



## **New EU- UN Women initiative announced, will tackle violence against women and girls in three countries**

***(Brussels, 26 November) On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the European Commission and UN Women today announced a new joint programme on Preventing and Addressing Violence against Women and Girls. The programme, which will support initiatives by national institutions and civil society organizations in Albania, Timor Leste and Mexico, was announced by EuropeAid Director General Fernando Fructuoso de Melo and UN Women Assistant-Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director for Policy and Programmes, John Hendra.***

Violence against women is the most unacceptable expression of gender inequality. It can take many forms, from domestic violence, to trafficking and can even lead to death. All our efforts must be joined as long as these kinds of practices remain. That is why the European Commission is particularly welcoming this new project.

On 25 November last year, UN Women launched “COMMIT” a global initiative, calling leaders worldwide to take a stand to end violence against women and girls through concrete commitments. The European Union (EU) expressed its commitment to prioritize ending violence against women.

“Violence against women and girls is a pandemic that affects one in three women worldwide, and it’s rooted in gender inequality. As the post-2015 development agenda is being formulated, UN Women is urging world leaders to focus on tackling this scourge. This new EU- UN Women programme that is being announced today represents an important contribution to raising awareness and triggering action to end many forms of violence against women and girls in multiple settings, through ground-up efforts.” said John Hendra.

The new programme “Preventing and Addressing Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) in Albania, Mexico, and Timor Leste” is financed through a contribution of EUR 1 million from the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). The programme will address different forms of violence against women and girls in different contexts: trafficking in Albania, domestic violence in Timor-Leste and femicide in Mexico. The programme will support legislative changes, preventive measures and service provision for survivors.

According to a global study conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2013, 35 per cent of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual violence. UN Women research also shows 603 million women live in countries where domestic violence is not yet considered a crime. Approximately 140 million girls and women in the world have suffered female genital mutilation. Trafficking ensnares millions of women and girls in modern-day slavery. Women and girls comprise 80 percent of the estimated 800,000 people trafficked annually. And femicide, the murder of women because they are women, is taking an increasingly brutal toll.



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Every year, 25 November and the ensuing 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence which follow (ending on 10 December, Human Rights Day) are commemorated around the world. [Ending violence against women](#) is one of UN Women's key priority areas, with programmes addressing the pandemic implemented globally. UN Women also coordinates the UN Secretary-General's [UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign](#) and supports widespread social mobilization through Say NO – UNiTE to End Violence against Women. In addition, UN Women manages the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women which commemorates its 17th anniversary in 2013.

The announcement of this new programme follows a strategic partnership agreement between UN Women and the European Union in April 2012. The EU and UN Women work together regularly in areas of genderresponsive budgeting, peace and security and political participation of women, in several regions around the globe.

Mr Frutuoso de Melo and Mr Hendra announced this new partnership effort at the European Development Days, where Mr Hendra is participating in a High-Level Panel on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Post 2015.

For more information

Website of the DG Development and Cooperation - EuropeAid:

[www.ec.europa.eu/europeaid](http://www.ec.europa.eu/europeaid)

On the European Instrument for democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR):

[www.eidhr.eu](http://www.eidhr.eu)

On European Development Days

[www.eudevdays.eu](http://www.eudevdays.eu)

On UN Women:

[www.unwomen.org](http://www.unwomen.org)

On UN Women's In Focus Violence Against Women and Girls

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/end-violence-against-women>