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Written statement* submitted by Family Health Association of Iran, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[01 February 2020]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

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Statement on UPR on the Islamic Republic of Iran 2019

Family Health Association of Iran as a leading NGO in the field of SRHR and an international organization has submitted its reports with consideration of its field of activities to every cycles of UPR. On this basis, in the third cycle of UPR reports, seven main areas of the activities of the association have been reviewed, that three of which are highlighted in this statement. These three areas are: the health situation of children and adolescent, prevention of domestic violence and violence against women and Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) – Particularly HIV/AIDS. All these are deemed as important activity areas of the Association.

Children and Adolescent Health: Family Health Association of Iran, while working in the area of child and adolescent health, has discovered that in the last four years the Islamic Republic of Iran has paid particular attention on ordinary and vulnerable children and adolescent's health. In this regard for the provision of suitable services to children, the Welfare Organization has focused to identify these children, their families and their problems. Iranian Parliament also is seriously attempting to adopt the protection of children and adolescents draft bill, and the legal deputy of the Judiciary has put this bill in priority for review. The establishment of child and adolescent supporting office is one of the Judiciary's programmes for the protection of children and adolescents. Furthermore the adoption of the child and adolescent trials guidelines law is another supportive action of the Judiciary. According to this law, children and adolescents will not be subjected to sentences that are foreseen for adults, but will be sentenced to corrective measures.

On this basis a number of recommendations for the health of children and adolescents are suggested:

- Adoption of the Protection of the Rights of Children and adolescents draft bill by the Parliament;
- Adoption of the Prohibition of Child Marriage draft bill, marriage of children below 13 years old;
- Implementation of the organization of street children and child labourers programme.

Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women: one of the subjects that continually have been recommended to the Islamic Republic of Iran's Universal Periodic Reviews has been the need for further attention to women's rights and efforts to prevent violence against women. To this aim throughout the last 4 years, the Islamic Republic of Iran and NGOs have made extensive efforts for the reduction and prevention of domestic violence and violence against women. In this regard, the Welfare Organization has launched Social Emergency as crisis intervention centres, which are deemed as a safe base for initial referral of social problems that include domestic violence and child abuse. Also Social Emergency provides mobile clinic services for the prevention of violence against women.

The Social Welfare, Services and Participations Organization of Tehran Municipality in the recent years has created shelters for the protection of abused and vulnerable girls and women subjected to violence which are active at Tehran Province levels. The Women and Family National Bureau headed by the President has created indexes for gender equity, pre and post marriage education and policies for sports and recreation programs for using in government body. Also the Parliament is currently reviewing the Provision of Security to Women against Violence draft bill with the cooperation of the Judiciary.

Considering the above-mentioned activities, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Adoption of the Women's Safety against Domestic Violence draft bill.
- Increase support for active NGOs campaigns on domestic violence issues.
- Running education, awareness raising and advocacy programs for prevention of domestic violence for soldiers in barracks, workers in factories, schools and universities directly or indirectly.

- Further concentration on cultural and preventive measures for prevention of domestic violence at community level, particularly small towns and cities.
- Concentration on education of men on reduction of domestic violence.
- Running education programs for police and law enforcement, and prison guards for prevention of violence and support for victims of domestic violence.

Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) – Particularly HIV/AIDS: One of the most important fields of activity of the Family Health Association of Iran is efforts to promote SRHR and prevention of STIs, particularly HIV/AIDS. To achieve this goal, the Family Health Association has taken steps in launching “positive club”. These clubs provide relevant services to HIV/AIDS patients. To this aim, the Ministry of Health and Medical Education and Welfare Organization have given plenty of support for the launching the positive clubs.

It must be said that the HIV/AIDS treatment are free in Iran and the Ministry of Health and Medical Education provides these costs.

The launching of behavioural counselling clinics in all Iranian prisons for education, harm reduction and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, particularly HIV/AIDS also is one of the activities of the Prisons Organization.

The Interior Ministry provides special support for active NGOs such as FHAI on HIV/AIDS prevention and recently a national network of NGOs in the field of HIV/AIDS (SHAMSA) has been formed and received official certificate from Ministry of Interior. SHAMSA conducts supportive activities for HIV/AIDS patients.

In view of these activities, the following cases are recommended for the improvement of the existing conditions:

- Concentration on educational and cultural activities on HIV/AIDS at schools, universities, prison guards, military bases, policy-makers etc.
 - Desensitization of the taboo and discrimination against HIV/AIDS patients especially their employment in governmental and nongovernmental organizations.
 - Empowerment, job creation and income generation for HIV/AIDS patients.
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