



# UN WOMEN

**Topic B “*Developed or Developing Countries: The International Perception of Women in Leadership or Government Roles*”**



# Welcoming letter

Dear delegates,

We are delighted to welcome you to the UN WOMEN committee for the XII edition of CFMUN. This experience will challenge your perspectives, your knowledge, and your ability to defend the voices of women and girls who are often silenced. We encourage each of you to participate confidently, understanding that your words have power and that your ideas can inspire meaningful change.

Throughout these debates, you will have the opportunity to share your strengths, learn from each other, and engage in discussions that may shift the way you see global issues. Every delegate in this room has the potential to make a difference, and we trust that you will approach each debate with respect, integrity, and commitment.

Delegates, do not hesitate to raise your voice—being heard starts with believing in yourselves.



Take every opportunity to challenge assumptions, propose solutions, and grow from the experience. Enjoy every moment, because these days will leave a mark.

Kind regards,  
Paulina Albrand and Begoña Chaos

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# I. Committee Background

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN WOMEN) was established in 2010 by the UN General Assembly to accelerate progress in achieving gender equality worldwide. The entity works with governments, civil society, and international organizations to create policies, programs, and standards that promote women's rights, eliminate discrimination, and protect women and girls from violence.

UN WOMEN supports countries in fostering political participation, educational access, leadership opportunities, and economic empowerment. It plays a critical role in humanitarian settings, protecting women's rights in crises, conflicts, and environments where institutions restrict freedom. The committee operates under the principles of human rights, non-discrimination, and equality, with the goal of ensuring that women worldwide have the opportunities and protection they deserve.

## II. Introduction to the Topic

Women participation in political leadership reveal the global gender equality efforts. All around the world women face different problems such as structural, cultural, and institutional barriers preventing them from accessing high level government positions such as ministers, parliamentarians, heads of state, and senior public officials. “Just 19 countries have a woman Head of State, and 22 countries have a woman Head of Government”. (UNWOMEN, 2025)

Global perception is important. It affects diplomatic relations, influences foreign policy expectations, and shapes how governments are judged on their human rights and gender equality efforts. Understanding how developed and developing nations represent, support, and promote women in leadership roles is vital for grasping global inequalities and finding practical solutions.

### III. Evolution of the Topic

Historically, women have been excluded from voting, and public decision-making. Most countries before the mid-20th century denied women suffrage and legal autonomy.

“After World War II the UN adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the rise of democracy but women’s representation still remained low.” (UNWOMEN, 2023)

By now, it can be seen that huge changes have occurred where international visibility of female leaders grew. “Considering economic status, some developing countries outperformed developed states in the gender parity of their parliaments for instance, Rwanda's majority female parliament”.(IPU, 2023). However, online harassment, gender stereotyping, and media portrayal remain major global barriers.

The perception of women in leadership is now shaped not only by national culture but also by international expectations, particularly the UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5): Gender Equality.

## IV. Relevant Events

### A. Panorama

Women's participation in politics has grown worldwide, but it is still unequal. Developed countries are usually seen as more supportive due to stronger institutions and gender-equality laws, yet women are still underrepresented in top positions and face harassment. Underdeveloped countries are commonly viewed as less favorable because of traditional gender roles and economic challenges, but many have increased women's representation through gender quota systems, sometimes outperforming wealthier nations.

Cultural attitudes strongly shape perceptions of women leaders, often linking leadership with masculinity and causing women to be judged more harshly and violently. Violence and harassment against women in politics are also a growing global issue. International efforts promote equality, but real progress depends on legal reforms, cultural change, and political commitment worldwide.

## **B. Points of view**

Developed countries generally view women's leadership as a democratic and human rights issue. Many European and North American states support gender equality laws, anti-discrimination policies, and leadership programs for women. Some countries, like Sweden and Canada, prefer education and institutional reform over strict quotas, while others, such as France and Spain, support legal quotas to increase representation. Developing countries show mixed views. States like Rwanda, Bolivia, and India support gender quotas as an effective tool to overcome historical inequality. Others, particularly in parts of the Middle East and South Asia, argue that culture and religion should be respected and that change should come gradually. Countries such as Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan often emphasize national sovereignty and resist international pressure on social policies. International organizations like the United Nations and UN Women defend women's rights and gender equality.

political participation as a universal right and encourage legal reform, protection from violence, and leadership training. Civil society groups and youth movements usually support stronger action, while some political parties and traditional groups oppose mandatory measures in favor of gradual change.

The central debate is between promoting universal gender equality and respecting cultural and political independence.

## V. UN and External Actions

### A. UN Actions

The United Nations promotes women's participation in political life as a fundamental human right and a key part of democracy and development. Through international agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the UN encourages countries to remove legal and social barriers that prevent women from holding public office.

The UN works mainly through UN Women, which supports governments by providing technical assistance, leadership training for women, and guidance on creating gender-equality laws and policies. It also helps countries design national action plans to increase women's representation and strengthen institutions.

In addition, the UN monitors progress using global data and reports to evaluate how well countries are improving women's political participation. It raises international awareness by organizing campaigns and forums where

governments share best practices.

The UN also works to address violence against women in politics by promoting legal protection, encouraging reporting systems, and supporting safer conditions for female candidates and elected officials.

## **B. EXTERNAL ACTIONS**

Outside the United Nations, many international actors also work to promote women's leadership in politics. Regional organizations such as the European Union, African Union, and Organization of American States create policies and programs to encourage gender equality among member states.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international foundations raise awareness about discrimination and political violence against women through reports, campaigns, and public pressure. They often support legal reform and protection programs.

Foreign governments and development





agencies provide funding, training, and education programs to help women gain leadership skills and access political opportunities. Media and global movements also influence public opinion by highlighting inequalities and promoting women leaders. Together, these external actions support reform, raise awareness, and pressure governments to improve women's political participation.

## VI. Conclusion

In conclusion, around the world, the position on women in politics demonstrates the progress but also the inequalities that we still have. While some countries have promoted a political inclusiveness regardless of their economic circumstances or other obstacles, there are some areas where they still limit women's progress.

UN Women plays a key role in helping countries achieve gender-balanced governance by highlighting the fact that women's participation is recognized as both a fundamental right and an essential component of sustainable development.

Raising international standards, encouraging best practices, and assisting nations in achieving true and sustainable gender equality in leadership positions must be this committee's top priorities.

## VII. Committee Focus

The main focus of UN Women is the fact that women around the world are still struggling with support, being seen by others, and respected by governments. In the moment cultural expectations, political barriers, and unequal opportunities still make it harder for women to reach positions of power.

This committee looks to address the issues present in both developed and developing countries, since inequality can exist anywhere just in different forms. UN Women wants to understand the reason why women do not give up, how they are seen by society, and develop solutions that can help these countries change such perceptions.

Overall, the main goal is to: ensure that women everywhere have the same chance as men to lead, influence decisions, and shape the future.

## VIII. Participation List

- Argentine Republic
- Canada
- Federal Republic of Germany
- Federal Republic of Nigeria
- Federative Republic of Brazil
- French Republic
- Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
- Islamic Republic of Iran
- Islamic Republic of Pakistan
- Japan
- Kingdom of Norway
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- Kingdom of Sweden
- Kingdom of Thailand
- Kingdom of the Netherlands
- People's Republic of China
- Republic of India
- Republic of Indonesia
- Republic of Kenya
- Republic of South Korea
- Republic of South Africa

- Republic of the Philippines
- Republic of Turkey
- Russian Federation
- State of Qatar
- The Commonwealth of Australia
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom
- United Mexican States
- United States of America

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