



Federal Ministry of Justice

Violence Against Women: AGF Re-assures of FG Mandate to Enforce Rule of Law

The Honourable Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami, SAN has reassured of Federal Government's mandate is to ensure that the law is used as a tool to improve the lives of Nigerians.

Malami made the statement in his message to commemorate the 2016 International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women insisted that the rule of law governs actions of individuals as well as that of law enforcement agencies.



Left-Right: Representative of the Women Affairs Minister, Ilyasu Omar Zubair, Director Legal Drafting, Mr. Hamza Tahir, Attorney General/Commissioner for Justice, Barr. Rakia Tanko, and UN Women Deputy Country Representative, Adji Fatou Ndiaye, at the commemoration of the 2016 International World Day for the elimination of violence against women, held at the Ministry's Auditorium Abuja, on 25th November, 2016.

The event held at the premises of the Federal Ministry of Justice had as its theme, 'The Impact of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAAP) Act and Other Legislation on the Elimination of Violence Against Women' on Friday November, 2016.

Malami who was represented by the Director Legal Drafting, Mr. Hamza Tahir, explained that the relevant legal and social recommendations should be shared in order to harness comprehensive and systematic actions for the sustenance of

the Elimination of Violence against Women and also achieve one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 which promotes genders equality.

He said, ‘ it is heart-warming to note that in the progress report of the SDG Goal 5 (Gender Equality) tremendous progress has been made in the area of gender equality and women’s empowerment in recent decades. Girls ‘access to education has improved, the rate of child marriage declined, progress is being made in the area of reproductive health and reduction in maternal deaths’.

The AGF further explained that gender equality remains a persistent challenge for countries worldwide and that the lack of such equality is a major obstacle to sustainable development, stressing that in the year 2014, 143 countries including Nigeria guaranteed equality between men and women in their constitutions.

“Subsequently, Nigeria domesticated the Child Right Act in 2003 and it has been adopted in a number of states and the passage of the Violence against Persons Prohibition (VAAP) Act, 2015 shows the commitment of the government to a sustainable elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls.

Malami therefore assured that his Ministry would ensure continuous collaboration between government agencies, the public and Civil Society Organization, in order to send, loud and powerful messages to perpetrators of violence that they would be found and brought to book.

Also speaking, the Honourable Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development, Hajiya Aisha Jummai Alhassan in her remarks disclosed that men and women are victims of violence in an increasing violent world and that the forms of violence experienced by women and girls include acts that entails specific assaults on their sexuality, female genital mutilation, widowhood practices, male child preference, early and forced marriages among others.

Alhassan who was represented by Mr. Iliyasu Umar hinted that violence against women whether in war time or at peace time is harmful to our National Development, adding that it is one phenomenon that has exhibited the capacity of eroding women’s ability to participate normally in social and economic life.

Kebbi State Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Rakiya Tanko Ayuba-Haruna in her keynote address disclosed that the violation of human rights and its impact ranges from immediate to long term multiple physical, sexual and mental consequences for women and girls resulting in deaths.

She expressed that due to the stigma and silence surrounding the issue of violence; it is difficult to obtain data on violence against women in Nigeria.

According to her, the violence against women has been on the increase from all directions and corners of the world and it is time to create awareness among the common public on the growing atrocities being committed against women and children.

However, she said that it is necessary for all stakeholders to pursue reviews of its activities targeted at eliminating violence against women in order to take stock of the successes and challenges so far.

In her contribution, the United Nations Deputy Country Representative, Adji Fatou Ndiaye noted substantial funding shortfall as the major challenges to efforts to prevent and end violence against women and girls worldwide, the resources which in any case would better be spent on development.

She explained that the initiative of the UN Secretary-General's Campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women's call for 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence provides a moment to bring the issue of sustainable financing for initiatives to prevent and end violence against women to global prominence and also presents the opportunity for resource and the donor community.

"Frameworks such as Sustainable Development Goals, which includes a target on ending violence against women and girls, offer huge promise, but must be adequately funded in order to bring real and significant changes in the lives of women and girls", she reaffirmed.

The International World Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women is a global event marked on the 25th November of every year.

The purpose of the event is to examine the implementation and enforcement of some of the country's legislations that address violence against women as well as create awareness to the Nigerian public.