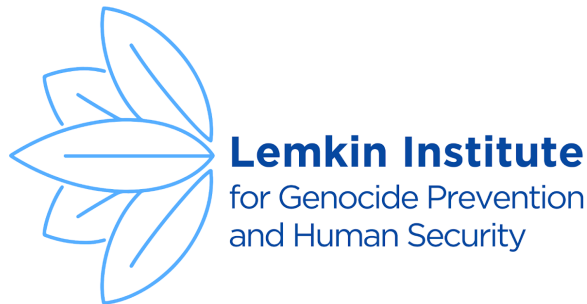




## **Statement on the Transphobic UN Report on Violence Against Women and Girls**

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The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention and Human Security is appalled by the advanced edited report from the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls (VAWG) entitled “Sex-based violence against women and girls: new frontiers and emerging issues,” released on June 16, 2025 (“the Report”). In addition to situating itself within the quickly spreading global wave of transphobic and interphobic genocidal language, the Report is blatantly ignorant of basic biological concepts and purposely misleads the reader. The author, UN Special Rapporteur Reem Alsalem, cherry-picks disinformation to serve an anti-trans agenda—and even misattributes such disinformation to reputable sources on more than one occasion.

The Report begins by laying out key terminology, in which it presents sex as a “true binary,” citing evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins. Dawkins, in an opinion piece supporting this contention, bases his definition of sex entirely on gametes. This definition of the concept ignores the multitude of other components that make up sex, both biologically and sociologically. It is clear that Dawkins chose such a restrictive definition in order to serve his pre-existing conclusion that sex is binary.

Among experts in the field, it is generally accepted that rather than being binary, sex is bimodal, meaning that there are “two dimensions to the continuum of biological sex.” The idea that sex is a true binary also ignores the existence of intersex people, a community which Richard Dawkins dismisses as too small to count. Regardless of what percentage of the world population is intersex, legislation and policy do affect intersex people. Crafting legislation and policy while denying their existence is discriminatory and potentially genocidal in nature.

Alsalem's report goes on to argue that a society not firmly entrenched in the sex binary promotes violence against women and girls, although violence against women and girls is common across all social orders and can be the most severe in societies that impose a strict sex binary. Nonetheless, Alsalem advocates for a society where everyone is defined entirely by their sex assigned at birth – with no existence apparently allowed for sex and gender variant individuals – and rejects the use of inclusive language. The problem is that the sex assigned at birth is a rough measure of someone's sex, based only on visible indicators (genitalia). While even that will not always fit neatly into a strict sex binary, because intersex newborns often have visible indicators of sex variance, variations in sexual development often only become apparent later in life.

The Report aims to defend what it calls “sex-specific language and categories,” by which it means binary categories alongside the exclusion, erasure, and perhaps persecution of sex variant people. It ignores the fact that countries have used sex-specific categories that recognize sex variance and this is a much better measure of someone's sex. Although Alsalem claims to be concerned with the denial of the existence of biological sex as a concept, it is evident that what she is determined to stamp out is the recognition of sex and gender diversity, which is just as material and biological as her binary and is in fact scientifically much more accurate. Interspersed amongst factual statements about VAWG and gender discrimination are trans-exclusionary radical feminist (TERF) rallying points, many of them staggering in their inaccuracy.

The Report argues that inclusive language somehow excludes cis women and “erases the legal category of ‘women.’” It champions the recent decision of the United Kingdom Supreme Court to deny trans women protection from discrimination as women. The Lemkin Institute previously released a Red Flag Alert denouncing that same ruling as genocidal in nature.

Inclusive language does not deny protection to anyone, but rather expands it to those previously denied protection. In other words, protecting trans women does not mean that cis women lose protection. Legal protections do not become less valuable when their scope is expanded. Moreover, cis women are still considered women under the law, even in jurisdictions where gender inclusion is practiced. That has never been at issue.

Alsalem argues that data collection for the purposes of combatting VAWG is threatened by the recognition of gender diversity. According to her, unless all data is tied to one's sex assigned at birth, policies developed based on collected data cannot adequately address VAWG. The Lemkin Institute would like to remind the Special Rapporteur of the prevalence of domestic violence suffered by the transgender community. Excluding trans women from the data collected on VAWG

would mean that policies aimed at combatting such violence are crafted without taking into consideration *the very populations most vulnerable to such violence*.

Canada's submission to the Special Rapporteur presented data on VAWG which distinguished between violence perpetrated against cis and gender diverse individuals. This data offers Canadian authorities a granular and accurate picture of domestic violence against various groups, including cis women. However, Alsalem's Report insists on data being organized into two categories based solely on its very narrow interpretation of biological sex. The Lemkin Institute is unclear as to what end is served by refusing to disaggregate data further than by just two categories, other than the erasure of sex and gender diverse individuals. Where Alsalem claims that gender and sex diversity obscure statistics, her insistence on the collection of data based around the willful ignorance of such diversity would have the same effect.

Perhaps most erroneously and dangerously, the Report subscribes to the notion that gender dysphoria is "socially contagious" and presents the use of puberty-blockers and hormones for youth as "against their best interests." Given the fact that the Report expresses concern over the harmful nature of certain gender stereotypes, this parroting of harmful stereotypes regarding trans people is highly hypocritical. Both the argument that being trans is socially contagious and that gender-affirming care is harmful for youth have been disproven time and time again. Regarding the latter argument specifically, many studies have demonstrated that access to gender-affirming care for youth leads to decreases in suicide among trans youth. Unless it is in the best interest of trans youth to increase their risk of suicide, allowing access to gender-affirming care is certainly not "against their best interests."

The anti-trans movement likes to cloak its transphobia and transmisogyny in a patently genocidal language of social contagion: If nothing is done against trans people, somehow the invisible specter of "transgenderism" will take over ever-increasing numbers of people, especially our youth, weakening our societies and destroying all that is good and noble. The language of modern day transphobia is very similar to National Socialist views on homosexuality. SS Leader Heinrich Himmler was especially concerned about the supposed social contagion of homosexuality. Like the Nazis, today's anti-trans extremists rely on old bigoted arguments that have been proven to be false. The trans social contagion argument came into vogue 100 years ago, with the first examples of sex reassignment surgery. Governments and physicians performing such surgeries back then used this argument to try to restrict the number of such surgeries. If the social contagion argument held any water, the "epidemic of gender dysphoria" that it has always warned against would have occurred at least a century ago.

The fact is that trans people have always existed, there is no social contagion, and efforts to erase trans life are genocidal and should be treated as such.

Turning to the “consequences of the erasure of sex-specific considerations,” the Report argues that the move to “gender equality” has been accompanied in various jurisdictions by the defunding of programs and initiatives working to support women, especially victims of VAWG. No specific examples are given, but the authors cite the [submission](#) from Rape Crisis England and Wales as support for this claim. However, that submission makes no mention of the connection between a move from “sex equality” to “gender equality” and the inadequacy of funding to address VAWG. In fact, Rape Crisis England and Wales’s submission emphasizes the fact that services for victims of VAWG have been severely underfunded “over many decades.” The claim is thus misattributed, for the reason that no such connection exists anywhere between a move towards gender equality and a defunding of VAWG services. Instead of discussing the political choices made by the reigning political parties which have resulted in a lack of funding addressing VAWG, the Report scapegoats gender diverse individuals, which is a common TERF tactic.

The Lemkin Institute believes it is glaringly obvious that erasing the existence of sex and gender diverse individuals would not result in a sudden deluge of funding to address domestic and sexual violence perpetrated against women and girls.

The arguments presented by the Report in favour of “single-sex spaces” seem to [ignore several facts](#). It is argued that “female-only” support for survivors of violence is necessary in order to meet the needs of women and girls. As discussed in our recent [Red Flag Alert](#) on the UK Supreme Court decision, excluding a group which is [particularly vulnerable](#) to domestic violence from specialized shelters will only serve to make matters worse for many and to endanger trans women. Moreover, the decision to define inclusion solely by “biological sex” clearly ignores the existence of [trans men](#) and some [intersex men](#), who may be – for the purposes of Alsalem’s arguments – designated as “biologically female,” yet live and identify as men indistinguishable from any other man. If spaces are designed around the “sex binary,” those who exist outside of it have nowhere to go, being unwelcome in either female or male spaces. Alsalem brings up the utility of single-sex hospital wards, which begs the question of where people with varied sex characteristics would be able to seek care.

In another clear case of disinformation, Alsalem goes on to advocate for the exclusion of trans women from female prisons on the basis that it endangers “biological women.” However, the Report fails to identify any salient risks of the inclusion of trans women in female prisons—for the simple reason that [none exist](#).

The Report claims that “[f]emale prisoners, when housed and required to share facilities with male prisoners, experience harassment and physical, psychological and sexual violence.” What it means to say is that cis women suffer harassment and violence at the hands of transgender women imprisoned alongside them. The Report attributes this “fact” to a [2022 report](#) from Correctional Service Canada (CSC).

Interestingly enough, however, CSC's report states that *transgender women* are "more likely to experience verbal, physical, and sexual assault while in-custody [sic]." This is the complete opposite of what Alsalem claims the CSC's report states. The Report would have the reader believe that trans women are the perpetrators of such harassment against cis women, not the victims at the hands of cis men in custody. The Lemkin Institute finds this level of creative interpretation to justify putting trans women in harm's way incredibly irresponsible.

The Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) released a report in 2023 which highlighted the mistreatment and dehumanization faced by many LGBTI people in prison. Among many other examples, the CPT's report detailed how some trans prisoners are placed in isolation for "protection" purposes or subject to humiliation when forced to be held in settings which do not correspond to their gender identity. The recommendations made by the Alsalem Report would not serve to protect cis women, but instead to reinforce the mistreatment of trans inmates.

The Lemkin Institute believes that UN Special Rapporteurs should be held to a higher standard than Alsalem has demonstrated in this report. At the very least, they should be required to base their conclusions on facts, not fiction.

The Lemkin Institute is concerned that the Alsalem Report on VAWG's inclusion of anti-trans rhetoric and dog-whistles, as well as its false attribution of several of its claims to various institutions, harms the credibility of the Special Rapporteur and the UN's work. The parts of the Report that are based on fact are weakened by the invented portions as well as those rooted in logical fallacies.

At a time when femicide and VAWG more broadly are on the rise across the globe, it is incredibly disheartening to see the work intended to address these critical issues hijacked by an anti-trans political agenda. The trans and intersex communities are by no means responsible for the global prevalence of gender-based violence. Blaming vulnerable groups for the failure of governments to adequately address this issue allows those same governments – and the corporations actively encouraging and profiting off of the rise of online gender-based violence – to avoid accountability.

While the gender critical movement continues to straw man trans people, villainizing imaginary trans people who are violent predators and whose existence somehow both causes VAWG and prevents governmental action to combat it, existing trans and intersex people are losing their rights.

As in other genocidal processes, the denial of rights for trans and intersex people results in a proliferation of harm across private and public life, both for those within the targeted group, as well as those who appear as if they may be part of it. In the few months since the UK Supreme Court's decision to define "sex discrimination"

based on “biological sex” and thus deny protection to trans women from discrimination, cis and trans people alike have suffered violent harassment as a direct result.

An Equality Impact Assessment commissioned by Coolwood Books has determined that the Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance released following the Supreme Court decision could “cause 2,750 extra assaults on women and girls each year.” This is due in part to the fact that people often misclassify the sex of other individuals, resulting in violent responses to the presence of cis women with androgynous features or clothing in “single-sex spaces.” The Special Rapporteur would do well to consider the practical implications of her hate-fueled recommendations.

The Lemkin Institute would like to caution the UN Special Rapporteur against continuing to applaud governments taking action to enforce a strict gender binary. The strict imposition of a gender binary and a return to “natural” gender roles are hallmarks of genocidal ideology, and were key tenets held by the Nazi party. Today, the beliefs held by the gender critical movement overlap significantly with those held by various authoritarian governments and fascist political parties the world over. The TERF movement supports increased governmental control over people’s bodies and freedom of expression. It demonizes vulnerable members of the community, encouraging violence against those it baselessly scapegoats for the ills of society.

We at the Lemkin Institute join the voices of numerous other organizations standing in opposition to this report and its proposed erasure of gender diverse individuals. Violence against women and girls cannot be combatted by scapegoating vulnerable members of the population, nor can it be combatted by a strict reinforcement of the gender binary. To the trans and intersex people reading this statement, we once again would like to express our support, recognition, and solidarity.