

### **Position Paper for the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)**

The issues discussed before the Commission on the Status of Women are: Improving Access to Health Service for Women in Conflict- and Post-Conflict Situations; Elimination of Barriers to Justice for Women; and Women, the Girl Child, and HIV/AIDS. The Russian Federation, due to its history, is well aware of its multilayer competences and thus responsibilities on many fields of policy, including women's rights.

#### **I. Improving Access to Health Service for Women in Conflict- and Post-Conflict Situations**

Conflict situations, which are still evolving in various areas of the world, endanger the international security. The vast majority of victims in these conflicts are civilians, with women being a particularly vulnerable group. The Russian Delegation is alarmed about numerous women being impeded to access to health care all over the world, especially in conflict and post-conflict regions.

The Russian Federation has been intensifying its efforts establishing gender justice, especially since women represent the majority within the country. In the report *Gender Equality and Extension of Women Rights in Russia in the Context of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals* (2005), Russia especially underlines the importance of women within the society. Regarding the context of the review of the implementation of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, the Russian Government has included educational training within its military units in order to protect women in conflict from sexual abuse and violence. In 2010, A/RES/64/289 (2010) established the *United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women*, with Russia being one of the members of its executive board. Article 12 of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women A/RES/34/180* (1979) obliges all signatories to protect women in conflicts, especially in terms of health service. In addition, S/RES/1325 (2000) underlines the importance of a gender perspective in conflict situations.

In order to prevent abuse and violence, the Russian Federation asks for the establishment of a program, sending teams of experts, especially aligned to women and girl children in conflict and post-conflict areas. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) shall advertise and observe those teams of experts and closely cooperate with NGOs such as *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF) in terms of supporting each other within the existing institutional framework. The aforementioned experts shall be female and have a similar cultural background. Aggrieved women are rather willing to entrust to female experts, especially regarding the traditional and social behavior within rural areas. Those female experts shall receive special training beforehand as well as potential military units on-site. With the Russian Federation as a guiding example, sovereign states shall implement education on gender matters as part of their military training. The work and results are to be reported to the CSW annually. War rape and sexual harassment as tactical measures to humiliate alleged belligerents can lead to various physical and psychological dysfunctions of women, with an urgent need to keep contagious diseases in mind. Therefore, Russia suggests the establishment of mother-child-centers, supervised by the UNOPS, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program, civilian cooperators such as MSF, and supported financially by the United Nations Population Fund. Strengthening the importance of military health supporters, Russia furthermore calls for the introduction of a quota for medically educated soldiers in every peacekeeping mission. It shall amount to a share of 25 per cent for each division. They shall be further educated within the aforementioned, highly recommended military training, focusing on gender education and women's rights and work closely together with civilian cooperators such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, MSF and UNICEF.

#### **II. Elimination of Barriers to Justice for Women**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is guaranteeing the unalienable right to equitable jurisdiction, with no regard to the gender. The Russian Federation, responsible for a population that consists of 70 different nationalities and ethnic groups, is well aware of the fact that elsewhere women are suffering from judicial suppression in various forms, often due to traditional and social reasons. The Russian Federation observes with concern for a gender-neutral conduct of judicial proceedings. It is calling upon the international community to eliminate all barriers to justice for women, especially referring to prosecution of gender-based offenses such as sexual abuse, rape and discrimination by reaching the women themselves through educational programs.

Since the majority of the Russian population is female, the Russian Federation is performing full integration of gender-neutral domestic policy. Art. 19 of the Russian constitution guarantees the equal treatment of men and women before the law. In 2008, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) agreed upon the *Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women*, especially reaffirming the *Beijing Declaration*, which was adopted in 1995 and aims to eliminate all barriers to a general equality of men and women. Furthermore, by adopting the *Millennium Declaration A/RES/55/2* (2000) the UN has set the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Two of these goals are of utmost significance concerning the elimination of barriers to justice, namely MDG 2 dealing with Universal Primary Education and MDG 3 -Closing the Gender Gap in Education by 2015. Besides, the Russian Federation is a Signatory to the *UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women A/RES/34/180* (1979) and the according *Optional Protocol A/RES/54/4* (2000) underlining the obligation of every government to promote and protect the rights

of women and to eliminate discrimination in employment, health care, education, and other areas.

Women experiencing harassment from within their social context seldom file a report, fearing the loss of the basis of existence. Therefore, Russia intends to establish initiatives that could bear the names *Domestic Violence Emergency Fund* (DoVEF) and *Domestic Violence Emergency Shelter* (DoVES). Starting with the day of accusation up to one year, women can live in women's refuges. Aside, they receive \$50 monthly to start building up an existence. In case of a successful legal process, 10 per cent of the claimed amends flow back to the DoVEF. Within the DoVES, the women receive special training regarding women's natural claim for health, judicial support and HIV/AIDS education. Furthermore, they shall get vocational training to be capable to provide for themselves independently after having left the DoVES'. In case of an empty DoVES with no women in need of emergency shelter, the facilities shall be used to host underage mothers for a maximum of two years. With a notice period for the underage mothers of three months, it can be assured, that no wife in litigation has to be rejected. The DoVES' shall be established in all county capitals which have courts, beginning in the *Least Developed Countries* (LDCs). The Russian Federation asks for voluntary contribution from Member States to secure the financial stability of the fund. As a measure to reach women unlimitedly, concerning their unawareness of juridical possibilities, Russia suggests to employ educational multipliers on eye-level. Focal points, trustees within rural communities, have to be trained as jurisdictional advisors in the DoVES. Someone who has trust among the society like midwives or female village elders are invited to motivate women to seek legal assistance, that is, assure compatriots of the advantages of the trial and the guaranteed protection. The World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the United Nation Girls' Education Initiative and UN Women are in charge for the set-up of the DoVEF and DoVES. Doing so, they shall get support from the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). Female multipliers with a similar cultural background shall be sent from other countries to those certain regions. In order to achieve the MDGs, especially referring to MDG number 2 and 3, the Russian Federation requires the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to provide financial support for the purpose of those measures. They shall be executed and monitored as part of the framework of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women).

### **III. Women, the Girl Child, and HIV/AIDS**

HIV/AIDS is one of the most imperiling diseases known to mankind. Women are especially vulnerable, since imbalanced gender justice, violence, and lacking access to economic opportunities increase the risk of contagion. The Russian Federation has achieved great successes in reducing the proportion of women infected, since sexual education is in the process of improvement and several programs introduced in several cities have proved to be effective.

In 1995, the Russian Federation has adopted the *Federal Law on Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities in the Russian Federation*, especially aligned to persons with physical disorders, guaranteeing their full integration within the society. In addition to the provision of HIV tests for our population, every foreigner living or travelling in Russia for more than 90 days is required to present evidence on having been tested in order to prevent the further expansion of the epidemic. Within the framework of the *Baltic Region Healthy Cities Association* and the European Union, Russia initiated the *We choose a Life - Youth against HIV/AIDS-Program*, in order to strengthen the consciousness among the next generation. Moreover, the state of Russia plans to further expand its commitment within the *Central Asia Regional HIV/AIDS Program* (CARHAP), focusing on a common data pool and knowledge exchange.

In order to diminish the risk of infection with HIV, the Russian Federation calls for the implementation of HIV/AIDS-control programs within national legislations to increase conscience about the necessity, according to the Russian *Federal Law on Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities in the Russian Federation* and other programs. Implementations shall be observed by the *United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women* and reported to UN Women. Specialized medical centers, established in every country, shall provide gender-orientated prevention, health care and educational programs. It is planned to cooperate closely with *Médecins Sans Frontières*, profit from their knowledge in the field and to extend their existing centers explicitly to HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. Antiretroviral therapy, contraceptives and AIDS tests are to be offered. Affected women have at least to be aware of the limited health improvement options. Therefore, the aforementioned approach has to be complemented through nationwide educational programs, which highlight the importance of safer sex and HIV/AIDS prevention. In several societies sexually experienced women count as dishonored and are restrained from sufficient protection. In this context, all levels of populace have to be sensitized about this fallacy. Women within rural communities shall delegate a female trustee, integrated within the network of the prospective regional medical centers. Those women shall be briefed and trained, functioning as multipliers of health right awareness and the strengthening of women's self-assurance. Acceptance of sexual obedience within traditional relationships and marriages has to be tackled. Since the discrimination of HIV-infected and the fear of disclosure of AIDS-suffering is another issue of incommensurate knowledge, infected women shall promote hope and the opportunity to live post-infectedly. WORLD (women organized to respond to life-threatening disease) may be an adequate partner. This shall be financed by the *Global Fund to Fight Aids*. In addition, aims set forth through the *Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS* shall be reiterated.