

## Email template

By email: Victoria@victoriaatkins.org.uk

Dear Victoria Atkins,

We write to express our serious concerns about the Government's policy to create two separate strategies on Domestic Abuse (DA) and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). There has been no consultation on the efficacy of such a strategy, no evidence provided and no cogent reasons given as to why separate DA and VAWG strategies are necessary. We believe the Government's approach to be a profoundly regressive step for the following reasons:

1. It is conceptually unsound since violence against women and girls is often experienced as a continuum of overlapping forms of abuse. For instance, domestic abuse can also involve domestic slavery, FGM, forced marriage, honour-based violence, rape, sexual violence and so on.
2. It risks de-gendering domestic abuse, de-prioritising certain forms of VAWG, de-funding smaller specialist services, and creating confusion and silos in the understanding of VAWG.
3. It will seriously undermine decades-long efforts to promote an understanding of domestic abuse and other forms of gender-based violence as a cause and consequence of gender inequality.

Many of us view the current VAWG strategy as an evolving framework that can be strengthened and built upon to create a more inclusive and effective foundation for understanding and eradicating all forms gender-based violence. Our fear is that this unfinished work will now suffer a serious set-back.

We urge you to reconsider this approach and instead adopt and strengthen a single framework for addressing all forms of VAWG, that is aligned to the Istanbul Convention and its non-discrimination and other equality and human rights principles.

Yours Sincerely

[Add name]