

Human Rights Council – 43<sup>rd</sup> session

High-level panel discussion commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women

25 February 2020

Australian Statement

We thank the panellists for their insights on progress and challenges in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Violence against women and girls is one of the 12 critical areas of concern identified in the Platform for Action. It is a gross violation of their human rights and has a profound and devastating impact on its victims, communities and society.

In spite of efforts to combat gender-based violence, it remains prevalent, particularly within family settings. Families play an important role in empowering individuals to realise their rights. However, families can fail in this role and become settings where gender inequalities play out.

The Beijing Platform for Action reflects this complexity: it underscores the importance of families<sup>i</sup> but recognises that often violence against women and girls occurs within the home<sup>ii</sup>. It articulates how violence and harmful practices can force women and girls into subordinate positions compared to men and boys<sup>iii</sup>.

Gender-based violence and harmful practices are both causes, and products of, gender inequality. The consequences are far reaching, impacting on the health and wellbeing of women and their children and the rights to life, liberty and security of person, bodily autonomy, education and work.

Family violence in all its forms, is a shared problem. It is prevalent in all countries and cultures. Across the world, approximately 137 women are killed by a member of their family every day<sup>iv</sup>.

Last year, Australia entered the final phase of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children 2010-2022*; a comprehensive plan to combat domestic, family and sexual violence through improving gender equality for all Australians.

We ask the panel for its view on how the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action has informed responses to family violence.

281 words

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<sup>i</sup> UDHR, article 16.3

<sup>ii</sup> Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, paragraph 117

<sup>iii</sup> Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, paragraph 117

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures#notes>