



# Socialist International Women

## SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL WOMEN

### International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women 2020

#### DECLARATION

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is a powerful call to stand in solidarity with all women and girls worldwide who are suffering the distressing mental and physical effects of gender based violence. Sadly, this year the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have made matters even worse. Millions of women are suffering disproportionately in a number of different ways, including being more likely to lose their livelihoods; being unable to access social and medical support and, particularly significantly, being isolated and trapped in violent households, bearing the brunt of intimate partner anxieties and frustrations at the dire social and economic effects of this catastrophe. As a direct result, our current global emergency has produced a considerable increase in gender based violence and homicides. This is a heartbreaking reminder of the critical need to take urgent action and commit to initiating concrete solutions to ending the misery and pain of violence against women in all its forms.

The Socialist International Women strongly reaffirms its commitment to continuing the fight against the intentional and aggressive violation of women's human rights and dignity. It is clearly evident that women and girls continue to suffer high levels of violence and gender based oppression on a daily basis. The latest available data, gathered before the COVID-19 pandemic took hold, provides a grim reminder that there remains much urgent work to do in the fight to stop violence against women. The real life horror of these figures is deeply distressing, including the unacceptable facts that 35 percent of women worldwide have suffered physical and/or sexual violence, 137 women are intentionally killed by a family member every day, and women and girls together account for 72 per cent of human trafficking, with girls representing more than three out of every four child trafficking victims. This perpetual cycle of violence, abuse and suffering affects not just women and girls but all members of society. It creates fragile and wounded families and leaves deep emotional scars which ultimately create hugely negative impacts on the sustainability and peacefulness of all of our global communities.

Women continue to provide the biggest share of household, child-rearing and extended family care-giving tasks in our communities, meaning that millions of women are predominantly at home. This makes them more vulnerable to domestic violence, at the same time as being voiceless and invisible. Actions to halt COVID-19 such as curfews have affected women severely as the level of violence against women during these lockdowns has increased dramatically. The value of women's home and care work to families and communities is enormous. Even before the pandemic, the unpaid healthcare and other care-giving roles of women contributed an estimated USD\$11 trillion to world economies. In addition, 70% of health workers and 65.3% of the global paid care-giver workforce are women, putting them in the front line of increased gender based violence within their workplaces, as well as at home. Despite all of this, services supporting vulnerable women are under increased strain, both underfunded and under resourced, with many now at breaking point. This inexcusable lack of investment in urgently needed resources and funding specifically for women is having an immediate and devastating impact on families and communities which must be urgently addressed to avoid severe long-term socio-economic damage. With the increased urgent need for emergency and on-going support services for female victims of physical and emotional violence it is now critically urgent that the political will of communities and nations is robustly challenged at the

highest levels and strongly mandated to ensure that women's safety is a top priority in both policy and funding decisions.

The Socialist International Women firmly supports all initiatives which encourage positive change for women at all levels, including the UN Women Shadow Pandemic public awareness campaign to highlight the acutely painful effects that curfews and quarantines are having on women's physical safety and mental wellbeing. It is vital that all of us, women and men, take responsibility for each other and stand in firm solidarity to work together to actively support, look out for and protect each other both now and into the future.

The Socialist International Women remains firm in strongly advocating the effective use of appropriate political pressure, and particularly advocates for increased women's participation in political processes, as one of the most powerful ways to create meaningful change. The prevailing patriarchal system has proven repeatedly that without a significant input from women, women's issues are far too often entirely ignored, marginalised or trivialised. At this unprecedented time in our global history it is now more important than ever before that the vital concerns severely affecting women and girls right now are forced to the front of the political stage. As we are now in the final decade before 2030, when our collective vision of genuine, meaningful gender equality is to be realised, our communities and nations must not be allowed to slide backwards on gender equality issues and particularly must urgently address the dark stain of violence against women. As communities and economies eventually begin to recover from this crisis, the serious issues of violence against women and creating tangible gender equality must remain urgent priorities for action.

The Socialist International Women remains strongly committed to its primary mission of realising its vision of a global community where gender equality is a natural socio-economic state. A vision of a global society where women's human rights are respected and violence against women has been completely eliminated. The Socialist International Women stands firm in its belief that only by achieving this state can global sustainability and lasting peace be attained for the social and physical nourishment, fulfilment and wellbeing of all.

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References:

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<https://data.unwomen.org/features/covid-19-sends-care-economy-deeper-crisis-mode>  
<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/in-focus-gender-equality-in-covid-19-response/violence-against-women-during-covid-19>