



Advocacy pointers for 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence 2016

This 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence, 25th November to 10th December, Mothers' Union is shining a light on violence against women and girls, with the clear message that *it is not ok*. At least one in three women globally will experience some form of gender-based violence in her lifetime;¹ and globally, women between the ages of 15-44 are more likely to be maimed or die as a result of male violence than through cancer, malaria, traffic accidents or war combined.²

Governments have an important role in preventing and ending gender-based violence. As civil society, we can influence our leaders to do this. 16 Days of Activism provides a great opportunity for you as an individual or as a group of Mothers' Union members to do this.

Below are a few ideas for advocacy or lobbying messages for your government representatives, and methods of communicating with them.

Messages

- Make national, local and customary laws that prohibit all forms of violence against women and girls
- Ensure that victims of gender-based violence have access to justice, such as law courts and legal representation
- Provide and support services for survivors of gender-based violence, for example counselling and health services
- Ensure that perpetrators are prosecuted through the law, punished through the system of justice and rehabilitated so as to prevent reoffending behaviour

Many of these policies are also included in international agreements such as CEDAW and agreed conclusions from the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, which governments have agreed to implement at the national level.

In the UK specifically, we are also calling on the Government to redress the injustice in the new child maintenance system, for victims of domestic abuse.

We ask that victims be exempt from the 'collect and pay' charges for using the statutory Child Maintenance Service, as they may have no other option to receive or make payments for their children without further risk of abuse or violence. Using a family-based arrangement or Direct Pay could result in ongoing contact with the abuser, placing survivors at further risk.

Methods of communicating with leaders

- Arrange a meeting
- Send a letter or email
- Send an invitation to an event on gender-based violence
- Contact your local or national media, such as television, radio and newspaper
- Use social media

For any further information, contact the policy team at Mothers' Union, at policy@mothersunion.org; 020 7222 5533; or go to www.mothersunion.org

¹ World Health Organisation

² Restored