



Florida High Schools Model United Nations

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UNITED NATIONS ENTITY FOR GENDER EQUALITY
AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Political Leadership and
Participation of Indigenous
Women

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COMMITTEE BRIEF

Introduction

Women around the world are finding gender equality elusive, despite significant gains. More so, indigenous women. When asked about the biggest challenge facing women internationally today, Amy Klobuchar, U.S. senator from Minnesota, said: “One of the struggles that underlies all of our policy battles is the continued lack of women in positions of power. From corporate boardrooms, to the courts, and political leadership around the world, the lack of women in senior positions continues to stymie progress on issue from pay to humanitarian aid to discrimination in all its forms. The sooner we understand that the lack of women in leadership roles holds back not only women, but all people, the sooner we will be able to advance society as a whole.”¹ Not only do all women across the globe need the education, connections, and means to become successful leaders which can only be done if women have leadership positions in the political system - but more so, indigenous women.

Scale of the Problem

Women and girls need the support of their respective local and national governments to ensure equality. But without women in leadership positions in local, national, and global governments, women are going to receive less support. At every level, patriarchal standards impede women’s leadership and political participation; they are “underrepresented as voters, as well as in leading positions, whether in elected office, the civil service, the private sector, or academia.”² Women’s political rights have expanded so that, as of 2016, 43 countries have reached or exceeded the 30 percent critical mass mark for women in parliament.³

As of November 2019, 26 women are serving as elected Heads of State or Government.⁴ While elected officials garner the most attention, women are frequently underrepresented amongst senior civil servants and in other key governmental posts, “including chief statisticians, governors and board members of central banks, ambassadors and permanent representatives to the United Nations.”⁵ Alongside women’s greater political influence, there has been a growing recognition of women’s rights, not only politically, but also economically, socially and culturally.⁶ “Enabling governance systems are essential for the achievement of gender equality and women’s empowerment.”⁷ In practice, an important basis for achieving equality is having laws in place that establish that women and men have equal rights. The legislation the government passes can then become a “central reference point for political and cultural struggles,

¹ Politico Magazine (2019, March 08). What Are the Biggest Problems Women Face Today?. *Politico Magazine*. Retrieved from <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2019/03/08/women-biggest-problems-international-womens-day-225698>

² UN Women, *Women’s leadership and political participation*. Retrieved from: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation>

³ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “The World’s Women 2015: Trends and Statistics,” ST/ESA/STAT/SER.K/20, 2015, p. 121.

⁴ Theresa May’s prime ministership in the United Kingdom ended in June 2019 when she resigned.

⁵ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “The World’s Women 2015: Trends and Statistics,” ST/ESA/STAT/SER.K/20, 2015, p. 129.

⁶ UNWOMEN, *2011-2012 Progress of the World’s Women – In Pursuit of Justice*, page 8

⁷ United Nations, Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) Strategic Plan 2018-2021, 29-30 August 2017, page 14

driving changes in social norms and popular attitudes, as well as policy shifts.”⁸

For example, Sweden has implemented numerous laws to protect women against discrimination and provide them with the same opportunities as men. Sweden prides themselves on having a “feminist government” where “11 out of 22 government ministers are women” compared to the average 32% of women in politics in the European Union.⁹ In 2009, Sweden released their Discrimination Act, which works “to combat discrimination and in other ways promote equal rights and opportunities regardless of sex.”¹⁰ This law was then expanded upon in 2017 to include all forms of discrimination, including but not limited to gender identity, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation. In 2018, Sweden adopted a new sexual consent law that specifies sexual intercourse without explicit consent is to be considered as rape, even if there was no threat or violence.¹¹ This new law also considers each rape as a separate crime. For example, “if one perpetrator rapes the same victim three times and these three incidents are all reported, then three cases of rape will be registered.”¹² This allows for more accountability and protection for women affected by sexual assault. Laws such as the ones implemented by Sweden lead to better gender equality and protection of women.

International legislation has been passed in an attempt to narrow the gender gap; “International human rights treaties - such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) - are legally binding commitments that require States to respect, protect and fulfil women’s rights. As such, they encapsulate a substantive understanding of gender equality that can serve as both a vision and an agenda for action for those seeking to advance women’s rights in today’s challenging context.”¹³ With the formalities in place, it is important to ensure that the results of these laws actually eliminate disadvantages to women. The achievement of substantive equality requires coordinated public action in three interrelated areas: redressing women’s socio-economic disadvantage; addressing stereotyping, stigma and violence; and strengthening women’s agency, voice and participation.¹⁴

Women Leaders in Planning for Peace

Security Council resolution 1325 sets a clear agenda in order to measure the advancement of women in all aspects of peace-building, which includes, but is not limited to, gender awareness within peacekeeping initiatives, disarmament exercises, and women being visible within “national and regional instruments and in bi- and multilateral organizations.”¹⁵ This

⁸ UNWOMEN, *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016 - Summary - Transforming Economies, Realizing Rights*, 2015, page 3

⁹ Sweden Sverige, *Equal Power and Influence for Women and Men – Sweden is aiming for*. Retrieved from: <https://sweden.se/life/equality/gender-equality>

¹⁰ Sweden, *Discrimination Act*. Retrieved from: [government.se/contentassets/6732121a2cb54ee3b21da9c628b6bdc7/oversattning-diskrimineringslagen_eng.pdf](https://www.government.se/contentassets/6732121a2cb54ee3b21da9c628b6bdc7/oversattning-diskrimineringslagen_eng.pdf)

¹¹ Sweden Sverige, *Equal Power and Influence for Women and Men – Sweden is aiming for*. Retrieved from: <https://sweden.se/life/equality/gender-equality>

¹² Sweden Sverige, *Equal Power and Influence for Women and Men – Sweden is aiming for*. Retrieved from: <https://sweden.se/life/equality/gender-equality>

¹³ UNWOMEN, *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016 - Summary - Transforming Economies, Realizing Rights*, 2015, page 4

¹⁴ UNWOMEN, *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016 - Summary - Transforming Economies, Realizing Rights*, 2015, page 4

¹⁵ "Women, Gender and DDR." Women, Gender and DDR, August 2006, 1. http://unddr.org/uploads/documents/IDDRS_5.10_Women,_Gender_and_DDR.pdf.

resolution has been used to guide the United Nations and other organizations involved in DDR processes. The Security Council began addressing the concept of women, peace and security more systematically in October 2000 when they unanimously adopted resolution 1325 (S/RES/1325).¹⁶ Donald Steinberg, Deputy President of the International Crisis Group (ICG), recently noted that “Resolution 1325 is, in effect, a game plan for ensuring gender equality in political leadership, building gender-sensitive security forces, supporting women as they return to their homes, ensuring safety for women in refugee camps and settlements, and insisting on accountability for sexual violence and other abuses.”¹⁷

Over the subsequent 8.5 years, gender mainstreaming and addressing the problems posed by the treatment of women and girls during and after armed conflict have been emphasized by the Security Council and the international community, but perhaps not emphasized enough. “According to the United Nations Office of the Special Advisor for Gender Issues (OSAGI), fewer than 15% of the 261 resolutions adopted by the Security Council since 1325 contain specific language relating to women and gender issues.”¹⁸ In 2013, the Security Council adopted resolution 2122 (S/RES/2122), which addresses the participation of women in all phases of conflict prevention, resolution, and recovery.¹⁹ The Security Council followed up in October 2015 by adopting resolution 2242 (S/RES/2242) which both encompassed much of the work in the 15 years after the adoption of resolution 1325 and provided further guidance about future UN System and global efforts to integrate the roles of women more effectively in the pursuit and maintenance of peace and security.²⁰ Although at least seven texts related to the protection of women, peace and security have been adopted by the Security Council, it is still very clear that the United Nations, in partnership with various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), needs to address the gender dimensions of all situations of armed conflict.

When examining peacekeeping missions, female peacekeepers are increasingly considered integral to the success of peacekeeping missions as they are often perceived as less confrontational and much easier to approach for other women and girls. Women are deployed in police, military, and civilian areas and have made a positive impact on peacekeeping environments. Johanna Valenius further notes that “in the UN Interim Force in Lebanon, in Hebron, even the male population perceived female peacekeepers to be more approachable than male ones.”²¹ Other studies have confirmed many of these impressions about the relative approachability of male and female peacekeepers but the international community must not draw too many deep conclusions at this point as too few male peacekeepers still receive significant training about gender issues and gender mainstreaming before being deployed in the field; as the UN and the international community remedy this particular deficiency, it is likely that male peacekeepers will be seen as more approachable in the future than they are currently.

¹⁶ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1325. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/#/resolution>

¹⁷ Donald Steinberg, “Protection and Participation: Women and Armed Conflict” Presentation to the Salzburg Global Seminar September 10, 2008 p. 3.

¹⁸ Chineze J. Onyejekwe, “Women, War, Peace-building and Reconstruction” *Transnational Processes* UNESCO 2005 p. 281.

¹⁹ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2122. Retrieved from: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/docs/2013/10/un-security-council-resolution-2122>

²⁰ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2242. Retrieved from: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2242.pdf

²¹ Johanna Valenius, “A Few Kind Women: Gender Essentialism and Nordic Peacekeeping Operations” *International Peacekeeping* Vol. 14 No. 4, August 2007 p. 515.

Women's participation in government can be just as effective as their participation in peacekeeping missions have been. Women's participation in India's Panchayati governments have proven incredibly effective in driving economic, environmental, and social change. Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) "are regularly elected, local self-government institutions in rural areas that were confirmed constitutional status as per the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution of India."²² These PRIs coincide with the Sustainable Development Goals at a local level with focus on economic development and social justice. They also provide local infrastructure to ensure the wellbeing of residents including housing, healthcare, and most importantly programmes to advance development of women and children. About 50% of the elected representatives of the PRI's are women which is important considering 70% of India's population is governed by one of these institutions.²³ This provides women an entrance into politics at the local level which also bestows upon them the awareness and skills necessary for bureaucracy. For example, Ms. Chhavi Rajawat "brought about substantial change in her village by establishing water supply and solar power provisions, constructing paved roads and toilets, and setting up banks."²⁴

However, limitations of these PRIs must also be acknowledged. One of the biggest challenges that has been seen through the inclusion of women in PRIs is illiteracy. This illiteracy limits the extent of women's political participation. Other problems women have faced include prejudice from male colleagues, restriction around their mobility as they had domestic obligations, and their lack of experience in the political sector. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has addressed these issues to the best of their ability by implementing gender-friendly infrastructure as well as providing women with literate accounts or journal-level engineers to assist them with their duties.²⁵ While these are short-term solutions, the issue of illiteracy needs to be addressed through a long-term lens if women hope to maintain roles in political leadership especially in lesser developed countries.

Gender Dimensions in Armed Conflict

Violent conflicts disproportionately affect women and girls while intensifying pre existing gender inequalities. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 was the first to recognize the effect of armed conflict on women and girls. In order to combat this, the resolution urged governments to involve more women at the decision making levels, with focus on the Secretary General adding more female positions.²⁶ Military personnel are not fully educated on gender discrimination during armed conflict and how to support women during conflicts. Therefore, they may ignore the specific needs of women or how to provide the

²² UN Women, Take Five: "Elected Women Representatives are key agents for transformational economic, environmental, and social change in India." Retrieved from:

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2019/7/take-five-rahul-bhatnagar-india>

²³ UN Women, Take Five: "Elected Women Representatives are key agents for transformational economic, environmental, and social change in India." Retrieved from:

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2019/7/take-five-rahul-bhatnagar-india>

²⁴ UN Women, Take Five: "Elected Women Representatives are key agents for transformational economic, environmental, and social change in India." Retrieved from:

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2019/7/take-five-rahul-bhatnagar-india>

²⁵ UN Women, Take Five: "Elected Women Representatives are key agents for transformational economic, environmental, and social change in India." Retrieved from:

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2019/7/take-five-rahul-bhatnagar-india>

²⁶ UN Security Council, Resolution 1325. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/#resolution>
[https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1325\(2000\)](https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1325(2000))

resources for them to recover from physical or emotional trauma often associated with armed conflict. For example, sexual assault during armed conflict is one of the largest concerns pertaining to gender equality. Other conflict related sexual violence include “rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, forced marriage and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity” all of which disproportionately affect women and girls.²⁷ It is estimated that for each rape reported during armed conflict 10 to 20 cases go undocumented.²⁸ There needs to be more accountability for those who perpetrate violence against women and girls especially during armed conflict.

While women are frequently affected by armed conflict through abuse from their attackers as a war tactic, attention needs to be drawn to how they are also affected by those who are supposed to help. The United Nations is currently addressing the most recent allegations of misconduct by peacekeepers in the Central African Republic. While on their mission, “allegations came to light that international troops serving as peacekeepers had sexually abused a number of young children in exchange for food or money.”²⁹ To address these concerns, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon’s Special Representative Parfait Onanga-Anyanga was put in the position of combating these allegations and preventing this violence in the future. He continually emphasized his zero-tolerance policy and that “all international personnel and units will be held accountable to the highest standards of behaviour and conduct.”³⁰ UNICEF made visits to the victims following these incidents to provide them with medical care as well as to address their psychological needs due to the trauma as all four of these victims were minors.³¹ While the United Nations is addressing these crimes, delegates need to keep in mind that women are victims of armed conflict in more ways than one, including by those who are supposed to aid them. The only true way to address this issue is by including more female representation in politics to stand up for women’s rights as well as more women peacekeepers to support these victims with their nurturing nature as discussed above.

Resolutions to armed conflict often suffer without the help of female policy makers. The 48th Session on the Status of Women concluded that very little progress has been made to draw attention to the importance of different gender perspectives.³² Due to the lack of women involved in peace talks, agreements far too often pass up opportunities to benefit gender equality. The Division for the Advancement of Women evaluated this and concluded that “key issues, such as protection and promotion of women’s human rights, especially women’s economic and social

²⁷ United Nations, Intentional Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. Retrieved from:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-sexual-violence-in-conflict-day>

²⁸ United Nations, Intentional Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. Retrieved from:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-sexual-violence-in-conflict-day>

²⁹ UN Africa Renewal, *Fresh allegations of sexual abuse against UN Peacekeepers in Central African Republic*.

Retrieved from:

<https://www.un.org/africarenewal/news/fresh-allegations-sexual-abuse-made-against-un-peacekeepers-central-africa-n-republic>

³⁰ UN Africa Renewal, *Fresh allegations of sexual abuse against UN Peacekeepers in Central African Republic*.

Retrieved from:

<https://www.un.org/africarenewal/news/fresh-allegations-sexual-abuse-made-against-un-peacekeepers-central-africa-n-republic>

³¹ UN Africa Renewal, *Fresh allegations of sexual abuse against UN Peacekeepers in Central African Republic*.

Retrieved from:

<https://www.un.org/africarenewal/news/fresh-allegations-sexual-abuse-made-against-un-peacekeepers-central-africa-n-republic>

³² UN 48th Session on the Status of Women, Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/48sess.htm>

rights, may be omitted” due to the lack of female representation in peacemaking.³³ Post-conflict solutions provide a unique opportunity for women to get more involved with politics. Training of those involved in conflict, which includes, but is not limited to the military, government officials, as well as civilian peacekeeping personnel, about the importance of gender equality and inclusivity will improve all peacekeeping operations.

It must be kept in mind that “the interest of women and girls in becoming involved in peace processes often stems from their experiences of armed conflict, whether primarily as victims or as armed participants.”³⁴ Women who have experienced armed conflict firsthand will have the most insight into what changes are needed thus they can contribute more to peacekeeping processes than male officials who were never physically involved in the conflict. Involvement of women in peace processes can be the first step towards political involvement as it may spike their interest in political policies. However, there is the issue that male-dominated peace organizations may be opposed to the involvement of women. Those who do invite women in most likely will not allow them any input into the decision making due to prejudices of what roles women should have in society. Therefore, before women join the table for peace talks, stereotypes against the role of women in society need to be broken down in order to give women the opportunity they deserve.

Indigenous Dimensions

Every category outlined prior to this section details common hardships faced by women across the globe today when attempting to join and participate in political leadership. More problems become exposed, however, when one identifies as an *indigenous woman*. Indigenous women in particular face serious challenges, barriers, and difficulties on a daily basis; labeling them with two terms that bring the most hardship: “indigenous” and “women.” It is important to note that the term *indigenous women* does not refer to a homogenous group, as indigenous women are present in every corner of the globe - with different realities, life experience, cultures, traditions and depends on the women’s own-self classification of identifying within an indigenous community.³⁵

Compared to other groups/populations, indigenous women's hardships are amplified due to frequent violations of their civil and human rights. It is important to note that it is not *just* indigenous women who face hardships. Indigenous women are often faced with barriers of restricted job growth, economic and geographic challenges, limited social program access, high rates of illiteracy, social marginalization and more.³⁶ Globally, more than “47% of all indigenous peoples in employment have no education, compared to 17% of their non-indigenous counterparts. *This gap is even wider for women.*”³⁷

Indigenous women face and battle fear each day, on top of balancing generational expectations and treatment. In the United States, native women and girls are being kidnapped, trafficked or murdered at an alarming rate, with “5,712 reports of missing American Indian and

³³ UN Women Watch, *Women and Armed Conflict*. Retrieved from:

[https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/beijingat10/E.%20Women%20and%20armed%20conflict%20\(Sep%2009\).pdf](https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/beijingat10/E.%20Women%20and%20armed%20conflict%20(Sep%2009).pdf)

³⁴ United Nations, *Women Peace and Security*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/womenpeaceandsecurity.pdf>

³⁵ “Oas :: Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.” Retrieved from: <https://www.oas.org/en/iachr>.

³⁶ “Oas :: Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.” Retrieved from: <https://www.oas.org/en/iachr>.

³⁷ “International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.” United Nations. United Nations. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/indigenous-day>.

Alaska Native women and girls, though the US Department of Justice's federal missing person database, NamUs, only logged 116 cases."³⁸ In a study conducted by the Urban Indian Health Institute, data from 71 U.S. cities showed that native American women make up a significant portion of the missing and murdered cases.³⁹ The murder rate came to be ten times higher than the national average for women living on reservations, with murder being the third leading cause of death for Native women in the United States - despite only making up less than 2% of the population.⁴⁰

Indigenous women form the backbone of indigenous communities - spreading and being responsible for the preservation of and transmission of ancestral knowledge. Despite this role, indigenous women suffer intense levels of discrimination and injustice based off their gender, ethnicity, class and status. Poverty affects indigenous peoples at high levels, and violations over self-governance of ancestral lands are often violated by large corporations and corrupt governments. Obtaining or attempting to reach levels of political power within a community sometimes goes against the grain of the indigenous community.

In conjunction, indigenous women are especially faced with violations to human rights and suffer violence at the hands of their perpetrators. This violence invades the domestic sphere and deprives indigenous women of their liberty. It also leads to a militarization of indigenous territories and armed conflicts. This behavior can be found in the Americas, where indigenous women often undertake spiritual leader roles and guarantors of indigenous culture - the violence that takes place against them takes on many different shapes from physically to culturally and spiritually. Oftentimes, when trying to challenge and obtain justice, indigenous women then face obstacles in the justice system. It's often a system that is stacked against them, one for being a woman, and two for being indigenous.

Delegates are tasked with identifying areas in which indigenous women within their communities are facing difficulties and hardship, and how member states can alleviate the immediate distressors to increase political participation.

UN System Actions

The United Nations Security Council's Resolution 2122 reaffirms and extends upon actions of Resolution 1325 in October 2013. This Resolution once again recognized the need for female participation in politics and hopes to achieve this goal through regular briefings on issues relevant to women, including provisions in resolutions on gender equality, and regular consultations with women rights organizations and women leaders.⁴¹ The committee urged the financial support for the development of women in politics while emphasizing the need for women leaders to address sexual violence in conflicts. To reinforce their goals, the Council established a "women, peace and security mandate as a focus of one of its periodic field visits."⁴² Lastly, to hold the member states accountable, an annual report must continue to be submitted to the Security Council on the progress made based on goals set by Resolution 1325 to increase women participation in government.

³⁸ "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW)." Native Hope. Retrieved from: <https://www.nativehope.org/missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-mmiw>

³⁹ "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW)." Native Hope. Retrieved from: <https://www.nativehope.org/missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-mmiw>

⁴⁰ "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW)." Native Hope. Retrieved from: <https://www.nativehope.org/missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-mmiw>

⁴¹ UN Security Council, Resolution 2122. Retrieved from: <https://wps.unwomen.org/pdf/2122/UNSCR-2122-EN.pdf>

⁴² UN Security Council, Resolution 2122. Retrieved from: <https://wps.unwomen.org/pdf/2122/UNSCR-2122-EN.pdf>

The United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 2436 in 2018 to combat the misconduct of UN Peacekeepers in Peacekeeping missions. The Resolution “identifies clear standards of performance for evaluating all United Nations civilian and uniformed personnel working in and supporting peacekeeping operations.”⁴³ These well-established standards allow for uniform evaluation of the actions of the Peacekeepers. However, it must be recognized that within this Resolution the Security Council, “emphasizes the primary responsibility of host countries for the protection of civilians”⁴⁴ The host countries are responsible for protecting the citizens while the Peacekeepers are in charge of maintaining this peace. In other words, countries themselves needed to take action against these Peacekeepers. Lastly, Resolution 2436 recommends proper training and education of peacekeepers by the nations in conflict. The United Nations will be responsible for investigations concerning existing misconduct of Peacekeepers, but the nations are responsible for future prevention.

In 2020, UN Women released a report on the progress made on main goals involving gender equality and violence against women by looking at leadership positions of women and how these related to the milestones put in place by the UN Women’s Strategic Plan in 2018-2021.⁴⁵ The report is labelled “Progress Under 2020 Milestones” and focuses on five key aspects: global norms on gender equality, leadership and governance, economic empowerment, ending violence against women, and women, peace and security, humanitarian action, and disaster risk reduction.⁴⁶ It indicates progress based on geopolitical regions. The report shows the amount of spending on programmes related to gender equality and how it affects income groupings as well. These categories function as indicators of whether the UN Women’s Strategic Plan is making developments in gender equality.

In 2014, the IACHR released a report underscoring its concern over the disappearances and murders of indigenous women in Canada, and the link to a wider pattern of discrimination against indigenous peoples in the country. The report is labelled “Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in British Columbia, Canada” and highlights the forced removal of children to attend residential schools, continuous application of inadequate and unjust laws and policies such as the Indian Act. The IACHR established that a set of holistic and comprehensive approaches to addressing violence against indigenous women was necessary. The IACHR also released a report titled “Access to Justice for Women Victims of Violence in the Americas” where structural racism, social exclusion, and geographic inaccessibility were major obstacles to their access to the justice system.⁴⁷

Conclusion

“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, low levels of education, lack of access to health care and the disproportionate effect of poverty on women.”

⁴³ UN Security Council, Resolution 2436. Retrieved from: [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2436\(2018\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2436(2018))

⁴⁴ UN Security Council, Resolution 2436. Retrieved from: [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2436\(2018\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2436(2018))

⁴⁵ UN Women, Strategic Plan of 2018-2021. Retrieved from: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/8/un-women-strategic-plan-2018-2021>

⁴⁶ UN Women, *Progress Under 2020 Milestones*, Retrieved from: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/executive-board/strategic-plan/global-overview>

⁴⁷ “Oas :: Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.” Retrieved from: <https://www.oas.org/en/iachr>.

- 2011 UN General Assembly Resolution on Women's Political Participation

When women are not included in the political process, their absence affects everyone in almost every facet of society. In order to provide women with access to these roles, stereotypes and social prejudices need to be broken down and women must be provided with the proper education and resources to succeed. Indigenous women must also be considered, in particular. As the 2011 UN General Assembly stated, this is a multifaceted issue that needs to be addressed from all perspectives so as to achieve gender equality and provide women with the access to political participation and leadership.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ UN 2011 General Assembly. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/dppa/decolonization/en/ga/66th-session-2011>

Guiding Questions

1. What actions has your country taken to increase the amount of women participating in politics?
2. How have women in politics improved your country socioeconomically or how has the lack of women harmed your country?
3. What forms of armed conflict have occurred in your country? What aspects of this conflict disproportionately affected women? How has your country addressed these disproportionate effects?
4. How has your country addressed the sexual assault of women in armed conflict? What resources has your country provided for victims? How can that be approved upon?
5. How has your country's responses to COVID-19 provided help, or the lack thereof, to women?
6. What obstacles of gender equality, in terms of female participation in politics, have yet to be addressed within Resolutions 1325 or 2122?
7. What international treaties or conventions has your Member State signed and/or ratified relating to women's rights in political participation? If there are treaties or conventions that your Member State has not signed on to, why?

United Nations Resolutions and Associated Documents

- UN Women, "Strategic Plan 2018-2021," 20 August 2017
- The Economic and Social Council, "2020 Working Text – Beijing 2020," updated 15 March 2018.
- UN Women, "Progress of the World's Women 2019-2020 – Families in a Changing World," 2019.
- UN General Assembly resolution 73/153, "Child, early and forced marriage", (A/RES/73/153), December 17, 2018.
- UN General Assembly resolution 73/149, "Intensifying global efforts for the total elimination of female genital mutilation", (A/RES/73/149), December 17, 2018.
- UN General Assembly resolution 73/148, "Intensification of efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls: sexual harassment", (A/RES/73/148), December 17, 2018.
- UN General Assembly resolution 72/234, "Women in Development," (A/RES/72/234), December 20, 2017.
- UN General Assembly resolution 72/162, "Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto: situation of women and girls with disabilities," (A/RES/72/162), December 20, 2017.
- UN General Assembly resolution 72/154, "The girl child," (A/RES/72/154), December 19, 2017.
- UN General Assembly resolution 72/149, "Violence Against Women Migrant Workers," (A/RES/72/149), December 19, 2017.
- UN General Assembly resolution 72/148, "Improvement of the Situation of Women and Girls in Rural Areas," (A/RES/72/148), December 19, 2017.
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the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly” A/RES/72/147 December 19, 2017.

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