

### **Brazilian Government sets plan for assistance to victims of sexual violence**

The Brazilian Government has established a new plan for the organization and integration of care provided to victims of sexual violence by public safety and health professionals of the Unified Health System (SUS). The ministerial decree was signed in March 2015 by the Ministries of Health, Justice and the Secretariat of Policies for Women, and integrates actions from the “Women Living without Violence” Programme. The measure aims at implementing, at the national level, the immediate registration of information and collection of traces at the hospitals that provide these services.

The goal is to provide humanized care in order to reduce the exposure of the victim, preventing them from being subjected to various procedures. In addition, this service will help in gathering elements to criminalize the aggressors. The plan aims to preserve the life, dignity and integrity of victims by building their trust and providing tools to decrease their fear of seeking help and pressing charges against their aggressors.

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### **Brazilian Ministers sign ordinance establishing working group on health for women with disabilities and reduced mobility**

The Ministers of Human Rights of the Secretariat of the Republic Presidency; the Minister of the Secretariat on Policies for Women of the Presidency; and the Minister of Health, signed, in March 2015, a ministerial decree establishing the Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Women's Health with Disabilities and Reduced Mobility. The working group will promote actions for women with disabilities and reduced mobility to special medical care; monitor the implementation of actions for the qualification of health care for women with disabilities and reduced mobility; promote the development and dissemination of information that can support the development of actions aimed at coping with prejudice, discrimination, all kinds of institutional violence related to women with disabilities; and perform the half-year results of the development of actions for the qualification of health care of women with disabilities and reduced mobility.

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### **Brazil's President signs law that grants six months maternity leave for military women**

In March 2015, Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff signed a legislation that extends to the military armed forces the right to maternity leave of up to six months. The law is already in place for public servants and workers of private companies.

Published in the Official Gazette, the Law 13109 also opens the possibility of change of function for pregnant military as long as attested by the Board of Health Inspection of the Armed Forces, and secures the right to return to the office after the end of the license.

According to the Ministry of Defence, the law will benefit 23,000 women of the Armed Forces. Mothers may have license up to 180 days, counting from the day of delivery or the 9th month of pregnancy, upon request of the interested.

For adoptive mothers, the maternity leave shall be three months, when the adopted child is less than 1 year, and 30 days when the adopted child is over 1 year old. In both cases, the law provides for the extension of the license to the adopter for 45 and 15 days respectively.

For fathers, the law guarantees five working days of paternity-leave, from the day of the birth or adoption of the child.

The law already applies to public servants and workers in private companies.

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### **Brazilian mothers can now register the birth of their child at the register office without the father's presence**

From March 2015, mothers will be able to seek registration of birth of their children at register offices. The authorization is now provided by the Law 13,112/2015, published in Brazil's Official Gazette. The norm, sanctioned by President Dilma Rousseff, legally equates mothers and fathers on the obligation to register the newborn.

According to the text, it is the responsibility of the father or the mother, alone or together, the duty of registering the newborn within 15 days after birth. If either one does not meet the requirement within that period, the other will have a month and a half to make the registration.

Before the publication of the law, only the father could register the child within the first 15 days after birth. Only if there was failure or inability of the parent, the mother could take his place.

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### **Brazil Imposes harsher penalties for those who harm or kill women or girls with new "Femicide/Femicide" law**

A new law steps it up for victims of gender based violence and discrimination. The "Femicide/Femicide" law, signed by President Dilma Rousseff on 9 March 2015, is new legislation under Brazil's Penal Code that imposes harsher penalties for those who harm or kill women or girls on account of their gender. Proposed by Brazilian Congress after an investigation about omissions by public institutions and authorities, this law ensures the implementation of the Maria da Penha Law to address domestic violence. Murders linked to gender discrimination, contempt or domestic violence will carry sentences of between 12 to 30 years imprisonment. The bill also includes longer jail terms for crimes committed against pregnant women, girls under 14, women over 60 and women and girls with disabilities. The law makes visible the specific nature of these

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crimes, calls for gender sensitive investigations and is expected to help change the culture of gender violence and build a society that ensures the safety of all women and girls.