



PeaceWomen Across the Globe  
FRIEDENSFRAUEN WELTWEIT  
نساء من أجل السلام عبر العالم  
Femmes de Paix Autour du Monde  
Женщины мира за мир на земле  
MUJERES DE PAZ EN EL MUNDO  
Mulheres pela Paz ao redor do Mundo

DONNE DI PACE NEL MONDO  
ピースウーマン—国境を越え平和をつくる女たち  
全球和平妇女

## Statement of the International Board

# Ending the Twin Pandemics: Coronavirus and Violence against Women

In 2017, the World Health Organization recognised violence against women as a "major public health problem and violation of women's human rights". The vast majority of perpetrators are men. Victims and survivors include women, girls, and trans-gender women. During the current Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a sharp increase in the rates of violence against all of them. The violence of crisis is followed by crisis through violence.

In this time, everyone is expected to stay inside, with places assumed, or expected, to be safe and comfortable. If women are at home, they often face existential fears about money, losing jobs and livelihoods, of oppressive domestic situations and tense interpersonal and family dynamics. Many other women and girls throughout the world are homeless, without any shelter. Still others are incarcerated in prisons, jail, and detention centres and are at the mercy of the guards, usually men. Their risks have grown exponentially during the coronavirus pandemic.

In urban areas, victims and survivors are urged to move to shelters for abused women. These are often difficult to access, many are overcrowded, and some have been closed down because of the pandemic. Also, because women themselves can be carriers of the virus, they can no longer be taken in. Moreover, we believe that because men are the perpetrators, they should be removed from the settings, not the threatened women and children.

Owing to the unwavering global women's movements of the past 50 years against violence against women, in most countries there is an awareness of the increasing violence during the pandemic. As a result, there are countless flyers and sources of information that warn against violence and list tips and emergency hotlines. Even online support service are being provided. But the violence continues, unabated, and the unbearable helplessness and indifference typically felt, have only grown exponentially during Covid-19 pandemic.

Despite people's awareness and existence of local laws, national constitutions, and international conventions implemented to end violence against women, in reality, genuine commitment and effective actions are sparse. Also, most formal mechanisms do not address patriarchy and the deeply embedded patriarchal values, norms, and ideologies in the laws themselves, in cultural and religious teachings and practices, and in societal norms and expectations. Therefore, we applaud those already doing so and encourage more men to take responsibility for themselves and to engage in educating and organizing other men to stand in solidarity with women and girls to end all forms of violence against women.

UN Women warns against violence against women in the home, caring professions and workplaces and points to the horrendous number of 243 million women who were victims of





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domestic violence last year - without and with corona. In "The Shadow Pandemic: Violence against Women and Girls" UN Women summarises crime scenes, points out the costs of violence against women and how those who support them can defend themselves. UN Secretary General Guterres condemns the "terrible increase" in attacks on women and calls on states to "make massive efforts" to combat the increasing domestic violence in times of corona.

PeaceWomen Across the Globe condemns violence against women during this time and beyond and implores movements, public officials, community leaders and members, and all people of conscience to stand together to end all forms of now and forever.

*Kamla Bhasin and Ruth-Gaby Vermot, Co-Presidents PeaceWomen Across the Globe*

Members of the International Board: Sandy Fong, Kin Chi Lau, Margret Kiener Nellen, Christine Menz, Alejandra Miller Restropo, Cecile Mukarubuga, Margo Okazawa-Rey, Marina Pikulina, Susanne Schneeberger

