



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 16, 2021
#EveryWomanTreaty

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Women's Rights Activists in Canada and 127 Other Countries Release Global Treaty to End Violence Against Women and Girls

**Eight Years in the Making, Draft Treaty Now Ready for UN Member States to
Finalize and Ratify**

(November 16, 2021) - Today, one week before the UN Women's [16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence](#) begins, women's rights activists from 128 countries, including Canada, released the [first draft of a global treaty to end violence against women and girls](#) after eight years of extensive research and consultation with experts. The treaty will now go to UN Member States who are being urged to finalize and ratify this important international agreement.

"We have international treaties for tobacco, landmines and torture," said [Marina Pisklakova-Parker](#), one of the Co-Founders of [Every Woman Treaty](#) who started the first domestic violence helpline and advocates for changing laws in Russia, for which her organization was listed as a foreign agent. "We need a global treaty to protect women and girls from violence."

According to the World Health Organization, violence against women is "devastatingly pervasive," [impacting 1 in 3 women worldwide](#), with younger women most at risk. UN Women calls this a "shadow pandemic," which has only intensified since the outbreak of COVID-19.

Already the [President of Nigeria](#), the [Secretary General of the Organization of American States](#), the former Minister of Women's Affairs in Afghanistan, and four Nobel Laureates, have come out in favor of this global treaty.

"Violence against women and girls is preventable," said [Judge Najla Ayoubi](#), another Every Woman Treaty Co-Founder who was the first female judge in her province in Afghanistan when her father and brother were assassinated. Later, she was forced to flee for her own life. "Women's rights activists put our lives on the line every day fighting for the right to be free of violence, but we can't do it alone. Laws and policies work."

In countries that have domestic violence laws, for example, women have a [32% lower mortality rate](#). Intimate partner violence in eight communities in Uganda was [52% lower](#) after violence prevention training. In the U.S., fifteen years after the Violence Against Women Act passed, intimate partner violence [dropped 53%](#).

But international law does not offer sufficient protection. Right now there are regional treaties, such as the [Belém do Pará Convention](#) in Latin America, the [Maputo Protocol](#) in Africa and the [Istanbul Convention](#) in Europe, which have all proven effective, but leave out three quarters of the world's population. Efforts made to retrofit CEDAW (the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women](#)) to be interpreted to include violence have not been successful.

The First Draft Global Treaty to End Violence Against Women and Girls was created in consultation with frontline activists, survivors, medical experts, academics, human rights attorneys, legal scholars, diplomats and policy-makers. It's considered a "first draft," because ultimately it is the Member States of the UN which will need to ratify it and weigh in on the final version.

"We have done the heavy lifting of creating this viable first draft, and hope this will kick-start negotiations," said [Lisa Shannon](#), CEO of Every Woman Treaty. "This is not about one country telling another country what to do. This is about nations coming together to take a stand on ending violence against women and girls once and for all."

"This global draft treaty will be the first to consolidate all of the scattered definitions of violence against women and girls," said Jane Hodges, Global Policy Advisor for Every Woman Treaty. "It combines the best elements of all into a thorough, wide-ranging, very broad definition that talks about intersectionality, and that certain groups of women and girls are at heightened risk."

A global treaty will provide essential resources and training to stop violence against women and girls. Specifically, it will:

- Clarify norms to prevent, protect, eliminate and condemn violence against women and girls;
- Provide a specific, metrics-based reporting framework;
- Establish an international monitoring body;
- Require training and accountability for police officers, judges and health professionals;
- Increase funding for survivor services such as shelters, hotlines and legal aid; and
- Prioritize violence prevention education.

"Sadly, almost every woman has a story to share about violence that she or someone she knows has experienced," said Pisklakova-Parker. "Women's rights activists need to know that world leaders have our backs."

Interviews are available with women's rights activists across the globe about this first draft treaty. Read the full draft and the three-page summary [here](#).

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