



**Statement on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women**  
**Mouvement Mondial des Mères International – Make Mothers Matter International**  
**25 November 2011**

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The problem of violence against women and girls has reached pandemic proportions. At least one in three women in the world has been beaten or suffered sexual or other abuse – generally by someone close to her.

In 1999, the General Assembly of the United Nations designated November 25 as **the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women**<sup>1</sup>. This day launches 2 weeks of action against sexual violence, until 10 December – the celebration of the Declaration of Human Rights.

MMM International welcomes the important progress achieved in the establishment of international norms and standards. Legal and political agreements – both regional and international – have clarified the obligations of countries to eradicate and punish violence against women. Nevertheless, certain States continue to contravene these binding agreements.

MMM International, recalling the importance of Resolution 1325 adopted in 2000 by the Security Council of the United Nations which requires the equal participation of women in peace and security, notes that efforts must be significantly increased to strengthen the mechanisms which prevent, curb and heal the effects of violence against women in times of peace as well as in times of war.

It is essential to recognise the role of women – particularly mothers – in developing a culture of peace and non-violence within their family and society and also in contributing to the building of peace in countries after conflict. The mission of MMM International is to help society develop in this way.

The European Delegation of MMM International can confirm through its recent Survey of mothers in 16 European countries<sup>2</sup>, that the absence of violence and healthy relationships within the family were highlighted as the most important factors contributing to the well-being of mothers and their family. Fighting violence against women is necessary for the well-being of the family – the basic building-block of society.

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<sup>1</sup> Since 1981, the defenders of women's rights have been able to celebrate action against sexual violence on 25 November, which marks the anniversary of the brutal assassination of the three political opponents – the Mirabal sisters - in 1960 on the orders of the dictator of the Dominican Republic, Rafael Trujillo (1930-1961).

<http://www.un.org/fr/events/endviolenceday/index.shtml>

<sup>2</sup> Survey of Mothers in Europe 2011 : <http://www.mmmeurope.org/enqu%C3%Aate-m%C3%A8res-en-europe-2011-r%C3%A9sultats>



The elimination of violence against women and mothers should be of the highest priority at every level. However, this issue has not been accorded sufficient importance to implement significant changes for which political will and coherent strategies are crucial.

MMM International demands, therefore, that:

- Sexual violence perpetrated against women in war zones should be classed as « war crimes »
- there be adopted, particularly in the least developed countries and those emerging from conflict, a coherent and strategic approach by all parties concerned - governments, the international community and civil society - there is urgent need for resources and regular aid
- The family should be accorded special importance as the main source of non-violence and security for parents and children
- The main causes of violence against women should be identified in order to implement preventative measures particularly in the family.

Finally, MMM International forcefully reminds many world leaders that they have still to sign the Council of Europe Convention<sup>3</sup> dealing with the prevention and the fight against violence towards women and domestic violence. Although this Treaty has been available for signature since May 2011, to date, only a few countries have signed this essential agreement for the safety of women everywhere.

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<sup>3</sup> Convention du Conseil de l'Europe sur la prévention et la lutte contre la violence à l'égard des femmes et la violence domestique  
<http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?NT=210&CM=8&DF=22/07/2011&CL=FRE>