



To focus on ending what remains a horrific reality for millions, events in connection with [International Women's Day](#), observed on 8 March at United Nations Headquarters and around the world, are calling for action to end violence against women and girls, using satellite concerts, seminars and song releases to raise awareness.

As 2012 has vividly demonstrated, [violence against women](#) is universal, and is prevalent in all countries and all settings. One young woman was gang-raped to death, another later committed suicide out of a sense of shame that should have attached to the perpetrators and young teens were shot at close range for daring to seek an education, said Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

"These atrocities, which rightly sparked global outrage, were part of a much larger problem that pervades virtually every society and every realm of life," he said. "This year on International Women's Day, we convert our outrage into action. We declare that we will prosecute crimes

against women – and never allow women to be subjected to punishments for the abuses they have suffered."

More than 125 countries have specific laws that penalize domestic violence, a historic number, yet 603 million women live in countries where domestic violence is still not a crime. Up to 7 in 10 women globally will be beaten, raped, abused, or mutilated in their lifetimes. The Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign, launched in 2008, is based on the simple but powerful premise that all women and girls have a fundamental human right to live free of violence.

"Whether you lend your funds to a cause or your voice to an outcry," Mr. Ban said, "you can be part of our global push to end this injustice and provide women and girls with the security, safety and freedom they deserve."

Observances marking the Day around the world include:

- A live webcast at UN Headquarters at 10.00 a.m. EST will air the official launch of [One Woman song](#), written for [UN Women](#) and sung by 24 artists from around the globe.
- The UN Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda is hosting a gathering with Nathalie Dongo-Seh, Chief of Conduct and Discipline for the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS), with videos on the theme.
- The UN Information Centre (UNIC) in Moscow hosts a cultural event 5 March, with government and civil society speakers, the opening of an exhibition by women artists and live music.
- The UNIC in Ankara, Turkey, plans to host a joint event with the European Union Commission to raise awareness of gender equality issues.
- In fragile and conflict-affected areas, observances will include events organized by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).
- The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Public Information have developed a digital campaign: [Women and peacekeeping: Working to protect and empower women](#)
- UN Women's Deputy Executive Director Lakshmi Puri hosted a [Twitter chat](#) leading up to this year's session of the Commission on the Status of Women (4-15 March), focused on ending violence against women and girls.

- UNESCO, Sveriges Radio and Radio France co-host a concert tribute to women in music: [From the romantic to the electronic](#), live-broadcast from UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on Swedish radio P2 and France Musique, and on the Euroradio satellite network, a Radio-Television activity of the European Union.

*Issued by the UN Department of Public Information*