



## NGO Committee on Sustainable Development, NY

*Environmental, social and economic development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

~ **“Turn Your Passions into Actions for Change”** ~

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The NGO Committee on Sustainable Development-NY is honored to Co-Host our monthly meeting with the Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the United Nations during the 60<sup>th</sup> UN Commission on the Status of Women.

### **Domestic Violence Against Women & Girls: A Major Obstacle to Women’s Empowerment Concept Note - 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

Violence against women and girls is a global pandemic. It is said that seven out of ten women suffer from abuse and violence in her lifetime. A lot of this violence is not inflicted by strangers, but by loved ones in the home: husbands, fathers, brothers, intimate partners. Women and girls tell of horrors that have been inflicted on them: raped, stabbed, kicked in the stomach while pregnant, beaten with all sorts of objects that lead to broken bones and skulls, acid attacks, starved, poisoned, murdered. But domestic violence also occurs without physical violence and can include psychological abuse or emotional abuse with victims often blaming themselves for their situation which leads to a lifetime of hurt.

Our panel discussion will address the impact of Domestic Violence Against Women and Girls. The speakers will address domestic violence in their contexts; how domestic violence impedes the empowerment of women; share some of their legislation and successes in stemming the tide of domestic violence.

Domestic violence is often a secret kept behind closed doors and within families in homes across a wide spectrum of societies. One form of domestic violence is referred to as discipline which is learned and shared from generation to generation with victims hiding their pain due to shame and embarrassment. They live with conflicting feelings of being loved and cared for while a family member is inflicting hurt. These victims will try to keep up appearances of a happy family life for fear of retaliation. Often victims are children who have witnessed their mother suffer from domestic violence and they are even told that they could be the reason for the violence being inflicted against their mother. All this can destroy the victim’s sense of self-worth. Children running away from their families and these violent homes put themselves at the risk of being trafficked or killed. A woman or child trying to escape these homes put themselves in more danger, because this is when they might be befriended by those who could inflict more harm even death.

The NGO Committee on Sustainable Development-NY recognizes that in order to attain the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda the insidious violence against women and girls has to end, for there can be no sustainable development when horrific acts are carried out against a large percentage of the world’s population. The United Nations has long put forth that violence against women is a result of gender discrimination and harmful gender stereotypes about the role of women and girls that shapes social, economic, cultural and political structures.

These notions are put forth in the [Beijing Platform of Action](#), the [Vienna Declaration and Program for Action](#), the [Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women](#), the mandate of the [Special Rapporteur](#) on violence against women, its causes and consequences, outcome documents of the CSW (the [Agreed Conclusions](#) of the CSW57 strongly condemned all forms of violence against women and girls and noted that domestic violence remains the most prevalent form of violence that affects women of all social strata across the world), and numerous [General Assembly](#) and [Human Rights Council](#) resolutions. General Recommendations [12](#) and [19](#) of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women ([CEDAW](#)) clearly recognize violence against women as the maximum expression of inequality between men and women.

Not to leave children behind, the UN has also put forth [Resolution 25/10](#) on Ending Violence Against Children: A Global Call to Make the Invisible Visible. Two of the targets for [SDG 5](#) on Gender Equality are: End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere; Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation. In [SDG 3](#) to Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. Two targets of [SDG 16](#) on: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels includes 16.1 significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere and 16.2 end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children.

Together we put forth a **Global Call to Action to Break the Cycle of Domestic Violence** so we truly **Leave No One Behind**. We kindly request for all key stakeholders to join us in taking major steps to offer better protection and safe havens for victims. These victims can be helped with compassion and educational tools to strengthen their resolve to overcome their pain, get healing, and achieve **a lifetime that is empowered and sustainable with Justice for All**.