

MEXICO AND UN-WOMEN REAFFIRM THEIR COLLABORATION TO ELIMINATE GENDER VIOLENCE

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To mark International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, Foreign Secretary Claudia Ruiz Massieu and Ana Gúezmes García, UN Women representative in Mexico, signed a cooperation agreement between the Foreign Ministry and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women to develop a protocol of consular assistance for victims of gender-based violence.

Foreign Secretary Ruiz Massieu said that, on the instructions of President Enrique Peña Nieto, Mexico reaffirms its commitment to gender mainstreaming as a foreign policy priority and that the Foreign Ministry is constantly working to provide consular assistance to our fellow citizens in the countries where Mexico has diplomatic offices.

She stressed that everyone should work for equality, with special emphasis on the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls; their empowerment through education; on strengthening their capabilities; ensuring their dignity and promoting their rights.

Ana Gúezmes García, UN Women representative, highlighted Mexico's leadership in the recent adoption by the world leaders of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in September 2015—a transformative and clear agenda for global development, which recognizes that violence against women and girls is a serious but avoidable global problem and that sets goals to be achieved by 2030.

With the protocol, UN Women seeks to collaborate with Mexico's foreign policy for the comprehensive defense of the rights of Mexicans abroad, especially of women who are victims of domestic violence and who require special attention in the various stages of the migration process.

Lorena Cruz Sánchez, President of the National Women's Institute (INMUJERES), said that this sector of the population faces extreme violence in various contexts, and one particularly complex context is that of migration. "Borders offer little protection to undocumented women who cross them because of limited opportunities, or from the need to reunite with their families or because of the expulsion they experience in their hometowns," she said.

She stated that the consular attention protocol for vulnerable individuals is a first step towards consolidating a model of comprehensive care for the victims of violence.

The protocol will put mechanisms in place to provide comprehensive consular assistance and protection for women and that have an impact on and counter gender-based violence. It will include general provisions for attention with a gender perspective, from prevention to identification, attention and timely assistance, preventing the victimization of women and helping to break cycles of violence from within the Foreign Ministry's area of competency and through its network of diplomatic offices abroad.

The partnership with UN agencies, funds and programs is important for meeting the SDG and promoting human rights. There are about 220 cooperation projects between more than 20 UN agencies and Mexican institutions that have contributed knowledge and international experiences that strengthen Mexico's national policies and programs.

Cooperation on the development of the protocol of consular assistance for victims of gender-based violence is particularly important given that UN Women and specialized areas of the Foreign Ministry will share experiences and provide the technical component to ensure that the consular services take a comprehensive approach to gender equality and women's human rights, and that they are aligned with related international instruments.

The ceremony was attended by the President of the National Women's Institute, Lorena Cruz Sánchez; the Presidents of the Commissions for Gender Equality of the Senate, Diva Hadamira Gastélum, and the Chamber of Deputies, Laura Plascencia Pacheco; Guadalupe Gómez Maganda, head of the Gender Equality Unit of the Foreign Ministry; government officials; the diplomatic corps; academics; and representatives of civil society and the UN agencies in Mexico.

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women was established in 1999 by the United Nations to raise the awareness of the international community about the serious problem of violence against women.

To mark the day, the Foreign Ministry and hundreds of other iconic buildings worldwide were lit in orange as part of the UN's "Paint the World Orange" campaign and as a symbol of commitment to a brighter future in which women and girls can finally live free from violence.

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