



DR. RICHARD WILKINS

Managing Director, Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development

I am pleased to welcome you to this Colloquium on the impact of violence against women on the family. I warmly welcome and thank the experts and the guests for accepting the invitation to share their views and expertise on this important topic. I also, extend a welcome to all participants who are attending this event,

I would like to begin by expressing deep appreciation to the Supreme Council of Family Affairs for their collaboration and contribution to this important event.

Violence against women is a global phenomenon occurring in many places and cutting cross all cultures, and countries. It has different manifestations and forms and it occurs in public and private spheres. No society can claim to be free from such violence.

Family is normally a place where members seek love, security however in many cases; it becomes the place where violence is perpetrated against women and children. Early initiatives to address violence against women at the international level focused primarily on the family. The world plan of action for women adopted in 1975 in Mexico drew attention to the need for education programmes and ways to resolve family conflict but, did not refer, to violence.

In recent years, women's and other civil society organizations continue to lead the struggle to expose and counter violence. Their determination and hard work has place the issue on the global agenda and deepened understanding of the nature and scope of violence against women and its impact on their families, communities and countries.

The adoption of the Declaration on Elimination of Violence Against Women in 1993, the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on violence against women in 1994 the Beijing conference on women in 1995 have compelled a better understanding of the causes and consequences of violence against women and many positives actions have been taken.

The launch in March 2008, by the Secretary General of the United Nations of a multi-year (2008 - 2015) campaign to end violence against women will certainly mobilize public opinion, contribute to strengthen political will and commitments and to enhance efforts at all levels to prevent and end violence .



The campaign will harness the existing momentum by striving to find specific answers and strategies to this phenomenon.

Many examples of good and promising practices in addressing violence against women in legislation, services and prevention have been experienced around the world and an increasing numbers of men have become engaged in combating violence against women.

Eliminating violence against women would help achieving universal primary education which enhances knowledge, and opportunity .Education must be a priority focus, when women are educated, their lives improve and society improves.

In this context and guided by the vision of Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al Missned and inspired by her orientation on better educating and strengthening the family as a basic unit of the society, the Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development in collaboration with the Supreme Council of Family Affairs are contributing to the UNSG campaign to end violence against women by organizing this colloquium .

During this two days, the colloquium will aim to raise awareness on the nature, extent and causes of violence, to build collaboration among different stakeholders, to exchange information and best practices in order to provide effective and efficient responses and finally to support innovative approach and strategies to end violence.

It is important to find ways to build on the significant gains made, to scale up efforts and ensure a positive impact on women's live.

Sixty years ago, the founders of the United Nations reaffirmed their commitments to the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family. Today while commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights we are renewing this commitment to make a difference and make a family a place free from violence.

