

**Country:** United States of America

**Committee:** UN WOMEN

**Agenda Item:** Elimination of the Raising Domestic Violence During Covid- 19 Pandemic

Domestic violence, especially for women, is a huge problem in all countries which affects the psychological health of the future generations as well as the victims themselves.So we must strive to ensure a safer, better community for women across the world. Even before COVID-19 existed, domestic violence was already one of the greatest human rights violations. Since the pandemic started, 243 million women and girls across the world have been subjected to sexual or physical violence by an intimate partner. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, this number is likely to grow with multiple impacts on women’s wellbeing, their physical and mental health. Stay at home orders, isolation and economic crises increased women's vulnerability to violence at home.

The United States of America was affected colossally by the increasing domestic violence against women during the Covid-19 pandemic. The first Covid-19 cases in America were reported in January 2020. On March 19, California issued a stay at home order and became the first state to mandate all its residents to stay at home except for essential needs. Within a few weeks, other states issued a stay at home order as well. During these orders, firearm and ammunition sales increased. This increment was concerning, given the correlation between access to weapons and domestic violence. Data from US police departments showed the increase in domestic violence during the lockdown. For instance, on March 23 Oregon issued a stay at home order and a 22% increase in arrests related to domestic violence compared to prior weeks were noticed. Moreover, the temporary shutdown of non-essential businesses led to unemployment and an economic crisis. Family violence peaked by factors such as; unemployment, reduced income, stress, limited social support and uncertainty. All these were the start of a shadow pandemic, as the UN defines.

Intending to eliminate violence against women, the USA has made some serious progress which in our opinion can set an example to other countries to develop their policies. To give a few examples; the USA signed the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) into law as part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act in 1994. Before the VAWA domestic abusers could avoid punishment by crossing state borders since law enforcement was not obliged to respond to orders of protection filed in other states. Furthermore, since race, ethnicity, age and culture are key reasons for domestic violence in the United States of America many reauthorizations have been made to this law to support particularly vulnerable groups, including Native Americans, the LGBT community and immigrant women. Many analysts now credit VAWA for helping to reduce the rate of domestic abuse in the United States significantly. From 1993 to 2010, the total rate of intimate-partner violence decreased by 64%, according to the US Department of Justice. Biden, the president of the United States played an important role in the VAWA. He summarizes the provisions taken under the Violence Against Women Act as: “Abuse is violent and ugly and today there is rightful public outrage over it. It matters that the American people have sent a clear message: you’re a coward for raising a hand to a woman or child — and you’re complicit if you fail to condemn it.’’

 Over and above that USA has already worked with the United Nations in the past during the Together for Girls Partnership, bringing private sector, five United Nations organizations: UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UN Women, and WHO; and the U.S. Government through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It aimed to conduct national surveys and gather data, as well as to raise public awareness about the issue and promote evidence-based solutions.

The president of United States shows the importance he gives to women rights in a speech he made in 2013: ''You cannot have a conversation about human rights and human dignity without talking about the right of every woman on this planet to be free from violence and free from fear.'' To achieve a world where women are free from violence we believe that people who work in social service fields have a key role in identifying and solving many socio-economic based problems, most importantly violence, that has arisen during the COVID-19 epidemic. In order to fasten the process of spotting violence against women and girls, we must educate nurses and doctors in an emergency department about domestic violence and how they can notice victims. Since healthcare personal is most likely to be the first responders it's vital for them to not lose sight of the increasing violence while fighting this global pandemic.

As well as educating healthcare personals and eliminating the risk of victims not being noticed the USA gives priority to tackling violence against women from the root causes by focusing on long-term solutions. Such as, working with men and boys to end the normalization of power on women. We are aware that to make this happen we need to work on laws and policies that defend gender equality. As a country where freedom and equality are accepted fundamental values, we encourage other countries to adopt equal laws for their citizens.

The United States of America is aware that the COVID-19 pandemic is not just a health issue. It profoundly affects our society and escalates the problems our world faces nowadays. We are ready to take action to reach a world where there is no violence of any kind.