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The Rt Hon Suella Braverman KC MP  
Secretary of State for the Home Department  
Home Office  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

16th November 2022

REPLY ADDRESS:  
[chair@menandboyscoalition.org.uk](mailto:chair@menandboyscoalition.org.uk)

Dear Home Secretary,

### **Intimate Violence against Men and Boys: Crime Classification and Strategy**

We are writing as leaders of a range of charities and academics supporting male victims of sexual violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, intimate image abuse, stalking, forced marriage, and domestic abuse.

We are requesting that the Government urgently acknowledges and implements the recommendations in the recent report from the APPG on Issues Affecting Men and Boys.

As you will be aware, the ONS estimates that around a million men and boys become victims of these crimes every year, with many more living with lasting trauma and social impacts. However, since a policy decision taken by the Labour administration before 2010, and left in place by subsequent governments, all these victims and survivors are categorized by the designation 'violence against women and girls' and crimes against men and boys continue to be addressed, at least nominally, through the national Strategy on Tackling VAWG. This is explained and expanded upon in the Home Office publication 'Position Statement on male victims of crimes considered in the cross-government Tackling violence against women and girls strategy' (May 2022)

For absolute clarity, we would like to stress that in practice, the current government position is to classify all of the following, and many other examples, as victims of 'violence against women and girls': Over 170 known male victims of serial rapist Reynhard Sinaga; the victims of serial killer/rapist Stephen Port; fathers with children fleeing abusive relationships; GBT+ men facing forced marriage or so-called honour crimes; over 8,000 male victims of institutional child sexual abuse identified by Operation Hydrant.

It is the view of the overwhelming majority of charities, campaigners and academics in the field that this policy is extremely detrimental to male survivors, for reasons that include:

- It is insulting and damaging to describe male survivors as 'women and girls'
- The VAWG strategy does not address the gender-specific needs of male victims, leading to shortcomings and failures in provision.
- The current policy causes extensive confusion and misunderstanding, even within pillars of government, including the Home Office and statutory bodies such as ONS, CPS and the nation's police services.

For these reasons and many others, the APPG, with the support of the men's health and wellbeing sector, has called on the Home Office to remove crimes against male victims from the category VAWG and instead address their needs through a parallel and complementary strategy to prevent Intimate Violence Against Men and Boys.

We would like to also reassure you that all of the charities and academics represented here fully support and applaud the Government's 'Tackling violence against women and girls' strategy as applied to female victims. We are confident that a parallel strategy approach would enhance and improve the government's efforts to end the scourge of violence against women and girls, in keeping with the UK's commitments under the Istanbul Convention and other treaties. We are not aware of any organisation from the women's sector which opposes our call, and we know of many that actively support it.

It should be mentioned that the proposals made here are almost entirely administrative and would not necessarily involve significant additional spending commitments.

We therefore endorse the APPGs recommendations:

- A "Tackling Intimate Violence Against Men and Boys" strategy to be in place by the end of 2023;
- Cease classifying and defining male victims of these crimes as being victims of violence against women and girls. They should be classed and defined separately;
- Create a national policing strategy and plan to coordinate the response to male victims of these crimes.

We are all ready to work in partnership with the Government and civil service in delivering these proposals and would be very keen to arrange a meeting with yourself or any of your ministerial colleagues, at your convenience.

For your convenience, we have attached a copy of the APPG Report.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Ally Fogg, Chair, Men and Boys Coalition (Reply to: [chair@menandboyscoalition.org.uk](mailto:chair@menandboyscoalition.org.uk))

Dan Bell, CEO, Men and Boys Coalition

Mark Brooks OBE, Chairman, Mankind Initiative

Duncan Craig OBE, CEO, Survivors Manchester

Gary Williams, CEO Survivors UK

Robert Balfour, Founder/CEO Bens Place (Survivors West Yorkshire)

Humayun Islam BEM, Chief Executive BEAP Community Partnership

Paul Gladwell, Co-chairman, Paul Lavelle Foundation

Nav Mirza, Chief Executive, Dads Unlimited

Gay Larter, Director of Domestic Abuse Services, Dads Unlimited

Steve Canning, Programme Director, Operation Emotion

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Prof Nicola Graham-Kevan, University of Central Lancashire

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