



29th Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council

Agenda Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women

**Oral statement delivered by Deborah Brown on behalf of the Association for Progressive Communications (APC)
Tuesday 16 June, 2015**

Thank you Mr. President.

The Association for Progressive Communications welcomes the report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women. In an addendum to her report, the Special Rapporteur makes reference to 'internet violence' against women and girls, including harassment and intimidation online.

As the UN General Assembly recognised with its 2013 landmark resolution¹ on protecting women human rights defenders, technology related violence against women, including online harassment, cyberstalking, violation of privacy, censorship and hacking of electronic devices, are a growing concern and a manifestation of systemic gender-based discrimination, requiring effective responses compliant with human rights. The UN Working Group on Discrimination against women in law and practice,² the Commission on Status of Women,³ and the UN General Assembly have all expressed concern regarding the violence that women and girls face online.

Despite the widespread and pervasive nature of these violations, research by APC has found that the development of effective responses by State and non-State actors has been slow and inadequate, leaving women with little if any access to justice.

APC calls on all States to develop effective responses to technology-related violence against women as a matter of urgency as part of their existing obligations to uphold women's human rights rights. Doing so requires recognising technology-related violence against women as a form of VAW, and integrating it in monitoring, prevention and response mechanisms. This includes in public policy and in expanding the implementation of anti-VAW laws. Responses to technology-related violence against women must be part of strategies to uphold all human rights and fundamental freedoms online.

We request that the next thematic report of the Special Rapporteur focus on the issue of technology related violence against women, looking specifically at legal standards, practices and mechanisms.

Thank you Mr. President

¹ A/RES/68/181

² A/HRC/23/50, para.66

³ CSW agreed conclusions on the Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls, March 2013, para.34(www)