

Media Update

30 November 2020

United Nations

SECRETARY-GENERAL MESSAGE

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE ON WORLD AIDS DAY

1 December 2020

With the world's attention focused on the COVID-19 crisis, World AIDS Day is a reminder of the need to maintain focus on another global pandemic that is still with us nearly 40 years after it emerged.

Despite significant successes, the AIDS emergency is not over. HIV still infects 1.7 million people each year and kills some 690 000. And inequalities mean that those who are the least able to stand up for their rights are still the most affected.

COVID-19 has been a wake-up call to the world. Inequalities in health affect all of us. No one is safe unless we all are safe.

The HIV response has much to teach the fight against COVID-19. We know that to end AIDS and defeat COVID-19 we must eliminate stigma and discrimination, put people at the centre and ground our responses in human rights and gender-responsive approaches.

Wealth should not determine whether people get the health care they need. We need a COVID-19 vaccine and HIV treatments and care that are affordable and available to everyone, everywhere.

Health is a human right. Health must be a top investment priority to achieve universal health coverage. On this World AIDS Day let us recognize that, to overcome COVID-19 and end AIDS, the world must stand in solidarity and share responsibility.

UN Women

PRESS RELEASE

BRT Peshawar joins call for ending violence against women to commemorate 16 Days of Activism campaign

Peshawar: Trans Peshawar, the operating company of the Peshawar's BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) service, offers the Office of the Ombudsperson against Sexual Harassment at Workplace Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and UN Women in Peshawar to promote awareness messages and sensitize passengers on the issue of harassment at public places and violence against women through BRT buses and terminals as we continue to commemorate the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign in Pakistan and worldwide.

To create awareness on the law for protection of women against harassment at public place, hundreds of posters on the Section 509 of Pakistan Penal Code were displayed in all the buses of the modern mass transit system in Peshawar city, on Monday. The Section 509 says, *"Whoever, intending to insult the modesty of any woman, utters any word, makes any sound or gesture, or exhibits any object, intending that such word or sound shall be heard, or that such gesture or object shall be seen, by such woman, or intrudes upon the privacy of such woman, shall be punished."*

This year's 16 Days of Activism campaign is focusing on the emergence as the shadow pandemic of violence against women amid Covid-19. The global theme "Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!" calls for global actions to bridge funding gaps, ensure essential services for survivors of violence during the COVID-19 crisis, focus on prevention, and collection of data that can improve life-saving services for women and girls.

Shah Muhammad Khan, Provincial Minister for Transport and Technical Education, was the Chief Guest of the event. "BRT Peshawar is a convenient and successful travel facility for citizens. Men and boys should avoid sitting on seats designated for women. Respecting women is a collective responsibility," said Mr. Shah.

Rukhshanda Naz, Ombudsperson KP, said "The objective of this activity is to increase awareness of general public on the Section 509 of Pakistan Penal

Code and enhance their access to the services offered by Ombudsperson Office.”

Audio visuals messages, both in Urdu and Pashtu languages, will also be played on BRT terminals and in buses. This initiative will help in warning the harassers about repercussion and give confidence to women passengers so that they feel safe and secure while using public transport.

“Survivors, activists, decision-makers, the UN system, and people from all walks of life must collectively voice for funding for women organizations, essential services, and prevention from violence,” said Zainab Qaiser Khan, Head of Provincial Office UN Women in KP. She said that ending violence against women is everyone’s responsibility, so including stakeholders like Transport Department shows the commitment of the government to fulfill the shared responsibility. “Safe transportation means freedom of mobility for women with comfort which contributes towards women empowerment. Empowered women not only raise voice for themselves but also for other vulnerable women,” she remarked.
