

Nation: Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Committee: United Nations Women

Topic: Implementing measures to eradicate gender-based violence in South-Asia

In the era of contemporary world, the historical and social dynamics of power and position are increasingly being questioned and consequently being changed to allow for a more diverse and empathetic representation of our society. The fruits of this phenomenon is seen with increased representation of women in almost all spheres of human activity throughout the world. However, with the moral decadence of our society and increased number of women pursuing their dreams and venturing outside of socially accepted careers; women have become more vulnerable to violence and discrimination. This kind of gender-based violence has unfortunately plagued the entire subcontinent of South Asia.

Since the inception of our beautiful country, the Republic of Pakistan has prioritized the eradication of all kinds of gender based violence and discrimination on the basis of gender. Article 25 of the constitution of Pakistan (passed in 1973) ensures there shall be no discrimination on the basis of gender. Furthermore, the Republic of Pakistan acknowledges that the integration and protection of our women is imperative for sustainable development. This is in fact reflected in the teachings of our founding father, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who said that *“No nation can make progress in true sense unless its women participate in development along with men”*. Subsequently, it shouldn't come as a surprise that the Republic of Pakistan has 20.6 (as per 2018) percentage of women in its legislative assembly which is significantly higher than many prominent western countries. Moreover, the First Women Bank Ltd. (FWBL) was established in 1989 to decrease the financial disparity between the two genders and provide financial assistance to disadvantaged women. Furthermore, the Women's Protective Bill was passed in 2006 to legally protect women who became a victim of rape or were accused of adultery. Additionally, 'Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace' was adopted in 2010 to protect against sexual harassment at work. In addition, oppressive cultural practices practiced in rural Pakistan like child marriage and watta satta (trade of brides among tribes) were criminalized in 2012. Also, in a historic law for Punjab which is home to 60 % of the entire country's population the Protection of Women against Violence Act (PPWVA) was passed in 2016 which for the first time acknowledged online harassment and digital blackmail as a criminal offense. Furthermore, in 2016, the Republic of Pakistan had criminalized child pornography, pedophilia, and child trafficking within the country. Lastly, in 2018 the Parliament passed the *Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act* which established broader protections for transgender people.

Despite significant legislative measures in attempts to overcome gender-disparity and gender-violence post colonialism, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan acknowledges the many challenges it faces on ground for an empathetic and harmonious society free from all forms of violence on the basis of gender. Therefore, under the leadership of our Prime Minister, Imran Khan, the government has realized education as the single most important factor in empowering women and creating an unbiased society free from misogyny and violence. The National Education Policy Framework of 2018 lays down a comprehensive plan in tackling these challenges.

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan believes the cooperation of the international community to be integral in the fight against gender-based violence and misogyny. However, we encourage the international community to be more nuanced and balanced given the cultural differences between them and South Asia. South Asian societies are highly patriarchal but this does not always mean they are oppressive. The Republic of Pakistan strives to create a benevolent patriarchal system which is a patriarchy based on chivalry and empathy. This was aptly summarized by our founding father in the following statement :-

*“No nation can rise to the height of glory unless your women are side by side with you. I do not mean that we should imitate the western life. But let us try to raise the status of our women according to our own Islamic ideas and standards”*

Proposed Solutions to be Adopted:

- 1.) *Strongly Encourages* to mandate sex education with emphasis on compulsive sexual behavior to prevent misogyny, child abuse, and sexual abuse in school and college curriculums within the cultural and religious paradigm of that country;
- 2.) *Suggests* to ban all kinds of pornography and establish a Media Censorship Committee to censor any blatantly suggestive content;
- 3.) *Recommends* tighter regulation and policing of places with frequent intoxication from opioids, narcotics or alcohol;
- 4.) *Strongly Recommends* investment in mental health infrastructure with emphasis to help people suffering from Substance Abuse Disorder, Intermittent Explosive Disorder (IED), Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), Sex Addictions, Compulsive Sexual Behavior, Hyper-sexuality, and other mental and psychological illnesses which lead to gender-based violence;
- 5.) *Encourages* the use of social media campaigns by the government to increase awareness and increase funding to women rights groups;
- 6.) *Calls* for the adoption of articles passed at The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1979 and The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action by South Asian countries in accordance with the cultural and traditional landscape of that country;
- 7.) *Urges* for the criminalization of online harassment including cyber-bullying, abusive sexting, violent threats, etc and the establishment of the Cyber Abuse Committee to oversee and prevent online abuse.