

Cerritos Novice Conference 2020

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)



Topic: Gender-Based Violence

Director: Hannah Chung

October 10th, 2020

To Delegates of CHSMUN Novice 2020

Dear Delegates,
Welcome to CHSMUN Novice 2020!

It is our highest honor and pleasure to welcome you all to our 2020 online novice conference here at Cerritos High School. On behalf of the Cerritos High School Model United Nations program, we are proud to host our very first virtual novice conference, where you will become more knowledgeable on international issues, participate in intellectually stimulating discussions, and create new and everlasting friendships.

The CHSMUN program continues to compete around the world as a nationally ranked MUN program. Our delegates utilize diplomacy in order to create complex solutions towards multilateral issues in the global community. Our head chairs are selected from only the best seniors of our program, undergoing a rigorous training process to ensure the highest quality of moderating and grading of debate. Furthermore, all the topic synopses have been reviewed and edited numerous times. We strongly believe that by providing each and every delegate with the necessary tools and understanding, he or she will have everything they need to thrive in all aspects of the committee. We thoroughly encourage each delegate to engage in all of the facets of their topic, in order to grow in their skills as a delegate and develop a greater knowledge of the world around them.

Although this wasn't what we expected, our advisors and staff have put in countless hours to ensure delegates have an amazing experience at the online conference. Our greatest hope is that from attending CHSMUN 2020, students are encouraged to continue on in Model United Nations and nevertheless, inspired to spark change in their surrounding communities. CHSMUN Novice 2020 will provide a quality experience for beginner delegates to develop their speaking and delegating skills.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact us! We look forward to seeing you at CHSMUN Novice 2020!

Sincerely,

Anjali Mani and Karishma Patel

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Secretary-Generals

A Note From The Director

Delegates,

My name is Hannah Chung and I am so excited to be your chair for the United Nations Women Committee (UN WOMEN). I am currently a senior at Cerritos High School entering my fourth year of MUN. Model United Nations has opened my eyes to global issues and has shaped me to become confident in my speaking abilities. Outside of MUN, I am the Vice President of Key Club, and part of the board for Surf Rider, Lighthouse, and ASB. In my free time, I like to embroider, listen to music, and literally sleep (taking naps are my forte). I am extremely involved at my church, volunteering as a Sunday school teacher for toddlers, for about six years ongoing. Although this conference will be online, I hope to meet interactive engaging delegates and look forward to hearing all your ideas! Good luck! :)

Sincerely,

Hannah Chung

Director, UN Women

Committee Introduction

In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly created UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, to address the challenges women face around the world. UN Women was built upon four main parts of the UN system focused on promoting gender equality: Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). UN Women has made notable progress in advocating for women's rights and advancing gender equality, through agreements such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Such agreements have been used to eliminate and define all acts of discrimination and violence against women in 189 states in the United Nations. UN Women has made its goal to accomplish the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 which is aimed in promoting gender equality linked to the 2030 Agenda and is centered in empowering women and girls for a gender inclusive future. UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes, and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide.

Topic: Gender-Based Violence

Background:

Whether at home, on the streets, or during war, violence against women and girls continues to be a human rights violation of pandemic proportions that takes place in public and private spaces. According to the United Nations, gender-based violence is a violation of human rights that is inflicted upon a person against their will due to gender norms and unequal power within relationships. Gender-based violence undermines the health, dignity, security, and autonomy of its victims, yet it remains shrouded in a culture of silence. Various forms of violence such as sexual and domestic abuse, female genital mutilation, honor killings, and more have become common practices in developing countries that believe men are superior to women. Victims of violence can suffer sexual and reproductive health consequences, including forced and unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, traumatic fistula, sexually transmitted infections including HIV, and even death. Gender based violence is enacted under many manifestations, such as physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence, and more . Furthermore, it is estimated that 35 percent of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or sexual violence by a non-partner at some point in their lives. Gender-based violence is deeply rooted in discriminatory cultural beliefs and attitudes that perpetuate inequality and powerlessness, in particular of women and girls. Various other factors, such as poverty, lack of education and livelihood opportunities, and impunity for crime and abuse, also tend to contribute to and reinforce a culture of violence and discrimination based on gender. Such factors are frequently aggravated in times of conflict and displacement as the rule of law is eroded and families and societies are torn apart. The result is often an increase in both the frequency and brutality of gender-based violence. In its worst form, gender-based violence has become a weapon of war, intentionally directed against and aimed at terrorizing, displacing and destroying certain communities of ethnic groups. Women and girls in these societies are forced to undergo female genital mutilation (FGM) especially in cultures where FGM is associated with ideals of femininity and modesty, making this practice difficult to eliminate. At least 200 million women and girls aged 15-49 have undergone female genital mutilation in the 30 countries with representative data on prevalence. In most of these countries, the majority of girls underwent FGM procedures before age five. Issues such as human trafficking and child marriages often affect women and girls the most especially in vulnerable and poverty stricken populations. Gender-based violence prominently manifests in child marriage. Studies have shown that girls who marry early in their childhoods are at a higher risk for intimate partner violence than those who marry later in their lives. In sub-Saharan Africa, almost 4 out of 10 young women are married before their 18th birthday, where over 12 millions girls under 18 have been sent off for underage marriage. Women and girls are disproportionately impacted by human trafficking. Although data is lacking, estimates indicate that women and girls may constitute up to 80% of persons trafficking globally, with more than 60% of those trafficked coming from the Asia region. Gender-based violence is usually perpetrated by persons who hold a position of power or control others, whether in the private or public sphere. In most cases,

those responsible are known to the victim/survivor, such as intimate partners, members of the (extended) family, friends, teachers or community leaders. Others in positions of authority such as police or prison officials, and members of armed forces and groups, are frequently responsible for such acts, in particular in times of armed conflict. In some cases, this has also included humanitarian workers and peacekeepers. Legal systems and public policy frameworks have often overlooked the crisis of violence against women. In failing to protect the rights and well-being of survivors or punish perpetrators, many reflect social biases tolerating violence. Domestic violence and harmful traditional practices have often been seen as private matters that are “outside justice.” Therefore, in the majority of countries with available data, less than 40% of women who experience violence seek help of any sort. Among women who do, most look to family and friends and very few look to formal institutions and mechanisms, such as police and health services. The same inequalities that underpin the crime of trafficking also prevent women and girls from accessing protection and assistance. Trafficked women may be unwilling to come forward to the police, due to a lack of gender sensitivity or knowledge from law enforcement agents. Oftentimes, many survivors are often turned away and urged to seek mediation or other forms of settlement. At least 144 countries have passed laws on domestic violence, and 154 have laws on sexual harassment. Almost three-quarters of the world's countries have outlawed domestic violence and 78 countries have legislations that explicitly criminalizes marital rape. While a historic number of laws and policies against violence are now in place, implementation is still lagging behind. This issue is not only devastating for survivors of violence and their families, but also entails a significant social and economic cost. In some countries, violence against women is estimated to cost countries up to 3.7% of their GDP, more than double what most government spend on education. Numerous studies have shown that children growing up with violence are more likely to become survivors themselves or perpetrators of the future. Similar to data from other regions, in all four countries of a multi-country study from the Middle East and North Africa, men who witnessed their fathers using violence against their mothers and men who experienced some form of violence at home as children, were significantly more likely to report perpetrating intimate partner violence in their adult relationships. One characteristic of gender-based violence is that it knows no social or economic boundaries and affects women and girls of all socioeconomic backgrounds: this issue needs to be addressed in both developing and developed countries.

United Nations Involvement:

In terms of combating violence against women, the United Nations created UN Women in July 2010, an entity working for the empowerment of women. UN Women, in partnership with the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) has developed a global non-formal education curriculum to engage young people in efforts to prevent and end violence against girls and women. Furthermore, at a regional level, UN Women supports Partners for Prevention (P4P), a regional UN joint programme for Asia and the Pacific that provides new knowledge and technical support to prevent gender-based violence in the region. At a national

level, UN Women supports a range of prevention activities, supporting research to get data on the attitudes, perceptions and behavior of men and boys as well as young people related to various forms of violence supporting advocacy, awareness-raising, community mobilization and educational programmes, as well as legal and policy reforms. Woman's right to live free from violence is upheld by international agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, especially through General Recommendations 12 and 19, and the 1993 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. UN Women works with countries at global level to advance the international normative Frameworks through support provided to inter-governmental processes, such as the General Assembly and the CSW. At the country-level, UN Woman supports governments in adopting and enacting legal reforms aligned with International standards. Furthermore, launched in 2008, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's *UNiTE to End Violence against Women* campaign is a multi-year effort aimed at preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls around the world. The campaign builds on existing international legal and policy frameworks, and works to synergize the efforts of all UN offices and agencies working to end violence against women. In 2000, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security which was a milestone in addressing violence against women in situations of armed conflict. Adding on, in 2004, the UN General Assembly also specifically addressed domestic violence in Resolution 58/147, entitled "Elimination of domestic violence against women." In this important resolution, the General Assembly recognizing that domestic violence is a human rights issue with serious immediate and long-term implications, strongly condemned all forms of domestic violence against women and girls and called for an elimination of violence in the family. In addition, the United Nations Development Programme works with national partners on legal and policy frameworks to combat gender-based violence and supports national capacities to prevent violence and end impunity for perpetrators, ensure access to justice and protection of women and girls and to provide survivors with multi-sectoral support and services. As part of these efforts, UNDP works closely with UN Women, UNFPA and UNICEF. For example, UNDP is a key partner in the European Union-United Nations Spotlight Initiative to Eliminate Violence Against Women and has launched the Ending Gender-based Violence and Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (2018-2020) global project. The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Established by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in June 1946, CSW is instrumental in promoting women's rights, documenting the reality of women's lives throughout the world, and shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women. The priority theme for the Commission on the States of Women for 2021 focuses on the elimination of gender-based violence as well as women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life.

Bloc Positions:

Western: The Western bloc is known for openly promoting the empowerment of women as well as eliminating gender-based violence at home, schools, workplaces, and etc. Although the issues of poverty, human trafficking, and child marriage are significantly less prominent in this sector, gender based violence does take place, with domestic violence being the most prominent. Seeing how the prevalence of gender based violence in the United States has become the focus of a national conversation due to events such as the #MeToo movements, many policymakers have been quick to profess support in eliminating gender based violence. However, issues are often overlooked with quick fixes, therefore, delegates should focus on more holistic responses in addressing the full range of underlying problems.

Latin America and Caribbean: Despite laws against gender-based violence, many women in Latin America and Caribbean bloc continue to be failed by the legal system. To date, nearly 30 countries in the region have enacted laws against domestic violence or have characterized the violence as a crime. Surveys from various countries, however, indicate that an estimated 10 to 50 percent of women report being physically assaulted by their male partner. Husbands or partners are responsible for the majority of aggression, injuries, sexual abuse, and homicide. Enforcement of domestic violence laws remains a major concern. Police often fail to respond or are hostile to women who report domestic violence.

African: Most countries in the African bloc continue to lag behind the rest of the world on eliminating gender based violence, in large part due to deeply entrenched, discriminatory views about the role and position of women and girls in society. Gender-based violence goes beyond beatings including marital rape, sexual harassment, trafficking, female genital mutilation yet there is a lack of laws implemented and effectively followed causing an neverending cycle of violence. Cultural norms in this bloc place women in subservient positions in relation to their husbands and males leading to the justification of gender based violence. Delegates should be wary of religious and cultural practices in this bloc when proposing solutions in eliminating gender based violence.

Asian-Pacific: Gender-based violence is also very prevalent in the Asian-Pacific bloc. Violence against women is one of the deadliest forms of violence in Asia, yet it is dramatically overlooked by governments and policymakers. Most countries in Asia have laws against domestic violence, but nearly all laws exclude unmarried intimate partners. A key obstacle to developing evidence-based violence against women or/and gender-based violence policies and programmes is the lack of reliable and international comparable national data on this subject. In addition, child marriage and poverty in these regions often lead to violence against women and girls and the human trafficking ring in South-East Asia continues to subject women to harsh treatment.

Basic Solutions:

Eliminating gender-based violence involves addressing numerous factors including poverty, human trafficking, child marriage, and etc. Education plays an immense role in this issue. The number of years a person spends in school has been shown to have a positive correlation with a decrease in both future victimization and perpetration of physical and sexual violence. Education increases women's employment opportunities and socio-economic status. The empowerment of women reduces the unequal power relationship between women and men which has been identified as the root cause of GBV. Whenever educated women are given the opportunity to work and earn wages, they are more likely to adopt a larger economy within their household and communities and support their families with 90% of what they've earned. Therefore, it is necessary for women to access education which would not only reduce the amount of gender-based violence cases, but also boost the economic status of families in poverty. Not only is it important to educate women, but also men and boys. Working with men and boys helps accelerate progress in preventing gender-based violence, as they can begin to challenge the deeply rooted inequalities and social norms that perpetuate men's control and power over women and reinforce tolerance for gender-based violence. Seeing how gender-based violence is such a broad topic including sexual, physical, and psychological violence, delegates are encouraged to propose a variety of solutions, not limiting solutions to education.

Questions to Consider:

1. What has your country done to eliminate gender-based violence?
2. What efforts can be taken to decrease government and law enforcement corruption in order to ensure protection for women and to prevent gender-based violence?
3. How do you plan on eliminating gender-based violence in developing nations where cultural and socioeconomic stigmas have caused women to be viewed as less valuable than men?
4. What are major factors and underlying causes that contribute to gender-based violence and how can you prevent them from occurring?
5. In what ways can you engage men and boys in eliminating gender-based violence?
6. How do you plan on eliminating gender-based violence in areas that are more vulnerable and susceptible to violence, such as war torn nations or refugee camps?

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