



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE
GENEVA**

No. 159/05

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Croatia to the United Nations Office in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honour to submit the Note of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Croatia regarding the resolution of the Commission on Human Rights 2003/45 on violence against women.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Croatia avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 14 December 2005



**OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
GENEVA**

HUMAN RIGHTS REGISTER H.C.	
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REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND EUROPEAN
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No. 6610/05

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Croatia presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and pursuant to the Commission on Human Rights resolution 2003/45, on violence against women has the honour to provide information as follows:

Pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Family Act, the Law on the Protection against Family Violence, the Act on Gender Equality, the Misdemeanour Act, and the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality with the implementation programme of the national policy for gender equality promotion in the Republic of Croatia from 2001 to 2005, the Republic of Croatia is attaching great importance to eliminating violence against women. Therefore, within the legislative and executive branches in Croatia, the Committee on Gender Equality of the Croatian Parliament, the Office for Gender Equality of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Commissions for Gender Equality at County governments, and the institution of Ombudsman for gender equality, have been systematically organised with a view to protecting women victims against all forms of violence.

One of the key activities of the Ministry for Family, Veterans' Affairs and Inter-generation Solidarity is the development of the *National Strategy for Protection against Domestic Violence for the period 2005 - 2007*, aimed at improving the quality of life of women and children victims of violence and to generally improve protection against domestic violence, was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Croatia in 2004.

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A special value of the National Strategy for Protection against Domestic Violence is being reflected in its introducing the obligation of investigating, preventing and processing all kinds of domestic violence by all the competent bodies, as well as in preventive activities, providing assistance and information on domestic violence issues pursuant to recently adopted Recommendation 1681 (2004) of the Committee of Ministers for declaring the year 2006 as the *Year of the Campaign to Combat Domestic Violence against Women*, ensuring a systematic and carefully planned struggle against domestic violence and a contribution to the realization of the policy of gender equality, as well as cooperation of NGOs acting within their programmes with a view to protecting the victims of violence, and governmental bodies in preparing the National Strategy.

Bearing in mind that domestic violence is discrimination and that it is women who are most often victims of domestic violence, and that it is necessary to provide protection for all the victims of domestic violence regardless of gender, the National Strategy contains a total of 27 long-term and short-term measures. Pursuant to the deadlines set, several measures have been realised: *the Analysis of laws created to sanction family violence* has been completed (which includes criminal and misdemeanour legislation in the Republic of Croatia) and will be released on the Ministry's website to make it accessible to the widest audience; *the Proposal of Amendments to the Law on the Protection against Domestic Violence* has been prepared; *the Analysis of Shelters for Women and Children - Victims of Domestic Violence in the Republic of Croatia* has been prepared and on the basis of this analysis the proposal of the measures for improving the status of current and setting up new shelters will be prepared; *the Draft Rules of Procedure on Meeting the Requirements for Establishing and Operating Shelters for Women and Children - Victims of Domestic Violence* have been completed, taking account of the number and education of professional staff as well as of users' number, needs and interests.

The Ministry for Family, Veterans' Affairs and Inter-generation Solidarity published *The Address Book of all Institutions, Organizations and other Institutions which provide assistance, support and protection to victims of Domestic Violence*. The Address book contains addresses and telephone numbers of organizations and institutions in the Republic of Croatia where victims of family violence can seek advice or other form of assistance. As a particularly important measure, the *Protocol on Proceedings in Cases of Family Violence* has been adopted containing the legally accepted definition of violence, the duties of the authorities in charge and other factors involved in its prevention, identification and elimination, as well as the forms, methods and contents of cooperation, adopted by the Government of the Republic of Croatia on September 2005.

One of important obligations defined by the National Strategy, which is being fully implemented in misdemeanour procedures, is *labelling all judicial files dealing with family as urgent* in order to give priority to all the files connected with domestic violence, and to ensure a prompt judicial proceedings in cases of domestic violence.

In addition to the activities realized so far, there are others in progress, i.e. *the analysis of the status and education of employees in the police, courts, social welfare centres, hospitals, primary health care institutions, pre-school, primary school and high-school institutions, institutions of higher education and media on domestic violence issues (taking particular account of research and education conducted by the above-mentioned bodies)* is being prepared and on the basis of the information collected and the analysis completed, the preparation of *the program will continue, concerning the systematic education of all persons*

working on the implementation of laws created to sanction domestic violence and of other persons providing services and support in cases of domestic violence and those responsible for disseminating information and raising public awareness of domestic violence issues. Prepared programs for education will enable systematic education of employees, which is one of the long-term measures of the National Strategy. The informative leaflet intended for the victims of violence, containing the obligations of particular bodies in cases of domestic violence, will be published with a view to informing victims about the possibilities of protection. The preparation of the program of psychosocial treatment of domestic violence perpetrators and the recommendation for the treatment implementation will begin. The implementation of the program will cause changes in the behaviour and the value system of perpetrators. Setting up family courts, i.e. family divisions with regular courts, is expected as a part of the ongoing justice reform.

One of the most important activities is declaring 22 September as the *National day of combating violence against women*, in memory of the day on which three women were murdered (22 September 1999) at the Municipal Court in Zagreb. The international day of elimination of violence against women, 25 November, is also being marked in Croatia every year.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Croatia avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Zagreb, 12 December 2005

