



The National Alliance of Women's Organisations (NAWO, founded 1989) is an umbrella organisation for over 100 organisations and individuals based in England. All members are concerned to ensure women gain access to their human rights, and to make equality between women and men a reality. Its diverse membership includes: single issue to specialist organisations, faith groups, health centres, arts-based organisations and others offering services and campaigning across a range of women's concerns.

Aims and Objectives:

NAWO outlines its aims and objectives, in the Strategic Plan, 2015 – 2020, [here](#).

NAWO works in partnership with other women's organisations: To ensure that women's voices are heard and attended to nationally, in Europe and internationally; To ensure that gender is mainstreamed throughout all government policies and in their implementation



The Five Questions

1. Do you consider that there is a need for a separate legally binding treaty on violence against women with its separate monitoring body?

2. Do you consider that there is an incorporation gap of the international or regional human rights norms and standards?

3. Do you believe that there is a lack of implementation of the international and regional legislation into the domestic law?

4. Do you think that there is a fragmentation of policies and legislation to address gender-based violence?

5. Could you also provide your views on measures needed to address this normative and implementation gap and to accelerate prevention and elimination of violence against women?

The answers to all 5 questions have been amalgamated.

There is a need for a New Treaty/Optional Protocol to CEDAW

There is a need for a new **Treaty/Optional Protocol to CEDAW** that specifically addresses the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls because they are women and girls. At the international legal level this does not yet exist. It is a normative gap that needs to be filled, especially as violence against women has been acknowledged by States to be the most prevalent human rights violation in the world today.

The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) does not contain a specific article dealing with VAWG. There is thus a need for a new international law instrument with its own monitoring body that



specifically recognises, identifies, and provides legally binding obligations to deal with all manifestations of violence against all women and girls.

Most examples of VAW measures are in ‘soft law’. These are not legally binding. E.G., the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, numerous resolutions from different UN bodies, and general comments and recommendations of treaty bodies, General Recommendation No. 12 (1989) on violence against women, the CEDAW Committee, General Recommendation No. 19 on violence against women. CEDAW’s Article 2, interpreted with General Recommendation 19, is the existing legal mandate for the creation of laws prohibiting violence against women. General Recommendation 30 adopted in 2013 addresses the situation of VAWG in conflict and post-conflict settings. However, **although soft laws may be influential in developing norms, their non-binding nature effectively means that States cannot be held responsible for violations.**

There are regional human rights treaties that address violence against women, namely the 1994 Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará), the 2003 Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol) and the 2014 Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention). These regional instruments are being utilised successfully in certain countries, but they are not suitable as instruments to cover the globe. That also leaves many regions not covered in terms of normative law: (e.g. Asia, the Pacific and the Middle East among others). **We need to do more for women and girls in the 21st century.**