

Everyone benefits from the end – once and for all – of all forms of violence against women and girls.

Today at the Human Rights Council's Annual Full-Day Discussion on the Human Rights of Women was a panel on *accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women: engaging men and boys in preventing and responding to violence against women and girls*. On behalf of Australia and New Zealand, Canada thanked this morning's panellists for highlighting a key issue in the struggle to end violence and discrimination against women and girls.

Canada said, "We have learned that everyone benefits from gender equality. Everyone benefits from a world without prejudice. Everyone benefits from the end – once and for all – of all forms of violence against women and girls. And because everyone benefits, it is especially critical to engage a group that is often overlooked – the men and boys who can truly be agents and beneficiaries of this positive transformation.

It is critical that communities engage men and boys to accelerate efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls. We know that violence against women and girls is rooted in historical and structural inequality in power relations between women and men. Harmful gender stereotypes have created environments conducive to inequality.

This requires that we all take action.

Let us move to a world where women and men teach their children the importance of gender equality. Let us move to a world where boys and girls do not hesitate to speak out against discrimination. Let us increase men's involvement in gender equality and reducing violence through the use of male influencers and role models. Together, we are a strong generation with a real possibility to change power relations between men and women and create lasting gender equality. This is why men and boys must boldly work alongside women and girls to combat this violence.

Men and boys can and must challenge rigid gender norms that impede the agency of all people. They must speak out against all forms of discrimination and violence. And they must work to hold each other accountable for behaviours and actions that can lead to violence.

And not simply because men and boys have wives, daughters, or sisters. But rather because women deserve the full depth of respect, safety, and dignity, regardless of their relationships with men. Violence against women and girls is the world's greatest and most persistent violation of human rights. Violence against women and girls is unacceptable in any form.

And it is our duty as States, as partners, and as people – to make all forms of violence against women and girls a thing of the past".