

WOMEN'S COMMISSION

Information Note on 57th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

INTRODUCTION

This paper reports on the Women's Commission (WoC)'s participation at the 57th Session of the United Nations (UN) Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) from 4 to 6 March 2013 in New York, the United States (US).

BACKGROUND

2. CSW is a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council, dedicated exclusively to gender equality and advancement of women. It is the principal global policy-making body on women issues. Every year, representatives of Member States gather at the United Nations Headquarters in New York to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and advancement of women worldwide. CSW meets annually for a period of 10 working days in around late February to early March.

57th SESSION OF THE CSW

3. The 57th Session of CSW was held from 4 to 15 March 2013. The priority theme this year is "Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls".

4. The China delegation was led by Ambassador WANG Min, Deputy Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations. Mrs Stella LAU, the WoC Chairperson and Ms Jeanne FUNG, Assistant Secretary for the Labour and Welfare Bureau attended the

first three days of the session as part of the China delegation.

5. At the session, participants shared experience, practices and views in relation to the implementation of the previous commitments in various international conferences and conventions with regard to the priority theme. Member States, representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and UN entities participated in the session. A series of parallel events were also organised by Member States and NGOs which provided additional opportunities for information exchange and networking.

6. The tentative agreed conclusions (**Annex A**) will be adopted to call on governments and UN entities to take the following actions in order to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, including women and girls, and to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of violence against women and girls and eliminate impunity –

- a. strengthening implementation of legal and policy frameworks and accountability;
- b. Addressing structural causes and risk factors to prevent violence against women and girls;
- c. strengthening multisectoral services and responses to violence against women and girls; and
- d. improving the evidence-base.

7. On 5 March 2013, WoC Chairperson gave a verbal statement on the legal framework and preventive measures in Hong Kong to protect women and girls from violence at a panel which examined strategies to eliminate and prevent all forms of violence against women and girls. The statement is at **Annex B**.

NETWORKING WITH ACWF AND WOMEN'S NGOs

8. The WoC Chairperson took the opportunity to host a networking dinner with representatives from the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations, ACWF, and Macao SAR on 5 March 2013. They have exchanged ideas with the Hong Kong representatives on

various issues of concern to women.

ADVICE SOUGHT

9. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

Women's Commission Secretariat
March 2013

8 February 2013
Draft presented by CSW Bureau

Commission on the Status of Women
57th session
4 – 15 March 2013

The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls

Draft agreed conclusions

1. The Commission on the Status of Women reaffirms the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and the declarations adopted by the Commission on the occasion of the tenth and fifteenth anniversaries of the Fourth World Conference on Women. **(E/CN.6/2011/12, CSW55 agreed conclusions, para.1)**. The Commission also reaffirms the international commitments made in the Programme of Action at the International Conference on Population and Development and the key actions for its further implementation **(based on General Assembly resolution A/RES/67/144, Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, PP7)**.
2. The Commission reiterates that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the relevant conventions of the International Labour Organization, provide a legal framework for the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls **(E/CN.6/2013/3 paras.3, 4 and E/CN.6/2013/4 para.4)**.
3. The Commission reaffirms the commitment to the full and effective implementation of and follow-up to all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, in particular the Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Violence Against Women, and the Economic and Social Commission and its subsidiary bodies on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls **(E/CN.6/2007/9, and based on CSW51 agreed conclusions, para.4)**. It also reaffirms its previous sets of agreed conclusions on violence against women and the girl child, as well as relevant Security Council and Human Rights Council resolutions **(E/CN.6/2013/3 para.7 and E/CN.6/2013/4 para.5)**.
4. The Commission stresses that “violence against women” means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women and girls, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life **(based on A/RES/67/144, OP1)**.
5. The Commission condemns all forms of violence against women and girls. It recognizes their changing manifestations and contexts and that intimate partner violence and domestic violence remain the most prevalent forms. It also notes that particular groups of women and girls who face multiple and intersecting forms of

discrimination are exposed to increased risk of violence (**based on E/CN.6/2013/3 para.11 and E/CN.6/2013/4 para.9**).

6. The Commission recognizes that violence against women and girls occurs in all countries, contexts and settings and is one of the most pervasive violations of human rights. Violence against women and girls is a manifestation of the historically unequal power relations between men and women and systemic gender-based discrimination (**based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.15**).
7. The Commission urges States to strongly condemn all forms of violence against women and girls and to refrain from invoking any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations with respect to its elimination as set out in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (**based on A/RES/67/144 OP10**).
8. The Commission urges all States to meet their obligations at all levels, using all appropriate means of a legal, political, administrative and social nature, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, including women and girls, and to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of violence against women and girls and eliminate impunity (**based on A/RES/67/144 OP 11**).
9. The Commission stresses that the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women in all its dimensions is essential for addressing the root causes of violence against women and girls. It also recognizes that the prevention of and response to violence are interlinked, requiring States to act at each and every opportunity and to adopt a comprehensive and holistic approach that ensures accountability (**based on E/CN.6/2013/3 para.9 and E/CN.6/2013/4 paras.15, 19**).
10. The Commission welcomes the progress made in addressing violence against women and girls such as the adoption of laws and policies, the implementation of prevention measures, the establishment of support services for survivors and improvements in data collection, analysis and research. The Commission also welcomes the contributions and participation by all stakeholders including governments, women's and other civil society organizations and survivors in efforts to address violence against women and girls (**based on A/67/220 paras.62-64**).
11. The Commission recognizes that despite progress made, significant gaps and challenges remain in ending the scourge of violence against women and girls. It is concerned about the gap between commitments and action; the inadequate implementation of legal and policy frameworks; the insufficient allocation of funding and resources; and that existing efforts are not comprehensive, coordinated, consistent, sustained or adequately monitored and evaluated (**based on E/CN.6/2013/3 para.58 and E/CN.6/2013/4 para.13**).

12. The Commission stresses that ending violence against women and girls is an imperative for the achievement of gender equality, human rights, peace and security, development and the internationally agreed development goals, in particular the Millennium Development Goals (**based on A/RES/67/144 PP 15.**).
13. The Commission urges governments, the relevant entities of the United Nations system, international and regional organizations, women's and other civil society organizations, and the private sector, to take the following actions at the national, regional, and global levels as relevant:

A. Strengthening implementation of legal and policy frameworks and accountability

- a) Ratify and fully implement the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, withdraw all reservations to the Convention, and ratify or accede to its Optional Protocol; and include detailed information on measures taken to end violence against women and girls in reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women so as to increase accountability (**based on E/CN.6/2013/3 para 59(a),(c) and E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89(a),(c).**
- b) Adopt and accelerate the effective implementation of comprehensive legal frameworks that criminalize violence against women and girls; mandate protection and support services and prevention measures; and cover the prosecution and punishment of perpetrators to end impunity (**E/CN.6/2013/4 para.59 (g).**
- c) Implement multisectoral national action plans and policies which include measures for prevention, services and responses, data collection, research, monitoring and evaluation; the establishment of coordination mechanisms; the allocation of resources; and clear timelines and benchmarks for results to be achieved (**E/CN.6/2013/3 para.59 (f) and E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (j).**
- d) Ensure that in conflict, post-conflict, transitional and other humanitarian settings, the prevention and response to all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual violence, are adequately addressed, including through the provision of reparations and the meaningful involvement of women and women's organizations (**based on E/CN.6/2013/3 para.59(l) and E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89(w).**
- e) Strengthen bilateral, sub-regional, regional and international cooperation mechanisms and initiatives, including information exchanges on best practices, of governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to address the transnational organised crime problem of trafficking in persons, especially women and children (**based on A/RES/67/145, Trafficking in women and girls, PP26.**)
- f) Strengthen governance and coordination and oversight mechanisms to ensure implementation, monitoring and evaluation of laws, national action plans and policies (**based on E/CN.6/2013/3 para.59 (i) and E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (k).**

- g) Allocate dedicated and sufficient resources for the full implementation of laws, national action plans and policies to address violence against women and girls including through the expanded use of gender-responsive budgeting (**based on E/CN.6/2013/3 para.59 (g) and E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (k)**).
- h) Ensure that efforts to end violence against women and girls are a priority area in aid allocation and development cooperation.
- i) Encourage private sector investment in programmes and strategies to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls.
- j) Institutionalize mandatory and ongoing capacity building for public officials working in the areas of education, health, social welfare, justice and immigration, as well as the judiciary, police and military, to adequately address violence against women and girls in a gender-sensitive manner; and put in place accountability mechanisms to ensure compliance of public officials with laws and regulations (**based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (p)**).
- k) Enhance consultation and participation among all stakeholders in all efforts to address violence against women and girls, especially with survivors of violence and their organizations, so that their knowledge and experience can fully inform policies and programmes (**based on E/CN.6/2013/3 para.52**).

B. Addressing structural causes and risk factors to prevent violence against women and girls

- l) Accelerate efforts to eliminate discrimination against women and girls and ensure women's equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to education, health, social security, land, property, inheritance, employment, participation and decision-making in all spheres of life (**based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (i)**).
- m) Accelerate efforts to address social and economic inequalities, the poverty of women and girls and their lack of empowerment to reduce their vulnerability to discrimination and violence (**based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.86**).
- n) Promote and protect the human rights of all women and girls, including their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality free of coercion, discrimination and violence, their right to the highest standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health, and their reproductive rights (**based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para. 89 (h), and E/CN.6/2013/3 para.59 (j) and (k)**).
- o) Adopt and accelerate the implementation of laws, policies and programmes which protect and enable the enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including their reproductive rights, by all women and girls (**based on E/CN.6/2013/3 para.59(k) and E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (h)**).
- p) Prohibit and take action to eliminate harmful practices, including harmful customary practices and all other practices based on the idea of the inferiority or superiority of either of the sexes; and change attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that generate, foster and perpetuate discrimination and violence against women and girls such as child, early and forced marriage, sex selection, female genital

mutations and crimes committed in the name of honour **(based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (n))**.

- q) Mobilize communities and engage every individual at all levels of society, including religious and traditional leaders through the special role they play in communities, to change behaviours and practices that perpetuate and condone discrimination and violence in all spaces **(based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (n))**.
- r) Carry out awareness-raising campaigns through different means of communication which target the general public, young people and men and boys, address the structural causes of all forms of violence against women and girls, promote zero tolerance for such violence and remove the stigma of being a victim of violence **(based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (m))**.
- s) Encourage the media to develop self-regulatory guidelines that promote gender-sensitive reporting of violence against women and girls **(based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (v))**.
- t) Develop educational programmes, including comprehensive evidence-based sexuality education, that promote and build skills for respectful relationships based on gender equality and human rights, at all levels of formal and non-formal education with the involvement of adolescents, youth, parents and communities **(based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (l))**.
- u) Implement strategies and programmes to support and enable men and boys to adopt attitudes and behaviours that are based on gender equality and respectful relationships **(based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (o))**.
- v) Implement programmes and measures which encourage the equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women in child-rearing and parenting, domestic work and caregiving **(based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (o))**.
- w) Work with and engage men and boys to take responsibility for their sexual and reproductive behaviour, refrain from all forms of violence against women and girls and act to stop and to prevent such violence **(based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (o))**.
- x) Develop targeted programmes for children and young people who have experienced or witnessed violence to reduce the risk of their possible future perpetration of violence or victimization **(based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para. 89 (x))**.
- y) Ensure that public and private sector workplaces are free from violence, especially sexual harassment; and that they address violence against women and girls through regulatory and oversight frameworks and reforms, codes of conduct, protocols and procedures, as well as awareness-raising and capacity-building, in collaboration with employers and workers **(based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (q))**.
- z) Increase women's and girls' safety from violence and harassment in public spaces through awareness-raising and the involvement of local communities, enhancing crime prevention, and improved urban planning, infrastructures and public transport **(based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (s))**.

C. Strengthening multisectoral services and responses to violence against women and girls

- aa) Establish the full range of multisectoral services and responses for all forms of violence against women and girls that are sustained and include responses from police and the justice sector, shelters, legal aid, health-care services, including services for sexual and reproductive health, psycho-social counselling and support, 24-hour hotlines, and services for accompanying children at shelters, as well as long-term assistance and support (**based on E/CN.6/2013/3 para. 59. (j)**).
- bb) Take measures to ensure universal access to multisectoral services and responses for all women and girls subjected to violence including adolescent girls, those in rural areas and urban slums and those who suffer multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination such women and girls with disabilities, women and girls living with HIV, widows, and indigenous and migrant women and girls; and establish benchmarks and timelines towards this end (**based on E/CN.6/2013/3 para.59. (u, v, w and x)**).
- cc) Expand referral mechanisms between multisectoral services and implement information sharing protocols that respect the confidentiality and safety of survivors to ensure adequate integration and coordination (**E/CN.6/2013/3 para. 59 (m, n)**).
- dd) Address the health consequences, including the physical, mental and sexual and reproductive health consequences, of violence against women and girls by providing services that include first line support, treatment of injuries and psychosocial and mental health support, also emergency contraception, safe abortion where such services are permitted by the law, prophylaxis for sexually transmitted infections, as well as forensic examinations by appropriately trained professionals for those women who wish to pursue legal action (**based on the WHO guidelines (2003) and forthcoming WHO clinical and policy guidelines on “Responding to intimate partner violence and sexual violence against women”**).
- ee) Expand the availability of services and opportunities, especially free legal advice and economic support, including housing and employment, for survivors and their children to ensure their empowerment, recovery and reintegration into society (**based on E/CN.6/2013/3 para.59 (o)**).
- ff) Work towards a set of global standards to ensure the quality and consistency of services and responses, beginning with those required in the immediate aftermath of violence and progressively including those required for longer term recovery of survivors (**E/CN.6/2013/3 para.59 (q)**).

D. Improving the evidence-base

- gg) Carry out research and analysis on the structural causes of, and risk factors for violence against women and girls and its prevalence in order to inform the development of laws, national action plans, strategies and policies and make such information public to support awareness-raising (**based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89.(z)**).
- hh) Collect, analyse and disseminate reliable data on a regular basis, at the national and local levels, on different forms of violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences, disaggregated by sex, age and other relevant factors, to

- inform the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of laws, policies and programmes **(based on E/CN.6/2013/3 para.59 (z) and E/CN.6/2013/4 para.89 (y))**.
- ii) Collect data on a regular basis, in accordance with the indicators on violence against women, endorsed by the Statistical Commission, and in accordance with global ethical and safety standards **(based on E/CN.6/2013/3 para.59 (bb))**.
 - jj) Monitor and evaluate measures and programmes to address violence against women and girls and the feasibility of scaling up such measures, including through the development of indicators and evaluation tools, which are also practical and feasible for small organizations and low-income countries **(based on E/CN.6/2013/3 para.59 (cc) and E/CN.6/2013/4 (aa, bb, cc))**.
14. The Commission emphasizes that ending of violence against women and girls is not an option but must be a priority for the achievement of sustainable development, peace and security, human rights, economic growth and social cohesion. The Commission strongly recommends that the elimination of violence against women and girls be reflected as a priority area in the post-2015 development framework with clear targets and indicators for the realization of gender equality **(based on E/CN.6/2013/4 para.24)**

Speaking Notes for WoC Chairperson
The 57th Session of UN CSW, New York
4th – 6th March 2013

I. Legislative Framework

In Hong Kong, the legal framework for tackling domestic violence comprises criminal sanctions against acts of violence and civil remedies for victims of domestic violence.

2. The criminal legislative framework targets all acts of violence irrespective of the relationships, if any, between the abusers and the victims and independent of where the violence act occurs. The framework comprises the Offences against the Person Ordinance and the Crimes Ordinance.

3. For the civil legislative framework, it seeks to provide additional civil remedies for specific groups of individuals, including women and girls, in the light of their special circumstances and needs. In particular, the Domestic Violence Ordinance enacted in 1986 enables women in a marriage to obtain quick and temporary relief from molestation by applying to the court for an injunction order. The legal protection for victims of domestic violence has been further enhanced by a number of amendments made to the ordinance in recent years. The revised ordinance, which has been renamed as the Domestic and Cohabitation Relationships Violence Ordinance, now provided protection to spouses, former spouses, cohabitants and former cohabitants (irrespective of sex), and their children, as well as other immediate and extended family members.

4. The Protection of Children and Juveniles Ordinance under the civil legislative framework empowers the court to grant a care or protection order in respect of a child or juvenile who have been abused, ill-treated, neglected, or beyond control to the extent that harm may be caused to them or others. The Government renders “Place of Refuge”

for needy children and juveniles to provide them with temporary accommodation and care.

II. Administrative Measures against Domestic Violence

5. The Government has adopted a three-pronged approach to combat domestic violence and strengthen support for victims, i.e. prevent domestic violence, protect the victims and provide them with support, and stop batterers' abusive behaviors.

Three-pronged Intervention Approach

Preventive Measures

6. The Government has implemented preventive measures such as publicity and community education, and enhancing social capital so as to prevent violence against women and girls. For example, the "Strengthening Families and Combating Violence" publicity campaign is launched every year to organise territory-wide and district-based publicity and public education programmes. It aims to arouse public awareness on the importance of family solidarity and prevention of domestic violence, and to encourage people in need to seek early assistance. Major focuses of these publicity programmes include strengthening family and individual resilience, promotion of positive thinking and prevention of children and youth sexual abuse, etc. The messages have been widely spread to the public through various channels including TV and radio advertisements, posters and talks, etc.

7. The Family Life Education Resource Centre was also set up to provide a variety of multi-media resource materials to all related departmental units and social service agencies providing family education services with a view to promoting family functioning, strengthening family relationship and preventing family breakdown.

8. The Family Support Programme has been launched to mobilise volunteers to reach out to families at risk and to encourage them to receive the assistance and services which they need. It helps to prevent family problems from deteriorating into domestic violence.

Supportive Services

9. A wide range of supportive services and assistance are available for victims of domestic violence to facilitate them to seek advice and assistance, and to help them tide over the difficult period, lessen the trauma associated with violence and lead a new life.

10. The Government has set up the Integrated Family Service Centres over the territory to provide information, resources and support to needy families. A spectrum of preventive, supportive and remedial services is offered in these centres.

11. For victims of domestic violence with housing problems, social workers will provide them with appropriate assistance. Victims who are public rental housing tenants may be referred to the Government for household splitting, housing transfer and other assistance according to their needs. Social workers may also arrange volunteers to accompany the victims to look for alternative accommodation in the private sector. If the victims have genuine, imminent and long-term housing problem, social workers may recommend them to the Government for compassionate housing.

12. To support parents who are unable to take care of their children temporarily, particularly those children who are at-risk of abuse, a wide range of day and residential child care services are available. The Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project, which provides services during late evenings, weekends and public holidays, was regularised and extended to all 18 districts in October 2011.

13. There are different types of financial assistance to assist victims of domestic violence to tide over their financial difficulty. Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme provides a safety net for those who cannot support themselves financially. It is designed to bring their income up to a prescribed level to meet their basic needs. Charitable/ Trust Funds provide relief in the form of direct and temporary grants to meet the need of individuals and families in special and emergency situations for which other financial assistance may not be applicable or readily available.

Specialised Services and Crisis Intervention

14. As domestic violence is a complex problem requiring specialised skills to deal with, specialised services have been provided.

15. Family and Child Protective Services Units have been set up by the Government across the territories as specialised units to provide a co-ordinated package of one-stop service for victims of domestic violence, their families and batterers. It aims to prevent occurrence of child abuse and spouse/ cohabitant battering incidents, help the victims and their family members overcome the trauma brought by child abuse and spouse/ cohabitant battering, and assist the families restore normal functioning.

16. To strengthen support for victims of domestic violence, including those undergoing the legal proceedings, the Victim Support Programme was launched in 2010 to provide emotional support and information on community support services including legal aid services, accommodation, medical and childcare services and the relevant legal proceedings to the victims concerned. If necessary, social workers or volunteers will accompany them to attend court hearings and go through the legal proceedings so as to alleviate their fear and helplessness.

14. Individuals and families in crisis of domestic violence can seek temporary accommodation at emergency shelters. There are five refuge centres for women with a total capacity of 260 places. In 2011-12 the average utilisation rate of the five refuge centres for women was 80%. Besides, the Multi-purpose Crisis Intervention and Support Centre provides 80 short-term residential places to victims of sexual violence and individuals/ families facing domestic violence or in crisis.

15. In order to help batterers change their abusive attitude and behaviour, various types of counselling services to batterers are provided by the Government. The Batterer Intervention Programme is a psycho-education programme with 13 sessions. The Anti-violence Programme has also been introduced for batterers who are required by the courts under the Domestic and Cohabitation Relationships Violence Ordinance to participate in the psycho-education programme.

Multi-disciplinary Approach

16. The Government adopts a multi-disciplinary approach which coordinates the joint efforts of different departments, professionals and NGOs in preventing domestic violence. For example, the Committee on Child Abuse and the Working Group on Combating Violence have been set up to map out strategies to tackle the problems of child abuse, spouse or cohabitant battering and sexual violence in Hong Kong. They are chaired by Director of Social Welfare and comprising representatives from the Police, Education Bureau, Hospital Authority and NGOs and professionals such as social workers and medical practitioners.

17. At district level, there are 11 District Co-ordinating Committees on Family and Child Welfare and District Liaison Group on Family Violence, with the participation of representatives from government departments, NGOs, local organisations, and community leaders, etc., which coordinate provision of services relating to domestic violence.

18. The Government also collaborate with the relevant professionals, NGOs and community groups in combating domestic violence. The Government provides multi-disciplinary training programmes to foster a common understanding of domestic violence among various professionals. These training courses are coordinated at both headquarters and district levels.

III. Women's Commission Report on Women's Safety in Hong Kong: Eliminating Domestic Violence

19. In 2006, the Women's Commission issued the *Women's Commission Report on Women's Safety in Hong Kong: Eliminating Domestic Violence* which set out a multi-dimensional strategy to eliminate domestic violence. The Commission recommended 5 key approaches, namely women's empowerment; prevention, education and community support; early identification and intervention; criminal justice responses; and research, data-sharing and dissemination of findings. The report also put forward 21 recommendations covering law reform, services, publicity professional knowledge-sharing, etc. The Government has responded positively to the recommendations, and has adopted, for example, an early intervention strategy and stepped up

relevant publicity efforts.

20. In 2009, a report entitled *Women's Safety in Hong Kong: Eliminating Domestic Violence – An update and the Next Step* supplement to the 2006 report was published to take stock of the developments and aspects that require continuous efforts. The Commission will continue to keep in view the trend of domestic violence cases in Hong Kong and modify the strategy adopted accordingly.

21. The Commission had convened four sharing sessions with representatives from women's groups, NGOs and service agencies on the efforts made by local communities in combating domestic violence. Different sectors in society have worked together to build community network and neighbourhood support. Programmes and activities were launched at both the community and neighbourhood levels to complement the HKSAR Government's efforts in enhancing public awareness of domestic violence.