

## HRC 19

### Interactive dialogue on the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing

#### Statement by Finland

Finland thanks the Special Rapporteur for her important work and for the presentation of the report on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living and on the right to non-discrimination in this context. We welcome the focus of the report on women and their right to adequate housing. We believe that to respect, protect and ensure implementation of women's rights in this context, concerted efforts are called for.

Gender equality is a priority shared by most of us in this room. As the report before us today shows, adequate housing for women is in the heart of social inequality and discrimination. Denying women their right to inherit housing, land and property is discrimination. In Finland, women's equal right to property is guaranteed by the constitution.

Determined efforts are needed to ensure the full implementation of women's right to adequate housing. This is particularly true for women facing multiple discrimination, including the most marginalized: widows and elderly women, rural and indigenous women, women with disabilities, lesbians or women living with HIV/AIDS.

The home is the centre of life for all people. Too often, it is sad to note, the home is not a safe place for a woman. Violence against women is a worldwide human rights challenge, and my own country is not an exception. My government has enhanced the protection of victims of domestic violence by introducing legislation on restraining order against perpetrators. In addition, guidelines are being drafted to ensure cooperation between authorities and service providers to maximize protection for the victim. Third-sector service providers, such as the Federation of Mother-and-Child Homes and Shelters, carry out a valuable work in this respect.

We support the recommendation of the Special Rapporteur, addressed to the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice, to look at best practices with respect to women and the right to adequate housing. This would be a significant contribution towards implementing Millennium Development Goal No. 3 on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Thank you.

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