



**Manlius Pebble Hill Model United Nations
Conference October 2018**

UN Women
Chairs:
Lizzie Mafrici
Peri Cannavo

Preface:

Welcome to MPHMUN 2018's UN Women committee. Your chairs for the committee will be Peri Cannavo and Lizzie Mafrici. Peri is a junior at MPH and Lizzie is a sophomore at University of Maryland, double majoring in Women's Studies and International Relations. Our committee will be run resolution style; delegates are expected to bring in pre-written resolutions for each topic. Please staple your resolutions from each topic together and bring 45 packets to committee. In addition, if delegates would like to be eligible for an award, they must have a resolution and position paper for each topic. Position papers must be emailed to the committee by 11:59 PM on Friday, October 19th, something that is a part of MPHMUN's new eco-friendly policy. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to the thoughtful debate that you all will engage in come October.

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Introduction to Committee

Created in July of 2010, the UN Women's mission is to promote gender equality and female empowerment, with five priority areas: "increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting." UN Women's goal is to accelerate progress of women meeting their needs internationally. They also work to achieve economic, social, and political development for women by leading UN initiatives for gender equality and the progress of women.

Women in the Armed Forces

Introduction:

Throughout history, the armed forces have been something more closed off to women than almost any other aspect of society. Whether it is because of commonly held ideas about their physical abilities, or lack thereof, or simply because militaries have generally been seen as the embodiment of masculinity, women have had very few opportunities to get involved. While the situation is certainly better today and continues to improve, women remain barred from the military in many parts of the world. Even in the Western world, women are usually a small minority in the military and are often not allowed in combat. Even when they do join the military, the culture is such that they are often ostracized and put into uncomfortable situations. While this problem would decrease if more women

were to get involved, a culture change is also necessary.

Not only would women gaining involvement in the military throughout the world represent a huge step towards equality, but it also makes sense logically. With women making up essentially half of the worldwide population, the more that countries get women into their militaries, the larger and stronger those militaries can become. By mostly utilizing only men, these countries are missing out on a huge part of the population that might be interested in joining.

History:

Until relatively recently, women have been almost entirely constrained to roles as nurses or aides if they wanted to join the armed forces. and even in those roles, women were relatively rare. That began to change a little bit during the first

and second World Wars. In the United States, while women were not allowed in combat, during World War I, women began to get involved in the military outside of the previously created Army Nurse Corps. During World War I, over 25,000 women joined the US military, serving both as nurses and in other non-combat roles. The Women's Army Corps, the first female branch of the US army, was created during World War II and was vital in increasing the role of women in the armed forces for years after. Throughout the war, around 140,000 US women served, with the jobs available to them increasing to include pilots and spies, among other things. While the role of women in the US military at the time was relatively reflective of much of the Western World at that time, one notable outlier was Russia, where women had a greater role than in the rest of the Western World. All-female combat units began to emerge and gain

recognition in Russia during World War I, and by World War II, Soviet women were allowed in all parts of the military and in any combat role, making a sizable impact on the warfront. The Russian women were first able to carve out a role in the military because the Russians found themselves with very few available male troops near the end of World War I. Similarly, a few years later, Israeli women were used in all combat roles during the Israeli independence war of 1948.

From World War II until relatively recently, the role of women in the armed forces continued to grow, but it remained difficult for them to gain positions. In the Western World, more and more opportunities, some of which were in combat, slowly became available to women, but women playing a significant role in the military remained the exception rather than the rule. Many of their opportunities, such as with Russia and Israel, emerged as a result

of either desperation by a country or a simple lack of available soldiers. Because of this, women often became involved in the armed forces during rebellions and revolutions, often fighting in guerilla forces. For example, North Vietnamese women found a place in the army during the Vietnam War, even if their positions usually didn't directly place them in combat. In Nicaragua, women actually often fought on the front lines for the Sandinistas. Despite the roles that they gained during these revolutions though, their contributions were often forgotten when the war was over, just as was the case in places like the US and Europe after each world war. What this has meant is that for many years, it was practically impossible for women to gain permanent roles in the military. The UN peacekeeping force is another place where women have not traditionally had much of a place. While today there are more women in

it, from 1957-1989, only 20 women in total served as UN peacekeepers.

Current Situation:

Today, women have managed to gain a significant place in the armed forces, but barriers still remain. In most of the more developed and industrialized countries, there are many positions in the armed forces that are open to women. In Israel, military service is mandatory for both male and female citizens, and the Israeli Defense Force is currently changing its regulations so that men and women will have to serve for the same amount of time. While mandatory military service is generally quite effective at getting women into the military in the first place, it is controversial in other ways and often only used in smaller nations like Israel where there is a need to have much of the population in the military. In many other countries, such as Canada, Australia, the

United States, and Norway, women are allowed in all or almost all roles in the armed forces, both combat and non-combat roles. Despite this, even in the countries where women are allowed to serve in most roles, the percentage of women in combat is tiny and rarely greater than 5%, and the percentage of women in the military as a whole is essentially always much less than half. Additionally, women in many countries such as Pakistan, Russia and a significant number of other countries remain completely barred from combat roles. Russia is also a great example of how women often find that while they are able to enter combat and the military in general when there is a need for them, generally during a war, they often quickly lose their roles afterwards and the rules are once again tightened to prevent them from holding various positions. In fact, in a sizable number of countries, female

participation in the armed forces in any way is almost nonexistent.

It is not only getting women to join the armed forces around the world that is an issue today, but also the discrimination and harassment that they face once already in the armed forces. This manifests itself in many different ways. For example, most military gear is made with male bodies in mind, meaning that women often have trouble actually fitting into some gear. Additionally, many women in the military feel like they have to actively suppress their femininity. Because the armed forces have been seen as so fundamentally masculine throughout history, women in the military are often forced to act in increasingly masculine ways while suppressing a part of their identity that they don't think will be accepted. Sexual assault has also been a problem that has been gaining publicity recently, and because of the culture there, these women feel

especially ashamed of it and unable to speak out. In 2016, 8,600 women serving in the US military were sexually assaulted. The majority of these women were assaulted more than once, and 81% of victims did not report the crime. All of this means that while militaries in much of the world might be formally accepting women into all parts, these women are often not truly accepted as they are. The fact many women may not want to feel like they have to change themselves to serve has been one reason that the armed forces have remained so incredibly male dominated. Another issue that women in the military face is dealing with female health issues such as menstruation. When a woman is under severe stress, be it physical or emotional, her period becomes very erratic. This coupled with the fact that women often don't have a chance to change or make use of pads and tampons during things such as long convoy

rides makes menstruation very difficult to deal with. Because of it, many women feel that they must use birth control such as an IUD, which isn't always easy to acquire.

Questions to Consider:

1. In what ways have women in your country participated in armed conflict in the past, and in what ways are they allowed to serve in the present?
2. How can individual nations motivate women to join their armed forces?
3. What are ways to make women and feminine qualities more accepted in militaries around the world?
4. In what ways might both your nation and other nations be benefited by the increasing involvement of women in their armed forces?

Further Reading:

1. An article on women in combat in various countries. <https://www.cnn.com/2015/08/20/us/women-in-combat-globally/index.html>
2. A paper on the relationship between war and gender throughout history. <http://www.warandgender.com/chap2pap.htm>
3. An article discussing the struggles of being a woman in the military, both during and after service. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/11/the-inconvenience-of-being-a-woman-veteran/545987/>

Sexual Assault at Educational

Institutions:

Introduction:

While women throughout the world have had to and continue to have to deal with issues of sexual assault and harassment in many parts of their lives, one place where it has been somewhat prevalent but also especially inexcusable is at educational institutions. Every year, around 246 million children are the victims of violence in schools, and around 25% of schoolgirls said that they felt uncomfortable using latrines at school. This issue has received the most publicity when it happens at universities, but it is also a huge issue in elementary, middle, and high schools in both developed and developing countries. In fact, while it receives a notably small amount of attention when it happens at rural schools in poor countries, it can be an even bigger issue there, as girls who are already struggling to

gain an education don't feel as though they have the power to speak out. In addition, the issue is rarely handled properly because many of the developing countries where schoolgirls are sexually assaulted either have views that put the blame for the sexual assault on the victim or simply a lack of administration surrounding the issue in schools. Another huge problem that can occur because of sexual assault in schools in these countries is that parents feel that they need to remove their child from school to protect either them or their reputation, which has both social and mental growth repercussions.

The problem has manifested itself slightly differently in the universities. While in both cases it can either be a member of the faculty or a fellow student committing the assault, often the root of sexual assault in universities is fraternities and other social clubs. Whether members of these clubs have

been assaulting women, women are getting assaulted at parties hosted by the clubs, or the messages spread by these clubs are normalizing sexual assault and changing the culture, they have certainly had a large impact on the prevalence of sexual assault at universities. Additionally, the problem is different partially because it has received so much more publicity than sexual assault at educational institutions in other parts of the world has. Additionally, offenders manage to avoid regulations designed to punish perpetrators by slipping through loopholes.

History:

Because sexual assault carries such a stigma and there has been a culture of blaming the victim for the assault throughout history, it has taken many years for governments to begin establishing laws to combat sexual assault in schools. Some governments lack any laws to counter sexual

assault altogether. In much of the less developed world, tradition outlines the necessity of girls being virgins at marriage and places a great deal of shame on women that are sexually assaulted. This makes speaking out against it, especially as a victim, an incredibly difficult thing to do. It also means that any assault that occurred at schools in these countries gains almost no attention, especially in the past. Because of this, even when there are laws in place, they often don't do much good and are unenforced. Also, in some countries, girls are expected to offer sex in exchange for good grades or scholarships. The UN has done work to try to decrease sexual violence in schools in the past, some of which is reflected in the UN's 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, but much of the responsibility for eliminating it and punishing the offenders falls on the country, and historically, many

developing countries where this violence is especially prevalent haven't done much to protect or even recognize the victims. Additionally, the declaration itself has not been particularly effective, and many believe that with the recent rise of more conservative beliefs in parts of the world, it is losing power. In 2003, when a meeting was held to discuss the document, various countries including Iran, Pakistan, and Sudan objected to parts of the document, and nothing was agreed upon.

There are more laws prohibiting sexual assault in educational institutions in the developed world, but until the mid to late 20th century, the issue didn't receive much publicity in even these places. Victims didn't receive much protection and were afraid to speak out. Beginning around 1960, many countries began creating laws similar to the United States' Title IX, which was passed in 1972 and treats any form of sexual

harassment as discrimination and strictly prohibits it. These laws were a part of a growing feminist movement at the time that is known as second-wave feminism and was an effort to create equality for women in all aspects of life. Similar laws were created in many more developed countries, but until incredibly recently, these issues of sexual assault in educational institutions didn't receive very much attention. Even when a case was brought to court, without social media and the Internet, the issues didn't become global in the same way that they do today. In developing nations, when a case is actually brought to court, there is often not very much done to protect the victims. The case is generally resolved by having the perpetrator either pay a settlement to the victims parents or pay a bride price and marry the victim. In other words, while it might be understood that the perpetrator is

guilty, as a result of the culture, they don't face much of a penalty.

Current Situation:

In developed countries, such as the United States, there is a large focus on sexual assault among college campuses, but other educational institutions are ignored. For example, in America (under The Clery Act), colleges must report sexual assault statistics but lower levels of education aren't required to do the same. Because middle and high schools are generally smaller and less populated than universities, and teachers are valued as members of the community, confidentiality is much harder to achieve and thus many cases of sexual assault remains unreported. Regardless of the underreporting, action must be taken at all levels of education since there is no protocol in how to handle sexual assault at lower levels of education like there is at the

college level in many developed countries. Even at higher levels of education, protections that have been put in place to protect victims are being stripped away (such as recent Title IX changes in America).

Protections against sexual assault for women in education in developing countries lacks greatly as well. When looking at a full study of 141 developing and developed countries, the World Bank found that although 80% of countries have laws on sexual assault outside of the workplace, 60% of these countries lacked laws on sexual assault within education. Addressing sexual assault is crucial in increasing girls' education and thus promoting gender equality. For examples, countries like Nigeria have free access to education for all children, however rates for girls to attend are much lower and one reason could be because of sexual assault. Another

contributor to sexual assault for female students, especially in developing nations, is because of the inequalities already faced against them in education, such as the greater percentage of boys in school, traditional beliefs and duties at home.

Questions:

1. How can sexual education play a role in fighting sexual assault at educational institutes?
2. What other issues do girls face when trying to get an education?
3. Why is this still an issue in developed countries that have good educational systems?
4. What can educational institutions do versus governments?

Further Research:

1. Explanation of sexual assault:
<https://www.rainn.org/articles/sexual-assault>
2. For examples of sexual assault within schools
<https://www.equalrights.org/legal-help/know-your-rights/sexual-harassment-at-school/>
3. Gender violence within schools
http://www.ungei.org/resources/index_5968.html
4. The WHO's explanation of sexual violence
http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/global_campaign/en/chap6.pdf

Gender Quota Mandates in Government

Introduction:

A link has been proven between women's increased role in government and increased development. To further involve women in politics, many countries have come up with a solution: quotas that require a certain percent/amount of chairs in a government to be reserved for a certain gender. Although each country with a quota does it differently, overall gender quotas' success, and which type is the most successful, is still being debated. Gender quotas are used to promote legal change, and hopefully social change indirectly, but this leads to a very old question: Is social change caused by legal change or cultural shifts?

A rebuttal to the claim that quotas bring effective change is the idea that although quotas get women into politics, they might not necessarily give women any real power; political parties still control

politics and it's up to them to decide the actual influence women can have once they get into government. Another argument against quotas is the question of if they're really democratic or not. Many of these quotas were written into constitutions during times where there were newly formed democracies, usually after civil conflict, but it could be argued that it goes against democratic values to elect candidates just because of their gender and not because of their experience or campaigns.

History:

There are three types of gender quotas: reserved seats, legislative candidate quotas, and voluntary party quotas. Simply put, reserved seats are a certain number or percentage of seats reserved for women, usually written out in a country's constitution. Legislative quotas require political parties to find, nominate, and support qualified female candidates. These

quotas require that there is a certain proportion of women up for election, however it doesn't ensure them a seat in the government. Voluntary party quotas aren't legally binding and are up to each party. These quotas can mean a variety of things from simple requirements to more mandatory procedures like alternating male and female names on the party list. The two most common quotas seen throughout the world are legal candidate quotas and voluntary political party quotas (or a combination of the two). There also are both gender neutral quotas, minimum quotas and maximum ones. Gender neutral quotas are one that aren't specific to a certain gender, especially women in this case, and just set maximums and minimums for each gender (however this could get hard for those who don't identify as female or male).

Gender quotas also appear to be very popular among the citizens of countries

where they are implemented. For example, Jacqueline Peschard found that within Latin American countries, two-thirds of the population consider these gender based quotas to have a positive effect on their countries, further proving a hopeful link between the gender quotas and overall equality for women. She also points out the benefits of quotas as a symbolic gesture to women, because if nothing else they are raising awareness to the issues of gender inequality that every country faces.

Current Situation:

Quotas that are in place currently do get women more representation and give them a much larger voice, but it's what countries and citizens do with these quotas that really matters, according to Peschard. As beneficial as they might appear seem to be, Peschard points out that they should simply be a part of a comprehensive set of strategies to achieve gender equality

internationally. In her words, “Quotas attack the under-representation of women in its ultimate expression, not in its causes, on which this under-representation is ultimately based.” They can be the catalyst to change for women, but are not the complete answer. This part is widely overlooked, as many countries are praised for their implementation of gender quotas and the question of “what’s next?” is seldom asked.

When looking at all gender quotas, it appears that they overall aren’t the most effective method for promoting gender equality. There is no pattern between countries with and without quotas and if they have better scores on the World Economic Forum’s Gender Inequality Index. This could be because of an assortment of reasons: there could be a certain type of quota that's effective and some types that aren't, quotas as a whole could just not work in providing long term change, if women are

given a fair shot within the government and are treated as equals, cultural change isn’t following the quotas, or even governments aren’t doing enough to enforce these quotas. It’s also important to focus on which countries have quotas, their socioeconomic backgrounds, and if this plays a role.

According to Beaman et al, “The belief behind [gender quotas] is that as female descriptive representation increases, women become inspired to increase their political activity, and society in general becomes more supportive of female political ambition and participation.” The question of gender quotas actually being effective is still up to debate today, however one thing is agreed on across the international community: countries must work towards achieving gender equality.

Questions to Consider:

1. What can countries do to guarantee the success of gender quotas?
2. Should already developed governments implement quotas?
3. Which type of gender quota works the best?
4. If not gender quotas, how should countries improve gender equality within their politics?

Further Research:

1. A breakdown of types of gender quotas
www.idea.int/data-tools/data/gender-quotas/quotas#different.
2. Examples of countries and their quotas
https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1314/ElectoralQuotas#_Toc372193116

3. Global Gender Gap Report:
<http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/rankings/>
4. What's the deal with quotas?
https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1314/ElectoralQuotas#_Toc372193116
5. Gender quotas in African countries
<http://democracyinafrica.org/gender-quotas-womens-representation-african-parliaments/>