



25 November 2024

## **Christian Conference of Asia's Statement on International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women**

The year 2024 marks the 25th anniversary of the UN General Assembly's designation of 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, in memory of the Mirabal sisters, who were assassinated in 1960. Despite the strides made in the fight for women's rights, violence against women and girls (VAWG) remains deeply entrenched across the globe. In 2024, women and girls continue to face violence, with some even being murdered because of their gender. Women in the public eye, such as politicians, human rights defenders, and journalists, are especially vulnerable to targeted acts of violence both online and offline, some of which tragically result in fatal outcomes.

Across Asia, violence against women and girls remains particularly severe, with countless women facing intimate partner violence, harassment, forced marriage, exploitation, and trafficking. Such violence stems from entrenched patriarchal norms, socioeconomic inequality, and systemic erosion of women's rights, posing an ongoing crisis that demands urgent attention and coordinated action.

The gravity of this issue is reflected in country-specific data. In Pakistan, abduction and forced conversion of minority women have become common, while in India, a 26% rise in crimes against women includes kidnappings, dowry deaths, and domestic violence. Bangladesh sees over half of married women experiencing violence from a spouse, while Myanmar's political instability has intensified cases of gender-based violence. The Philippines, Indonesia, and South Korea report alarming rates of intimate partner violence, femicide, and digital harassment, and migrant women from countries like Nepal and Thailand face heightened risks of trafficking and exploitation. These realities underscore the urgent need to address VAWG in all its forms and to ensure a safer, more equitable society for all women and girls. States, as duty-bearers, must be accountable for upholding women's rights and creating environments where women are free from violence, discrimination, and exploitation.

The Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) has been steadfast in its commitment to promoting the dignity and rights of women. Through its Ecumenical Women's Action Against Violence (EWAAV) initiative, the CCA has created platforms for advocacy and awareness to combat VAWG. This initiative engages member churches and councils to develop faith-based approaches and effective strategies to address violence against women and girls, facilitating partnerships with local governments, civil society organisations, and faith-based movements advocating for women's rights. Additionally, it fosters a spirit of solidarity in the pursuit of justice and equality for women worldwide.

The CCA joins the international community in calling for cohesive and strategic approaches to address the root causes of violence against women, including deeply ingrained gender inequalities, harmful cultural norms, limited access to justice, and socio-economic inequalities. The CCA urges its member churches and councils to amplify efforts to address violence against women and girls through advocacy, public statements, and concrete actions that promote women's safety, dignity, and empowerment, which includes supporting survivors of violence, engaging in educational initiatives to change harmful attitudes, and working with other key actors to take meaningful action and work towards lasting transformation.

Let us reaffirm our commitment to protecting women's rights, championing justice, and fostering a world where every woman and girl can live free from fear, harm, and oppression. May our faith and actions inspire a transformative path towards peace, equality, and enduring change for all.

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