

Oral Statement at 53<sup>rd</sup> Human Rights Council Session  
Item 3: Interactive Dialogue on Violence against women and girls

21/06/2023

Mr. President,

We welcome the Rapporteur's report on violence against women and girls.

In Kenya we raise concerns about delayed prosecution of sexual and domestic violence cases by the criminal justice system and recommend increasing the number of specialised sexual offences courts with specialised personnel in registries, courts and prosecution as well as scaling up the integrated response to sexual and gender-based violence such as “Policare” and SGBV Recovery Centres and shelters in all Kenyan counties.

In Guatemala, the legislature approved in March 2022 the “law for the protection of life and family”. The legislation that would have criminalized abortion and limited the self-determination of women was however dropped after being protested by women’s rights groups.

Furthermore, four out of five indigenous women continue to live in poverty and half of them have not had the opportunity to learn how to read and write. The state of Guatemala should therefore give priority to the implementation of recommendation 39 on the rights of indigenous women and girls of the CEDAW convention.

Violence against women also undermines the work of Women Human Rights Defenders. In Kenya, women supporting survivors of gender-based violence report threats, intimidation, and attacks.

In Guatemala UDEFEGUA systematized 1149 attacks against women human rights defenders in 2022, compared to 355 in the year before. We urge the government of Guatemala to put in place an inclusive and integral National Policy on the protection of human rights defenders, which considers measures needed to address gender-specific risks faced by women human rights defenders.

Thank you