**2018 WAW conference, *‘The Great Leap Forward: Embracing the Istanbul Convention in Wales to end violence against women and girls!’***

***Press release****: Welsh Government national advisor on violence against women to speak at Cardiff conference of Wales Assembly of Women*

Welsh Government National Advisor for Violence against Women, Yasmin Khan is to speak at Wales Assembly of Women conference in Cardiff at the end of April.

The pioneering founder of the forced marriage and honour-based violence charity, the Halo Project, Ms Khan will talk about the Welsh Government’s Progress and Priorities in embracing the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence – the Istanbul Convention.

The Istanbul Convention is the most comprehensive legally binding treaty addressing the root causes of violence against women and promoting greater equality between women and men. The convention aims as changing attitudes and eliminating gender stereotypes not only among individuals but also at the level of institutions.

Ms Khan, who has worked with communities, and particularly women, to address inequalities in the field of employment, education and training, was appointed to the Welsh Government role as a job share with Nazir Afzal, the man who prosecuted the so-called Rochdale grooming gang.

Ms Khan’s official title is National Advisor for Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV). Together with Mr Afzal, they both advise the Welsh Government on the implementation of the innovative Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.

At the conference, Ms Khan will join a panel of experts headed by Wales Assembly of Women chair Professor Jackie Jones, an internationally recognised expert in gender law, to examine why the Istanbul Convention is important in Wales and how Wales is embracing the legislation.

Other speakers include Melissa Wood of the Equalities and Human Rights Commission in Wales who will examine the challenges of treaty implementation and Gwendoline Sterk of Welsh Women’s Aid who will look at what the convention looks like in practice.

Wales Assembly of Women vice chair Eleri Evans said: ‘We have a fantastic line-up of speakers. They are all real experts in their field. We are particularly delighted that Yasmin is able to join us. For anyone interested in bringing an end to violence against women- and understanding what Wales is doing about that – our conference will be the place to be.’

Wales Assembly of Women Annual Conferencing: *Embracing the Istanbul Convention* will take place at Cardiff University on Saturday 28 April, 10am – 3.30pm.   Cardiff University School of Social Sciences, Glamorgan Building, Cathays Park, Cardiff. CF10 3WT. Wales Assembly of Women is an independent campaigning organisation. For details of the conference email: eleri.evans@talk21.com