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Urgency Required on Protection Orders

Policy was passed at the recent National Conference of the National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) calling on the Government take urgent action to improve the implementation of the legislation relating to protection orders for those affected by domestic violence.

The Non Governmental Organizations' shadow report to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) committee last year showed that domestic violence is the fifth leading cause of death from injury for New Zealand women, and 50 percent of all homicides of women are committed by the woman's partner or ex- partner.

"It's a known fact that every five weeks a woman is killed by her partner or ex partner and about ten children are killed in domestic violence incidents every year in this country. There is an obvious need for improvement in the legislation to do with protection orders" says NCWNZ National President, Elizabeth Bang.

Last year the CEDAW committee, in its concluding comments on New Zealand, said that:

"It calls upon the State party to ensure that all violence against women is effectively prosecuted and adequately punished in line with the Committee's general recommendation 19. The Committee recommends that training be enhanced for the judiciary, public officials, law enforcement personnel and health-service providers in order to ensure that they can respond to it adequately."

Last year NCWNZ fully supported the research report last year commissioned by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, "*Living at the Cutting Edge- Women's Experience of Protection Orders* and the recommendations made in the report.

"NCWNZ acknowledges that changes are being made for improvements with regard to protection orders and that the Government, Police and the judiciary have publicly voiced their support. Implementation must be sooner rather than later if we are to see any improvement of the lives of women and children that are at risk," concluded Mrs Bang.

ENDS

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