



Dear Delegates,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 2016 Montessori Model United Nations Conference.

The following pages intend to guide you in the research of the topics that will be debated at MMUN 2016 in committee sessions. Please note this guide only provides the basis for your investigation. It is your responsibility to find as much information necessary on the topics and how they relate to the country you represent. Such information should help you write your Position Paper, where you need to cite the references in the text and finally list all references in the Modern Language Association (MLA) format.

The more information and understanding you acquire on the two topics, the more you will be able to influence the Resolution writing process through debates [formal and informal caucuses], and the MMUN experience as a whole. Please feel free to contact us if and when you face challenges in your research or formatting your Position Papers.

We encourage you to learn all you can about your topics first and then study your country with regard to the two selected topics. Please remember that both committee members need to be well versed and ready to debate both topics.

Enjoy researching and writing your Position Papers.

We look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

MMUN Secretariat Team

info@montessori-mun.org



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

In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly created UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. In doing so, UN Member States took an historic step in accelerating the Organization's goals on gender equality and the empowerment of women. The creation of

UN Women came about as part of the UN reform agenda, bringing together resources and mandates for greater impact. It merges and builds on the important work of four previously distinct parts of the UN system, which focused exclusively on gender equality and women's empowerment:

- Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)
- International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)
- Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI)
- United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

The main roles of UN Women are:

- To support inter-governmental bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms.
- To help Member States to implement these standards, standing ready to provide suitable technical and financial support to those countries that request it, and to forge effective partnerships with civil society.
- To hold the UN system accountable for its own commitments on gender equality, including regular monitoring of system-wide progress.

Source: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women>

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Email: info@montessori-mun.org

Eliminating Violence Against Women

Topic Background

One of the most common forms of gender-based violence (GBV) is against women. Physical, sexual, and psychological violence threaten women's health and well-being. Violence against women (VAW) is widespread and can happen to any woman no matter their social or economic status. Violence against women traverses religion, race, ethnicity, and financial security. Violence against women violates inherent human rights and undercuts human dignity.¹

Violence against women is a violation of human rights and can be considered a hate crime as it directs violence upon a specific group of people. VAW can take many forms. Some forms of violence against women are domestic violence, sexual harassment, and rape, but VAW can also be female infanticide, genital mutilation, marriage by abduction, and sex trafficking.

Violence against women does not only occur between women and strangers. According to UN Women's 2013 global review, 35% of women globally have experienced physical and or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence. UN Women also found that "some national violence studies show that up to 70% of women have experienced physical and/ or sexual violence in their lifetime from an intimate partner.

While violence against women can be physical, verbal violence in the form of sexual harassment is prevalent among girls and women. In European Union countries, 40-50% of women experience unwanted sexual advances by contact or sexual harassment. In the United States, 83% of girls from ages 12 to 16 experience some form of sexual harassment in public schools.²

Violence against women in all its varying degrees pays a price tangibly and intangibly. The tangible costs of violence against women include health, social, justice, and education services. The intangible costs include pain and suffering, loss of life, and second generation effects of violence.³

According to data in India, as a result of intimate partner violence, a woman "loses an average of at least 5 paid work days for each incident". In the United States, it is determined that \$5.8

¹ "The Issue: Violence Against Women". International Center for Research on Women. <http://www.icrw.org/what-we-do/violence-against-women>.

² "Facts and Figures: Ending Violence against Women". UN Women. <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures>.

³ "The Economic Costs of Violence Against Women: An Evaluation of the Literature". Tanis Day. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/expert%20brief%20costs.pdf>.

billion a year is the cost of intimate partner violence. Violence against Women has a cost financially for those who are unable to work as victims and also for legal fees. However, the cost of education is also jeopardized for those who are victims of violence. In Ethiopia, 23% of girls reported experiencing sexual assault or rape on their way to or from their school. This form of violence endangers the educational opportunities and learning environment for young girls.⁴

Violence against women poses a cost to the health of women as well. Violence puts women at risk for HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Studies in Tanzania, Rwanda, and South Africa show that women who have experienced partner violence are more likely to contract HIV. The cost of medical care for victims of violence, whether for physical and/or psychological therapy or medicine puts even more strain on women who need to pay medical costs out of pocket. Health Canada estimated that the “direct medical costs of all forms of violence against women was 1.1 billion Canadian dollars” in 2002.⁵

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC):

The DRC is currently on tier 3 of the tier system to measure human trafficking. Tier 3 means the country does not fully comply with minimum conditions for the prohibition of trafficking, which allows the DRC to continue its practice. During the DRC’s civil war, rape was used as a “weapon of war” and it was estimated that 48 women were raped every hour.⁶ There are no laws under the DRC’s penal code that address domestic violence. However, the DRC’s constitution states that the government is committed to the elimination of “all forms of discrimination against women and to combatting all forms of VAW.”⁷

Iran:

In Iran, it is common for women and girls to be victims of honor killings. Under Iranian penal code, if a man finds out that his wife is with another man “in flagrante” or “in blazing offense”, the husband is allowed to kill his wife and the other man. Domestic violence can also be legal in Iran if a women is disobedient to her husband. Disobedience, or “tamkin” gives legal backing for

⁴ “Consequences and costs”. UN Women. <http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/301-consequences-and-costs-.html>.

⁵ “Violence against women: an urgent public health priority”. Claudia Garcia-Moreno. <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/89/1/10-085217/en/>.

⁶ “Forty-eight women raped every hour in Congo, study finds”. Jo Adetunji. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/may/12/48-women-raped-hour-congo>.

⁷ “Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women by the DRC”. Marie Mossi Mota. http://www.omct.org/files/2005/09/3072/cedaw36_drc_en.pdf.

the husband to pursue a divorce, polygamy, or domestic violence.⁸ According to Sharia law, a man's testimony is given more weight than a woman's.⁹ This part of Sharia law will often silence women who have been abused because of fear of persecution.

The United States of America:

One of the United States' priorities for eliminating violence against women is the "protection of women (physical and legal), the prevention of violence against women, and the prosecution of perpetrators in order to address impunity."¹⁰ In 2013, President Obama signed a bill to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA 2013).¹¹ This act also created the Public Service Announcement, "It's on Us" in order to promote awareness of domestic violence and sexual assault. This campaign was launched to help prevent campus sexual assault and get men involved to change social norms.¹²

Violence against women affects more than the victims of such violence. Half the population of the world is being denied the freedom to live peacefully and without fear of violence. Women need to be protected from partner and non-partner violence, physical, verbal, emotional, and sexual abuse. Women are the foundation of many economies and their families. If women are deprived of their safety and freedom, the world is worse off and it deters poverty reduction initiatives. Women must be treated with respect and given the human rights they deserve. If something is not done to eliminate violence against women, economies, families, and society will not be able to recover.

Past International Actions

The United Nations outlined the importance of eliminating VAW when it drafted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs 3, 5, and 6 all address gender equality and the empowerment of women. MDG 3 calls for the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2015.¹³ MDG 5 calls for the reduction by three quarters by 2015 of the

⁸ "Gender Inequality and Discrimination: The Case of Iranian Women". Iran Human Rights Documentation Center (IHRDC). <http://iranhrdc.org/english/publications/legal-commentary/1000000261-gender-inequality-and-discrimination-the-case-of-iranian-women.html>.

⁹ "Islamic Law and the Implementation of International Human Rights Law". Manisuli Ssenyonjo. <http://bit.ly/1LayYP6>.

¹⁰ "Sexual and Gender-Based Violence". US Department of State. <http://www.state.gov/s/gwi/programs/policy/gbv/>.

¹¹ "Tribunal Justice and Safety". US Department of Justice. <http://www.justice.gov/tribal/violence-against-women-act-avaa-reauthorization-2013-0>.

¹² "Launch of the 'It's On Us' Public Awareness Campaign to Help Prevent Campus Sexual Assault" The White House. <http://1.usa.gov/1bPMLfz>.

¹³ "Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women". UN. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/gender.shtml>.

maternal mortality ratio and have universal access to reproductive health.¹⁴ MDG 6 calls for the reversal of the spread of HIV/AIDS and achieve universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS.¹⁵ All these goals help eliminate VAW in order to empower women by giving them safety and access to schools, access to health resources, and medical attention.

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (Resolution A/RES/48/104) was created on 1993 to deal with different aspects of VAW. Since 2000, the General Assembly has addressed trafficking in women and girls, crimes committed in the name of honor, traditional practices affecting the health of women and girls, and domestic violence.¹⁶

The Security Council has even addressed VAW issues in regards to conflict and peacebuilding. In 2000, resolution 1325 added women as stakeholders in violence prevention. The resolution urges actors to “increase participation of women and incorporate gender perspectives in all UN peace and security efforts.” It also calls for actors to take “special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, in situations of armed conflict.”¹⁷

There are many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) which address VAW. Some examples include the International Free Women’s Foundation (IFWF) and the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Women. The IFWF promotes “active participation in all fields of social life with their own identity” in order to “fight any discrimination against people because of their sex, language, religion, nationality or social situation.”¹⁸ The Global Partnership to End Violence Against Women is a project by Avon and works with Vital Voices and the US Department of State to create “public-private partnerships to reduce violence against women through delegations in 15 countries”. Avon also has a “Speak Out Against Domestic Violence” initiative. This initiative has donated \$40 million to the fight against domestic violence.¹⁹

The “He For She” campaign which works with UN Women to create “a solidarity movement for gender equality”.²⁰ The campaign works to involve men and boys to be a part of the gender equality movement. Currently, 453,053 men have taken the commitment worldwide to stand for gender equality.

¹⁴ “Goal 5: Improve Maternal health”. UN. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/maternal.shtml>.

¹⁵ “Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and other Diseases”. UN. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/aids.shtml>.

¹⁶ “Work of the General Assembly on violence against women”. UN Women. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/reports.htm>.

¹⁷ “Landmark Resolution on Women, Peace and Security”. Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/>.

¹⁸ “IFWF- The International Free Women’s Foundation”. IFWF. <http://bit.ly/1J609Vw>.

¹⁹ “Our Mission”. Avon Foundation for Women. <http://www.avonfoundation.org/causes/domestic-violence/>.

²⁰ HeForShe. <http://www.heforshe.org/>.

Possible Solutions

In order to eliminate Violence Against Women, delegates should look at what would be the best way to empower women and men to promote gender equality. Other possible solutions to eliminate VAW should deal with:

- Access to health resources, medical attention, and judiciary guidance.
- Education to teach youth about gender equality and stop gender bias.
- Accountability by states to enforce privacy measures that will keep women safe when reporting violence.
- Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) that allow for the spread of violence against women's awareness and disseminate information about what people can do if they see VAW.

Delegates of each country must look at their country's policies and the statistics regarding VAW in the country. Delegates should work with other parties to create a comprehensive solution that eliminate violence against women, but also aids victims of violence. Delegates should use their speeches as opportunities to build on the work of campaigns like "He For She" and "It's On Us" and work to promote gender equality. Delegates must also keep in mind that when women have equal access to education, business opportunities, and undeterred by inequality, poverty is reduced.

Further Research

Guiding Questions

1. What are some innovative approaches to reducing violence against women?
2. How can we create a global culture which refuses to accept violence against women?
3. How can cultural differences be bridged to reduce violence against women?

Research Sources

UN WOMEN

Millennium Development Goals

Post-2015

NGO- Violence Against Women

Questions:

1. According to a 2013 UN study, what percentage of women have experienced physical or sexual violence worldwide?
2. What are the tangible and intangible costs of violence against women?

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3. How much did Health Canada estimate was spent on medical costs for victims of violence in 2002?
4. Why do Iranian women who are victims of violence often do not report the incident?
5. Why are the MDGs important for the elimination of VAW?

Answers:

1. According to UN Women's 2013 global review, 35% of women globally have experienced physical and or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence.
2. The tangible costs of violence against women include health, social, justice, and education services. The intangible costs include pain and suffering, loss of life, and second generation effects of violence
3. Health Canada estimated that the "direct medical costs of all forms of violence against women was 1.1 billion Canadian dollars" in 2002.
4. According to Sharia law, a man's testimony is given more weight than a woman's.
5. The MDG goals are important for the elimination of VAW because they would empower women by giving them safety and access to schools, access to health resources, and medical attention. The MDGs would also give victims access to much needed resources.