The safety of women is a concern the world over. In India it is in the eye of the storm in the wake of the brutal rape and killing of a student in Delhi in December 2012. There is rising impatience with and anger about the cultural practices and governance issues that make such a heinous crime possible. It is essential for society to ensure safety of its girl and women citizens in the places where they live, work and seek leisure. Safe spaces are not only conducive to an optimum development of their potential but are fundamental to their dignity and life. Efficient governance, such as, safe public transport, well-lit streets, responsive administration, legal education, and safe practices are some of the areas with which engagement is required. In addition, a cultural transformation is required which will not devalue girls and women but provide for equality and justice. After the submission of The Justice Verma Commission Report to the government the civil society was obligated to look into them and press for speedy passing of an enabling legislation. The government also took a position that saw the amendments to the criminal law.

However, the issue is complex and evokes extreme reactions across the spectrum of our polity. The seminar aims to bring together several
stakeholders to discuss the issue at length with participants coming from diverse locations in the citizenry. It will register the intrepidity of young women like ‘Nirbhaya’ and Malala Yousufzai who have provided new facets to the women’s movement in the region and round the world. Sensitisation and awareness building on women’s issues will create a synergy of voices and actions on these issues that would reflect the MDG goals for enabling and empowering women.

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