Committee: **UN WOMEN**

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

Country: **Sweden**

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Sweden, during the Viking Age, women had a relatively free status in the Nordic countries of Sweden, Denmark and Norway, illustrated in the Icelandic Grágás and the Norwegian Frostating laws and Gulating laws. The paternal aunt, paternal niece and paternal granddaughter, referred to as odalkvinna, all had the right to inherit property from a deceased man. In the absence of male relatives, an unmarried woman with no son could further more inherit the position as head of the family from a deceased father or brother. From the 14th century until the Fabriks och Handtwerksordning and Handelsordningen of 1846, many professions in the cities were monopolized by the guilds. Women were, however, not excluded from guild membership. Widows became members with the license to practice the profession of their late spouse until remarriage: they could also be given a permit to practice some other trade. Formally, many guilds excluded married and unmarried women, however in practice there are numerous examples of married and unmarried female guild members. There were also exclusively female guilds, such as that of the midwives and that of the Rower woman. In 1460, 180 female guild members were listed for the city of Stockholm: the profession is not stated for the majority of them, but when it is, the most common professions for city women were brewer, baker, seamstress and washer woman. In 1919–21, women suffrage was finally introduced, which also necessitated a reform in which also married women were finally liberated from the guardianship of their spouses and granted legal majority in 1920. The women suffrage reform was followed by the Behörighetslagen ('Competence Law') of 1923, in which males and females were formally guaranteed equal access to all professions and positions in society.

The COVID-19 pandemic had increased the risk of women being subject to men’s violence as isolation increased the risk of violence and the possibility of control.  It also exacerbated the vulnerability of children and young people at risk at home.  As a response, the Government had increased funding to civil society organizations working with vulnerable groups and children.  Combatting men’s violence against women had been a priority for the Swedish Government for a long time.  The basis for the Swedish Government’s work was a 10-year cross-sectoral national strategy for preventing and combatting men’s violence against women, decided upon in 2016.  In June this year, the Swedish Government had presented a package with 40 measures to intensify work against men's violence against women.  Strong legal protection against men's violence against women, including sexual offences, was of the utmost importance.  In 2018, a new sexual offences legislation based on consent was introduced and it was now an offence to perform a sexual act with someone who was not participating voluntarily.  With the consent-based regulation in place, Sweden finally had a sexual offences legislation that clearly stated that sex that was not voluntary was illegal.

On cases of abuse of women, between 2015 and 2020, the number of cases had increased from 36,700 in 2015 to just over 39,000 in 2020.  On the person-based clearance rate (number of cases where the prosecutor had decided on indictment or provision of fine in waiver of prosecution of all handled cases), this had decreased from 14 per cent in 2015 to 11 per cent in 2020.  As for statistics on reported rape of women and girls, they had increased from 5,461 in 2015 to 8,686 in 2020.  The person-based clearance rate, however, had increased from 14 to 17 per cent.

Solution 1: Deterrence can be increased by increasing the penalties for violence against women.