



Zonta International District 22

Advancing the Status of Women Worldwide

District 22 Governor, Judith Trevan-Hawke, 8 Bowsprit Parade, Cleveland, QLD, 4163

Ph: (07) 3821 2511 Email: puit@bigpond.com

Hon. Dame Quentin Bryce AO, CVO

Chairman,

Premier's Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland,

P.O. Box 15185,

City East Qld. 4002,

Dear Dame Quentin,

Zonta International is an international service organization which has a primary focus of improving the legal, political, economic, educational, health and professional status of women (see www.zonta.org). In carrying out its goals, our organization upholds CEDAW Articles 1-16, the Beijing Platform for Action – 12 Critical Areas for Concern, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 3 and 5.

Zonta International is now the only international women's organization which focuses solely on status of women issues in accordance with CEDAW (the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women).

Our organisation believes firmly in strengthening laws to prevent discrimination against women and the girl child, and we are constantly vigilant for opportunities to advocate for change or for new initiatives to promote our objectives, particularly on the issue of domestic and family violence. We recently provided a submission to the federal government on the Beijing Platform for Action 12 Critical Areas of Concern – a joint submission with Districts 23 and 24, and prepared by District 22.

On the matter of violence against women and the girl child, Zonta International has been very active, since 2012, in supporting the UN Say No- UNiTE campaign by its own Zonta Says No program which is run at District and club level. (Refer to <http://zontasaysno.com>). Zonta International's ZISVAW (Zonta International Strategies for Violence Against Women) Program supports actions at the global level to reduce violence against women and the girl child.

www.zonta.org/WhatWeDo/InternationalPrograms/ZISVAWProgram.aspx).

These programs addressing violence have been supported by Zontians for many years
(www.zonta.org/WhatWeDo/InternationalPrograms/ZISVAWProgram/ZISVAWProjectArchives.aspx).

In recent years treaty bodies have made recommendations for Australia to improve its response to violence against women (VAW) and they have also identified significant concerns regarding violence against women which need addressing. These comments include:

CEDAW – Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW/C/AUS/CO/7).

International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Refer to the Committee’s General Comments 14 (2000) and 16 (2005) CEDAW/C/AUS/CO/7/ Add.1).

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 16).

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 7).

Commission on Human Rights (General Comment 28 (2000)).

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (General Recommendation XXV (2000)).

Convention on the Rights of the Child (Concluding Observations, Australia, UN Doc CRC/C/AUS/CO/4 (2012)).

Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UN Doc CAT/C/AUS/4 (2010)).

Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Australia (UN Doc A/HRC/17/10 (2011)).

Under our Constitutional Law, States have co-equal powers with the federal government so all States need to agree to signing an international agreement before the federal government can act. We would contend, therefore, that every State needs to address the concerns expressed about Australia by these treaty bodies. It is a ‘check-list’ for action so that changes can be reported to the federal government for the next periodic review.

We hope that our analysis, observations and recommendations in this submission will be helpful to your Taskforce in addressing this important topic. We see Zonta’s role as one of leadership in a civil society response to a status of women issue. We feel that our recommendations in response to Terms of Reference 3- Co-ordinated Response- are a step forward. By co-ordinating a number of service organisations and gaining support from local government or other organisations to ‘store’ furniture and other essential items , direct relief can be provided to those women endeavouring to break out of a cycle of violence. We would be happy to assist in co-ordinating such an endeavor.

All Zontians strongly support all government action to prevent discrimination against women and the girl child, and we particularly acknowledge such action taken by government to protect their human rights.

Yours Faithfully,



District Governor, District 22.