



MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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DIRECTORS WELCOME LETTER:



Dear Delegates and Faculty Advisors,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the American University of Sharjah Model United Nations (AUSMUN) 2020. This conference has been the home of fruitful debate, practical resolutions, dedicated moderators, spectacular delegates, and diligent advisory and executive boards for the past twelve years and is continuing to do so for its thirteenth year. With 1000 delegates registered from more than 45 national and international educational institutions, this conference will be the biggest one yet!

This year's theme 'Embracing Diversity, Shaping the Future' has been designed to capture the essence of issues that surround our globalized society. Even though we have come this far in time, there has been little to no improvement in accepting diversity as portrayed by the latest atrocities in several countries around the world. However, the future can be successfully shaped for us, the youth, only by embracing diversity in every sector of life and we hope to draw attention to this.

This background guide has been formulated by our hard-working chairs and the research team to provide delegates with the starting point of their preparation for this three-day conference. The guide is initially divided into two sections based on the two topics and is further split into logical components. Firstly, the Summary and History section acts as an introduction to the issue by highlighting important events, terms, history, and global implications. Secondly, the Discourse on the Issue section establishes a link between the issue, its implications, significance, and the United Nations Charter. Lastly, the Past International Organization (IO) Actions and Latest Developments section elaborates on the previous action that has been taken and latest development in terms of the last actions taken with regards to the issue. At the end of each issue, delegates will find sections of Questions the Discussions and Resolutions Should Address and Suggestions for Further Research that aim to streamline the process of delegate's research. However, in order to grab a better understanding of the topic and be able to position yourself better to participate during the conference, it is advised to go beyond the background guide since this guide does not encapsulate enough information to be sufficient for every country and is only a brief introduction to the issues at hand. It is highly encouraged for delegates to view the 'Delegate Handbook' on the AUSMUN website and the 'How to Research' video on YouTube created by AUSMUN.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to all the contributors to this background guide. It is the collaborative work of the Moderators, AUSMUN Research Team, and the AUSMUN Media Team. On behalf of them all, I truly hope that this guide will be of great help to you.

All the very best for the conference and if you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at research@ausmun.com.

Sincerely,
Manaswi Madichetty
Director of Research
AUSMUN 2020

MODERATORS WELCOME LETTER:



Gouthami Pillai

Youssef Aboutaleb



Maha Siddiqui

Dear Distinguished Delegates,

It is with utmost pleasure and honor that we, the moderators of UN Women, welcome you all to AUSMUN 2020. We are eagerly anticipating our interactions during the committee, as well as the discussion and debate on the issues we'll be tackling. Every stage of the process demands creativity and diplomacy. As your committee's chairs, we will work to ensure that the committee is functioning smoothly. We will do our best to help you understand parliamentary procedures and to ensure that the views of all delegates are heard and respected. We expect each delegate to come to the conference with an understanding of his/her country's foreign policy/positions and a willingness to forge agreements.

The UNW is a United Nations organization that comprises of representatives from 41 Member States elected by the UN Economic and Social Council to three-year terms with the following regional allocations: Africa (10), Asia and the Pacific (10), Latin America and the Caribbean (6), Western Europe and other states (5), Eastern Europe (4), and contributing countries (6). As your committee's chairs, we are looking forward to meeting you and hearing your ideas for solving the issues at hand. The United Nations depends on the cooperation and goodwill of its 193 Member States because each state has its own unique interests and concerns, it is challenging to write, negotiate, and pass resolutions.

With that being said, we are as excited as you are for the conference and cannot wait to convene in committee with all of you and we look forward to meeting you all and hearing your voice for change in the sessions. If you need any help regarding the topic and conference in general, please do not hesitate to contact us at mahashajee2011@gmail.com. Please note that posting paper should be submitted before the 4th of February to the mentioned email. Best of Luck!

Regards,
The UNW Chairs



UNW

United Nations Women

Topic I

The Urgency and Nature of Change in the Era of #MeToo

1. Summary & History

The MeToo movement, with a large variety of local and international related names, is a movement against sexual harassment and sexual assault. The phrase “Me Too” was initially used in this context on social media in 2006, on Myspace, by sexual harassment survivor and activist Tarana Burke. The movement was further founded in the same year to help survivors of sexual violence, particularly black women and girls, and other young women of color from low wealth communities, find pathways to healing. The vision from the beginning was to address both the dearth in resources for survivors of sexual violence and to build a community of advocates, driven by survivors, who will be at the forefront of creating solutions to interrupt sexual violence in their communities. In less than six months, because of the viral #metoo hashtag, a vital conversation about sexual violence has been thrust into the national dialogue.

What started as local grassroots work has expanded to reach a global community of survivors from all walks of life and helped to de-stigmatize the act of surviving impact of sexual violence worldwide. Sexual harassment is not complementary, humorous or unavoidable; victims have demanded that it be understood as a form of violence and abuse of power. Some journalists have listened and treated victims’ stories; policy, practice and legal changes need to follow. The greatest global challenge seen to sexual violence is in full flow, and women from every region have grasped the power of social media to expose their stories using the hashtags #MeToo and #WithYou.

Bonds have been forged between women who have named their abuser and those who have not been public about their abuse. They have inspired and strengthened each other and have found comfort in the collective outing of their traumas/consequent harms. Journalists have shaped a new media response to women’s outing of their abuse. Women have occupied the power of solidarity to name the agony of sexual harassment. They have called for an end to the normalization, tolerance, and minimization of the harms inflicted. They have shown that sexual harassment is more routine than it is exceptional and that it tends to be used by men in positions of power and authority. They have shown that beyond the harassers there are others who enable: friends, colleagues, and subordinates may either be complicit in that exercise of power or too cowed to refuse to cooperate.

Power’s gifting of protection to the privileged has been profoundly challenged, with some major names and careers being felled. The women of the #MeToo international uprising have created a pivotal moment in time, pushed open a door and demanded change. In 2015, States echoed the ambition of the movements to end sexual harassment as part of their commitment to end all violence against women, by 2030 (UN Women, 2016). This bold ambition requires considerable effort, including recognition that sexual harassment can constitute criminal behavior and may require specific legislation.

2. Discourse on the Issue

The #MeToo wave has unearthed a prolonged injustice that has affected women across the globe and initiated a public discussion that previously did not garner attention. It opened doors for thousands of women to share their own stories and experiences with sexual harassment and assault. However, it initiated more than just support groups for victims, it was a wake-up call for society.

Although many people were heartened by the rise in awareness resultant of movement, it isn't going as positively as people think. The backlash is greater than anticipated - men are shying away from one-on-one interactions with women including mentoring, meetings and socializing. Additionally, companies are less keen on hiring women. The male-dominated society, out of fear of repercussions, prefers to cut out social interactions with women all together instead of correcting their actions - making the movement seem like a push backward for women. (Twana Harris, 2019) Rather than a message of 'treat women with respect', the rule in the #MeToo era is 'avoid women at all costs'.

Globally, #MeToo is largely trending. In the UK, claims were made against famous British politicians and public figures. Celebrities, brand names and members of the power elite were all under intense scrutiny due to the scandals surrounding famous personalities such as Michael Fallon and Damian Green. In South Korea and Japan, although accusations were denied, they had a large impact on the public. However, the movement fizzled out quite early in Pakistan, when feminists remained quiet while the public slandered a victim for accusing a musician online. The movement needs to be more effective in countries that are predominantly misogynistic.

3. Past International Organization (IO) Actions & Latest Developments

On a comprehensive level, a treaty called the 'Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women' (CEDAW) was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly and was instituted in 1981. (UN Women 2016) It is an international treaty that dictates what discrimination against women is. It was drafted by Member States of the UN, has been ratified by 189 states and is one of the constituents of the global treaty on sex inequality. However, currently 35 of the states do not have legislation on sexual harassment, 59 states do not have legislation on sexual harassment in the workplace, 123 countries do not have legislation on sexual harassment in education, and 157 do not have legislation on sexual harassment in public spaces (UN Women 2018). Since then, UN Women has led to much action to tackle discrimination against women. Significantly, in 2015, UNW led an inter-agency framework to drive action in order to prevent all forms of discrimination and violence against women, called "A Framework to Underpin Action to Prevent Violence against Women" which included the ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, WHO, and OHCHR (UN Women 2018). This framework draws an evidence-based understanding of the causes, the risk and protective factors that are associated with violence, which also extends to discrimination. Additionally, it outlines the work that can be done towards eradication that can be pursued by stakeholders across communities, countries, regions, disciplines, and sectors. (UN Women 2016). UN Women has also provided leadership and coordination on existing and new Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) accountability frameworks to regional bodies and Member States; as well as, support to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), particularly, women-led organizations. UN Women has worked to ensure that the contributions of women of all ages regarding conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding are recognized and valued.

4. *Questions the Discussions and Resolutions Should Address*

- What would it take to facilitate the adoption of the dictates of the CEDAW by Member States?
What shape can adoption take in different states under varying circumstances?

5. *Suggestions for Further Research*

- Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women

Topic II

Leadership and Political Participation of Women

1. Summary & History

Since the 1970s, women have steadily emerged in leadership roles in all societal spheres. Women bring to the exercise of leadership an arsenal of strengths, which increasingly are received to benefit the entities they lead on local, national, and global levels. Women's leadership styles are transformational, participative, and inclusive than the leadership styles of their male counterparts (Erez & Gati, 2004; Stelter, 2002). According to the results of a 2008 Pew Research initiative studying whether men or women make better leaders, participants rated women over men by five-to-one in the top eight leadership characteristics, including honesty and intelligence. Although women are filling more managerial positions, they have yet to emerge in the top executive leadership positions. With women making such substantive contributions in the exercise of leadership, this background guide concludes with the rhetorical question. The various factors that affect women's participation in politics differ around the world and constantly change with shifts in the national context

Leadership is made up of relationships that are deeply rooted in social settings (Bryman, 1996) as well as increasingly more external global layers (Leung, Bhagat, Buchan, Erez, & Gibson, 2005). Understanding institutional systems are critical for the advancement of research on leadership in varying contexts (Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson, 2006). Leadership and political fields need representation from both women and men in the process because of the varying skill sets that each brings to the job (Denmark, 1993).

Actors function within institutions according to normative expectations, social values (March & Olsen, 1984, 1996), rules, and incentives, and consider their priorities while operating simultaneously (Peters, 2000). Institutions gain legitimacy when social practices become accepted and collectively expected as obvious behavior (Lucas, 2003). As it becomes more commonplace to observe women in political leadership and influential positions, such behaviors will become an accepted schema within society. Legitimacy is achieved when the success of women leaders is recognized by one group, which in turn influences another group etc, (Lucas, 2003). For example, an increase in working women during and following war has led generations of women to follow the example of their mothers, aunts, and neighbors into the workforce.

The increase in flow of women in leadership happens over generations, with each generation becoming more comfortable with, or institutionalized to, the idea of women working outside the home and even holding leadership positions. Globalization can also lead to a similar form of institutionalization across societies, as they become more alike and model one another. As the development of a country increases, women's political leadership participation also increases. Women's advancement to independence and leadership in each country may be affected by different factors in various ways because of the dynamic nature of the environments in which they live (Erez & Gati, 2004). Organizations have been presenting a developmental view of institutional forces to explore how society-wide institutions—the business environment, societal development, economics, technology and infrastructure, political freedom, and culture—might encourage or hamper women's participation in political leadership.

2. Discourse on the Issue

As the 2011 UN General Assembly resolution on women's political participation states, "Women in every part of the world continue to be largely marginalized from the political sphere, often as a result of discriminatory laws, practices, attitudes and gender stereotypes and low levels of education." Eradication of these obstacles is of utmost importance to encourage women leaders. Additionally, the troubles faced once they've reached positions of power – the prejudice, discrimination, harassment, and even violence – must be brought to light.

However, in both the local and global scenarios, women are underrepresented not only in leading positions in politics but also as voters. During elections, women are forced to vote for clan-favored parties, and in some cases, are forced to engage in 'proxy voting' where male family members cast votes in the name of the women. Few women have broken out of the chains, often to the benefit of the society at large. But for the entire women community, the playing field must be further expanded to have equal opportunities for all.

Women currently make up less than a quarter of the world's politicians, with only 22% of national parliamentary positions held globally. Internationally, women account for less than 10% of the parliament in 27 states. Japan, Ukraine and the Democratic Republic of Congo have a low number of women parliamentarians as well. However, the current scene shows an upward trend - the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments has risen to 23.97%, a massive increase from 11% in 1997. Rwanda has the highest percentage with 61.3% of women have won seats in the lower house of the Parliament.

The UNDP Strategic Plan and its Gender Equality Strategy (2014-2017) focuses on the involvement of women in decision-making and leadership, in collaboration with its sister agencies such as UNW, OHCHR, and UNICEF (UNDP) Women's rights organizations help to strengthen the links between leaders and women in the communities they represent.

3. Past IO Actions and The Latest Developments

In 1995, during the Fourth World Conference on Women which was assembled by the UN, the resolution 'Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action' was adopted. Critical areas that were addressed in the Beijing Declaration included inequalities of areas between women and men in sharing power and decision-making and insufficient mechanisms to promote the advancement of women. It has since taken actions across various International Organizations and bodies of the UN, towards ensuring women's full participation, equal access, and capacity to participate in power structures and decision-making. It has also driven action for the Member States to integrate gender perspectives in public policies, programs, and projects. (United Nations 1995) One manifestation of this was the UN General Assembly resolution on women's political participation in 2011 (Res. 66/130) which called on all States "to enhance the political participation of women" which also extends to leadership positions. (United Nations 2011) Since then, UN Women has collaborated with electoral management bodies, legislatures, women's networks and other UN bodies to put an end to stereotypes that prevent women from rising to and assuming leadership roles, as well as increase the number of women leaders through building their skills and capacities. UN Women has helped states budget and plan based on principles of gender equality and has measured progress through data on gender and aimed to guarantee equality under law. More recently, aligning with their goals and working towards 2030 and commitments affirmed within the SDGs, UN Women launched the Leadership, Empowerment, Access, and Protection (LEAP) program initiative in 2016 and has since launched proposals to apply this in different states under varying circumstances. (UN Women 2019) The programme was designed to make equality achievable across

the globe by supporting constitutions, laws, and policies that guarantee opportunities for women to lead.

4. Questions The Discussions and The Resolutions Should Address

- How we can increase the political participation of women in the world?
- What are the programs that can be led better with women's leadership?
- What countries are most/least supporting women's participation and how it can be improved?

5. Suggestions For Further Research

- How can UNW help women to participate more in political activities?
- Which platforms are more helpful to increase women's participation?

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