Houston Area Model United Nations
Standard Committee

CSW



Chair | Isabella Carranza

Topic A: Addressing the Regression of Women's Rights Posed by Armed and Extremist Groups

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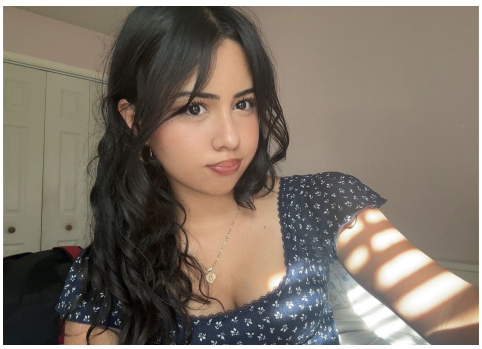
Chair Letter

Welcome to HAMUN, and more specifically, to the Commission on Status of Women (CSW). My name is Isabella Carranza and I will be your CSW chair for HAMUN'S 52nd Conference. I'm currently a Freshman in the University of Houston, and am studying for a Bachelors of Science in Psychology. I'm very excited to be your chair this year and look forward to the discussions and new perspectives this conference will bring.

I've been a delegate at both HAMUN '50 and HAMUN '51 and this is my first year serving as a chair! Immediately upon beginning to delegate and involve myself more, HAMUN became incredibly special to me, as not only did it help me feel more aware of pending global issues, but it gave me specialized perspectives from the countries I delegated for. HAMUN also helped spark a passion for research, which I now am more involved in and currently pursue within my psychology studies.

I chose to staff CSW because of my passion surrounding women's rights. Especially when deciding which topics or case studies to include within the background guides, it puts into perspective how so many women struggle around the globe and the problems that remain. Realizing how patriarchy is embedded within countless institutions and cultures may feel discouraging at first, but by being in this committee, hopefully by the end of researching you gain a sense of hope through seeing how different women's rights groups collaborate and solve issues today.

I encourage all delegates to take this as a chance to speak up during debates, challenge different perspectives or solutions, and see how different states may work together towards their respective goals. I believe HAMUN is a great supportive and collaborative environment, and all forms of participation make the experience even more enriching.



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Committee Background

The Commission on the Status of Women was established in 1946, originally a commission by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It also served as a response to former US first lady Eleanor Roosevelt's speech during a 1946 UN General Assembly meeting, days before the committee was established, where she urged more women to partake in international and national issues. The committee focuses exclusively on women's suffrage, the promotion of gender equality, and the empowerment of women. In the first meeting, the duration of the committee was defined: "members considered that the work of the sub-commission should last until women had reached the point where they were on equal footing with men in all fields of human enterprise". However, CSW equality efforts continue today, addressing emerging issues regarding women's rights and privileges. Both topics this conference will focus on aspects of digital and social media, which bring upon a new aspect of dangers present to women.

Regarding this specific issue of extremism and terrorism against women, CSW implements strategies from the WPS (Woman, Peace, and Security) agenda, established by The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000. The group focuses on ensuring women have safety within their respective nations, and in accordance with the topic, have identified terrorism as a current persistent threat, especially with the disproportionate effect it has on women. The agenda is uniquely focused on combining UN Security Committees' priorities with UN Women and the CSW, under the WPS agenda and focusing on overall higher security to protect marginalized groups from gender based terrorisim.

Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

A 2019 UN Women study identified misogyny as deeply embedded within the ideology of current violent extremist groups, and can intersect with broader conservative politics. The report highlights how hostility towards woman can converge with their states political or social movements, as the poorer state the nation is in, the worse the treatment is towards women. Even amongst individual, "lone-wolf" violent extremist attacks, most perpetrators had prior accounts of violence against women in common. [8] Terrorisim towards women is on the rise as well. Such gender-based terrorism was static in 1970-2000 and increased notably after 2004, and the top three years have been since 2018: 2021, 2019, & 2018. [7]

Although a common assumption may be that women's rights only continue to expand and liberate them throughout history, recent trends of gender-based crime and terrorism tells the opposite story. Globally, at least 50,000 women a year die at the hands of family members, which is 137 women each day and more than half the total of violent deaths of women. [10] Femicides and gender-based crimes are able to run rampant in member states with cultural values that oppose women, or even with a lack of legislation protecting them.

Despite the significance of these issues, the bulk of research in extremist gender-based crimes has been invalidated due to one-time researches to the field and hampered the studies continuity. Many focused on terrosim journals only, but women have not be the center focus or a good number of references. [7] Addressing these research gaps and instead focusing on a more female-focused approach, extremist groups can be fought against while keeping woman's security at the center.

Current Global Political Climate

When analyzing the emergence of these extremist groups, a beneficial addition to perspective to consider the broader political and social environments in which they are able to operate. In recent years, as a response to increasing feminist groups and legislation, there has also been an increasing wave of conservatism worldwide. Repelling old legislature such as the overturning of Roe V. Wade in the United States, a law that made abortion accessible, member states pulling out of the Istanbul Convention, a conference focused on women's' rights, and defunding out of women's ministries displays international negative response to the advancement of women's rights. [4] This recent pushback on women's' liberation can begin to cultivate misogynist perspectives.

This does not suggest that of restorative or conservative views are inherently causing extremist groups to terrorize women, as delegates are encouraged to distinguish between conservative political policies compared to specific ideologies that practice discrimination and promote violence against women.

Appearance of the *Manosphere*

Following the emergence of higher social media engagement worldwide, there is an increase in homogeneous ideologies and communities, which makes it easy for these groups to fall into extremes. Especially with the amount of easy to influence, younger populations online, it makes it more dangerous that mindests like these, hostile rhetoric, resentment against women, male superiority, are quick to become internalized with these individuals. Misogyny is often referred to as a gateway to more harmful and violent acts, such as recruitment into extremism and extremist groups. A longitudinal effect is recruitment of younger men; The majority of Boko Haram fighters are teenagers, the typical ISIS recruit is around 26, and most Jemaah Islamiyah members are young and male. [8] ISIS is even reported to use social media campaigns to reach North American and European audiences. [5] With the emergence of social media, another lens to the issue is introduced, as propaganda becomes more accessible, digestible, and shareable.

Case Study: ISIS Controlled Territories

The terrorist group Islamic State, commonly known as ISIS, was established in 2004 within Iraq as a division of Al Qaeda, founded by Abu Musab al Zarqawi. The oppression ISIS is known for is a strict interpretation of sharia law, using out-of context lines of theological scripture for brutal governance. Though the initial group was traditionally territory-based, it has shifted to a more ideological focuses state. To enforce such ideology, the group resorts to using violence and oppressive policies, especially towards women, and have been apart of shaping the UN's interpretation of extremism. [6] [3] Jihadists are apart of the groups higher class and assume private ownership over women. Not only social and legislative rights shown by enforcement of the hijab, seclusion, and gender segregation in public, but sexual "ownership" as well. Presence of such groups contributes to the regression of womens; rights worldwide, and delegates are encouraged to

In relation to women's rights, ISIS's hierarchical structure follows gender roles at a more extremist level. The Jihadist men occupy positions of authority, while women are treated as subordinate to male control. This hierarchy extends beyond the restriction of women's social and legislative rights through compulsory veiling, seclusion, and gender segregation in public spaces. It also presents itself in the denial of women's bodily autonomy, as ISIS has justified the treatment of women as male property through its ideological interpretation of religious law, and the way it markets towards young women, both in and outside the territories. Despite the rules that seem conformist and negative towards women, the group advertises itself as an "adventure" whilst promoting a sisterhood in religion. [6]



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Case Study: ISIS Controlled Territories

Women's' Involvement In Extremist Groups

Though it may seem contradictory to the ISIS agenda and their controlled territories focused on restricting women's rights and liberties, they are mostly enforced by an all female police force, the al-Khansaa Brigade . Unlike traditional views of extremist or radically conservative terrorist groups, women can be participants in these groups as well. The nuance emerges from the power and protection they review, even actively working against their own communities. [6]

Woman are recruited to these groups under the promise it allows for an expansion of individual rights, for example the group allows Saudi women to drive, banned at the time in their home country. [10] This perceived autonomy is a main driving factor for women to join these extremist groups, even if it's at the fault of other women.

Professor Nira Yuval-Davis, president of the research committee on Racism Nationalism and Ethnic Relations for the international Sociological Association quotes in her Gender & Nation book, , "... membership of women to national and ethnic communities is double-edged. On one hand, women are members of the community just like men. On the other hand, there are special rules and regulations only concerning their existence as women". The quote refers to both national and ethnic communities, women who live in such militant territories are promised with more (perceived) rights by complying, and international women are promised a uniform religion, both groups are assured a community. The ISIS's 'Manifesto for Women' was created through an orientalist mindset and established primarily through european women recruited apart of the militia force. Though the manifesto argues against these womens' western countries of origin, they join due to the promising conservative values the group holds.

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Case Study: Machismo & Latin Femicides

Machismo, a sociological concept that is prevalent and associated with Latin or Hispanic cultures is the perception of men as strong, powerful, and aggressive. The term is a consequence of rigid gender roles, and in turn has harmful effects such as promotion of femicies or domestic violence. [2]

In 2022, at least 4,050 women were victims of femicide (also known as femicide), female homicides tied to a gender based issue, in 26 countries and territories of Latin America and the Caribbean [1] and 14/25 of countries with the highest rates of gender based violence can be found in Latin America [7] The prevalence of this specific issue, varies from the organized militant groups seen in ISIS gender-specific extremism, and instead is primarily culturally ingrained and maintained, with different mechanisms, both culturally and lack of legislative protection, keeping the practices ongoing.

Femicides prevalence in these countries is also due to the discrimination present in justice and law enforcement, and the impunity men receive in these institutions in comparison to their female counterparts. [12] Though the issue is cultural at its core, the lack of women in government also has an impact on the frequency and ease for the attacks carried out. When an ecological model is applied to high-femicide areas, it's found to be liked to a low number of women in government, reductions on health and education, and no legislation that restricted access to firearms for past perpetration of intimate partner violence. [11] Therefore, seen by an empirical analysis across Latin American countries, the main deterrent for femicides was an increase of women in parliament and engaged within legislative decisions, as not only did it decrease the amount of gender-related crimes, it also decreased governmental corruption incidents, making it more likely to arrest and hold accountable perprertatiors of gender-related crimes. [11]

Past UN Actions

Response to Extremism in Africa

UN's Office of Counterterrorism (UNOCT), were flown to Africa, considered that year (2023) to be the epicentre of violent extremism, to analyze and address the violence within the area. To combat these groups, the default form of securitization was used, in which to protect women's' rights, they focused on using military and organized protocol. Multi-donor security initiatives were set up, international forces such as the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), and the Africa Union-backed UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization in Mali (MINIUSMA). However, despite the large presence of security groups and the initial success of MINIUSMA, there was an influx of reports on these groups committing human rights violations against local citizens, escalating numbers of civilian deaths by international forces, and civilians killed during attacks, which in turn increased even more anti-military and government groups. [3]

UN Security Council Resolution 224

In 2015, UN Security council, member states, and the United Nations focused on creating the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, with a emphasis on women's role in counter-terrorism groups and attacks. The conference outlined strategies to combat counter-terrorism through analyzing attacks through a feminist approach when developing an analysis, identifying any discriminatory policies, especially those restricting women's' civic engagement to ensure full human rights, and aligning national counter-terrosim policies with civil laws. UN Women, another participant within the conference, established the importance of gender equality and inclusivity within the member states, which are drivers of peace and women's security nationwide. [13]



. [3] Stationed MNJTF in Africa's extremist controlled areas.

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TOPIC A: QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- How can women be protected in extremist controlled areas and create to a progression of full safety? Is securitization the best option to ensure safety for women, or what alternatives can be instituted instead?
- Can women be both victims of an extremist system and participants in enforcing that system? Why might women want to join despite being aware of the limits on their rights, and how should the UN address this complexity?
- How can member states and international organizations protect against the emergence of extremist or harmful homogeneous groups within member states, both online and offline, to ensure women remain in a safe community?
- How can enforced gender roles enable harmful ideologies and, in turn, create an environment that fosters violent extremism?
- Should there be separate legislative policies for militant organized extremism and cultural femicide? How should a state go about creating laws that surround a culture's harmful practice?
- Why might extremist organizations intentionally create roles specifically for women?

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