



# CUIMUN XXIV STUDY GUIDE

UN Women



# STUDY GUIDE

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## **Introduction from the Chairs**

We formally invite you this autumn to the UN Women committee at this year's instalment of Cambridge University International Model United Nations! This year, we will examine two critical issues for women across the world with the mission statement of empowering them through international organisation and diplomatic organisation. Member states are obliged to contribute new methods and visions in pushing forward change through a common goal of creating meaningful resolutions to guide national policies. With the focus of gender equality at its core, the United Nations has the responsibility to reach consensus on how it does this and is in many cases the best platform to provide support to developing countries. In addressing limitations conducted on the basis of discrimination and lack of civil society and public safety for the protection of women, the emerging challenges evolve as to how the UN Women intends to reach into new functions and responsibility for over 3.7 million women in the 21st century.

As a unique committee, we hope to educate each other on how we want to create resolutions that advance women in society. No matter the challenges of voting on different drafts from bloc positions or intensely disputing an amendment, this will be a weekend where we work together in creating and sharing ideas on how to make a difference in how we bring gender equality in a transforming world. We hope this study guide aids you in understanding the topics as well as explore the key cases, challenges and themes across the ongoing issues for this committee.

See you in November!

Your directors,

Hamzah Sheikh, Eve Bradley and Hanna Sokolska

## **Introduction to UN Women:**

In July 2010 by the power of UN General Assembly resolution 64/289 a new entity was established within the UN structures: the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), consolidating four separate former United Nations entities. The entity's creation has not only underlined the importance of women's rights and gender equality, equating it to other global imperatives, but has also provided means both to increase awareness and to foster implementation of equating policies. The resolution states that the organisation is governed by a multi-tiered intergovernmental governance structure as follows:

*“(a) ... the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women shall constitute the multi-tiered intergovernmental governance structure for the normative support functions and shall provide normative policy guidance to the Entity;*

*“(b) ... the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Executive Board of the Entity shall constitute the multi-tiered intergovernmental governance structure for the operational activities and shall provide operational policy guidance to the Entity.”*

Those two multi-tiered governance structures, comprising the above entities, are responsible for, respectively, the organisation's normative support functions and providing normative policy guidance to UN-Women, and the organisation's operational activities and providing operational policy guidance to UN-Women. Furthermore, the Economic and Social Council is responsible for establishing appropriate and concrete linkages between the Commission on the Status of Women and the Executive Board to ensure consistency between the overall policy guidance set by the Commission and the operational strategies and operational activities approved by the Executive Board (paragraph 67(b) of GA resolution 64/289)<sup>1</sup>. Lastly, governance within the structure is administered by the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director under policies established by the Executive Board in accordance with such principles as may be laid down by ECOSOC and the General Assembly.<sup>2</sup>

The first Executive Director elected in 2011 for a four-year term was then-sitting President of Chile, Michelle Bachelet. Currently the office is held by Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka from South Africa. The Executive Board consists of 41 states elected for 3-year terms, using regional quotas. UN Women deals with topics such as ending violence against women, peace and security, women's leadership and political representation, humanitarian actions, and creating a sustainable development agenda.

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<sup>1</sup> unwomen.org. (2015). [online] Available at: <http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/executive%20board/un%20women%20executive%20board%20informal%20guide.pdf?la=en&vs=5046> [Accessed 3 Sep. 2018].

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

## **Topic A: The Role of UN Women in ensuring gender equality and justice against gender violence in post-conflict regions.**

### **Introduction**

Throughout conflict and its devastating effects after de-escalation of hostilities, women have always been shaped by their social and economic roles in their communities and forced to commit to a position in war where they are most vulnerable. The position of women prevails to define their experiences after conflict throughout displacement and bereavement of family lost in the conflict, including the trauma from physical and sexual abuse in the zone of conflict. A significant number of refugees consist of women and children who are dependent on state and NGO resources, and support, forms of representation and legal support are fragile in their communities when they return. Liberation movements and political representation simply does not gain enough attention after the conflict as their interests seem no longer relevant to revolutionary governments, and women are not represented in peace negotiations in the discussions to resolve wider areas of the conflict.<sup>3</sup>

Women have always been vital in supporting inner and wider family, where entire communities are forced to leave everything behind in the height of the conflict as well as adjust to a new environment which could differ drastically from the life they used to know. This position is why the negligence of women's roles in post-conflict negotiations is counterproductive to a sustainable peace process on top of a deep injustice to those who have lost the most in war. As women have a critical role in working and rebuilding their economies and income, the risks of physical and sexual violence and the absence of political participation means that women's health and safety is important in everyone's interests. The level of organisation for women to have political roles in the community and state as well as the support network for daily needs and legal support needs to be active to produce development for the entire region affected by war.<sup>4</sup>

This is done by emphasising gender in the peacebuilding process, to all forms of conflict response and the agencies coordinating on the ground. With approximately 80% of women and children dependent on the agencies and organisations that work in post-conflict development, it is imperative that the motivations and objectives of these groups understand and utilise a gender perspective from as soon as they are operating on the ground and promoting women in having a place in negotiations. Supporting communities and holding socioeconomic concerns is sidelined by the armed groups who are the main actors at the negotiations, which is no different position in terms of representation as it was before the peace process. Education, welfare and female

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<sup>3</sup> Sorenson, 1998, 3-5.

<sup>4</sup> ICRW, 1998, 1-2.

empowerment are secondary to the military issues that are central to the concerns of the groups who remain in power after the conflict.<sup>5</sup>

The UNSC has passed resolutions which address the concerns the needs of women post-conflict and condemns violence and abuse against women in war. UNSC Resolution 1325 was passed in 2000 to protect women and recognise their role as essential before and after conflict. Member states are thus obliged to increase the political representation of women and dedicate to implementing this on all levels of government and public institutions and require armed groups in protecting women from violence. UNSCR 1820 was also passed in 2008, drawing and building upon previous resolutions, but calling to remove amnesty for those who have committed sexual violence and constituting it a war crime. These resolutions aim to increase women's voices and protect their interests in post-conflict development. The key challenges for women in post-conflict countries consists of: gender-based violence, access to justice, political corruption, lack of women's political participation, limited civil society, lack of education and political awareness, lack of decision-making power in the family, traditional and cultural mores, lack of access to quality healthcare, sexual and reproductive rights, stigmatization of mental health and sexual violence.<sup>6</sup>

### **Timeline of events**

- **1995** – Beijing *Platform for Action* conference recognises that women's full involvement in all efforts for the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts is essential for the promotion and maintenance of peace and security;
- **1998** – Commission on the Status of Women conclusions on women and armed conflict which called for action in a number of areas, including, but not limited to: ensuring gender-sensitive justice; meeting the specific needs of women affected by armed conflict; increasing the participation of women in peacekeeping, peacebuilding, pre- and post-conflict decision-making; and addressing disarmament, illicit arms trafficking, landmines and small arms;
  - **2004** – the aforementioned is adopted in conflict prevention, management, conflict resolution and in post-conflict peace-building;
  - **2008** – Commission's review found a number of gaps and challenges, including: in terms of representation and participation of women in peace-processes and decision-making; prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence, monitoring and accountability, and funding;
- **2000** – United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1325 on women and peace and security, the first resolution ever to address the impact of war on women, and women's contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace;

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<sup>5</sup> Cahn *et al.*, 2010, 340-354.

<sup>6</sup> McCoy *et al.*, 2013, 3-9.

- since its adoption, the progress of the implementation of UNSCR 1325 is being reviled during annually held open debates;
- 2005 – World leaders reaffirm their commitment to UNSCR 1325 in World Summit Outcome;
- 2006 – Peacebuilding Commission is established, focused on peace-building in post-conflict zones, with founding resolution’s mandate to mainstream a gender perspective in all aspects of its work;
- **2008** – United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820 reaffirms UNSC’s resolve to eliminate all forms of violence against women, including by ending impunity;

## Discussion

In examining the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and following Resolutions, the post-conflict situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a prime example. The Bosnian Genocide saw the slaughter of over 100,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys, as well as the systematic rape of an estimate of 20,000-50,000 Bosnian women and girls, at the hands of the military Republika Srpska consisting of Bosnian Serbs. Serbia hoped to inherit the former Yugoslav republic and continue its socialist rule over its neighbours, with the Serbs as dominant ethnic group. Most of the sexual violence committed against women was done in groups by military forces in an act of ethnic cleansing alongside the systematic murder of most of their male family.<sup>7</sup>

The legacy of the Yugoslav wars represents one of the trials of the Western bloc and the United Nations in failing to prevent the massacre and the damning destruction of life when they finally act to take measures. The Dayton Peace Accords ended the massacre against Bosnian Muslims which was brokered by the United States in between the Bosnian Federation, Republika Srpska and President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia. As the Bosnian Serbs emerged victorious in establishing their country as a separate entity from the Bosnian Federation, Muslim women in Bosnia continued to endure what many called the worst event in Europe since the Holocaust.

Progress came in 2003 with the Gender Equality Law in providing a legal framework to outlaw all forms of discrimination towards women and establish the agencies tasked with monitoring progress of the legislation. The law requires 40% of the public administration to be run by women, although they only make up nine seats of the forty-two in the Lower House and two out of the fifteen seats in the Upper House. Only three of the one hundred and forty-eight mayors are women. The situation is more complicated due to the separation of public administrations between the Bosnian Federation and the Republika Srpska. Unfortunately, female trafficking, genocide denial, mental health stigmatisation and the fear of seeking justice or compensation are still significant issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the lack of female representation is a huge factor in preventing serious dialogue on the issue.<sup>8</sup>

Without the work of Non-Governmental Organizations for Bosnian Muslim women and survivors of the genocide, the Gender Equality Law and the call to implement UNSCR 1325 would not have been possible. As mentioned, the loss of a significant number of men in war results in women expanding their roles, taking positions of leadership in the community and extended family. Thus, the rise of NGOs in Bosnia Herzegovina was also the rise in NGOs specifically for women and specialised for the context of post-conflict in this region. As many became partners with the United Nations and western countries, they began supporting completely new groups even though NGOs did not exist in Bosnia prior to the war as the

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 11-12.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 13-15.

socialist government of the former Yugoslavia had state planned social services and access to the political and civil society that was out of reach for Bosnian women. Consequently, Bosnian women groups such as Zena Zenama (Women to Women) and Udružene Zene (United Women), see feminism and democracy as interdependent for the development of civil society to combat long-term consequences of war.<sup>9</sup>

Smaller grass-roots, initiatives are more successful with the financial and technical support from the international community than sophisticated programmes with more funding. Despite the fact these groups lack funding, they manage to do more with less in the form of delivering workshops and voluntary centres to support other women. Many organisations provide services such as legal and business support provided from women with professional expertise assisting those who usually do have means to access it.<sup>10</sup>

Bosnian politics is still significantly male dominated and cultural patriarchy is highly represented in Balkan nationalistic culture, emphasising an active public life for men in contrast to the domestic private life of women. As women had more freedom and equality under the communist government of Yugoslavia, the effects of war and conflict still had the impact of ensuring they remained housekeepers and caretakers of family and communities at home. The significant difference for Bosnian women was that the extreme levels of sexual violence committed against them gained little recognition. Bosnian women were also depicted as limited to their traumatic experience, simply as victims. They were described in this way, too, at the Dayton Peace Accords negotiation process. This failed to emphasise gender perspective and the crimes against women in the war although it was highly reported across the world.<sup>11</sup>

Women's organisations were a massive part in establishing both the draft for the Gender Equality Law in 2001 and the International Criminal Tribunal on crimes in the former Yugoslavia in 1993. The history of genocide denial and the stigma around rape as well as the view of gender equality as a western construct, all still have significant impact on the lack of women in political participation, such as in the House of Representatives, where the percentage of women has decreased once again. The work being done, however, has been significant in having courts and institutions work with international organisations and bringing in a gender perspective.<sup>12</sup>

It was not until 2010 that through implementing UNSCR 1325 with the National Action Plan, that women's rights and liberation took the next step in incorporating women, peace, and security. Zene Zenama's Sarajevo Report in 2007 asserted that both international and national

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<sup>9</sup> Walsh, 2000, 2-4.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 12-13.

<sup>11</sup> Kanjarawi, 2015, 48-57.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 58-59.

institutions are responsible for establishing Security Council Resolutions into state practice. Establishing a mainstream perspective of gender equality and applying it into state organisation is the role of international institutions in supporting national institutions, whereas the state is obliged to commit to the goals and milestones established by them. Therefore, it is the responsibility for Bosnia and Herzegovina as a member state of the United Nations to apply the norms and practices proposed by UNSCR 1325 in advocacy for justice following the history of sexual violence left unresolved in the political landscape.<sup>13</sup>

It was women's NGOs that provided the most in bringing in the gender perspective into Bosnia and Herzegovina, as they were the initial actors in responding to the immediate effects on the ground in providing aid and rehabilitation for victims during and after the conflict. The major issue at the time was lack of technical, management and medical expertise. Medica Zenica, one of the first organisations with a medical focus, was set up by German gynaecologist Monika Hause at the heat of the country and provided psychological assistance. The passing of Resolution 1325 coincided where women's NGOs were more well-connected and engaged with the international community, where even the Beijing Platform for Action was applied in their strategy for deciding their objectives in applying the Resolution. The Agency for Gender Equality, which came to monitor progress of the Gender Equality Act was also tasked to draft the National Action Plan to implement UNSCR 1325.<sup>14</sup>

The objectives of the adopted National Action Plan (2010) for the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 are:

- Inclusion of women in multiple levels of the policy and decision-making process with a gender perspective training and the increase of women in all fields including the military and police.
- Improve efforts to increase the number of women in peacekeeping missions with training on all UN peacekeepers and personnel in having a gender perspective in their operations.
- Combat ongoing sexual violence and human trafficking of Bosnian women and girls.
- Increase the level and resources behind the support for women and girls who have suffered from conflict as well as guaranteeing health and legal provision for them.
- Continue working towards the work done towards the state and international groups in implementing the values and goals outlined in Resolution 1325.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation HQ in Sarajevo was initially reluctant to implement UNSCR 1325 as it did not meet their mission perspective, however they changed their position and taken to working with the Bosnian Ministry of Defense and women's NGOs in promoting its awareness and implementation. However, the issue of the lack of women's participation in politics, the slow decline in importance of implementing the Resolution, insufficient financial

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<sup>13</sup> Rošul-Gajić, 2016, 144-148.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 149-152.

support and little motivation in civil society groups still prevent eventual success of gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The United Nations adopted six additional resolutions (1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, and 2122) with greater emphasis on combating sexual violence, but they do not have the same momentum behind the push for change as 1325 originally did. Despite 2122 being the most recent and only resolution to define women as actors instead of victims for change, the progress beyond the political world into general society and grassroots communities is not likely to go in the same direction. In fact, the limited of influence of judiciaries, welfare, social and health services on the Bosnian community means that the facilitation and funding of UN member states is critical.<sup>15</sup>

However, other regions of the world do not progress towards gender equality and increasing levels of political participation of women through UNSCR 1325. The international community oversees the reversal of socioeconomic development when it comes to economic warfare and internal displacement in countries such as Iraq and Syria. The Gulf War and the sanctions placed on Iraq devastated the position of women in Iraqi society. From having one of the highest literacy rates in the Middle East, Iraq soon began to push women out of the labour force and into “traditional” roles of home and family. The declining importance of political participation and education for women and girls became particularly severe under Saddam Hussein as he waged cultural war against the West. The invasion of Iraq had undermined public and police services, the Ba’ath regime and military as well as civil society in densely populated urban areas.<sup>16</sup>

Women in Iraq have been denied significant presence in the post-conflict reconstruction and executive decisions of the new government supported by the United States and NATO. It is constitutional law to ensure a quarter of all Members of Parliament be women to ensure their position in the political process. This is applicable to respective provinces throughout Iraq reflecting the theory of the national sentiment. Women do not typically volunteer to run for office, however, as they are usually advised or directed by their husbands or relatives to operate in the same political party, and it is impossible for any parties to succeed in the election without achieving the overall cross-party quota.

With the political importance and traditional privilege, women not only lack the autonomy of political decision-making but also are more successful as religious conservative backgrounds or face the backlash of that supporting community, which is counterproductive to women’s liberation and gender equality in Iraq, where half of women representatives come from this background. Areas such as the Anbar province, known as one of the bloodiest and most anarchic regions throughout and after the Iraq War in 2003, prefer the more extreme conservative option

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 153-154.

<sup>16</sup> McCoy et al., 24-25.

of not letting women and girls vote at all and curb the potential of female political candidates by not allowing their picture to be shown on campaign materials.<sup>17</sup>

Even in more autonomous areas of Iraqi Kurdistan, the phenomenon of representation without autonomy is prevalent among female politicians, where it is common to have no more than one or two female ministers at any given time, in the successive governments and their ruling parties. The lack of a woman's voice and a vague patriarchal interpretation of Sharia (Islamic implementation of law) in the Constitution means issues such as honour killings, Female Genital Mutilation and sexual abuse continue to rise throughout Iraqi Kurdistan. The main factor in combating these issues which is more successful in Iraqi Kurdistan than the rest of Iraq is holding a higher quota for female representation in their autonomous legislative body (30%). This has led to ground-breaking legislation to restrict polygamy, the Law Against Domestic Violence criminalising abuse and protecting victims and the banning of FGM in 2011, along with the amendment of pre-existing legislation against honour killings through removing any legal recognition of "mitigating circumstances" in the criminal act. Setting up special directories and domestic violence courts as well as the High Council of Women's Affairs to advise policy and strategy have been the main features that distinguishes Kurdistan from Iraq.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 27-28.

<sup>18</sup> Kaya, 2016, 1-2.

**Bloc Positions**

Though the majority of the governments, almost by the default, support gender equality and justice against gender violence, it has to be taken into account that the extent to which such are supported as well as execution of which is proclaimed goes, differs not only from state to state, culture to culture, but rather depends on beliefs of politicians, the governments are constrained. On that account, it is impossible to create static groups, blocs of countries with their clear standings on the aforementioned issue, and hence the delegates are more than encouraged to do their up-to-date research on their respective represented states.

Moreover, should the delegate be assigned to the state considered as a part of a post-conflict region, they ought to seek more detailed information about within-state standings on the issue throughout the discussed period.

## **Conclusion**

Women's organisations and political participation is greatly beneficial towards society as they are the driving force behind reconstruction after conflict and the importance behind seeking justice and development towards rebuilding efforts on both material and societal level. The former negligence of women in peace and security has been left behind in the adoption of Resolution 1325 and following work by the United Nations. International and regional institutions such as UN Women and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation for Europe are hugely beneficial in working with member states to improve political participation for women in post-conflict environments. The United Nations General Assembly and Security Council has much more work to anticipate in achieving the goals of UN Women in society strongly affected by war, insecurity and poverty.

Holding progress to account and increasing the level of impact from female representatives continue to be issues where UN Women can focus as it grows as an international voice for women. Assessing developments produced by UNSCR 1325 and 2122 and seeing how member states build onto this work brings into question what is out of its scope and how to expand the practical limits of the work done in the interest of bringing a gender perspective in security and conflict analysis. More comprehensive levels of gender analysis in peace and security has proven to increase the level of political participation of women which in turn brings development for the standards of living and protection of women and girls living in environments where military actors and concerns continue to hold precedence as well as the patriarchal norms that seek to inhibit liberation and empowerment in public office.

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## **Topic B: The Role of UN Women in the #MeToo Movement and Combating Sexual Harassment and Violence Against Women**

### **Introduction**

In October 2017, in the wake of sexual assault allegations against former film producer Harvey Weinstein, the #MeToo movement emerged. Founded in 2006, it was created as a platform through which to bring attention to discrimination, sexual harassment and assault, it is supported in its mission by miscellaneous regional, national and international affiliated groups and campaigns worldwide. Today, it is widely considered one of the most significant women's rights awareness campaigns of recent decades. Since its emergence, it has targeted discrimination, sexual harassment and assault against women in a variety of fields, most popularly in the film industry, the military and governments, but also in everyday workplaces worldwide.

The movement speaks to wider issues, namely the prevalence of violence against women and girls and sexual harassment. While it has proved to be a watershed moment and has helped to raise awareness, we have to ensure that we learn from it and ensure greater accountability of those in positions of power in future. The key question here, therefore, is what the role of UN Women should be in the light of this movement and how it can work to combat sexual harassment and violence against women and girls.

As a whole, the UN has strict guideline for its employees on sexual harassment, outlined in the Secretary-General's bulletin on the Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority within the UN. Throughout this topic, a certain defined vocabulary will be used; Sexual Harassment has been defined by the UN in great depth, and the language surrounding the topic is also as specific.

The following has been taken from a UN Women-watch document created in conjunction with the EEOC, intended to define and describe the meaning of Sexual Harassment and Discrimination and the language and terminology associated.

“{Sexual Harassment is defined as}... Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

**Sexism** is an attitude. It is an attitude of a person of one sex that he or she is superior to a person of the other sex. **Sex Discrimination** is a behavior. It occurs when employment decisions are based on an employee's sex or when an employee is treated differently because of his or her sex. **Sexual Harassment** is a behavior. It is defined as unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature. **Quid Pro Quo Harassment** is when

employment and/or employment decisions for an employee are based on that employees' acceptance or rejection of unwelcome sexual behavior. **Hostile Work Environment** is a work environment created by unwelcome sexual behavior or behavior directed at an employee because of that employee's sex that is offensive, hostile and/or intimidating and that adversely affects that employee's ability to do his or her job.”<sup>19</sup>

Officially, the member states of the UN have not agreed on one definition of the terms; this makes it difficult for any UN Women action to take effect when legal terminology is different depending on each member state. This, as well as EEOC terminology and the information highlighted in the Secretary-General's bulletin on the Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority, is something delegates should keep in mind throughout debate

### Timeline of Events

- **1979** - The establishment of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which sets out the UN's commitment to ending violence against women and girls<sup>20</sup>,
- **1993** - The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, which reaffirmed this commitment<sup>21</sup>,
- **1995** - The Beijing Platform prioritises ending gender-based violence as one of its key focus areas,
- **2006** - Tarana Burke, and African-American civil rights activist, first used the term MeToo on the social media platform Myspace to show solidarity with other women of colour who'd experienced sexual harassment or gender-based violence,
- **October 2017 onwards** - A series of allegations were made against Harvey Weinstein, an



Alyssa Milano  @Alyssa\_Milano Follow

If you've been sexually harassed or assaulted write 'me too' as a reply to this tweet.

Me too.

Suggested by a friend: "If all the women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted wrote 'Me too.' as a status, we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem."

American film producer. Dozens of women came forward, saying Weinstein had harassed or assaulted them sexually. This started the conversation on sexual harassment in Hollywood and the #MeToo movement.

**15th Oct 2017** -- The actress Alyssa Milano used #MeToo in light of the Harvey Weinstein allegations. The hashtag soon went viral and thousands of people used it to share their own personal experiences of sexual harassment. Since then there have been 2.3 million #MeToo tweets from 85 countries.<sup>22</sup> It has, however, been criticised in the media.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/whatishh.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>

<sup>22</sup> <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/11/09/world/metoo-hashtag-global-movement/index.html>

## Discussion

While the #MeToo movement was initially prompted by allegations against individuals in the film industry, including allegations of sexual harassment and assault against Harvey Weinstein, the movement has spanned several areas of public life, in several countries, and can be traced back to years of efforts made by women to make Hollywood a safer place for women.

### *#MeToo in the Film industry*



Sexism has always been prevalent within Hollywood, the film and the television industries. This is best reflected within a number of Hollywood productions, where women are often objectified by their co-stars; generally, conflict has been created in many famous movies through one character, usually male, holding power, be it financial, cultural, social political or otherwise, over another character, usually female. Alternatively, the female character within a production is present as comedic relief, as the sexual distraction stereotype, and is often portrayed as unintelligent. In the late 80's and the 90's, a movement now referred to as "girl power" emerged, challenging this stereotype. Started by Punk band Bikini Kill, the movement set the stage for a new wave of entertainment portraying women as more than their stereotype. In TV and the movie industries, there was a significant rise in productions involving strong female leads, such as supernatural-themed television shows, like "Sabrina the Teenage Witch"<sup>23</sup>, "Buffy the Vampire Slayer"<sup>24</sup>, "Charmed"<sup>25</sup>

and later on characters like Hermione in the Harry Potter movies, just to name a few. Movies centered on independent female leads, like "Thelma and Louise", saw a rise in production.<sup>26</sup> Representation for female minority groups also took a step forward, with movies like "Bend it Like Beckham".<sup>27</sup> The music industry, specifically female artists like the Spice Girls also represent a change in the industry, as their success rocketed; their support of the Girl Power movement popularized the movement into everyday life.<sup>28</sup>

This is not to say feminism at the beginning of the cinematic Third Wave was perfect or all-inclusive; far from it, sexual harassment throughout the industry was rampant and went mostly unchallenged. What is notable of this Girl Power movement is that it set the stage for the feminists of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It marks the beginning of the reaction against a structurally and culturally ingrained perspective of women in Hollywood as nothing more than sexual.

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<sup>23</sup><https://www.colorado.edu/gendersarchive1998-2013/2003/08/01/scream-popular-culture-and-feminisms-third-wave-im-not-my-mother>

<sup>24</sup><https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2016/07/how-buffy-became-a-third-wave-feminist-icon/493154/>

<sup>25</sup><https://www.colorado.edu/gendersarchive1998-2013/2003/08/01/scream-popular-culture-and-feminisms-third-wave-im-not-my-mother>

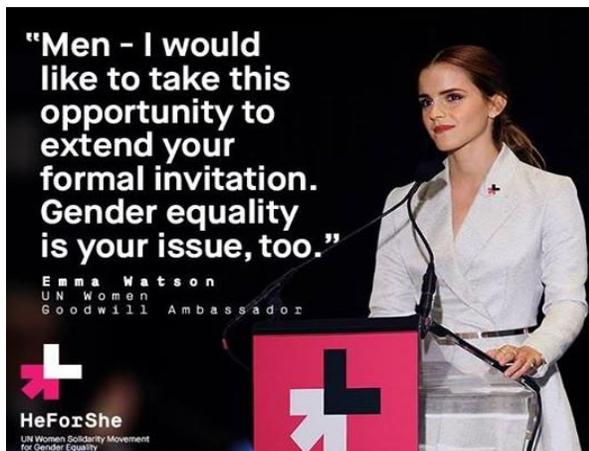
<sup>26</sup> <http://time.com/4344000/thelma-louise-25th-anniversary-feminism-women-gender/>

<sup>27</sup> <https://ew.com/movies/2018/04/05/bend-it-like-beckham-oral-history/>

<sup>28</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/38786.stm>

Over the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the girl power movement slowly faded from popular view. Between 2000 and 2014, many accusations and cases of sexual harassment against significant Hollywood figures flew under the radar and remain unreported. The power, often financial, yielded by perpetrators, and the influence they held over the industry, the press and at times the justice system, has caused many cases to be thrown out, settled on, or abandoned by victims. A major theme of the MeToo movement has been centered around many victims fears of speaking out, be it on threat of violence, or the threat of financial, personal or professional ruin. Add to this the statistic that only a third of sexual harassment and assault cases go reported, and shocking image of an intrinsic system of sexual assault in the film industry becomes visible.<sup>29</sup>

In 2014, the UN announced the HeforShe campaign, aimed at the advancement of gender equality. HeforShe believes that gender inequality is an issue that affects all people around the world, socially, economically and politically. As such, the movement aims to educate all on the issues and struggles faced by women worldwide.<sup>30</sup> The campaign's announcement address was given by Emma Watson, known for her commitment to gender equality through her goodwill ambassador links to UN Women and as a feminist activist, who also started as the strong female role of Hermione in the Harry Potter series in the late 90's during the Girl Power movement.<sup>31</sup> As the campaign has grown, many in the film industry have lent their names to the movement and openly



supported it, including men in the film industry and outside of the industry, adding the inclusion of men for which HeforShe strives.<sup>32</sup> In 2015, HeforShe aimed to engage a million boys and men around the world, a target they failed to meet. Many in the industry stood with HeforShe as the campaign moved for equal pay regardless of gender, and played a major role specifically in trying to instill these ideals in Hollywood. HeforShe is of specific note in relation to the topic, as one of its key ideals, to educate the world, especially men, on the struggles faced by women, includes exposing intrinsic sexual harassment in all its form. The HeforShe movement is a key player in the

precursor to the beginnings of MeToo, as it started to conversation on gender inequality and started to lift the unspoken taboo on speaking out.

In October 2017, after months of investigation, the New York Times reported on decades of sexual harassment accusations against Harvey Weinstein, a former producer and co-founder of Miramax entertainment company, with actresses Rose McGowan and Ashley Judd coming forward and telling their stories.<sup>33</sup> A week later, the New Yorker magazine reported on 13 counts of sexual harassment and 3 counts of rape accusations against Weinstein, with actresses Asia Argento, Lucia

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.rainn.org/statistics/criminal-justice-system>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.heforshe.org/en/our-mission>

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkjW9PZBRfk>, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/9/emma-watson-gender-equality-is-your-issue-too>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.elle.com/culture/celebrities/news/a23840/heforshe-emma-watson-famous-men-celebrities-feminists/>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/05/us/harvey-weinstein-harassment-allegations.html>

Evans (née Stoller), and a third unnamed woman coming forward as victims of Weinsteins.<sup>34</sup> The same day, Gwyneth Paltrow and Angelina Jolie, both successful Hollywood actresses, also come forward to accuse Weinstein of harassment.<sup>35</sup> Since October 2017, over 85 women have since come forward to accuse the ex-producer. On the 15 October, the MeToo movement was born, as reactions from around the globe poured in from women sharing their stories and experiences of sexual harassment in their lives. Weinstein was charged in New York with rape and several counts of sexual abuse stemming from two separate accusers in May.<sup>36</sup> Despite the fact he has been released on bail, his arrest has been described as a “pivotal turning point for the #MeToo movement”, proving that it is possible for women to fight back.

Allegations have also been made against other prominent figures in the film industry. Of note, Kevin Spacey was accused by actor Anthony Rapp of making inappropriate sexual advances towards him. Following this, several women, including eight members of the House of Cards team, said that Spacey had created a “toxic” environment on set with his “predatory” behavior. Spacey was later fired from the TV show House of Cards.<sup>37</sup>

These are just two examples of accusations against individuals in the Film industry; as stated before, an average of two thirds of sexual harassment and assault cases go unreported worldwide, and this statistic has changed very little post MeToo.

### ***#MeToo in Sports***

Sexual harassment is prevalent in sport, from golf to swimming to skiing. Famous cases in the US alone include the Larry Nassar case in USA gymnastics and the King case in USA swimming, as well as thousands of other less publicized cases which ended in conviction. Between 2000 and 2014, 2.5% of NFL players were arrested on gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment and Rape charges<sup>38</sup>. Statistics from the National Crime Victimization Survey compiled by the U.S. Department of Justice show that from 1995 to 2013, the latest year for which data are available, a total of 37,846 post-secondary school students involved in various sports between ages 18 and 24 were victims of rape, attempted rape, sexual assault or the threat of rape or sexual assault.<sup>39</sup> Of the female victims, just twenty percent reported the rape or sexual assault to police. Eighty percent of all the victims said they knew their attacker.<sup>40</sup> A notable case exemplifying these statistics is the previously mentioned Larry Nassar case. Since 1986, Nassar was the doctor of the national USA gymnastics team and a leading physician at Michigan State University. In 2016, former gymnast Rachael Denhollander came forward and stated that Nassar had abused her since she was fifteen.<sup>41</sup> This accusation, as well as the beginning of the MeToo movement, prompted other women, including famous gymnasts like Simone Biles and Gabby Douglas, to share their stories. 156

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<sup>34</sup><https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/from-aggressive-overtures-to-sexual-assault-harvey-weinsteins-accusers-tell-their-stories>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/10/us/gwyneth-paltrow-angelina-jolie-harvey-weinstein.html>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-44257202>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-41884878>

<sup>38</sup> <http://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/document.php?id=cqresrre2017042800>

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-42725339>

women testified against him in court, and he was arrested in January 2018 with a sentence of up to 175 years.<sup>42</sup> He had passed multiple background checks in relation to his work, and had previously been reported to Michigan State for accusations of harassment. Michigan state took no action in relations to the accusations, and did not relay them to the appropriate authorities who could consider them in the background check process. Despite the fact that during Nassar's court case, athletes who publicly accused Nassar of assault outlined ways in which Michigan state and USA Gymnastics had failed them, both organizations have done nothing to change anything in their hiring process or HR processes to ensure the safety of their athletes.

### ***#MeToo in the Military***

The #MeTooMilitary raised awareness of sexual abuse within the (US) military. Again, this had the effect of shedding light on the issue. In 2017 the Pentagon reported that there had been a 10% increase in the number of incidents that had been reported. There are, of course, barriers to prevent sexual violence within the military, however certain HR policies within militaries worldwide, including in the USA with “don't ask, don't tell”, have created barriers for individuals trying to report sexual harassment, assault or violence. Due to the culture of the military and its entrenched (and, often, gendered) power structures, fully addressing the issue will prove challenging.

### **#MeToo: A Global Movement**

While the main examples of the #MeToo movement are very focused on the US, this has been a globally significant movement. The hashtag has trended in 85 countries since its inception and has seen women (and men) across the world give their experiences. There have also been several local variants on #MeToo, including the Italian #QuellaVoltaChe (“that time when”), the Norwegian #stilleførøpoptak (“silent until recorded”) and the French #BalanceTonPorc (literally translating as “denounce your pig”).<sup>43</sup>

The issues of sexual harassment and violence against women and girls are certainly not limited to one particular country or region. It is, therefore, necessary to consider how UN Women can tackle these issues in an intersectional way and one that is appropriate for the different countries they are working in.

### **Implications for UN Women**

The MeToo movement brought to light many injustices in relation to sexual harassment, abuse and violence against women which UN Women have the mandate to directly tackle. The first of note to this committee is the view many men, and many individuals in situations of power, have of women that allows for this abuse to happen in the first place. Financial, political, social and cultural positions of power can range from an individual's pastor, a significant other, to an individual's boss or potential employer. Influence and network connections can create a situation where an individual can have a metaphorical or literal life and death decision over an individual. In terms of the MeToo movement, this position of power is used to systematically assault women and remain

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<sup>42</sup> *ibid*^

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/world/metoo-shockwave/>

unaccountable. The roots of sexual double standards that lead to individuals asserting their power in this way are often cultural; a culture where a woman is weaker than a man, physically or mentally, or a culture where women exist to fulfil sexual desire, leads to abuse. To combat this, UN Women literally have to fight against decades and centuries of ingrained cultural influence.

The second injustice this committee is faced with is the taboo these cultures creates that allows harassment, abuse and violence go undetected. Cultural bias has an authority behind it similar to rule of law; women raised in environments where sexism is commonplace may see their sexual assaults as unspeakable. For one reason or another, be it shame or acceptance, cultural influence is a large reason why women don't speak out. Another is the fear of the repercussions of speaking out. Often with abuse and harassment in the workplace, women are told that if they say anything, their abuser will ruin their careers, will demote them, or will fire them.

Another reason women do not speak out leads to the third injustice this committee must acknowledge, the lack of convictions of perpetrators, and the failure of accountability. Of all cases of sexual harassment, abuse and violence reported, 2% are convicted.<sup>44</sup> This committee should consider how to combat the lack of accountability faced by perpetrators. Post MeToo, little has changed to combat these injustices; cultural influences remain unchallenged, and accountability is still low; MeToo has started to significantly chip away at taboos, and has increased rates of accountability, but there is still a long way to go.

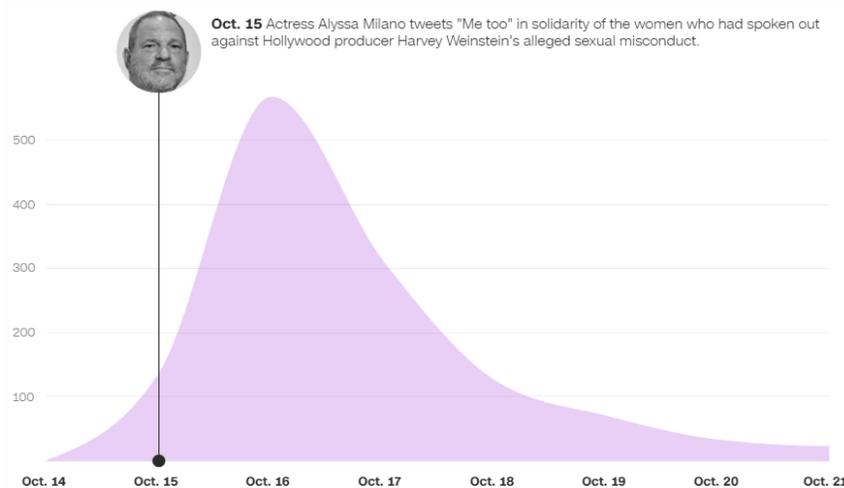
The UN and, more specifically UN Women, are committed to tackling violence against women and girls and sexual harassment. Both the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and subsequent 1993 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women aim to eradicate both of these issues.<sup>45</sup> In more recent years, UN Women

has prioritised the ending of violence against women and girls as one of its main issues and the UN has included it under Sustainable Development Goal 5.<sup>46</sup>

While UN Women has made some strides, the #MeToo movement has really exposed the severity of the situation. Given how prevalent violence against women and sexual harassment are, how can the UN learn from the #MeToo movements or, as UN Women have asked, “#MeToo, now what?”

How #MeToo went viral in its first week

Total Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter posts, in thousands\*



Source: Crimson Hexagon, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter data: October 14-21, 2017 | Photo: Getty

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.rainn.org/statistics/criminal-justice-system>

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>, <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>,

<sup>46</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg5>

## **The Prevalence of Sexual Harassment and Assault**

The lived experiences of women, as told through #MeToo, are supported by UN statistics on the prevalence of sexual violence. According to this research, 35% of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or sexual violence by a non-partner at some point in their lives.<sup>47</sup> It is thought that even more women than this have experienced some form of sexual harassment or assault during their lives.

It is vital to take an intersectional approach and to remember that different women have different privileges and different oppressions, which means they have different experiences of sexual harassment and violence. The UN, for instance, notes that there are certain contexts in which sexual violence is more prevalent, such as in conflict zones. Other factors that might affect a woman's experiences with sexual violence can include their ethnicity, disability status or sexual orientation. For instance, 24% of girls aged 11-14 living with disabilities in Uganda have experienced sexual violence at school, compared to 12% of non-disabled girls.<sup>48</sup>

## **Ensuring Accountability**

As previously mentioned, perhaps one of the biggest issues highlighted is the lack of accountability for men in positions of power — whether this be sports, the military, the cinema industry or other power structures. As UN Women Executive Director, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka said of the #MeToo movement, “for the first time, we actually see powerful men being held accountable... The importance of this moment is to be sustained so that we can also save lives”.<sup>49</sup>

However, considering a large number of the industries that have been rocked by the #MeToo movements are private industries, these could be hard to regulate. For instance, it is thought that sexual misconduct in the film industry is a result of gendered power structures and the general culture of Hollywood, which the US government or the UN can do very little about through legislation or resolutions. It is necessary, therefore, to try and combine structural changes and attitudinal changes. The #MeToo movement has started the conversation on sexual harassment and violence and has had some victories, like Weinstein's arrest, but it needs to be translated into concrete changes within these power structures.

It is worth noting that there are already mechanisms in place, such as the ILO Convention on Ending Violence and Harassment in the Workplace, but that these clearly do not go far enough. It is, therefore, necessary to consider how these efforts could go further.

## **Structural and Attitudinal Changes**

In order to make a meaningful change, we must remember that sexual harassment and violence stem from the wider issue of sexism. As Care International, a leading NGO has stated, “to end sexual violence and harassment we need to talk about the structural roots of gender inequality – the

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<sup>47</sup> <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures>

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.ungei.org/srgbv/files/232107E.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2018/3/news-coverage-csw62-side-event-on-gender-and-media>

systemic privileging of men and particular expressions of masculinity.”<sup>50</sup> In order for any effective action to be taken by this committee, UN Women must challenge systematically ingrained sexism in cultures worldwide. Sexism looks different within different cultures and societies; this body must recognize this, and attempt to challenge sexist thinking accordingly.

### **Bloc Positions**

As previously mentioned, each UN Women member states sexual harassment legislation differs in one way or another. Some members’ have legislation which safeguards the rights of its women equal to mens, whilst others fail to hit this mark. The cultural and social climates of each member state also plays a vital role in this scenario; nations whose very identities rely on systematic oppression of women and legally enforced gender roles will find it hard to strike compromise with nations who value gender equality. As such, each delegate must do in-depth research into their nations legislation, the cultural and social climate of their nation and their neighbours, and identify member states of the committee with whom they will be able to create partnerships to create realistic solutions in accordance to their ideals.

### **Conclusion – Key Issues**

In response to the MeToo movement, at the 2018 Grammy Awards and the 2018 BAFTA film Awards, attendees used their influence to create the TimesUp movement. Initially founded on January first of that year, the aim of the campaign was to raise funds for legal expenses of low-income victims of sexual harassment, assault and violence. And yet, 10 months on, what has changed? Has Time really been called on sexism, sexual assault, and violence against women? Initially, many believed the results of all of the activism and effort put in by well meaning individuals in the search for empowerment would eventually amount to more than bail for a perpetrator of over 50 offenses. Yes, since the feminist Third Wave in the 1990’s, Women have made significant progress in catching up Men in terms of equality, but the gap is still there. To complete what so many millions of people over time have fought for, UN Women can help by showing a united front of Government officials all pushing for the same goal. Your job, as delegates in this committee, is to fulfill the challenge posed by the MeToo movement and all of its precursors, by coming to peaceful solutions through cooperation and compromise. Delegates should keep in mind their nations position throughout, to tackle issues such as systematic structural, cultural and societal sexism ingrained around the world, the threat of the failure accountability to women speaking out, and re-assess how to ensure the safety of women, be it in the workplace or at home, once they come forward with an accusation.

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<sup>50</sup> <https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/development-blog/we-need-structural-reform-to-end-sexual-harassment-and-violence-against-women>

## Topic B Sources

An account of UN Women's engagement with the #MeToo movement:

<http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>

Useful and analytical articles on the origin and spread of the movement:

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2018/3/news-coverage-csw62-side-event-on-gender-and-media>

<https://edition.cnn.com/2017/11/09/world/metoo-hashtag-global-movement/index.html>

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/twitter-chat-what-metoo-says-about-sexual-abuse-in-society>

Two articles about specific cases within the filmmaking industry:

<http://time.com/5291663/harvey-weinstein-arrest-metoo-movement/>

<http://time.com/5088481/anthony-rapp-kevin-spacey-sexual-misconduct/>

About the #MeToo movement and the military:

<http://www.moaa.org/Content/Take-Action/Top-Issues/How-the--MeToo-Movement-Is-Shaping-the-2019-Defense-Spending-Bill.aspx>

UN findings on the prevalence of violence against women and girls:

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures>

About the need for structural changes:

<https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/development-blog/we-need-structural-reform-to-end-sexual-harassment-and-violence-against-women>

Interesting discussions of celebrity criticisms of the #MeToo movement and their implications:

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2018/jul/13/henry-cavill-criticised-metoo-comments>

<https://edition.cnn.com/2018/08/13/entertainment/lindsay-lohan-me-too-apology/index.html>