

Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV)

Spain

Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review

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Council

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About ODVV

1. The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) is a non-governmental, non-profit, non-partisan organization in Special Consultative Status to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC). The ODVV was established in 1988 in Tehran and has been active in the field of human rights and humanitarian activities.

2. The ODVV is also associated to the United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI), a participatory of the NGOs Coalition for an International Court (based in New York), and national coordinator of the Global March Against Child Labour (based in New Delhi) which cooperated in a variety of issues with international organizations and has working relations with many NGOs in Iran and around the globe.

3. The ODVV is also a member of the International Organization against Small and Light Weapons, and the UN Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGO), and the International Movement for a Just World (JUST), AMAN Network of Rehabilitation Centres in the Middle East and North Africa, International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT).

4. During the last 2 decades, we have done so many activities, mainly informative in regards with human rights and supportive in regards with the victims of violence. Various human rights education courses, workshops, seminars, conferences have been held or co-held by the ODVV for various sectors of society: civil society institutions and governmental organizations.

5. Other Activities:

- Participation in UN Commission on Human Rights annual sessions, and the new Human Rights Council sessions in Geneva. Written and oral statements on various items of the agenda are issued by the ODVV.
- Internship for foreign students
- Publication of different books and booklets on human rights such as Rights of the Child, Racism, Racial Discrimination and Xenophobia. Publication of Defenders Newsletter

(English), human rights news and developments bulletin (Farsi), Rights of the Child bulletin (Farsi
- Daily electronic human rights newsletter in English and Farsi

Background

6. Spain is a democratic constitutional monarchy with a parliament. Spain's GDP is approximately 1.43 trillion dollars, and its unemployment rate drops each year. While respecting its human rights commitments, the Spanish government has ratified various human rights conventions and optional protocols and has been a forerunner in the realization of these rights. The UPR is an opportunity to review governments' achievements and problems with regards to the implementation of their human rights commitments. Therefore the ODVV felt it necessary to first of all point out Spanish government's positive achievements which are as follows:

- a) Strengthening existing policies and programmes on education.
- b) Independent and unbiased press and media with an emphasis on the realization of the right to freedom of expression and belief.
- c) Guaranteeing gender equality and adoption of special measures for the realization of nondiscrimination in favour of women.
- d) Attention towards financial and economic crises and the necessity of the observation of human rights regarding these challenges.
- e) Conformation of the constitution and domestic laws with the UDHR and other international human rights instruments.

7. Violence against women and domestic violence is a challenge that grips all governments, and the Spanish government is not exempt in this regard. By adopting preventive measures against domestic violence the Spanish government has utilized numerous mechanisms. Despite the criminalization of domestic violence and setting up of special courts, and the setting of heavy sentences for those who commit these crimes, the Spanish government is still facing serious problems.

Recommendations

8. Attention must be made that all forms of acts of violence against women are gross violations of human rights and seriously hinder the development and strengthening of peace and democracy. The ODVV recommends the following to the Spanish government in this regard:

- a) Necessity to teach to respect women's rights by adding special courses in schools curricula

b) Culture building and institutionalization of the prohibition of violence against women norm within society.

c) Holding of seminars, workshops and education courses for the enlightenment of general consensus and information dissemination of men towards this issue.

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