



Permanent Mission
of the Czech Republic
to the United Nations



Preventing and eliminating the violence against women: *Drug policy reform as a way of violence elimination*

Parallel event within the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women

March 12, 2013, 2:30 – 4.00 PM at Grumman Room, 8th Floor
Church Center for the UN 777 United Nations Plaza New York, NY 10017



Organizers: International Gender Policy Network, Eurasian Harm Reduction Network under the auspices of the Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the UN

Background: All forms and manifestations of violence against women require more attention. Some, however, have been especially neglected. This is particularly evident with women who use drugs and/or are engaged in sex work. Violence puts these women and girls at the higher risk of HIV and prevents them from accessing essential services. Violence affects them extensively throughout the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia due to a combination of repressive drug laws, patriarchal societies, lack of access to adequate health care and insufficient legal, social, psychological and treatment support. The violence is often state-inflicted through discriminatory policies and law enforcement practices leading to demonizing and dehumanizing women. Violence committed at the hands of law enforcement and health professionals, in the name of drug policies contributes to stigma and discrimination, instigates self-stigma reinforcing their inability to seek and obtain protection and health services.

Goal of the session: The session is designed to inform the participants of the Commission on the Status of Women about the issues of violence against women who use drugs and/or are engaged in sex work as well as present recommendations and jointly discuss the efforts by NGOs, the UN Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights, other UN agencies and country missions on ways to eradicate violence against women who use drugs and sex workers.

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Program:

- *Opening word: Monika Ladmanova, International Gender Policy Network*
- *Keynote: Sergey Votyagov, Eurasian Harm Reduction Network: State-induced violence against women who use drugs*
- *Messages from women activists in Eastern Europe and Central Asia:*
 - *Ekaterina Gargaphadze, NGO Aceso: Stigma, discrimination against women and drug policy in Georgia*
 - *Viktoria Lintsova, the Eurasian Network of People Who Use Drugs: Violence against women and access to health care in Ukraine*
- *Keynote: Anna Kirey, Sex Workers' Rights Advocacy Network: The impact of policies on violence against women sex workers*
- *Keynote: Eka Iakobishvili, Harm Reduction International: States' responsibilities in eliminating the violence against women who use drugs*
- *Q&A and concluding remarks on violence against women and possibilities of its elimination and prevention in EECA region by Monika Ladmanova, International Gender Policy Network*

Participants: we invite the representatives of UN and country missions, UN agencies, and civil society groups working in advocacy of women's rights to participate in the session.