



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
29 November 2012

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women

Fifty-seventh session

4-15 March 2013

**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and
to the special session of the General Assembly entitled
“Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace
for the twenty-first century”: implementation of strategic
objectives and action in critical areas of concern and
further actions and initiatives**

Statement submitted by Women’s International Zionist Organization, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.



Statement

Women's International Zionist Organization programmes to eradicate domestic violence: the role of a non-governmental organization

Domestic violence is one of the most appalling types of violence against women because it happens mostly in the one place where women should feel safe — the home.

Women's International Zionist Organization, as a women's organization, has developed a variety of programmes to deal with this social malady. Since the feminist movement in Western society of the 1970s, awareness of domestic violence has increased. Any woman, regardless of her ethnic origin, age, place of residence, circumstances, religion or social status, can be involved in an unhealthy relationship or become a victim of domestic violence.

Domestic violence has many faces, some easier to hide than the obvious physical abuse, and includes verbal, psychological, sexual and financial degradation. It strips the women of their dignity and self-esteem, isolates them from friends and family, and can be potentially life threatening. It also has a deeply scarring effect on her children.

While providing a wide range of social and educational services, Women's International Zionist Organization is faced with two main forms of violence: domestic violence and child-related violence, where children and youth can be either the victims or the abusers.

As a women's social movement focusing on the advancement of women, Women's International Zionist Organization sees the eradication of domestic violence as a core issue in its work. The majority of abused women are unemployed or earn the minimum wage, have low self-esteem, and may have experienced this type of relationship as daughters, not only as wives and partners, and therefore cannot perceive that it is possible for them to live differently.

Women's International Zionist Organization believes that in order to break the cycle of violence, a comprehensive, long-term multifaceted solution is required.

Shelters for battered women and their children

Women's International Zionist Organization has built shelters that provide residential refuge for battered women and their children for up to one year. During this year, with the help of a multiprofessional staff, Women's International Zionist Organization addresses the mental, emotional, functional and legal aspects of both the women and their children. This allows the woman to summon the willpower and ability to take control of their lives and build a non-violent home for themselves and their children. The supportive and rehabilitative therapy they receive assists them during their stay at the shelter and during the transition to independent life in the community.

Women's International Zionist Organization halfway house project

This unique project assists women and their children who have concluded their stay at a Women's International Zionist Organization shelter and are ready to take their first steps as a single-parent family. The women and children are housed in

rented apartments near the shelter for a period of one year and receive counselling and care throughout that time. For some of the women, it is the first time that they are totally independent.

Women's International Zionist Organization centres for the prevention of violence in the family

Treating the problem is only one solution. Another is prevention. Women's International Zionist Organization operates centres for the prevention of violence in the family. The centres treat the abused woman, the abusive husband and their children within the community framework. Workshops are conducted for police staff and emergency room doctors. Volunteers are trained, and they visit schools to talk to children about domestic violence, bullying and antisocial behaviour.

Women's International Zionist Organization assistance to battered women who file a police complaint

In order to guarantee that the frightened women will continue to file complaints against their abusive partners, Women's International Zionist Organization has designed and operates, with the police, a unique programme to reach out and give the victims of domestic violence the security, assistance and support they need.

Women's International Zionist Organization legal action

Women's International Zionist Organization operates a network of offices staffed by lawyers, mediators, psychologists, social workers and paraprofessional volunteers that provides advice and legal aid on family issues such as couple mediation, custody of children and divorce agreements, and information outlining women's rights and Women's International Zionist Organization services.

New initiative

Women's International Zionist Organization is part of an international programme that targets the abusive man. It provides an intensive, therapeutic, educational framework for men who were removed from their homes by court order because of physical abuse of their spouses.

Trafficking

Although not defined specifically as domestic violence, trafficking of women is undoubtedly a form of violence. Women's International Zionist Organization lobbies actively nationally and internationally to punish those that encourage, organize and generate pornography, prostitution and trafficking. Women's International Zionist Organization supports national programmes put in place to help the victims escape the cycle of degradation, abuse and violence and help them prepare to re-enter society with dignity.

This is a very condensed overview of Women's International Zionist Organization programmes to eradicate domestic violence. It is the ultimate objective of Women's International Zionist Organization to strengthen the network of programmes that provide the emotional and mental support to women they need in

order for them to break the cycle of violence and achieve a better life for themselves and their children.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

The General Assembly designated 25 November as the International Day of the Elimination of Violence against Women, and invited non-governmental organizations to organize events that stress the severity of the problem. Women's International Zionist Organization marks the day by organizing an annual ceremony to honour the memory of the victims and draw the attention of the media by creating awareness of the fact that there is no romance in domestic violence. We should erase from the media the terms "murder for family honour", "murder for romantic reasons", "crimes of passion". There is no romance in death and there is no honour in the murder of women. This was the message of Women's International Zionist Organization last 25 November, when thousands of victims, relatives and members of the public attended the ceremonies of commemoration.
