



21 September 2017 – The European Union and the United Nations have launched a 500 million Euro initiative to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, one of the most widespread and devastating human rights violations across the globe.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres said that the initiative called Spotlight was unprecedented in scale. “It is unprecedented in scope taking a comprehensive approach from prevention to protection of survivors, to access to justice and so much more,” Mr. Guterres said. “ It is unprecedented in its focus, targeting a number of countries in ways that will have deep and irreversible impacts and it is unprecedented in its ambition, aiming for sustainability and a long-term gains for women and girls.”

Federica Mogherini, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy said that the initiative would be run together by the EU and the UN, which she called a “perfect couple”.

“We will mobilize all our full potential which is huge.” Mrs. Mogherini said. “Different UN agencies and all the European Union services will be involved ...when we move the machine, it is really powerful.”



Over the next few years, comprehensive programmes will be implemented to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, such as sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices; trafficking and economic exploitation, femicide,; and domestic and family violence.

Core areas of intervention will include strengthening legislative frameworks, policies and institutions, preventive measures, access to services and improving data gathering in Africa, Latin America, Asia, the Pacific and the Caribbean.

Mr Guterres said the initiative would help achieve the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development. The initiative will apply a rights-based approach, and give particular attention to the most marginalised women and girls in order to ‘leave no-one behind.’

The Spotlight Initiative is “truly historic,” said Mr. Guterres. “When we shine a spotlight on the empowerment of the world’s women and girls, everyone’s future is brighter.”

“It is a harsh but true reality – one in three women will face violence throughout their lifetime,” he [said](#) at the launch event, held on the margins of the General Assembly’s high-level annual debate.

“The European Union is committed to combatting all forms of violence against women and girls, as they undermine our core fundamental rights and values, such as dignity, access to justice and gender equality,” EU High Representative Federica Mogherini told the event.

“We need first to ensure that we keep women and girls safe, in order to empower them to deploy their full potential.”