

INTERNATIONAL
FEMMES ET VILLES
MUJERES Y CIUDADES
WOMEN IN CITIES

The 1st International Seminar
ON WOMEN'S SAFETY

Making the links

The Montréal Declaration on Women's Safety

We are women and men, in all our diversity, meeting in Montreal on the occasion of the 1st International Seminar on Women's Safety, May 9 to 11, 2002.

We are representatives of women's groups, grassroots, community and non-governmental organizations, cities and municipalities, police forces, government agencies, the research community, international networks and United Nations agencies, from five continents, 27 countries, and 55 cities and municipalities.

We call for action building on the recommendations of the conferences in Beijing 1995 (the Fourth World Conference on Women), Istanbul 1996 (the Second City Summit), Johannesburg 1998 (Building Partnerships on Crime Prevention and Community Safety), and Naples 2000 (Forum on Safety and Democracy).

GIVEN THAT:

Well-founded fear of crime, and various forms of violence against women, represent, for all women, a major obstacle in the exercise of their freedom and the achievement of gender equality.

The effects of violence against women constitute an obstacle to the development of communities and societies around the world.

CONSIDERING THAT:

The strategies put in place by public, private and community-based organizations must put women at the centre of the action, and aim to reinforce the capacity of women's individual and collective actions.

Co-ordinated approaches to intervention, including partnerships, and the pooling of resources, are essential principles for effective action.

Good urban governance is a prerequisite to women's empowerment. This must include, amongst others, the allocation of adequate resources to women's organizations.

The success of initiatives to address women's safety and security depend on the full involvement of men as well as women.

The solutions introduced by women to increase safety and security make cities and municipalities safer for all.

WE APPEAL:

To women

Mobilize and speak out on issues of violence and insecurity, inspired by actions achieved by women throughout the world.

Support women and men in their efforts to attain gender equality in decision-making positions (municipal governance, police, etc.). Support women in positions of power to remain accountable and promote equality.

To men

Listen, accompany, and support women in their drive for autonomy and empowerment, and work to reduce men's violence.

Mobilize men and boys to challenge traditional gender roles in order to prevent violence against women and girls.

To women's groups, grassroots and community organizations

Work in partnership with all the relevant organizations, especially municipalities, to ensure that women's specific needs are taken into account in local prevention strategies. Special efforts should be given to outreach isolated communities. Create local to local exchanges.

To cities and municipalities

Put in place local safety policy, planning, and practices which integrate a gender approach, and which support women's safety initiatives.

Provide greater opportunities for women's involvement, for example safety audits, including formal mechanisms to ensure adequate resources to respond to recommendations and sustain initiatives.

Create formal mechanisms to increase the participation of women in decision-making in local governance (elected officials, managers and citizens).

Allocate municipal funds to gender equality, community development and poverty reduction programs. Ensure transparency and accountability in municipal administration.

Develop international cooperation at the municipal level including the exchange of good practices and experiences.

To police services

Ensure that the police take a preventive rather than a repressive approach to violence and insecurity. Work towards changing the organizational culture of the police, including the provision of adequate training on the causes and impacts of violence and insecurity on women. Women's organizations and experiences should form part of such training.

Work in partnerships on the development of strategies to promote women's safety and empowerment.

Increase the numbers of women in the police.

To the education sector

Integrate gender awareness, anti-violence, and human rights teaching into the curriculum, to enable youth to challenge stereotypes and attitudes on gender-based violence.

Provide gender training for all school staff.

Encourage the use of student-led safety audits in and around schools.

Mobilize children and teenaged girls through empowerment strategies, including self-defence, aimed at ensuring a safer city for all.

To the media

Contribute to community mobilization, and facilitate access to services aimed at ensuring women's safety.

Challenge gender stereotypes and inequalities through information and awareness campaigns, including studies on women's experiences. Highlight and disseminate best practices. Work to reduce sensationalised reporting.

To the research community

Encourage research on women's safety and the integration of gender in crime prevention, including the development of appropriate survey methods, process and evaluation tools.

Provide research assistance and support to community-based project implementation and evaluation.

To the private sector

Recognize the economic and social impacts of violence against women and that prevention is cost effective and beneficial.

Audit the impacts of all decisions on the safety and security of women employees, clients, and consumers, by working with unions, women's groups and community organizations to include these issues in workplaces.

Partner with local organizations and municipalities, and financially support initiatives promoting women's safety.

To governments

Develop policies and programs to ensure women's financial autonomy, including women's right to own property.

Develop integrated, concrete and accountable gender approaches in national crime prevention programs, including the allocation of necessary resources for the development and sustainability of strategies and initiatives on women's safety and security.

Incorporate a gender approach in the training of elected officials and managers.

Politically and financially support local governments in their efforts to promote safety.

To international networks and UN agencies

Sustain and contribute to the development, documentation, adaptation, dissemination, and replication of good practices and tools. Increase the availability of electronic exchange, and of technical assistance, especially between the South and the North. Sustainable development requires international, regional, national and local-to-local exchanges and cooperation. Support the evaluation of progress made by regular international or regional conferences on women's safety.

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