

Republic of North Macedonia

Ministry of Interior

Minister's Office

SUBJECT: Requesting supplements as per relevant resolutions

REFERENCE: Your Act No. 28/2-12106/20-1 of 30.04.2020

Distinguished,

Apropos the aforesaid subject which informed about the circular letter submitted to the member states by the UN Secretary General on the measures and activities undertaken in the period from August 1, 2018 to date concerning the implementation of Resolutions A / RES / 73/148, A / RES / 73/146 and A / RES / 73/149 of the General Assembly, which tackle the elimination of violence against women and girls with an emphasis on sexual violence, trafficking of women and girls and eliminating female genital mutilation, I, hereby, submit the following information:

Resolution A/RES/73/148

With the purpose of improving the quality of protection offered to women and girls, as well as eliminating violence against women and girls and changing negative social norms and gender stereotypes, the Republic of North Macedonia has ratified the Istanbul Convention. The Multi-Sectoral Working Group, whose members included employees of the Ministry of Interior, developed a 2018-2023 National Action Plan which lays down three goals. The first goal of the Action Plan is to harmonise national laws with the provisions of said Convention, the second is to establish services which promote the protection of victims of gender-based violence and victims of domestic violence and the third goal is to prevent gender-based violence and domestic violence. The activity was carried out by the Ministry of Interior.

Based on the 2018-2023 National Action Plan, in 2018 the Ministry of Interior prepared an Operational Plan wherein activities were foreseen within the scope of the Ministry's

competence. The Public Security Bureau is undertaking the measures and activities envisaged in the Action Plan.

The Multi-Sectoral Working Group, whose members included employees of the Ministry of Interior, drafted a Law on prevention and protection from violence against women and domestic violence. The activity was carried out by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

To raise public awareness and change attitudes and behaviour and work with primary and secondary school students, the Department for Prevention of SoI Skopje carries out workshops across primary and secondary schools as part of the “School safety” project where types of violence, including domestic violence, are discussed. The main goal of the project is to improve the overall and personal safety of students in the educational institutions, as well as to reduce all forms and types of violence. This project has been carried out as a continuous activity over 7 (seven) academic years.

The Public Security Bureau, as well as the Training Centre, have undertaken activities to conduct continuous training on the “Training module intended for Professionals on providing gender-sensitive services to victims” developed for the needs of the Ministry. A handbook on these trainings has been prepared with the support of UN Women. Following a coordinated meeting, guidelines were provided to train all police officers within the sectors for internal affairs and the regional centres for border affairs, as well as the police officers in organizes units at the strategic level in order to sensitize them and provide services to vulnerable categories of victims.

To strengthen the capacity of the institutions in the security sector for human rights and prevent sexual and gender violence and sexual exploitation and abuse, in 2018 and 2019 the Public Security Bureau in cooperation with the OSCE Mission carried out 8 (eight) workshops on “Improving gender sensitivity among police personnel to violence against women and dealing with domestic violence”. The main purpose of the workshops was to acquaint police officers with the Law on Prevention, Combating and Protection against Domestic Violence, the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, the so-called Istanbul Convention, and to familiarize them with the needs and

expectations victims of domestic violence have in terms of the police personnel, as well as the manner in which police personnel treat said victims.

In order for institutions and associations for protection of women to responsibly, duly and urgently take action as well as for them to mutually coordinate and cooperate towards preventing and combating domestic violence, during this epidemic, the Public Security Bureau provided all police stations with the phone numbers of Counselling centres for women victims of gender-based/domestic violence, NGOs and civil society organisations and telephone numbers of national services that can undertake protective measures based on their programmes, as follows:

- 1) Offering shelters for persons – victims of domestic violence
- 2) Adequate health care
- 3) Adequate psychosocial intervention and treatment
- 4) Psychosocial treatment in counselling centres
- 5) Support for a child's education
- 6) Legal aid and representations and
- 7) Economic empowerment of victims through active involvement in the labour market

During the coronavirus epidemic, the Ministry of Interior published a poster and a brochure on its website with information about the established service for legal and psychosocial support for vulnerable victims of violent crimes by the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association. The service is fully functional and adapted to the conditions imposed by COVID-19. Posters and flyers have been displayed in prominent places and on the premises of police stations to better inform citizens about the establishment of the service for legal and psychosocial support for vulnerable victims of violent crimes. The service will include a three-level support: providing information and advice related to legal, financial, and practical issues and risks for further victimization, legal aid, and psychosocial support. The posters and brochures were prepared as part of the “Legal support service for vulnerable victims of violent crimes” project, supported by the European Union and the Ministry of Finance – Central Financing and Contracting Department.