

Check Against Delivery

United Nations Human Rights Council
Twenty-Seventh General Session
15 September 2014

Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Eliminating Violence against Women and Domestic
Violence as a Global Framework

Mister President,

Liberal International and the International Network of Liberal Women would like to turn the attention of this Human Rights Council to the on-going violence against women and girls which continues to constitute one of the most wide-spread forms of human rights violations.

Domestic violence, female genital mutilation, honor killings, forced marriages and sexual violence especially at times of conflict are just some of the most horrific crimes committed against women on a daily basis. One in four women falls victim to such violence with irreparable consequences not only for her physical and mental health but also for her well-being and long-term personal development prospects.

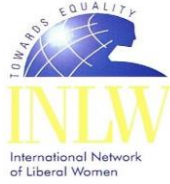
Mister President,

Just several months back on the occasion of the 58th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Her Excellency Ms. Rashida Manjoo, acknowledged that there are severe gaps within the current international normative framework in respect to preventing, eliminating and punishing violence against women.

Acknowledgement is certainly an important first step but acknowledgment alone is not going to save the lives of millions of women and girls who fall victims to senseless acts of violence simply because of their gender.

Mister President,

The Council of Europe and its 47 member states have resolved to reverse these continuing trends of violence by establishing the Istanbul Convention on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence which entered into force on 1 August 2014.



It is currently the most far-reaching legally binding international instrument which provides practical measures for preventing violence, protects victims, prosecutes perpetrators and most importantly introduces an implementation monitoring mechanism.

As the only political international with an acting Human Rights Committee and a global network of human rights parliamentarians we have made a clear commitment before our membership and national parliaments around the globe that we will not only advocate for the universal ratification of the Convention but also work towards the extension of its jurisprudence on a global level. The latest LI Congress in Rotterdam adopted a resolution outlining specific steps to materialize these commitments into practice.

Mr. President,

It is time to not only acknowledge but also close the existing gaps in international women rights' legislation. As liberals we have taken the lead and we are eager to build an international coalition which is why we are here today asking this very institution to follow. The severe gaps mentioned by Her Excellency Ms. Rashida Manjoo need to be closed now. We are offering a solution!

The international community has a responsibility to address the very causes of gender-based violence by eliminating social, economic, legal and all other barriers towards the empowerment of women around the world.

On behalf of all the member parties of Liberal International and the women members of the International Network of Liberal Women from Africa, Asia, the Arab world, Europe, as well as North and South America we call on the United Nations Human Rights Council to adopt an all-encompassing global women rights legal framework to effectively eliminate and prevent all forms of domestic violence and violence against women and girls by incorporating the content of the Istanbul Convention and all other relevant international legislation.

We insist that given the current international legal framework this is the only way in which violence against women can be addressed both as a form of discrimination and a human rights violation.

Thank you.