



## DEBATE PACK

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# Violence against women and girls and the Sustainable Development Goals

**Westminster Hall**

**Wednesday 27 April 2016, 9.30am – 11.00am**

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### Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>Background</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Press Articles</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>PQs</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Other Parliamentary material</b>	<b>14</b>
4.1	Statements	14
4.2	Debates	18
4.3	Early Day Motions	19
<b>5.</b>	<b>Further reading</b>	<b>21</b>

The proceedings of this debate may be viewed on [Parliamentlive.tv](http://Parliamentlive.tv)

The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

# 1. Background

## The challenge

It is widely accepted today that women's empowerment is crucial to achieving sustainable growth and development across the world and that the scourge of violence against women and girls is a major impediment to that empowerment. According to [UN Women](#), more than one in three women experience physical or sexual violence today – mostly by an intimate partner.

At the same time, policy-makers and practitioners also recognise that the interests of women, including younger women, are not separate from those of humanity more broadly; empowering women cannot be achieved without wider processes of positive social change that benefit all people. The days of 'ghettoising' women's issues are hopefully in the past.

## The role of the SDGs

Many hope that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were agreed at the UN summit in New York last September, will tackle such challenges in a much more systematic and explicit way than their predecessors, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), did. And a key aim of the recent [meeting](#) in New York of the UN Commission on the Status of Women was to provide impetus to efforts to turn this promise into practice.

Of the 17 SDGs, **Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**, is the most important goal in efforts to combat violence against women and girls. A number of **targets** flow from it that directly address the issue:

- 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
- 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

Last but not least, no less important than the targets for Goal 5 are the **indicators** against which progress will be measured. Below are the [indicators](#) that most directly address the issue:

- 5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner, in the last 12 months, by form of violence and by age group
- 5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner, in the last 12 months, by age group and place of occurrence
- 5.3.1 Percentage of women aged 20-24 who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18
- 5.3.2 Percentage of girls and women aged 15-49 who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age group

The UK Government has been a consistent supporter of the SDG process and has over successive governments sought to place gender equality, including through combating violence against women and girls, at the heart of its international development work. For example, the current government has just published a "[Strategy to end violence against women and girls](#)" for the period 2016-20.

**Key sources:**

World Health Organisation [factsheet](#) on intimate partner and sexual violence against women (January 2016)

[Facts and Figures: Ending Violence against Women](#), UN Women (February 2016)

[Virtual Knowledge Centre to end Violence against Women and Girls](#), UN Women

For a full list the 17 SDGs and the linked targets, see: "[Transforming our World. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)" (pp14-28).

## In the United Kingdom

In March 2016, the Home Office published its “refreshed” [strategy](#) for ending violence against women and girls (VAWG).<sup>1</sup> This sets out a wide range of actions that the Government will be taking to tackle VAWG between 2016 and 2020. To support this work, the Government has pledged £80 of dedicated funding to help vital services such as refuges and rape crisis centres. In 2017, a VAWG Service Transformation Fund will be launched to encourage new approaches that incorporate early intervention, establish and embed the best ways to help victims and their families, and prevent perpetrators from re-offending.<sup>2</sup>

On tackling VAWG overseas, the Ministerial foreword by Karen Bradley states:

(...) We are delivering an ambitious programme to address female genital mutilation and forced marriage by tackling them in the source countries for these practices. I am pleased that the UK is championing the implementation of the UN Global Goals which include targets on eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking, sexual and other types of exploitation. With the introduction of our landmark Modern Slavery Act, I am determined to break the supply chains that see victims trafficked into the UK and abused.<sup>3</sup>

The following Library Papers are also available:

- [Domestic violence in England and Wales](#)
- [Domestic violence: a select bibliography](#)

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<sup>1</sup> HM Government, [Ending Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2016–2020](#), March 2016

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p5

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p7

## 2. Press Articles

The following is a small selection of recent press and media articles relevant to this debate.

Please note: the Library is not responsible for either the views or accuracy of external content.

The Guardian

[Prevention of violence against women – finally, an idea whose time has come](#)

Mary Barry

20 April 2016

Mail Online

[Activist Gloria Steinem sheds light on the shocking realities of brutal violence against women in the Congo, El Salvador, and even the US, in powerful new documentary series](#)

Carl Stern

14 April 2016

The independent

['Rampant' violence against women in Pakistan revealed as groups fight 'un-Islamic' law against domestic abuse](#)

Lizzie Dearden

5 April 2016

United Nations Population Fund

[The time is now: A call to end female genital mutilation, child marriage and son selection by 2030](#)

17 March 2016

The Guardian

[Activists call on world leaders to make gender equality pledge a reality](#)

Liz Ford

14 March 2016

Global Citizen

[10 ridiculously sexist laws you won't believe still exist](#)

Yosola Olorunshola

8 March 2016

Huffington Post

[No Time to lose in tackling violence against women](#)

Flavia Bustreo

7 February 2016

The Independent

[#HerVoice: Ministers and human rights lawyers join NGOs in petition demanding end to sexual violence against women in India](#)

Jenn Selby and Julia Zulver

10 November 2015

Financial Times

[Sustainable Development Goals aim to improve women's lives](#)

Amy Kazmin

15 September 2015

Vice News

['I Don't Know Why We Come': Inside the UN's Commission on the Status of Women](#)

Nimmi Gowrinathan

20 March 2015

Global Citizen

[The SDGs can make a real difference for women and girls](#)

Kathleen Ebbitt

9 March 2015

The Guardian

[Sustainable development goals: all you need to know](#)

Liz Ford

19 January 2015

### 3. PQs

#### South Sudan: Females

18 Mar 2016 | 30813

**Asked by: Craig Whittaker**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to protect and support the rights of women and girls in South Sudan.

**Answering member: Nick Hurd | Department for International Development**

The UK continues to press the Government of South Sudan to progress its commitments to tackle violence against women, to push for both the Government and Opposition to meet the agreed quotas for women's participation in the transitional government of national unity.

Our development programmes in country dovetail with HMG's overall efforts to support the rights of women in South Sudan. Through our Access to Justice Programme we seek to improve access to justice for those subjected to sexual and gender based violence. Our education programmes seek to empower women including the Girls Education South Sudan programme which operates in all South Sudanese states to help 200,000 girls complete secondary school. Our humanitarian support funds projects in the conflict-affected Greater Upper Nile region to prevent and respond to Gender-Based Violence against women and girls. Women's empowerment projects in Lakes and Central Equatoria states are funded through the cross-governmental Conflict, Stability and Security Fund and the FCO's Human Rights and Democracy Programme.

#### Overseas Development Assistance

16 Mar 2016 | 607 c934

**Asked by: Gary Streeter**

Given that so much poverty and misery is caused by conflict, is it not about time that the OECD definition of ODA included peacekeeping and anti-terrorist activity at the very least, as that bears down directly on poverty?

**Answering member: Justine Greening | International Development**

I agree with my hon. Friend. In fact, the sustainable development goals agreed in the UN in September 2015 had a goal 16 that was all about the need to improve not only peace but security. It is nonsensical for us to work so hard on tackling sexual violence in conflict and not be able to use our aid programmes to help work with the military to prevent that.

### **Humanitarian Aid: Females**

**14 Mar 2016 | HL6601**

**Asked by: Baroness Northover**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of humanitarian funding goes to women's rights organisations and local organisations with expertise in gender during emergencies.

**Answering member: Baroness Verma | Department for International Development**

Providing opportunities for women's rights organisations to participate in humanitarian preparedness, response, and recovery is one means to ensure that the unique needs of women and girls are addressed and that the capacities of women and girls are recognised and utilised. This is one of the themes of a high-level leaders' roundtable event at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016, which the Government expects to deliver for women and girls, including on their increased participation in humanitarian assistance.

In addition, DFID has contributed £6 million to the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women, which provides grants to organisations across the world to tackle gender-based violence, including small women's rights' and youth-led organisations and has committing to increasing its focus on funding to small women's rights organisations.

### **Developing Countries: Females**

**10 Mar 2016 | HL6557**

**Asked by: Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether action on the promotion of women's rights and social justice has been made central to the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and of whether women, as key stakeholders, are able to promote and negotiate their own development goals.

**Answering member: Baroness Verma | Department for International Development**

The UK was a leading voice in the Global Goals for Sustainable Development negotiations and insisted that that that these goals must start by empowering girls and women, and tackling discrimination. A key priority was to ensure a strong and explicit commitment to gender equality through a standalone goal, and further gender mainstreaming throughout the framework. These were both successfully included in the final set of global goals.

## Overseas Aid

18 Feb 2016 | HL5932

### Asked by: Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to change the definition of overseas development aid in order to channel a higher proportion of the aid budget through departments other than the Department for International Development.

### Answering member: Baroness Verma | Department for International Development

As one of just a few donors to have met the 0.7% commitment, the credibility of the Official Development Assistance system is of great importance to the UK. The government is working closely with other countries to modernise the definition of Official Development Assistance at the OECD Development Assistance Committee, to ensure it reflects the breadth of the new international development agenda set by the new Global Goals for Sustainable Development and fully incentivises other countries to meet these goals.

## Female Economic Empowerment: Poorest Countries

03 Feb 2016 | 605 c909

### Asked by: Andrew Gwynne

What efforts is the Secretary of State making to ensure that other donor countries, the EU, the UN and the World Bank integrate gender into their humanitarian efforts?

### Answering member: Justine Greening | Department: International Development

The fact that we now have global goal 5 on gender equality means that, for the very first time, this is formally on the world's to-do list. The world humanitarian summit is a key moment where we can make sure the vulnerabilities of girls and women in particular are properly pulled into the humanitarian system in terms of a response on the ground. The hon. Gentleman will be aware that two years ago the UK held a conference on this very topic to drive that forward.

## Human Trafficking: Zika Virus

03 Feb 2016 | 24164

### Asked by: Barry Sheerman

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the UN, the EU and South American countries on the trafficking of women in countries affected by the Zika virus.

**Answering member: Hugo Swire | Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

We have not held specific discussions with the UN, EU and South American countries linking the trafficking of women and the Zika virus. However, this Government has a track record of leadership on the trafficking of women. Last spring, the UK became the first country in Europe and one of the first in the world to enact Modern Slavery legislation. In June, my Right Honourable Friend, the member for Witney, the Prime Minister (Mr. Cameron) agreed an action plan with the Heads of Government of Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean to strengthen cooperation on human trafficking. We were also strong proponents of the inclusion of a commitment to end modern slavery at the 2015 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting and in the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

**Developing Countries: Females**

**27 Jan 2016 | HL5148**

**Asked by: Lord Stoddart of Swindon**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Statement by Baroness Verma on 10 December 2015 (HLWS370) concerning plans to tackle violence against women and girls overseas, whether the plans will be financed through the overseas aid budget or by separate financial provisions, and what measures will be put in place to ensure that the finance provided is used exclusively to assist the victims of violence.

**Answering member: Baroness Verma | Department for International Development**

The UK Government is proud of the leadership role that it is taking to tackle violence against women and girls at home and overseas, including domestic violence, sexual violence, FGM and child, early and forced marriage. Plans outlined in the Written Ministerial Statement to address violence against women and girls overseas are financed through the overseas aid budget. This covers a range of interventions, all of which are necessary, to eliminate violence against women and girls. It includes the essential activities providing support to survivors of violence; programming to actively prevent violence; research to test and understand what works to stop violence in different contexts, and efforts to strengthen the international system to deliver results at scale.

**Developing Countries: Females**

**11 Jan 2016 | 20845**

**Asked by: Caroline Lucas**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps she is taking to implement all of Sustainable Development Goal 5 to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; and what steps she is taking to meet target 5.2 to eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls.

**Answering member: Desmond Swayne | Department for International Development**

The UK worked hard to secure a comprehensive standalone goal on gender equality and women and girls' empowerment in the Global Goals, and to integrate gender equality throughout the remaining goals. The new Global Goals will help us to influence others, achieve even more, and are critical to achieving transformational change to the lives of girls and women across the globe. The UK has put women and girls at the heart of our international development and humanitarian work. The UK is committed to helping 6.5 million more girls to go to school over the next 5 years. This programme of work will include tackling the difficult issues that keep girls out of school like FGM and child marriage.

The UK led efforts across the globe to ensure that a target to end violence against women and girls (VAWG) formed part of the Global Goals. We are now focused on seeing this target implemented. This includes stepping up DFID action to build the evidence base for what works to prevent violence, which will help to convince others that effective action is possible. It also means DFID working with international partners to ensure financial and technical resources are mobilised to tackle VAWG, and working with national and local partners in developing countries to transform social norms to tackle the discriminatory attitudes and behaviours that are the root causes of VAWG.

**Developing Countries: Females****11 Jan 2016 | 20743****Asked by: Patrick Grady**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to support the collection of data on the effect of sexual and gender-based violence on women in later life in developing countries.

**Answering member: Desmond Swayne | Department for International Development**

Supporting robust data collection on violence against women and girls and its effects is critical. However, international systems do not yet fully capture sufficient data for those over the age of 49. At UNGA the Secretary of State announced DFID's role as an anchor partner of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data. We are working with international bodies to support the development of rigorous, national data on violence against women and girls of all ages and its effect. One area we are looking at is whether the internationally recognised Demographic and Health Surveys can be expanded to women in later life.

**Developing Countries: Females**

**18 Dec 2015 | HL4408**

**Asked by: Baroness Northover**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of global demographic change in which almost 24 per cent of women globally are aged 50 and over, what steps they are taking to ensure that sustainable development goal indicators on violence against women specifically include women over the age of 49, and to ensure that those women are not excluded from reporting mechanisms in the future.

**Answering member: Baroness Verma | Department for International Development**

Supporting robust indicators for Sustainable Development Goal 5.2 on violence against women and girls is critical. DFID is working with international partners including the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data to support the development of strong indicators and the development of rigorous, available national data that will enable measurement of progress to end violence against women and girls of all ages.

**Developing Countries: Females**

**15 Jul 2015 | 6230**

**Asked by: Owen Thompson**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department has taken to ensure that the voices of women working in developing countries to tackle violence against women are heard in the global decision-making processes.

**Answering member: Justine Greening | Department for International Development**

I am proud of the leadership role that my Department has taken, and continues to take, in tackling violence against women and girls. The voices of women and girls were at the heart of Girl Summit 2014 and the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, and we are making significant progress towards ending FGM, child early and forced marriage and sexual violence in conflict across the world. My Department regularly consults with women's rights organisations and women in developing countries to tackle violence against women and girls, including through global decision-making processes such as the Sustainable Global Goals.

**Developing Countries: Females**

**14 Jul 2015 | 6231**

**Asked by: Owen Thompson**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department has taken to ensure that resources are reaching women working at the grassroots in developing countries defending women's rights.

**Answering member: Justine Greening | Department for International Development**

Supporting women's rights organisations is vital to challenging harmful social norms and supporting collective action to bring about change. DFID supports women's rights organisations through several Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) such as Womankind, Vital Voices and through the UN Trust Fund to end Violence against Women.

In March I announced £8 million for AmplifyChange, an initiative which supports community based organisations to take action on a number of neglected sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and gender issues including child, early and forced marriage (CEFM), female genital mutilation (FGM) and violence against women and girls (VAWG).

**Developing Countries: Females**  
**9 July 2015 | 5568**

**Asked by: Alistair Carmichael**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what discussions she has had with Ministerial colleagues on re-establishing the position of Ministerial Champion for Tackling Violence against Women and Girls Overseas.

**Answering member: Justine Greening | Department for International Development**

As Secretary of State for International Development, I champion this issue every day as part of my broader plan to improve the prospects of women and girls overseas. I am proud of the impact my department has achieved in tackling violence against women and girls, not least through the 2014 Girl Summit which focused on eradicating Female Genital Mutilation and Early and Forced Child Marriage.

**Developing Countries: Crimes of Violence**  
**17 Jun 2015 | 1940**

**Asked by: Barry Sheerman**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps she is taking to reduce violence against women in developing countries.

**Answering member: Justine Greening | Department for International Development**

I am proud of the leadership role that the UK has played on tackling violence against women and children world-wide, and it will continue to be a key priority for my Department. We have increased programmes that tackle violence against women and girls by over 60% in the past two years, and now support 103 programmes in 29 countries.

DFID works to prevent and respond to violence against children across a wide range of humanitarian and development programmes, from our flagship £35 million investment in ending female genital mutilation, to our support to the No Lost Generation Initiative, through which the UK is funding education and psychosocial support for Syrian children to protect them from violence, abuse and exploitation.

## 4. Other Parliamentary material

### 4.1 Statements

#### **Violence against Women and Girls**

**08 March 2016 | HCWS595**

**Theresa May**

On Tuesday 8 March, to mark International Women's Day, the Government is publishing its Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy for this Parliament. A copy will be placed in the House Library.

We have made progress since publishing the original Call to End Violence against Women and Girls in 2010. Data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales shows a general downward trend in sexual assaults since 2005/6 and that 8.2% of women were a victim of 'any domestic abuse' in the last year – the lowest estimate since these questions were first asked in the 2004/05 survey.

At the same time, reporting of what often continue to be hidden crimes is increasing which the Office for National Statistics attributes to greater victim confidence and better recording by the police. The number of prosecutions and the number of convictions for VAWG crimes were all higher than ever before in 2014/15.

But there were still an estimated 1.35 million female victims of domestic abuse in the last year, and over 300,000 victims of sexual violence. This is wholly unacceptable and we remain determined to end violence against women and girls.

Over the next four years, we will support a transformation in service delivery and a step change in social action to do more still to achieve a long term reduction in the prevalence of these terrible crimes, to help women and girls rebuild their lives, and to break the inter-generational consequences of abuse. We will continue to ensure victims get the help they need, when they need it, and drive a shift from a model of crisis intervention to prevention and early intervention. We will develop the evidence base on, and embed, what works to tackle the causes of offending behaviour to achieve sustainable reductions in violence and abuse.

Over this spending review period, we are providing £80m of dedicated VAWG funding to continue to provide a bedrock of critical services for VAWG, and to support a transformation in local service delivery to support local areas to build coherent pathways of support for victims at every stage.

**Written Ministerial Statement on Foreign Affairs Council for Development October 2015 [Extract]****Justine Greening****22 Oct 2015 | HCWS262**

On 26 October, I will attend the Foreign Affairs Council for Development in Luxembourg. The meeting will be chaired by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini. This is the first Council meeting since the new Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030, which the UK played a strong leadership role in shaping, was adopted by world leaders at the post-2015 Summit in September. As Secretary of State for International Development, I look forward to participating in the meeting to share the UK experience, including on humanitarian issues and improving the lives of girls and women, and to work with other Member States and the Commission to deliver the new Global Goals by 2030. The UK's continued focus on international development is very much in the national interest.

**Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030**

I will strongly welcome and underline the UK's continued commitment to championing and implementing the Global Goals. Building on the Prime Minister's co-chairing of the UN High Level Panel, the UK played a key role in creating a set of goals that are universal and inclusive, underpinned by a commitment to leave no one behind. The new Global Goals address the key elements of the "golden thread", including peace, governance and justice and also an unprecedented ambitious Goal on Women and Girls empowerment. The UK will continue to invest 0.7% of GNI on ODA and I will lobby others to meet their aid obligations. I will push the EU to come up with a comprehensive and ambitious plan for implementation.

[...]

**Girls and women**

On girls and women, as successfully with the Global Goals, the UK has been a key actor in shaping and developing the new Gender Action Plan (2016-2020) (GAP). I have continuously pushed for girls and women to be prioritised in the new Commission. Moreover the UK's important role in the GAP Taskforce has ensured the document demonstrates a significant shift in the Commissions commitment to girls and women. The publication of the new EU GAP provides a landmark opportunity for the EU to take significant steps forward in delivering tangible results for women and girls across the world. The Council will endorse the new GAP at the FAC-DEV. I will press for its full implementation, ensuring that the Commission and EEAS are held accountable when and where the GAP is not implemented.

[...]

## **Tackling Violence against Women and Girls Overseas**

**Lynne Featherstone**

**05 Feb 2015 | HCWS254**

I would like to update the House on my work as the Ministerial Champion for Tackling Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) overseas.

Since moving back to the Home Office as the Minister for Crime Prevention, I have been able to strengthen my Ministerial Champion role by ensuring the government continues to take a coherent approach across international and domestic work to tackle violence against women and girls.

The scale of the challenge of ending violence against women and girls continues to be considerable.

Since my appointment as the International Champion, I have made a series of overseas visits, including to South Sudan, Somalia, Bangladesh, United Arab Emirates, India and Burma, working in partnership to encourage and drive action to address VAWG in these countries. I have also represented the UK at a number of key international forums such as the Commission on the Status of Women, making the case for VAWG to be recognised in the post-2015 Millennium development framework. I have also met, and built up strong alliances, with many in the wider community working on these issues including passionate activists and campaigners from non-governmental organisations and grassroots organisations, and diaspora communities in the UK.

In January, I undertook my final overseas visit - to India and Burma. I first visited India in my role as Ministerial Champion in 2011 and the progress that has been made since my last visit was encouraging. I was pleased to be able to secure ministers' agreement to send written support for the Girl Summit charter to end Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Child, Early and Forced Marriage (CEFM) in a generation.

In Burma, as well as with government ministers, I met with civil society groups, women's rights campaigners, and Aung San Suu Kyi, to discuss how violence against women and girls can be tackled; and how they could gain an equal voice in the peace process and political reforms. One thing was clear to me. They are all dedicated to making their country a better place for all Burmese people. Much of the violence against women and girls in Burma is as a result of conflict. I was encouraged to hear of the work underway to tackle this, and saw a Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative-linked training session for the Burmese Army, supported by the UK's Defence Academy, on the UNSC 1325 commitments on women, peace and security.

I am proud of the role the UK has taken in supporting Burma, India and so many other countries to address violence against women and girls. I am also extremely proud of the achievements we have made since 2010. The UK is now positioned as a true world leader on tackling violence against women and girls. I would like to outline just a small selection of these achievements:

- We have hosted three ground-breaking global summits on addressing VAWG: (1) the **'call to action'** to tackle violence against women and girls in humanitarian emergencies; (2) **ending sexual violence in conflict**; and (3) the **Girl Summit** focused on tackling child, early and forced marriage, and ending female genital mutilation (FGM) both in the UK and worldwide.

- These summits galvanised a huge range of financial and political commitments to act, including a ground-breaking Communiqué to agree that early action to protect girls and women in emergencies saves lives (signed by fifty governments and organisations); an International Protocol on the Investigation and Documentation of Sexual Violence; and a Girl Summit Charter on FGM and child, early and forced marriage (with 470 signatories, including 36 governments).

- I launched a flagship FGM programme in 2013 – for which the UK is the largest donor in the world - working in 17 countries to support the Africa-led movement to end FGM, aiming to see a 30% reduction of FGM in ten countries over the next five years. The momentum this generated led to the Girl Summit being held in London the following year.

- The UK has significantly scaled up its work to tackle VAWG overseas. For example, the Department for International Development has seen a 63% increase in programmes addressing these issues since 2012. We now have bilateral VAWG programmes in 29 countries.

- We have committed up to £25 million for a new programme to end child, early and forced marriage in 12 countries.

- We have seen a six-fold increase in programmes addressing VAWG in humanitarian situations. For example, the UK is now supporting a programme working across the DRC, Ethiopia, and Pakistan called 'Protecting Adolescent Girls against Violence in Humanitarian Settings', which will directly benefit 8615 adolescent girls

- We are investing £25 million over five years in a flagship research and innovation programme that will find out what works to prevent violence in developing countries, with a component focused on conflict and humanitarian contexts.

I am committed to continuing to address these issues here and around the world. The government is committed to publishing a review of our VAWG action plan this session, which will set out the progress we have made, domestically and internationally, over the course of this parliament.

We are making progress at home too. Since we launched our strategy, A Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls, in 2010 we have criminalised forced marriage in England and Wales; introduced new stalking offences; rolled out Clare's Law and Domestic Violence

Protection Orders to protect victims of domestic violence and announced a new offence of domestic abuse of controlling and coercive behaviour; we have driven a step-change in our efforts to end female genital mutilation, and our national prevention campaign (This is Abuse) encourages teenagers to re-think their views about rape, consent, violence and abuse; contributing to the wider cultural awareness that violence is unacceptable.

But there is still more to do. I am continuing to drive progress. Since the Girl Summit we have issued a consultation on mandatory reporting of FGM and we are now considering the responses with a view to bringing forward legislation this session. We have also established the FGM unit to drive a step change in nationwide outreach on FGM with criminal justice partners, children's services, healthcare professionals and affected communities.

## 4.2 Debates

### [\*\*Sustainable Development Goals\*\*](#)

13 Apr 2016 | 608 cc151-168WH

### [\*\*HIV: Women and Girls\*\*](#)

12 April 2016 | 608 cc36-57WH

### [\*\*International Women's Day 2016\*\*](#)

8 March 2016 | 607 cc197-245

### [\*\*Women: Representation and Empowerment\*\*](#)

7 March 2016 | 769 cc1100-1152

### [\*\*Sustainable Development Goals\*\*](#)

17 Sep 2015 | 764 cc1966-1999

### [\*\*Sustainable Development Goals\*\*](#)

10 Sep 2015 | 599 cc602-644

### [\*\*Sustainable Development Goals\*\*](#)

16 Jun 2015 | 597 cc63-80WH

### [\*\*UN: Sustainable Development Goals\*\*](#)

16 June 2015 | 762 cc1130-1152

## 4.3 Early Day Motions

### **VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPEMENT AGENDA**

**EDM 1346 (session 2015-16)**

**Margaret Ritchie**

**11 April 2016**

That this House is deeply concerned that violence against women and girls (VAWG) is one of the most widespread violations of human rights and that a third of all women and girls will face violence in their lifetime; notes the detrimental impact that VAWG has on individual women, their dependents, their communities and society as a whole; further notes that women in minority groups, such as LGBTI women and migrant women, and women living in poverty are at a particular risk of experiencing violence; welcomes the Sustainable Target Goal (STG) 5.2, which set a target for the elimination of VAWG in the context of the overall goal of gender equality; recognises the vital role that women's rights organisations play in meeting the targets specified by STG 5.2 and in ending gender discrimination more widely; regrets that women's rights organisations currently receive less than one per cent of the UK aid money for gender equality; supports Action Aid's Fearless campaign, which calls on the Government to dedicate a further £70 million from the existing aid budget to women's rights organisations by 2019; and urges the Government to commit to providing these additional funds to women's rights organisations to enable them to work to end VAWG.

### **MODERN SLAVERY**

**EDM 1255 (session 2015-16)**

**David Amess**

**15 March 2016**

That this House commends the inclusion of an explicit target to end all forms of modern slavery in the UN Sustainable Development Goals; recognises that modern slavery not only has a devastating impact on individual victims but also has catastrophic implications for international development by impeding health, economic growth, rule of law, women's empowerment and lifetime prospects for youth; further recognises that a specific target in the Sustainable Development Goals will bring more concerted action, political will and funding to the fight against modern slavery; notes the central role of the UK's Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner Kevin Hyland and the valuable support of Pope Francis in securing the inclusion of this target; and welcomes the forthcoming event convened by the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the UN, to bring together senior representatives of member states, international organisations, faith and civil society groups and the private sector, to determine new enhanced and co-ordinated action to meet it.

## **COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING WOMEN'S FORUM 2015**

**EDM 807 (session 2015-16)**

**Valerie Vaz**

**2 December 2015**

That this House commends the historical first meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) Women's Forum; notes that there are approximately one billion women and young girls throughout the commonwealth; further notes the statement from the conference that our granddaughters will not achieve wage parity unless there is significant national and international action implemented on equality; recognises the importance of the Bechdel test as a good indication for equal gender representation and notes the benefits of applying it to areas of society other than media; and calls on the Government to establish an independent Technical Working Group of Experts on Gender Equality to enable women's empowerment through transformative systems for education, health and employment opportunities to follow-up on priorities for gender equality and women's empowerment in alignment with the targets for the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to report progress to subsequent CHOGMs.

## **VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

**EDM 101 (session 2015-16)**

**Daniel Zeichner**

**9 June 2015**

That this House believes that the Government should play a leading role at the UN summit in September 2015 and strongly urge its international colleagues to adopt a specific target to reduce the level of violence against children as part of the new Sustainable Development Goals; notes that UNICEF has highlighted that nearly two-thirds of homicides around the world involve the killing of people under the age of 19; further notes that 60 per cent of the world's children continue to experience physical punishment; and urges the Government to make this one of its key priorities, along with climate change, education and healthcare to leave a better world for the next generation.

## 5. Further reading

[Ending violence against women and girls strategy: 2016 to 2020](#), Home Office, March 2016

[Violence against women and girls](#), Gov.uk

[Violence against women](#), World Health Organization, Fact sheet No. 239, January 2016

[The time is now: A call to end female genital mutilation, child marriage and son selection by 2030](#), United Nations Population Fund, 17 March 2016

["Because I am a Girl: the Unfinished Business of Girls' Rights"](#), *Plan International*, September 2015

["Those terrible weeks in their camp: Boko Haram Violence against Women and Girls in Northeast Nigeria"](#), *Human Rights Watch*, 2014

["Good Girls Don't Protest: repression and abuse of women human rights defenders, activists, and protesters in Sudan"](#), *Human Rights Watch*, March 2016

[Sustainable Development Goals inquiry](#), International Development Committee

[Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals](#), Commons Library Debate Pack CDP-2016-0080, 12 April 2016

[Tackling HIV in women and girls](#), Commons Library Debate Pack CDP-2016-0078, 11 April 2016

[The Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda](#), House of Commons Briefing papers CBP-7291, 28 September 2015

[End Violence against Women](#)

[WomenKind](#)

[Vital Voices](#)

[Childreach International](#) (webpage of various publications concerning children)

[AmplifyChange](#)

[Violence against Women](#) (Amnesty International)

[Violence against Women](#) (International Center for Research on Women)

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