Chairman of the ACP Committee of Ambassadors welcomes UN-EU initiative to stamp out violence against women and girls

New York, 22 September 2017/ ACP: The African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States lent its support to a major UN-EU initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls (VAWG), launched on Wednesday, 20 September in the margins of the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

The Spotlight Initiative, aimed at "transformational change" in addressing one of the most widespread and devastating human rights violations across the globe, will be financed by an envelope of €500 million contributed by the European Union, of which a substantial portion is drawn from the European Development Fund for ACP countries.

H.E. Mr. Amadou Diop, Senegal’s Ambassador to the EU and Chairman in office of the ACP Committee of Ambassadors delivered a statement on behalf of the 79 ACP member countries, welcoming the initiative and condemning gender-based violence as a "global pandemic that hinders development".

"Despite the fact that the ACP Member States have made strides in their efforts to join the international community to fight against gender sexual abuse by adopting international instruments prohibiting violence against women, much remains to be done through the improvement of collective actions and partnership," he told the gathering.

“The ACP Group applauds the EU for launching this initiative and stands with the UN and the EU in forging a meaningful alliance together through this initiative to fight against sexual and gender based violence.”

Under the Spotlight initiative, the UN and the EU will pool together capacities, resources, expertise and current efforts, while also inviting other development partners to join the cause. Efforts will strategically focus on the most prevalent forms of VAWG in different regions, including sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices; specific forms of domestic and family violence; femicide; trafficking in human beings; and economic (labour) exploitation.

For the ACP regions, the emphasis will be on sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices in Sub-Saharan Africa, domestic and family violence in the Caribbean, and domestic violence in the Pacific.

In terms of the 2030 Agenda for Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Spotlight Initiative not only tackles the stand-alone SDG 5 on gender equality and SDG 16 on peaceful societies, but also promotes women’s and girl’s empowerment as a cross-cutting element central to the achievement of all 17 SDGs.

- ACP Press

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Full remarks (click for French version) of H.E. Amadou Diop, Ambassador of Senegal and Chairman of the ACP Committee of Ambassadors:

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,
Secretary General of the United Nations António Guterres
European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven Mimica
Yours Excellencies, Heads and Representatives of international and regional organisations,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a privilege for me to speak on behalf of the 79 Member States of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States.

Excellencies

The ACP Group welcomes the timely launch of the EU/UN initiative to fight against sexual and gender based violence against
women and girls. Violence against women and girls is a global pandemic that destroys young girl’s dreams and holds back development. Today it is said that one out of three experience violence in their lives, this is about 30% of women in the world. Up until last year 19% of women between 15 and 49 years of age have experienced physical and sexual violence by an intimate partner. These numbers tell us that this issue can no longer be ignored and must be addressed.

The ACP Member States have made strides in their efforts to join the international community to fight against gender sexual abuse by adopting international instruments prohibiting violence against women. Governments have also have passed national laws banning all forms of violence against women. They have introduced more effective protection services; they have mounted campaigns to drive home the point that no act of violence against a woman can or should be tolerated.

Excellencies

Much remains to be done, increased collective actions and partnership are the channels in which we will ensure that together we are able to fight this pandemic. It is for this reason that the ACP Group applauds the EU for launching this initiative and stands with the UN and the EU in forging a meaningful alliance together through this initiative to fight against sexual and gender based violence.

The ACP Group is committed to supporting this initiative and expresses its willingness to implement this program that inspires us to move forward together in a spirit of partnership to conquer this pandemic

Excellencies

This historic launch today is a concrete way of showing that together we can begin to bend the curve down and bring the scourge of sexual and gender based violence against women and girls to an end.

I thank you

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More information on the UN-EU Spotlight Initiative [1]