

18 October 2022

## National Plan to end violence against women and children welcomed

The Law Council of Australia welcomes the collaboration and commitment of all governments to take action to end the epidemic of violence against women and children.

“Every member of our community has a responsibility to work together to stamp out gender-based violence,” Law Council of Australia President Mr Tass Liveris said. “The release of the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032 provides a roadmap for protecting and supporting victim-survivors and women and children at risk of experiencing violence.”

The Law Council commends the Plan’s focus on prevention and early intervention and delivery of targeted and tailored services to support diverse groups, including the identified need to improve capacity building within legal assistance services supporting women and children experiencing family violence. The Plan’s commitment to the development of measurable targets to track progress through a supporting Outcomes Framework is also welcomed.

“We are pleased the Plan promises that further work will be undertaken to develop consistent national definitions of gender-based violence. The existing differences between family violence definitions, both within federal legislation and across state and territory legislation, significantly impact responses to family violence,” Mr Liveris said.

“The Plan recognises that we need to substantially improve criminal justice responses to domestic, family and sexual violence crimes. Access to appropriate survivor-centred responses that encourages reporting must be a priority. At the moment, around nine in 10 women who experience sexual assault never contact police.

“Development of a standalone First Nations National Plan will also help ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities are resourced to lead, design, implement and evaluate culturally appropriate and trauma-informed service delivery.

“If governments are serious about supporting victim-survivors to come forward and seek justice, the vision of the Plan must be backed up by funding for the legal assistance sector.

“The prevalence of child protection matters and cases involving family violence has increased but essential frontline support services remain chronically underfunded and unable to meet the needs of those affected by family violence.

“We hope the Budget later this month includes at least an initial investment towards addressing current service gaps in the justice system by increasing funding for legal

# Media Release



assistance providers, such as Legal Aid Commissions, Community Legal Centres, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services, and Family Violence Prevention Legal Services.”

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