides a basis for continuing engagement with agencies working in this area.

New Zealand, like the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Madame Rashida Manjoo, finds it instructive to view violence against women as being within a continuum that spans interpersonal and structural violence. Our efforts to eliminate violence against indigenous women must therefore address the structural issues that affect all indigenous peoples as well as the particular challenges that women face. New Zealand looks forward to learning more from other states about their efforts to address this pressing issue.