

MUNAA

Background Paper

CSW

Women's reproductive
rights



MUNAA Dear delegates, judges, and secretaries,

During the last months, the whole MUNAA team has been putting a huge effort into the preparation of this event for ensuring this model of United Nations experience will be of great value to you.

We believe this event is a magnificent opportunity to make great friends, develop abilities that will be very useful in the future, and to do what you can to help others. In this simulation, you will be continuously working with your leadership, always searching to guide your committee into following the best solutions. Also, you will practice your verbal skills, as you will be constantly engaging in vivid debates and sharing your ideas in front of an audience. In addition, you will power up your negotiation abilities through convincing other contestants to follow you and support you during discussions. And if that was not enough, everything you do in these three days will expand your point of view and help you gather knowledge about issues around the world.

This is the perfect opportunity to express yourself and become a better person than you were yesterday. I look forward to see all of you in this magnificent event

**SINCERELY,
MARIANA REYES
SECRETARY GENERAL**

SECRETARIAT

Mariana Reyes Secretary General	Mauricio Guerrero Chief of crisis	Ana Lucía Aguilar Chief of internal affairs	María Fernandez Chief of hospitality
Pablo Numata Sub-secretary general	Rodrigo Colunga Chief of crisis	Diana Campero Chief of external affairs	Yara Chavez Chief of technology

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I.Quorum

- 1.- Afganistan
- 2.- Argentina
- 3.- Canada
- 4.- China
- 5.- Denmark
- 6.- Finland
- 7.- France
- 8.- Germany
- 9.- Iran
- 10.- Iraq
- 11.- Italy
- 12.- Japan
- 13.- Nigeria
- 14.- South africa
- 15.- Spain



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16.- Turkey

17.- Tunisia

18.- United Kingdom

19.- United States

20.- Venezuela

II.-Committee background

Women's rights have been a concern of the United Nations (UN) since 1945, when the United Nations Charter promised in its preamble "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small." At the very first UN General Assembly meeting in February 1946, Eleanor Roosevelt, a delegate from the United States, made a statement calling upon all governments to encourage women to take a more active role in political affairs at both national and international levels. That same month, following through on its promise to promote equal rights for women, a subcommission dedicated to the status of women was founded under the auspices of the Commission on Human Rights. After the international community recognized the increasing importance of global women's rights, the sub-commission gained full commission status under the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on 21 June 1946 through ECOSOC resolution 11(II), thus becoming the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The Commission's original mandate was

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to “prepare recommendations and reports to the Economic and Social Council on promoting women’s rights in political, economic, civil, social, and educational fields” and to “make recommendations to the Council on urgent problems requiring immediate attention in the field of women’s rights.” The CSW began with only fifteen member states represented; it is now comprised of 45 member states. Although the Commission’s membership may appear small in numbers, it has maintained close relationships with several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) since its beginning

III.-History of the topic

The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was adopted in 1979, and ensures the human rights of all women, regardless of social, economic, religious, or cultural heritage. Though there has been extensive debate and adoption of law in individual countries, CEDAW is the only human rights treaty that upholds the reproductive rights of women in the context of their own culture and heritage.

The UN recognizes the integral roles women take in shaping society domestically and intellectually. Ultimately, CEDAW retains a woman’s right to control her own health and body, including the rights of her children. Today, we see these freedoms threatened by political and religious movements around the world.

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The availability and access to birth control has been a widely debated issue since the affirmation of CEDAW. Only a handful of nations, mainly developed nations such as the US, Canada, and the EU nations show that contraception is available to 70% or more of women. Even though these nations provide birth control, access to it requires a prescription, to which many teens and impoverished women are not privileged. Additionally, many employer-based insurance companies do not cover birth control, leaving women to face payments they cannot afford. In other nations, birth control, oral contraceptives in particular, are allowed only on a serious medical basis, and the road to proving such a claim is difficult—nearly impossible for women without resources. Many countries that have outlawed birth control have done so on political order or by religious mandate and law. The greatest debates against allowing birth

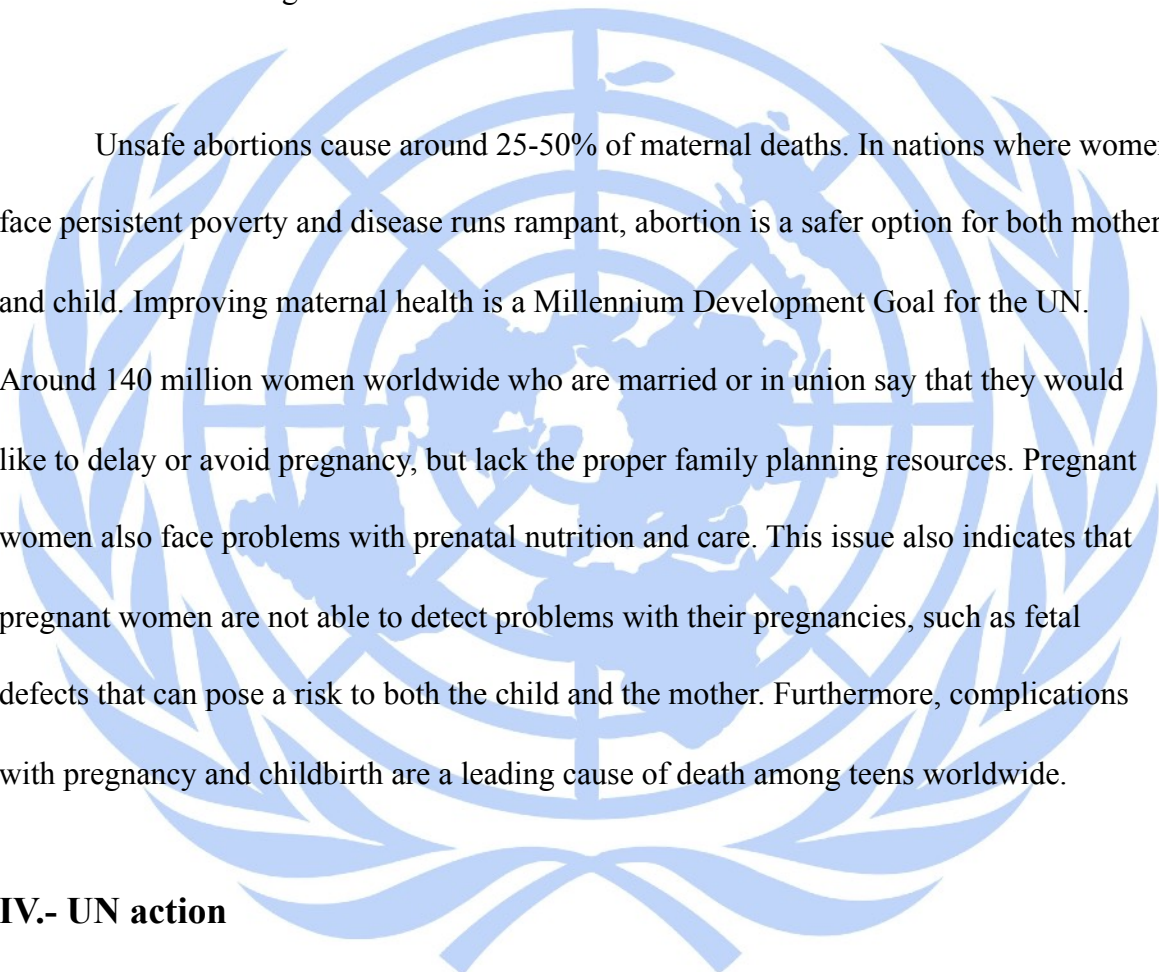
Furthermore, in many nations, not just the ones that outlaw contraceptives, women are frequently punished for seeking out birth control. By CEDAW and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR), women cannot be persecuted for their individual beliefs relating to reproductive rights, and certainly cannot be treated with violence.

Another major issue concerning women's reproductive rights is maternal health, and with this, abortion. In the United States of America, one of the most liberal nations with abortion internationally, 87% of counties do not offer an abortion provider. These figures are from 2012, and with the rise of stricter state legislation from Indiana, Mississippi, and Texas in

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recent years, this percentage has only gone up. Unfortunately, what is seen in the United States, and is reciprocated internationally, is that women who are unable to procure safe and medically sound abortions from legitimate and legal providers turn to illegal means, and sometimes turn to dangerous forms of self-induced abortion.



Unsafe abortions cause around 25-50% of maternal deaths. In nations where women face persistent poverty and disease runs rampant, abortion is a safer option for both mother and child. Improving maternal health is a Millennium Development Goal for the UN. Around 140 million women worldwide who are married or in union say that they would like to delay or avoid pregnancy, but lack the proper family planning resources. Pregnant women also face problems with prenatal nutrition and care. This issue also indicates that pregnant women are not able to detect problems with their pregnancies, such as fetal defects that can pose a risk to both the child and the mother. Furthermore, complications with pregnancy and childbirth are a leading cause of death among teens worldwide.

IV.- UN action

Women's sexual and reproductive health is related to multiple human rights, including the right to life, the right to be free from torture, the right to health, the right to privacy, the right to education, and the prohibition of discrimination. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) have both clearly indicated that women's right to health includes their

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sexual and reproductive health. This means that States have obligations to respect, protect and fulfill rights related to women's sexual and reproductive health. The Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health maintains that women are entitled to reproductive health care services, goods and facilities that are: (a) available in adequate numbers; (b) accessible physically and economically; (c) accessible without discrimination; and (d) of good quality

IV.-Conclusion

As previously stated, women's reproductive rights are highly linked to human rights. Yet, despite the fact that the United Nations has already remarked their importance in multiple times, this are frequently violated, not only by civilians but also by government members. Even though advances have been made, women's reproductive rights are still not in a good position, specially in the case of third world countries. Women still suffer plenty of discrimination nowadays, specially regarding reproduction and sexuality. The United Nations should decide the best way to dress this topic.

V.-Guiding questions

1. How can technology impact society's views towards abortion? What might these technological advancements do to help/hinder the argument for or against abortion?
2. How, if at all, can world superpowers influence developing nations rights for women?

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3. What can international bodies, such as the UN, do to provide women reproductive rights? How can these bodies empower women to recognize their rights?

4. Do countries that abide by cultural and/or religious laws have an obligation to abide by these same standards?

VI.- Bibliography

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