



Mission Viejo High School MUN
34th Annual Conference
Vox Populi



UNHCR: Gender Equality

Hello delegates,

My name is Makena Gordon, and I am your head chair and a junior at Mission Viejo High School. This year will be my third year involved in Mission Viejo's MUN program. Apart from MUN, I also play on the lacrosse team at Mission and participate in Mock Trial competitions. I love to see people who care about becoming a change in the world, as well as watching people improve on their public speaking abilities-something I struggled with before joining MUN. I am very excited to see you all this January and I hope you all enjoy MUN as much as I do!

I. Background

Equality is a given right to any human, but we as a world face the issue of working towards equality between genders. Women are constantly given less opportunities in education, the work force, and politics all throughout the world. We need to dive further past gender roles in society and start working towards a lifestyle where men and women have equal opportunities, as well as equal responsibilities. Empowering women would create stability for families financially and allow for women to take care of themselves, which in some countries is almost unheard of. Women need to reach a point where they believe in their self-worth and have access to education and decisions that men are granted.

However, gender equality is more than just empowering women, but it also draws attention to the way women and men behave toward each other in society, and the actions and attitudes of men toward women joining them in their work place or politics. Men and women need to work together to improve the lives of themselves and each other. Countries in the Middle East are suffering majorly in the lack of equality for women. The UN as a unit needs to unite countries to help each other gain equality for all.

II. UN Involvement

The UN has made some strides in closing the barrier between equality of men and women. About 2/3rds of all countries in developing region have reached gender parity in primary education. Women are also being given more political power; up to 30% of chambers in Parliament are seen as being dominated by women in 46 countries. However, countries in Africa and Asia are still struggling with enrolling girls in primary schooling.

The UN is introducing a plan called Goal 5, which has the main idea of ending all violence against women and to achieve equality for women globally. Within Goal 5, there are a list of targets. These include eliminating all forms of discrimination, violence, and harmful practices against women and children. It also aims to ensure access to healthcare specifically for women as well as women's' participation in activities involving politics and economics.

There are also several inter-agencies working with the UN to tackle the problem of gender equality such as UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Sub-Working Group on Gender. Although these programs specify in



Mission Viejo High School MUN
34th Annual Conference
Vox Populi



violent sexual treatment toward women, they share the same overall goal of women standing alongside men in society.

III. Possible Solutions

One key solution for this issue lies within education. Opening the doors to primary education at the least for women everywhere is a necessity for their own independence. By having more access to learning, women can be more applicable for jobs and in the future will be able to support themselves. Women also needed to be treated with respect and acceptance at work and school. However, the issue here is that there are several barriers with different religions that put women under men, and it would be hard to change those beliefs. Therefore, this idea of acceptance would have to become a trend in societies through the social aspect of lives and hopefully then have impact on religion. Another way to ensure equal access to jobs is to begin implementing job applications that don't ask for gender before considering someone for a job; that way, the bias would not be an issue when women go seeking jobs.

IV. Questions to Consider

- Is gender inequality a large issue in your country?
- Is there equal access to education and work for all genders in your country?
- Are women a present voice in your political system?
- Are women repressed in your country for specific reasons?

V. Country Bloc Policies

Africa Group: Specifically, Sub-Saharan Africa has been making great strides in closing the gap between genders, especially focusing in their primary schools. Overall, women are also common in the labor force; they make up 61%. However, women still lack a voice in decisions made in their countries and are often treated with disrespect. There are programs such as the GIL working on this issue.

Asia-Pacific Group: This region has made large advances in closing the gap of gender in education at more than just the primary level. Women also make up roughly 70% of the work force and have higher levels of participation in management of companies than in most regions. However, women still have a weaker voice and earn less than men do for very similar jobs.

Eastern Europe/ Central Asia Group: Women are still struggling for their equality in this country, but it is being shadowed over by other obstacles that receive much more of the UN's attention. Many women are being denied access into labor forces and are being withheld economic rights.

Latin America/ Caribbean Group: In these countries, women often suffer from working in an environment where they are not paid at all. Most of the countries' political cabinets have around



Mission Viejo High School MUN
34th Annual Conference
Vox Populi



20% of their members as women. A big issue in this region is women suffering from sexual harassment.

Western Europe Group: Europe has made strides to fighting for equality between genders, especially with the initiation of the Lisbon treaty in 2007. The Women's Charter was another act passed in 2010 to focus on women gaining the same power as men in this region. The EU has taken this issue very seriously and is dealing with this topic as a high ranked issue.

VI. Works Cited

@OneYoungWorld. "Gender Equality: We Need New Solutions." *One Young World*. N.p., 17 Dec. 2013. Web. 26 Nov. 2016.

"United Nations: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment." *UN News Center*. UN, n.d. Web. 26 Nov. 2016.

"Peace Corps." Global Issues: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. N.p., n.d. Web. 26 Nov. 2016.

@usaid. "Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment | U.S. Agency for International Development." *U.S. Agency for International Development*. N.p., n.d. Web. 29 Nov. 2016.

"What Is Gender Equality?" *Gender Equality: What Is Gender Equality?* N.p., n.d. Web. 29 Nov. 2016.