

1. As we look to the future, please indicate what are the main challenges to addressing violence against women in its various forms; e.g. the institutional and substantive disconnect between the different international instruments; a lack of understanding of the provisions in international law that link gender equality and violence against women; inadequate judicial protocol or recourse and/or legal framework; impunity of perpetrators; stereotypes and the social stigma associated with reporting etc.?

- While the evidence base has expanded, there are still significant gaps in research. Also, further investment in data and the collection of evidence is crucial to effectively tackling violence against woman and girls;
- A lack of leadership and accountability on gender equality within the humanitarian system hampers the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence.

2. Is the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women enters its 25th year, please provide a brief analysis of what your perceptions of the mandate are, highlighting any particular instances where you believe the mandate has contributed to the empowerment of women in addressing gender based violence.

- The Kingdom of the Netherlands values the work and activities of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women. The rights of women and girls and the prevention and elimination of all violence against women and girls are two of the main priorities of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. For example, together with France, the Netherlands successfully tabled for the 7th time the biannual resolution on Violence Against Women in the UNGA Third Committee in 2018, this time with a specific emphasis on sexual harassment as a form of violence against women and girls.
- The Kingdom of the Netherlands believes the mandate of the Special Rapporteur is essential in promoting synergies among existing international and regional instruments and systems on violence against women and girls. It is essential to use these synergies between mechanisms and systems simultaneously with accelerating and achieving their full implementation.
- Over the years the Special Rapporteur has played an important role in developing and disseminating the concept of due diligence standard.
- Besides the many country visits of the Special Rapporteur, the Netherlands very much appreciated the thematic report on online/ICT facilitated violence against women and girls from a human rights perspective. After being discussed during the HRC session in 2018, the Netherlands encourages further discussion on this issue.

3. Given the changed landscape of women's rights and the current global challenges in this regard, please indicate what specific measures should be taken to further strengthen the role of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur to accelerate prevention and elimination of violence against women.

- N/a

4. **Please indicate what steps should be taken to ensure that the mandate of the Special Rapporteur can effectively contribute to ensuring better institutional coordination across the various international and regional violence against women and gender equality mechanisms for the elimination of violence against women.**
 - N/a

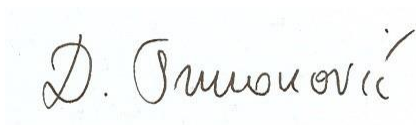
5. **Please specify what measures should be taken to support my initiative to encourage States to establish femicide watch and/ or observatories.**
 - N/a

6. **Please indicate what are the opportunities and challenges for strengthening and using the mandate of the Special Rapporteur under the international and regional frameworks to eradicate violence against women and girls, and to accelerate that elimination.**
 - Engage in dialogue with countries in all regions where women's and girls' rights and women's human rights defenders are increasingly under pressure.
 - Provide assistance in order to accelerate the discussion on violence against women and girls domestic violence with a specific focus on intersectionality, especially in regional human rights systems. For example, some states now argue the Istanbul Convention undermines issues relating to the concept of 'family' or distinctive genders, which blocks progress in addressing violence and discrimination against women and girls.
 - Draw attention to those sanctions regimes established by the UNSC which already incorporate sexual and gender-based violence as a designation criterion. Also, there is a need to provide relevant information to the competent sanctions committees.
 - Report on how the three regional human rights systems can be used in the development of strong indicators for SDG target 5.2 which focuses on the elimination of all violence against all women and girls.

I would be grateful to receive any responses you may have to one or more of the afore- mentioned questions by **28 February 2019**.

I remain at your disposal for any queries through the team supporting my mandate at the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Orlagh McCann (omccann@ohchr.org); Ms. Roberta Serrentino (mserrentino@ohchr.org); +41 22 917 99 02+41 22 917 99 42; or at vaw@ohchr.org.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



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Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and
Consequences