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Human Rights Council
50th session. Item 10
Situation in Ukraine and Crimea
Geneva, 5th of July 2022

Delivered by Elina Viitasaari
CGNK Gender focal point

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Everyone,

Sexual violence as a war weapon is a cheap, easy and effective tool to terrorize. Combined gender inequality and militarization makes it possible. In a patriarchal world, masculinity is considered a strong, dominant and valued trait while femininity is seen as a weak, submissive and belittled feature. Using violence strengthens the perpetrator's masculinity, by repressing the victims, thus "feminizing" them. The Russian military clearly represents this ideology. Maintaining this masculine status requires constant violent behavior, thus raping in Ukraine continues.

International community has a key role in strengthening accountability in Ukraine. Decreasing barriers for victims to report, securing investigators work, giving media space for the victims' stories, and supporting the ICC and other justice procedures. In addition to directing more funds to legal processes, backing up the physical and psychological services helps victims to become survivors, which gives a good base for further reconciliation.

The Center for Global Nonkilling appeals to all member States to engage in gender-responsive peace work while eliminating conflict-related sexual violence. We demand to the Russian Federation to stop waging war in Ukraine immediately, and in particular over women's bodies.

Thank you.