



Hanoi, Nov 24, 2017: The role of men in the prevention and fight against gender-based violence against women and girls was once again confirmed at an event this morning in Hanoi.

The *"White Ribbon Breakfast – Men’s cooperation to ensure safety and justice for women and children who experience GBV "* event was held in Vietnam for the third time, attracting nearly 100 representatives from the United Nations in Viet Nam (UN), embassies, leaders of ministries, bilateral and multilateral donors, NGOs and press agencies. This event is in response to the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign held internationally.

According to statistics from the Department of Family - Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, from 2011 to 2015, each day there are 64 women and 10 children experience domestic violence in Viet Nam. Of the total of 157,859 domestic violence cases detected between 2011 and 2015, the victims who are women (aged 16-59) accounting for 74.24%. Previously, according to the National Survey on Domestic Violence 2010, 58% of Vietnamese ever-married women say that they have experienced at least one form of violence (physical, sexual and psychological) from their relatives or intimate partners in their lifetime. However, 87% of the victims did not seek help due to the lack of available support services. Many people do not dare to speak due to fear of discrimination and harassment. Not only married women, many young and unmarried women are also subjects of violence. According to a study by Action Aid, 87% of women in Hanoi and

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Ho Chi Minh City interviewed said they had been sexually abused in public. Women and girls are not safe at home, in public and at work.

In response to the National Action Month On Gender Equality And Prevention Of Violence Against Women And Girls in 2017 with the theme of "Join hands to stop violence against women and children", the " *White Ribbon Breakfast*" event this year was held to raise awareness and promote the actions of men in cooperation to protect the safety and justice for women and children who experience gender-based violence.

At the event, the representative from the Vietnam Women's Union shared about maintaining the annual White Ribbon Breakfast and calling for putting the safeguarding of women's safety and justice as a top priority in interventions, protection of victims and addressing gender-based violence. In his second time attending to the White Ribbon Breakfast event, the Australian Ambassador to Australia, sir Craig Chittick, spoke about the Australia's GBV response system. The representative from the Ministry of Justice also had a practical sharing about the legal assistance and the protection of victims of GBV in legal proceedings. From the United Nation, Ms Elisa Fernandez Saenz, head of Vietnam office of The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) emphasized the importance of access to justice of women as well as gender sensitivity in the legal aid process to ensure the safety of women.

Following the event, the Center for Women and Development has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Center for Legal Counseling, Vietnam Bar Federation on cooperation in legal counseling and support for women and children who experience GBV. This agreement is a concrete and resolute action that clearly demonstrates the effort to strengthen the cooperation and mobilize the role of stakeholders in ensuring the safety and justice for women and children who are subjects of GBV.

The event was co-organized by the Center for Women and Development (CWD) - Vietnam Women's Union and The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women).

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Information on the White Ribbon campaign:

White Ribbon Campaign includes activities of prevention and fighting violence against women such as communications, education and programs for the youth in schools, at workplaces and in communities. The White Ribbon campaign was globally launched first time in Canada in 1991 and has now spread to more than 60 countries and became the largest movement led by men to mobilize men to end violence against women.

The United Nations General Assembly has designated November 25 as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, it is also the opening date for the global campaign “16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence” , this campaign ends at The International Human Rights Day (December 10) and was launched the first time in 1991.

The White Ribbon Breakfast was started in Australia in 2003, and by 2007 White Ribbon Foundation was officially established and headed by men. The ambassador of the campaign is the Commissioner of Police, South Australia Police, Mr Grant Stevens.

The Center for Women and Development (the Vietnam Women's Union) follows the Australian White Ribbon Breakfast model with the expectation that Vietnamese men would have a strong role in promoting gender equality and responding to violence gender!

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