



## **Ending Violence against Women – Opportunities and Challenges of ICT**

**On 14 March at 15.00 in Conference Room 11**

Information and communication technologies (ICT) provide an excellent opportunity for women to participate in society more actively than ever. Campaigning for women's human rights has never been easier than it is today through the variety of online platforms and social networks. Thanks to ICT we can reach out faster and more efficiently to those who are in dire need of help - the victims of violence - in order to provide information on support services. Today prevention of violence is taking place more and more via online tools. Fast development of ICT provides us with endless opportunities, which is especially pertinent in rural areas where women and girls often have limited access to information and education.

However, rapid increase of use of ICT does not come without risks. ICT has enabled forms of violence never seen before. Today cyber stalking, cyberbullying, so-called revenge porn and other forms of harassment are spreading fast. Law enforcement and victim support systems are not always capable of addressing these issues in a timely manner and legislation in many countries is still not addressing digital violence.

Moreover, digital violence often crosses state borders. Part of the challenge is to reach every individual and change his or her mindset - changing social attitudes and norms is considered as the first step preventing digital violence. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to address those matters also on an international level. We can only increase the likelihood of positive use of ICT, when we address the risks associated with it.

The aim of the side-event is to:

- Discuss the positive changes digital developments have brought into the lives of women all over the world, including faster and better service provision for victims of violence;
- Discuss the spread and effects of ICT related crimes such as cyber stalking, cyberbullying and so-called revenge porn;
- Discuss ICT as a tool for prevention – rising awareness and changing attitudes via social networks;
- To discuss, how states and international organisations can prevent and tackle digital violence against women.

This side event will take advantage of the presence of delegates from around the world at the United Nations headquarters for the CSW62, to highlight the important role ICT has in empowering women, but also draws attention to the challenges and drawbacks women face. Our aim is to unite our strengths and insight in addressing these issues and spread the knowledge and best practices, so we all can take most effective action to end digital violence against women.