

December 8, 2004

International Conference on “Combating Patriarchal Violence Against Women - Focusing on Violence in the Name of Honour”, Stockholm Dec 7-8, 2004

Concluding Comments and a Call for Action from the Chair:

Patriarchal violence is a threat to individual freedom and life, to gender justice and development. It must be addressed in all its forms, and at all levels. It occurs throughout the world and in all classes and groups of societies. It differs in expressions but is basically rooted in perceptions of male superiority and female subordination. It is often the last resort to maintain existing power structures when women and girls challenge the fact that they are denied rights that men and boys are entitled to by birth as males.

Violence in the name of honour is one form of patriarchal violence often connected to lack of bodily integrity, freedom of movement, gainful employment and economic independence. A specific feature is that it is openly encouraged and sanctioned, within families and communities.

The UN GA resolution A/C.3/59/L.25 declares the obligation of States to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish the perpetrators of crimes committed against women and girls in the name of honour and to provide protection to the victims and that not to do so violates, impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of their human rights. The resolution highlights the responsibility of men to promote gender equality and to change attitudes to eliminate gender stereotypes. It also stresses support to victims, including by protection, counselling and health care, including in sexual, reproductive and psychological health.

Thus, the chair of the international conference on patriarchal violence, held in Stockholm 7-8 December 2004 issues the following Call for Action:

1. The root causes to overall patriarchal violence must be addressed, by combating perceptions of male superiority and female subordination as well as interpretations of masculinities that reinforce patriarchal structures and male violence.
2. Violence in the name of honour must be combated as an obstacle to women's enjoyment of human rights. Interpretations of honour as strongly connected to female chastity must be challenged. It can never be accepted that customs, traditions or religious considerations are invoked to avoid obligations to eradicate violence against women and girls, including violence in the name of honour.
3. Violence against women must be addressed from a rights based perspective within a broad range of measures to promote gender equality, by empowering women and girls and by raising awareness among men in order to fight men's silence on patriarchal violence. Measures should be taken in the areas of legislation, employment, education and sexual and reproductive health and rights.
4. Respect for women's enjoyment of human rights is intrinsically linked to democracy. International conventions must be implemented into national legislation. States have an

obligation to promote and protect human rights, including the right to life, liberty and security of persons, and to give priority to this by providing adequate resources.

5. International co-operation to more effectively address patriarchal violence, with focus on violence in the name of honour, should be encouraged and expanded, including through the UN, Interpol and Europol as well as through regional organisations like the EU, Council of Europe, OIC, ASEAN, SADC, SAARC. Civil society, including NGO's, are important partners of Governments in this pursuit.