

79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

High Level Meeting to Commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

***Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Cyprus,
Ambassador Maria Michail***

New York, 25 November 2024

Mr. President,

Cyprus fully aligns with the statement delivered by the European Union. Allow me to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

On the commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, allow me to reiterate that prevention and combating of all forms of violence against women and girls is within the highest priorities of the Republic of Cyprus.

We strongly condemn sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in all its forms and manifestations; online and offline; in public and private spheres, in peacetime as well as in crisis and conflict. SGBV is a major violation of human rights and an impediment for the full realisation of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, deeply rooted in stereotyped gender roles and historic inequalities.

Mr. President,

Cyprus has taken several measures aiming at effectively combating gender-based violence. A National Strategy and a National Action Plan on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women have been adopted for the years 2023-2028, confronting all forms of gender-based violence in a cohesive and thorough manner.

Additionally, Cyprus has adopted a complete legislative framework to prevent and combat gender-based violence. The “2021 Law on Preventing and Combating

Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence and Related Issues” places gender at its core, recognising that women are adversely affected by gender-based violence as a consequence of inequality.

Mr. President,

Femicide is the most brutal and extreme manifestation of violence against women and girls, taking place in all regions and countries around the world. Numbers cannot lie: in 2023, every 10 minutes a woman or a girl was killed by a partner or a family member. This is unacceptable.

Cyprus’ Parliament took a highly significant step in 2022, adopting a law on femicide. The law was the first of such piece of legislation in Europe, integrating femicide into the Criminal Code as a distinct crime, rendering gender-related killings as an aggravating factor when imposing sentences. Cyprus encourages all States to acknowledge the existence of femicide and define gender-related killings in their national legal frameworks.

Mr. President,

As a newly elected member to the Human Rights Council, Cyprus has set as a priority the elimination of violence against women and girls. As we approach the 30th anniversary since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform of Action, it is more crucial than ever to reflect on its principles, assess our progress and our shared commitments. Now is the time to “orange the world”!

I thank you.