

Statement on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

We, the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, speak up and join with others to bring an end to violence against women and girls. Global statistics indicate that in all societies women and girls are more frequently the victims of violence. Actions or threats likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering are incompatible with biblical ethics and Christian morality. Such actions include, but are not limited to, family violence, rape, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), honour killings, and dowry murders. Manipulation, denial of personal liberty, and coercion are also acts of abuse and violence. To such behaviours the Seventh-day Adventist Church says, "Let's end it now!"

Seventh-day Adventists recognize that creation in God's image bestows dignity and worth on every individual. The measure of that worth is seen in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ to provide eternal life for everyone. The love and compassion that characterized the earthly life of Jesus sets an example for all His followers in their relationship with others. Christ-like behaviour leaves no room for violence against family members or persons outside the family.

The Bible counsels Christians to view the body as the temple of God. Bringing intentional harm to another person desecrates that which God honours and is therefore sinful behaviour. Seventh-day Adventists commit themselves to being leaders in breaking the cycle of violence perpetrated against women and girls. We will speak out in defence of victims and survivors through teaching, preaching, Bible study, and advocacy programs.

The Seventh day Adventist Church seeks and welcomes partnerships and collaboration with others in addressing this global issue. The collective voice of many can save tens of thousands of women and girls from the harm and suffering that result from abuse and violence.

(This statement is supported by the following Bible references: John 3:16; Genesis 1:26; Isaiah 61:1-3; Ephesians 5:2-3; 1 John 3:10, 15-18, 4:11; 3 John 1:2; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19; Romans 12:1-2.)

(See also the "Statement on the Nurture and Protection of Children".)

This statement was approved and voted by the Executive Committee of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists on June 23, 2010, and released at the General Conference Session in Atlanta, Georgia, June 24-July 3, 2010.