UN WOMEN

Topic: **"Protecting the Rights of Women and Girls in Afghanistan: Expanding Access to Education, Employment, Healthcare and Public Participation".**

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Writer's note:

Welcome delegates to LIMUN 2027.
As your committee Dais, we are looking forward to meeting you and to hear your ideas about how to solve international problems. As this is a new committee following international MUN procedures, you will be provided with a guide to help you throughout this process. Keep in mind that a position paper is not required, instead you will be writing opening speeches.

As your committee Dais, we will work to keep the committees running as smoothly as possible. We will do our best to help you understand the procedures and to ensure that the perspectives of all delegates are heard and respected. If you have any questions that are not found in the guide, be sure to ask us. Once again welcome delegates and good luck.

I. COMMITTEE BACKGROUND

The United Nations General Assembly, through General Assembly resolution 64/289, decided to establish the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, to be known as UN-Women, a composite entity of the UN system from 1 January 2011.

The General Assembly also established the UN-Women Executive Board as the Governing Body of the Entity to provide intergovernmental support to and supervision of its operational activities.

The rules of procedure of the Executive Board (UNW/2011/6) were adopted by the Board in 2011. Functions and working methods of the Executive Board are described in the Informal Guide to the UN-Women Executive Board.

As the lead United Nations entity on gender equality and secretariat of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, we shift laws, institutions, social norms, and

services to close the gender gap and build an equal world for all women and girls. Our partnerships with governments, women's movements, and the private sector, coupled with our coordination of the broader United Nations, deliver lasting changes

Gender equality is not only a basic human right, but its achievement has enormous socio-economic ramifications. Empowering women fuels thriving economies, spurring productivity and growth. Yet gender inequalities remain deeply entrenched in every society. Women lack access to decent work and face occupational segregation and gender wage gaps. They are too often denied access to basic education and health care. Women in all parts of the world suffer violence and discrimination. They are under-represented in political and economic decision-making processes.

Over many decades, the United Nations has made significant progress in advancing gender equality, including through landmark agreements such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

II. HISTORY OF THE TOPIC

a. Introduction to the topic

The status of women and girls in Afghanistan has historically fluctuated alongside the nation's political transformations, evolving from periods of progressive modernization to severe institutional restrictions. The topic encompasses fundamental human rights, specifically access to primary, secondary, and higher education, equal employment opportunities, comprehensive healthcare services, and meaningful public participation. Ensuring these rights is vital not only for basic human dignity, but also for sustainable economic development, social stability, and long-term peace across the region.

b. Evolution of the topic

Early Modernization (1920s–1970s):

Efforts to advance gender equality were driven by state-led modernization initiatives aimed at expanding women's public roles. Over these decades, societal norms in major urban centers transformed gradually, allowing women to transition into formal public life, access higher education, and enter professional fields such as governance, medicine, and instruction.

Conflict and the First Taliban Era (1979–2001):

Decades of geopolitical and civil conflict severely disrupted the social and structural modernization of the previous era. The rise of the Taliban regime shifted state policy from progressive inclusion to strict systemic exclusion, eroding female autonomy and drastically reducing access to public services and basic healthcare.

Reconstruction Era (2001–2021):
Following the political transition in 2001, international partnerships and domestic reforms led to a broad institutional restoration of human rights. This period saw a dramatic expansion of female infrastructure, marked by increased enrollment across all levels of education, a return to the workforce, and institutional integration into civic leadership.

Recent Developments (2021–Present):
The departure of international forces and the subsequent shift in governance led to a major reversal of the progress achieved over the prior two decades. The swift reimposition of public restrictions created complex socioeconomic challenges, limiting women's participation in civic life and straining households reliant on female professionals.

c. Relevant events

1920s:
King Amanullah Khan launches Afghanistan's initial gender equality reforms, opening the nation's first school for girls and discouraging traditional mobility restrictions.

1964:
The adoption of the 1964 Constitution formally grants Afghan women the right to vote, run for political office, and enter the formal workforce.

1996:
The Taliban takes control of Kabul, establishing the first regime and issuing systemic prohibitions banning female education past age eight, employment outside the home, and unescorted public movement.

2004:
The newly established Islamic Republic of Afghanistan adopts a new Constitution, enshrining equal rights for women and establishing a 27% quota for female representation in Parliament.

August 2021:
Following the withdrawal of international forces, de facto authorities take power and institute a series of edicts closing secondary schools and universities to female students and prohibiting women from working in most civil service and NGO positions.

III. CURRENT ISSUES

a. Panorama

Today, Afghanistan faces a multi-layered humanitarian and economic crisis where gender-based restrictions directly impact national recovery. The suspension of secondary and university education for female students affects millions of youth, while workforce prohibitions limit economic growth and strain essential services such as maternal healthcare. Humanitarian agencies highlight that restricting female aid workers hinders the effective delivery of assistance to vulnerable populations, creating an urgent need for constructive international dialogue.

b. Points of View

United States:
Emphasizes that formal diplomatic recognition and normalized relations with the de facto authorities are strictly contingent upon restoring human rights, particularly secondary and higher education for girls, workplace participation, and freedom of movement.

Qatar:
Advocates for constructive diplomatic engagement and dialogue while actively supporting educational initiatives, asserting that access to education for women and girls aligns with Islamic values and is essential for societal development.

China:
Focuses on regional stability, economic cooperation, and non-interference in domestic affairs, encouraging socio-economic growth and humanitarian aid as practical channels to support population well-being and long-term development.

Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Member States (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Turkey): Consistently state that female education and professional employment are compatible with Islamic principles, calling for policy reforms while maintaining humanitarian outreach and educational aid.

IV. UN & EXTERNAL ACTIONS

a. UN

The United Nations has addressed the crisis through specialized agencies including UNICEF, UN Women, UNDP, and the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). UN Security Council resolutions have repeatedly urged for the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women in public life and the immediate reopening of educational institutions.

b. External actions

Externally, international non-governmental organizations and regional partners continue to deliver essential healthcare, facilitate remote learning opportunities, and distribute emergency aid to support local communities.

V. CONCLUSION

Protecting the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan remains essential for the country's humanitarian stability, economic resilience, and long-term peace. Achieving progress requires balanced international cooperation that pairs diplomatic engagement with practical support for healthcare, education, and economic resilience. delegates must consider inclusive strategies that respect cultural contexts while safeguarding fundamental human rights standards for all Afghan citizens.

VI. QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What are the most important obstacles that hinder access to education, employment, healthcare, and civic participation by Afghan women and girls?
2. How have constraints on Afghan women and girls impacted the economy, healthcare system, and social development of the country in general?
3. What steps have been made by the United Nations, as well as its agencies, regarding protection of rights of Afghan women and girls? How effective have such steps been?
4. How can the international community assist Afghan women and girls without exacerbating the humanitarian and economic situation in the country?
5. What role should be played by international organizations and NGOs in providing education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for Afghan women and girls?
6. How can countries conduct diplomatic negotiations with the de facto regime of Afghanistan while advocating for women's and girls' rights?
7. How can increased access to education for Afghan girls be provided even if traditional schools and universities are prohibited?
8. How can the international community help Afghan women who work in the field of healthcare and humanitarian organizations where the involvement of women is required for assistance to female beneficiaries?
9. How can cultural and religious factors be taken into account while observing international human-rights standards regarding Afghan women
10. How could women's involvement in Afghanistan be restored and preserved in education, work, health care, and government sectors?

VII. REFERENCES

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