

ESCAP/Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+25 Review
Item3b Realizing gender equality for women and girls in the thematic area of freedom from violence,
stigma and stereotypes”

Statement by Dr. Yumiko Tanaka Representative of Japan
64nd Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Violence against women is a serious violation of human rights that includes criminal behavior. The issue of violence against women has not yet been resolved, and Japan is well aware that we cannot even start discussing women’s empowerment with this problem remains, and now is the time to deal with such unresolved issues if we are to further increase opportunities for women to participate actively.

In line with this awareness, in 2017 Japan revised its Penal Code, aiming to address the realities of sexual crime according to the circumstances of each case. The revisions included redefining the actions constituting rape and amending the statutory penalty. At the same time, further penal provisions were added, such as those establishing the new crimes of indecency or sexual acts by parents or guardians. Also, the provision requiring filing of criminal complaints by victims was deleted.

Japan addressed violence perpetrated online by instituting a new “Revenge Porn Prevention Act” in 2014 to punish posting of sexual images on online forums and so on without the consent of the person shown in the images. In 2016, Anti-Stalking Act was amended to add messages sent via social media and comments on blogs and other personal web pages to the actions constituting stalking behavior that are regulated by the Act.

To support victims, a nationwide telephone advice line for victims of sexual crimes was set up in 2017, and in 2019 the advice line became capable of handling calls free-of-charge 24 hours a day.

In another measure, one-stop support centers for victims of sexual crimes and sexual violence were set up in all 47 prefectures across Japan to provide physical and mental treatment by doctors and support victims by accompanying them during visits to the police.

Japan is determined to continue its unremitting efforts to eradicate violence against women.