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## **Coronavirus Covid-19: Naudi (Council of Europe), domestic violence emergency. “Homes can turn into fearful places for women and children”**

“Our thoughts go to the women and children for whom home is a fearful place, not a safe place”. This message of sympathy was sent today by Marceline Naudi (photo courtesy of SIR/CdE), president of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence on Women (Grevio) of the Council of Europe. Naudi sends out a call: the recent restrictions “provide abusers with additional power and control”. In addition, due to fear of the infection, women do not report their abusers nor contact any doctors, shelters have been closed down, online or telephone support is risky for those women who are stuck at home with their tormentors. This will be worsened by the economic repercussions of the pandemic, which “will hit women very hard”. Therefore, Grevio makes an appeal “to do all that can be done” not to stop providing services, support and protection to women and girls who are at risk of being abused. Luckily, there are “innovative solutions” too, Naudi points out: specific information campaigns about the available services, online application forms to ask for protection, and others have included domestic violence support services as “essential services”. “I hope”, Naudi’s message ends, “the new supportive spirit that this pandemic is creating in our societies may extend to the abused women and girls who now risk feeling even more trapped up with their abusers”.

Valentina Bombelli