



STUDY GUIDE

Commission on the Status of Women

AGENDA ITEM

Woman's Rights in the Middle East

CHAIRING PANEL

Linus Bleinroth & Saw Omer

Table of Contents

Welcome..... - 1 -

Introduction - 2 -

History of the Committee..... - 2 -

Definition of Key Terms - 3 -

General Overview..... - 4 -

Possible origins of the Problem - 4 -

Current Situation..... - 5 -

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue..... - 5 -

Possible Solutions..... - 6 -

Appendix - 7 -



Welcome

Forum: Commissions on the Status of Women

Topic: Woman's Rights in the Middle East

Represented Countries: Saudi Arabia, India, United emirates, United Kingdom, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Ghana, France, Brazil, North Korea, Lebanon, Malaysia, Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Syria

Chair: Linus Bleinroth

Co-Chair: Saw Omer



Picture 1 The Middle East



Introduction

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The CSW is instrumental in promoting women's rights, documenting the reality of women's lives throughout the world, and shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Read more [here](#)

History of the Committee

The United Nations' commitment to the advancement of women began with the signing of the [United Nations Charter](#) in San Francisco in 1945. Its Preamble declared 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..."

In 1946 the Commission on the Status of Women was established to promote the advancement of women throughout the world. The Commission met for the first time at Lake Success, New York, in February 1947.

Initially, the Commission focused on legal measures to protect the human rights of women and awareness-raising on the status and situation of women around the world. Debates in the Commission brought unfamiliar issues into the international political arena. From the very beginning, the work of the Commission attracted the interest, participation and support of the growing international women's movement.

By the mid 1960s, the Commission had begun to address women's role in economic and social development. Delegates from developing countries drew attention in particular to the situation of women in rural areas and the need to enhance their contributions and address their priorities and needs.

In 1975, at the urging of the Commission and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the United Nations observed International Women's Year with the theme "Equality, Development and Peace". The culmination of the year was the first global Women's Conference in Mexico City which adopted a global plan of action to improve the status of women.

The United Nations Decade for Women from 1976-1985, and the following world conferences on women, created an unprecedented momentum for change. The Platform for Action adopted in Beijing in 1995 consolidated the consensus and commitments achieved through the work of the Commission.

Read more [here](#) and [here](#)



Definition of Key Terms

- Women's rights:** All rights spelled out by the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) and by the two Human Rights Covenants (on Civil and Political rights as well as on economic, social and Cultural rights) are the rights of every woman. The same applies to all other Human Rights treaties.
- Middle east:** Also called Mideast. The area from Libya E to Afghanistan, usually including Egypt, Sudan, Israel, Joran, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and other countries of the Arabian Peninsula.
- Empowerment of women:** Empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of women. It often involves the empowered developing confident in their own capacities.
- Gender equality:** Gender equality does not imply that women and men are the same, but that they have equal value and should be accorded equal treatment.



General Overview

In this Model United Session, you will be debating about Women's rights in the Middle East. The following paragraph will give you an idea of one point of view of the rights of women in the middle east:

There are many misperceptions in the United States about the problems faced by women in Middle Eastern countries. The dominant image prevailing in this country is that of veiled, homebound, uneducated women who need help to take the first steps toward emancipation. Those women undoubtedly exist in the Middle Eastern countries. So do highly educated, professional women, quite emancipated in their own minds but still struggling against restrictive social values. Nowhere in Middle Eastern do women enjoy equal rights, let alone equal opportunities, with men. The situation, however, varies considerably from country to country. This is true whether one talks of political rights, civil rights, family law, access to education and jobs, or more generally, the restrictions imposed on women by social customs. Social class creates additional differences among women in some countries. These differences are not sufficiently acknowledged outside Middle Eastern countries. Even the Arab Human Development Reports tend to generalize about Arab women, despite the fact that the statistical tables they contain contradict such generalizations. Of the sixteen countries located in the Middle East and North Africa, ten have signed, and nine have ratified, the Convention on All Forms of Discrimination against Women.³ Even in those countries, however, women's political, educational, and especially personal rights vary greatly.

Possible origins of the Problem

<u>Location</u>	geographical location such as continent, country, area, habitat
<u>Religious</u> beliefs	Jewism, Islamism, Hinduism, Christianity etc.
<u>Traditions & cultures</u>	a method or manner of people, acting in a certain way through food, costumes, habits, beliefs, practices, events etc.
<u>Historical events</u>	Significant events that happened in the past, which have a certain influence on the present and the future



Current Situation

Following points are factors that cause the abuse of rights of women. We suggest that you do some more research on those points to get a better insight and understanding on how women's rights are violated in some Middle Eastern countries.

- driving cars
- Lack of freedom of choice and decision making
- walking on streets
- dress codes
- marriage
- work and payment
- voting
- leadership roles (government & companies/business)
- objectification of body
- expectation of women (e.g. in daily life)
- Female Genital Mutilation (excision)
- Honour killings

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

- [51st session](#) (26 February- 9 March 2007) – Agreed conclusions: Elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child
- [62nd session](#) (25 February-7 and 13 March 2008) – Agreed conclusions: Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women
- [53rd session](#) (2-13 March 2009) – Agreed conclusions: The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS
- [55th session](#) (22 February-4 March and 14 March 2011) – Agreed conclusions: Access and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work
- 56th session (27 February – 9 March and 15 March 2012) – No agreed conclusions were adopted on the Commission's priority theme, The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges



- [57th session](#) (4-15 March 2013) – Agreed conclusions: Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls
- [58th session](#) (10-21 March 2014) – Agreed conclusions: Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls
- [59th sessions](#) (9-20 March 2015) – The twenty-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special sessions of the General Assembly was carried out during the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The Commission adopted a Declaration. No agreed conclusions were adopted.
- [60th session](#) (14-24 March 2016) – Agreed conclusions: Women’s empowerment and the link to sustainable development

Read more [here](#)

Possible Solutions

- Sending Non-governmental organizational support towards developing countries to help stop FGM
- Implementing a women-quota for leading, political and economic positions in Middle Eastern countries
- Implementing a proper voting right for women in Middle Eastern countries to encourage further development of women’s rights
- Implementing strict laws on harsh consequences towards honour-killings



Appendix

Examples and further research:

Article women's rights in the middle east:

[India women's commission chief backs ban on "barbaric" female genital mutilation](#)

Article women's rights in Africa and Middle East:

[Women's right in Arica and in the Middle-East](#)

Article women's rights accomplishment:

[Saudi Arabia celebrates its first ever Women's Day in Riyadh](#)

TEDx about the following:

[How women are transforming in the Middle East](#)

PDF- text – Women's rights and democracy in the Arab world:

<http://carnegieendowment.org/files/CarnegiePaper42.pdf>

Past resolutions from the Women's rights project:

<http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=3ae6a8d57&skip=0&query=csw%20women%27s%20rights#hit6>

United nations interesting article:

[UN Women important link](#)

Further research on Refworld – a site where you can find past resolutions:

[Refworld](#)

