

Report

6th Conference on Femicide / Feminicide

Violence against women as the focal point of the Bi-Regional Dialogue on Gender Issues between the European Union and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States

Why do States Continue to Fail?

Santiago de Chile

23 January 2013

Introduction¹

It was envisaged that the 1st EU-CELAC Summit held on 26-27 January 2013 in Santiago de Chile would decide on the creation of a "Bi-Regional Dialogue on Gender Issues", in addition to other affairs. The purpose of the 6th Conference on Femicide/Feminicide², which took place on the eve of the 1st EU-CELAC Summit, was to identify the content that should be included in this new space for bi-regional dialogue on gender issues, with regard to violence against women and the participation of women's rights defenders in this space.

Femicide/feminicide³, or the gender-based murdering of women because they are women, is the most extreme manifestation of violence against women. Femicides are not "[...]

¹ Chair: **Michael Alvares Kalverkamp**, Director of Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, Chile. Panellists: **Patricia Jiménez**, Director of the Global Dialogue Programme of Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, EU Office, **Rafael Dochao Moreno**, Head of the European Union delegation in Chile.

² The 6th Conference on Femicide/Feminicide was organised by Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, in collaboration with the "Red Chilena contra la Violencia hacia las Mujeres" (Chilean Network against Violence towards Women), "Corporación Humanas, Centro Regional de Derechos Humanos y Justicia de Género" (the Corporación Humanas Regional Centre for Human Rights and Gender Justice) and Raul Romeva i Rueda Member of the European Parliament of the Greens/ EFA.

³ It should be noted that the terms femicide/feminicide are used interchangeably to refer to the same phenomena, i.e. the death of women because they are women, and that these crimes are not only committed by strangers but also by partners, former partners and family members.

*isolated incidents which arise suddenly and unexpectedly, but are the ultimate act of violence which is experienced in a continuum of violence*⁴ against women.

The assertion that States are failing to eradicate the violence and killing of women is sustained at a global level according to data provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in its *Global Study on Homicide*⁵. This study, which reveals a decrease in homicides at global level in the last few decades, also indicates an increase in the proportion of female victims of homicide. A recent report by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences confirms this assertion: there has been an increase in gender-related killings of women in Latin America,



Rafael Dochao Moreno, Patricia Jiménez and Michael Alvares Kalverkamp presenting the conference

Europe and the other continents as well. Some countries in Central America have experienced an increase in the number of female homicides that is three times higher than the increase in the number of male homicides. Women's organisations in Italy and Spain affirm that the number of female homicides or femicides/feminicides has not decreased.

The continuous increase in femicide/feminicide in most of Latin America and the difficulty in Europe to reduce it highlights the failure of the States to comply with their duty to prevent and eradicate this extreme form of violence against women. It is clear that the policies being implemented are not effective since they are not giving the expected results.

This serious violation of human rights must therefore be considered a priority topic in EU-CELAC bi-regional relations, in order to develop joint actions such as the exchange of good practices that enable the creation of an EU-CELAC bi-regional strategic plan of action to eradicate discrimination and violence against women. These activities must be carried out with the civil society participation.

⁴ Rashida Manjoo, United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences.

⁵ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2011), *Global study on Homicide 2011. Trends, context, data*.

6th Conference on Femicide/Feminicide

The conference was structured around the following topics: a) regulatory and legal aspects, b) data collection and compilation of statistics, and c) investigation problems and new approaches. It sought not only to describe and analyse the main problems in terms of femicide/feminicide, but also to present actions, initiatives and experiences that provide feasible ways to advance in the prevention and eradication of these phenomena.

a) The Legal framework for Femicide/Feminicide: international treaties against violence towards women and the laws that criminalize Femicide/Feminicide⁶

There are two regional conventions that establish legal frameworks to protect women, and to prevent, prosecute and eliminate all forms of violence against them in Latin America and Europe. These are the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belem do Pará - 1994) ratified by 32 of the 35 Member States of the Organization of American States (OAS), and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Agreement – 2011) ratified by 3 of the 47 States of the Council of Europe. It needs 10 ratifications to come into force.

The Convention of Belem do Pará was the first international convention that defined as a human right, “*the right to be free from violence in both the public and private spheres*”, and recognised violence against women as a violation of their human rights. This fact imposes concrete duties on the States.

Since 1995, when the Convention of Belem do Pará came into force, its provisions have been legally binding and mandatory. This involves adapting national legislation and developing government policies to ensure compliance.

Despite the fact that Art. 7 of the Convention of Belem do Pará instructs that the States must “*establish fair and effective legal procedures for women who have been subjected to violence which include, among others, protective measures, a timely hearing and effective access to such procedures*”, the Inter-American Human Rights System (IHRs) confirms that local authorities fail in their duty to investigate facts adequately and to penalise all offenders.

⁶ Chair: **Lorena Astudillo**, lawyer, member of the National Coordination of the Chilean Network against Violence towards Women.

Panelists: **Oswaldo Ruiz**, former senior lawyer at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights; **Javier Truchero**, lawyer, expert at the Council of Europe in relation to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence; **Patsili Toledo**, lawyer, PhD in Public law and member of the Antigone Research Group at the Autonomous University of Barcelona.



Lorena Astudillo, Oswaldo Ruiz, Patsili Toledo and Javier Truchero discussing the legal framework regarding Femicide/ Feminicide

The IHRS considers that it is essential to improve the structures and increase resources with regard to law enforcement and administration of justice. This includes training officials and technical staff, as well as allocating sufficient financial resources. The IHRS also believes that indiscriminate access to justice should be guaranteed for victims and their families. This includes free legal advice, security and protection measures for the victims, witnesses and investigators; physical and cultural access for victims to investigation bodies and the courts; and the eradication of stereotyped views of the role of women and gender- or ethnic-based discrimination by justice officials. According to the IHRS, appropriate legal mechanisms, including the definition of violence against women as a criminal offence, need to be established in order to facilitate prompt, adequate and effective investigations.

In fact, the Convention of Belem do Pará establishes in Art. 7. that the States must *“include in their domestic legislation penal, civil, administrative and any other type of provisions that may be needed to prevent, punish and eradicate violence against women and to adopt appropriate administrative measures where necessary”*. Depending on the nature of the cases, the IHRS recommends establishing criminal, administrative or disciplinary penalties, as required, to ensure that the different types of violence against women are punished with penalties in proportion to the type of violence. Steps should be taken to establish or modify protocols, manuals, investigation criteria, expert services and services to provide justice, and any other regulations in order to adequately investigate cases of gender-based violence against women.

The right of women to be free from violence is a complex right that involves a set of other rights, such as the right to life, to personal integrity and security, and, depending on the specific case, the right to equality before the law, to the protection of honour, reputation, and private and family life, to the preservation of health and well-being, and to justice, among others. As a result, the violation of the right to be free from violence also involves reparations of a complex nature in order to restore the above mentioned rights.

Discrimination plays a fundamental role in the causes and consequences of violence against women. As a result, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHPR) has stated that the reparations in cases of sexual or gender-based violence must drive a transformation of the discriminatory situation. Otherwise, if everything remains as it was before the violation of rights, the discriminatory culture is sustained and it will not be possible to eradicate the causes of violence against women, thereby resulting in the violent actions being repeated indefinitely.⁷

Therefore, the focal point is that the measures to repair the damage caused by violence against women, including femicide as the killing of women because of their gender, must drive a transformation of the discriminatory culture.

The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Agreement) is based on the premise that no one body or institution can address violence against women and domestic violence on its own. An effective response to this type of violence requires concerted action by many different stakeholders. The Convention requests that the Member States implement integral, coordinated policies with the participation of governmental bodies, non-governmental organisations, parliaments and other authorities. The objective is that the policies to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence are carried out at all levels of government and by all the corresponding bodies and institutions. This can be done, for example, by drawing up a national action plan that assigns each institution or agency a special function to undertake or a task to perform. Until the date of the 23rd January 2013, only 3 of the 47 Member States of the Council of Europe have signed this convention that will not come into force unless another 7 signatures are obtained.

The adaptation of national legislations and the implementation of government policies in order to comply with the Convention of Belem do Pará have been completely insufficient, as has the follow-up of general observations and specific recommendations made by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

It is expected that the Council of Europe Convention will come into force quickly and that the Member States will comply with these obligations sooner than the American States.

⁷ I/A Court H.R., Case of González et al (“Cotton Field”) v. Mexico. Preliminary Objection, Merits, Reparations and Costs. Judgment of 16 November 2009. Series C No. 205, par. 450.

As both regional conventions point out, the increase in violence against women and femicide/feminicide is due in part to the lack of national legal frameworks that allow the phenomenon to be dealt with comprehensively. Convinced of the relevance of this statement, numerous organisations that defend the rights of women in Latin American have had moderate success in influencing their respective legislative bodies on the drafting of laws that penalise violence against women.

While nine Latin American countries have legally defined femicide/feminicide as a criminal offence in order to specifically punish gender-based murders of women, no European country has defined it as a criminal offence. While this legal definition could help to reduce impunity, merely adopting these laws does not guarantee that the government will implement the policies necessary to prevent and eradicate femicide/feminicide. On the contrary, as they are criminal laws, they are far less costly for the States than the resources that need to be invested in some countries to address the structural problems of the justice system, such as the negligent action of police and judicial bodies, which is indicated in the "*Cotton Field*"⁸ judgment. Nevertheless, evidence shows that the laws adopted have removed all references to impunity and the State's responsibility in the investigation and sanctioning of these crimes, which is one of the aspects that is most



criticised by feminist movements in relation to femicide in countries like Mexico and Guatemala.

It is not possible to make a general assessment of the results of the

definition of femicide/feminicide as a criminal offence in the region because it has been defined very differently from country to country and the laws are still very recent. Nonetheless, it can be noted that merely defining this extreme form of violence as a criminal offence is not a sufficient response from the State, and that more extensive prevention and protection measures are required for women.

In addition to these conventions, there have been other efforts to promote the development of human rights such as the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), which has financed a wide range of programmes and projects undertaken by non-governmental organisations that promote human rights. For this Instrument, the

⁸ Case of González et al ("*Cotton Field*") v. Mexico of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights: http://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/casos/articulos/seriec_205_esp.pdf

promotion of women's rights and the prevention of all types of violence against women are a key element of the relations between the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean.

b) Importance of determining the extent of the phenomenon: Problems with data collection, recoding and statistics on femicides or feminicides⁹

The first problem identified is that there are no clear, accurate records of violence against women, and in particular of femicides or feminicides attempts failed. Feminist organisations, and human and women's rights organisations also identify reluctance within the system to fully recognise the different forms of violence as violence, as well as the causes and consequences that it can lead to.

The extent of the problem of violence against women and its most extreme form, femicide/feminicide, cannot be adequately determined due to the lack of complete, proper records, particularly in relation to femicide/feminicide. This phenomenon is taking place all over Latin America and Europe, demonstrating that the policies implemented to prevent and eradicate it have not been effective. Therefore, adequate intervention that adapts to the specific characteristics of each country's reality is imperative.

For the Chilean Network against Violence towards Women – formerly the Chilean Network against Domestic and Sexual Violence -¹⁰, the Chilean State identifies and mistakenly limits violence against women to domestic/family violence, i.e. it only includes violence that occurs in the private sphere. As a result, the State ignores femicide cases committed by strangers to the victim or by other people known to the victim but who are not partners or ex-partners, which are consequently not officially considered to be femicides. Therefore, the entirety and complexity of the problem is hidden. By limiting it to family abuse, the continuous violence that affects women during their whole lives, both in the public and the private sphere, is ignored.

⁹ Chair: **Carolina Carrera**, Chair of Corporación Humanas and Counsellor of the National Institute for Human Rights. Panellists: **Soledad Rojas Bravo**, National Coordination of the Chilean Network against Violence towards Women, **Ana Carcedo**, Chair of CEFEMINA, feminist information and action centre, Costa Rica.

¹⁰ Chilean Network against Violence towards Women. <http://www.nomasviolenciacontramujeres.cl>

In this sense, the frequent use of expressions like “partner violence”, “spousal abuse”, “family abuse” and “domestic violence”, hides or filters out the gender direction of this violence from the collective consciousness. This issue was made explicit in 2010 with the incorporation of the concept of femicide into Chilean legislation.

Furthermore, even though “major social crimes” including homicides, bodily harm and rape, among others, are recorded and reported on regularly, the data is not broken down according to gender. “Family abuse”, however, is not included among the “major social crimes” despite its high rate of incidence, and it is recorded separately under the “other crimes” category along with drugs and theft.



In 2000, the Chilean Network against Domestic and Sexual Violence started to document murders of women and to identify which ones fell under the definition of femicide/feminicide in accordance with the conceptual frameworks created by feminist theorists. In 2004, the Network determined from a study on

feminicide that half of the cases consulted in the legal files of women who had died *from assault* corresponded to feminicides, i.e. they were killed because they were women. As a result, the State of Chile was recommended to design and implement a national policy that would comprehensively address the issues of prevention, treatment and reparation to those affected by gender-based violence, which is understood to be a specific form of violence that often ends in death.

At present, however, neither the Chilean legislation, the government policies implemented nor the data collection in this area meet the parameters established in the Convention of Belem do Pará, and as a result, both the records and the construction of the problem in the public imaginary are quite restricted.

The situation is very similar all over Latin America. While the problem of violence against women has achieved a certain amount of recognition due to the Convention of Belem do Pará, the States have not managed to formulate cross-cutting policies that allow the problem of femicide/feminicide to be identified with specific common standards in Latin America or to designate it clearly and define its characteristics. As a result, it is also difficult to record the facts related to femicide/feminicide in Latin America properly, as its definition, classification and interpretation varies from country to country.

In the Costa Rica, records of femicides are more extensive thanks to feminist organisations, in particular the CEFEMINA feminist information and action centre¹¹. There used to be great resistance by the judiciary, which strongly questioned the figures published in CEFEMINA's first study on femicide (2001). Despite the criticism, however, they succeeded in getting the crime of femicide incorporated into Costa Rican legislation in 2007.

The sources consulted in the studies carried out by the Chilean Network and CEFEMINA were the media and the judicial yearbooks, as they were the only ones available; in the case of Chile, they were also able to consult the legal files of women who had died *from assault*. The lack of official records on these murders is standard in Latin America even though the IHRS recommends that reliable records be created so that the victims, the murderers and the dynamics surrounding this type of crime can be identified. Adequate records would, on one hand, enable a better understanding of the phenomenon, its causes and consequences, and the formulation of appropriate comprehensive government policies, and on the other hand help to evaluate the impact of the measures taken and adapt them in light of the new data recorded.

It is necessary to require suitable responses from the States, particularly in relation to security and justice, and to reinforce the roles that the feminist organisations themselves play and should play in defining necessary prevention and protection policies.

c) Challenges facing the investigation of femicide/feminicide cases: the problems that lead to impunity¹²

¹¹ CEFEMINA, feminist information and action centre <http://www.bd.cdmujeres.net/centros/cr03/centro-feminista-informacion-accion-cefemina>

¹² Chair: **Katherine Ronderos**, Chair of LIMPAL Colombia (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom – Colombia).

Panellists: **Cecilia Medina**, Former Judge of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, **Jaime Hermida Marina**, Head of Human Rights Office Area, Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, **María Guadalupe Ramos Ponce**, Research Professor in the University of Guadalajara, CLADEM.

Even though the problem of violence against women is being observed and fervently denounced by human rights and women's movements in Latin America and Europe, this effort is totally insufficient as its eradication depends on the implementation of comprehensive government policies that the States do not assume. The situation is particularly serious in Central America where there has been an increase in violence due to the specific circumstances, which also means an increase in violence against women, as well as femicides/feminicides. The particular case of Mexico illustrates this escalation of violence which shows not only a lack of clear legislation for combating violence against women but also poor implementation of existing legislation.



This is why the “*Cotton Field*”¹³ case which was brought before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights illustrates the inadequate way that femicide/feminicide cases are dealt with and it highlights the responsibility of judicial and police officers who are in charge of the investigation, trial and judgment in the already countless number of cases of disappearance, kidnapping, torture, rape and homicide of women in Mexico.

The judgment of the “*Cotton Field*” case recognises that the investigations were rife with irregularities and inconsistencies, just like so many other cases of murdered women in Ciudad Juárez and in other countries in Latin America that end in impunity. As a result, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACourtHR) stated, among other things, that the Mexican State did not comply with its duty to investigate - and therefore its duty to guarantee - the victims’ rights to life, personal integrity and liberty. When a woman disappears in a violent context, the duty of strict due diligence requires that the investigation is carried out more quickly. It is essential that the authorities act promptly and immediately in a way that is relevant to the social context and from a gender perspective.

The “*Cotton Field*” judgment is historical in many aspects: for the first time, the IACourtHR applied standards that are common in all its cases to an exclusive case of violence against women. It also defined reparation actions for the damage caused to the parties who were directly offended in the case, as well as measures to prevent reoccurrence which require reforms in institutions and their authorities, prevention and care programmes, and even government policies directed at the public in general.

¹³ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Case of González et al (“Cotton Field”) v. Mexico _ http://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/casos/articulos/seriec_205_esp.pdf

It is important to remember that while the judgments of the IACourtHR are directed at one country in particular, the other States in the region should take the necessary measures to prevent similar cases to those resolved occurring within their jurisdiction.

Furthermore, the most recent recommendations of the CEDAW Committee¹⁴ to the Mexican State include full application of the General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence (LGAMVLV-2007), to take the necessary measures to guarantee that the legal definition of femicide as a criminal offence is based on objective factors that allow it to be adequately established in the local criminal laws and to speed up the legal definition of this crimes across the country. It also recommended standardising police investigation protocols for femicide, including informing the families of victims immediately.

In the last two years, there have been legislative advances in defining femicide as a criminal offence in Mexico. 16 States have made reforms to different legal systems, including criminal codes, to define it in various ways.¹⁵ Even though the definition of femicide as a criminal offence in these States can be considered to be a legislative advance, the reality is that there have been various obstacles to reducing impunity. Some of the main ones are: a lack of action protocols that guarantee adequate investigations from a gender perspective, a lack of legal harmonisation in relation to the General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence and a lack of government policies for the prevention, care and punishment of violence against women.

In addition, in some states the legal definition of femicide is seen as a way for the institutions to be exempted from their responsibilities to protect women's human rights. Indeed, when femicide is legally defined using subjective elements that are difficult to accredit, in practice it does not allow investigating this type of murder and so the problem remain unseen.

¹⁴ 52nd session of the Committee of the United Nations on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, New York, July 2012.

¹⁵ These States are: Guerrero, State of Mexico, Sinaloa, Chiapas, Colima, Federal District, Durango, Guanajuato, San Luis Potosí, Tabasco, Tamaulipas, Tlaxcala, Veracruz, Oaxaca and Jalisco. Femicide was also legally defined as a criminal offence at Federal level.



María Guadalupe Ramos Ponce, Cecilia Medina and Jaime Hermida Marina on investigation and the problem of impunity.

The most recent report of the National Citizens' Observatory for Femicide¹⁶ which encompasses January 2010 to June 2011 indicates that 1,235 women were victims of suspected femicides in eight states of the Mexican Republic. Some states have experienced a major increase in the number of femicide victims or have maintained the average number in comparison with the figures of the previous report (2009-2010). This proves that even though there is a body of legislation and regulations for protecting women, as in 2010 most of the State regulations regarding the Laws on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence were approved and published and femicide was approved as a criminal offence in various States, the problem of violence against women has worsened.

In the particular case of Mexico, there have been problems implementing the protocols that have been established for investigating femicide/femicide. These problems are due to the fact that there is no ongoing training for those in charge of investigating the cases or administering justice. Furthermore, the gender perspective is held in low regard and this is a cultural and social problem that the States are also obliged to address.

The judgment of the "*Cotton Field*" case was issued while Spain held the presidency of the European Union. This facilitated the Spanish Government activities to promote awareness about femicide, to support the Observatory in Guatemala and to work on a protocol model for investigating femicide. The existence of an international protocol for investigating femicide and due diligence helps to facilitate the work of the States when there are cases of femicide/femicide that could not be prevented.

¹⁶ Observatorio Ciudadano Nacional del Femicidio. <http://observatoriodelfemicidio.blogspot.be/>

Conclusions and Recommendations of the civil society to the EU-CELAC Summit on violence against women and femicides/feminicides

The civil society organisations welcome the EU-CELAC Bi-Regional Dialogue on Gender Issues, in which one of the main focal points is the fight to eradicate violence against women and its most extreme form, femicides or feminicides, i.e. murders caused by the subordination of women.



Jaime Hermida Marina, Ana Carcedo, Cecilia Medina, Raul Romeva i Rueda, Patsili Toledo, Katherina Ronderos and Javier Truchero discussing the conclusions of the conference and the recommendations for the EU-CELAC Summit

As a result, we request the creation of an EU-CELAC strategic action plan to eradicate discrimination and violence against women drafted with the participation of women's and feminist organisations. This plan has to be based on international instruments like CEDAW, the Convention of Belem do Pará and the Convention of Istanbul, as well as the standards established by the United Nations bodies and the regional human rights systems, which have been fundamental for the advance in recognising and validating women's human rights.

This plan must guarantee the following, among others: 1) visibility of all forms of violence against women and in particular femicide/feminicide, sexual violence and disappearances; 2) access to effective justice and the eradication of impunity, as well as reparation for the victims and their families; 3) recognition of the strategic role of feminist organisations and those that defend women's rights.

The following is therefore necessary:

- Ratification of the Convention of Istanbul by the European States, as well as the Optional Protocol of the CEDAW by all the States, with a view to advancing in shared standards related to women's rights.

- The European and Latin American States need to move forward to meet the recommendations and resolutions of the human rights bodies of the United Nations and of the Inter-American and European Human Rights System, particularly those related to eradicating discrimination and violence against women.
- Eliminate the norms and practices that prevent women from fully exercising their rights as citizens.
- With the participation of the civil society organisations, recommend and promote the adoption of specific legislation to punish violence against women and femicide/feminicide in all areas, in accordance with international human rights standards. These rules should include penalties for state agents that do not comply with their duty to act with due diligence in this matter, whether by action or omission.
- Improve and train the judicial system ensuring physical, financial and cultural access of women to justice. This should include the instruments, guidelines and protocols suitable for investigating and punishing the perpetrators effectively, for generating the legal information required for feedback, and for publicising the judgments for accountability and monitoring by the civil society.
- Eliminate any police, administrative and legal procedures that discriminate against women or put them in danger, including conciliation.
- Implement protection measures for women who experience violence, not tied to complaints, or criminal proceedings or of any other nature, and effective mechanisms to guarantee the security of women protected by these measures.
- In technical alliance with feminist and women's movements, encourage the States to generate official, accessible statistics information on all types of violence against women in both public and private spheres, and particularly on femicides/feminicides, sexual violence and disappearances, torture and trafficking. This information should consider the diversity of social conditions of women that live in violent conditions.
- Revise the strategies implemented by the States to combat armed violence, given the disproportionate impact that they are having on the security of women.
- Establish minimum ethical criteria on the media's treatment of violence against women, particularly femicide/feminicide, sexual violence, disappearances, torture and human trafficking, as well as promote and supervise their compliance, recommending sanctions if necessary.
- Support and reinforce the work and the action of organisations that defend women's rights in the defining and monitoring of the state's response to all forms of violence against women.
- Implement adequate protection measures for the defenders of human rights, be they preventative in nature or an urgent response to imminent risks.

- Provide this EU-CELAC bi-regional plan with the resources necessary for its implementation, constituting a specific fund to promote and reinforce the strategic work of feminist organisations and those that defend the women's human rights.
- Finally, this EU-CELAC bi-regional action plan should enable, at a global level, a strong consensus position before the 57th Session of the Commission of the Status of Women (March 2013) and thereby ensure the best conclusions possible in relation to combating violence against women worldwide.