

Delegation from The Philippines

Position Paper on The Philippines views on The Commission on the Status of Women

Overview:

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) has been fighting for women's rights issues and inequalities involving women around the world since 1947. The CSW has played a role in leading intergovernmental and international bodies in the discussions and possible solutions to obtaining gender equality and empowering women worldwide. Their contributions tackle the disadvantages women everywhere have been confronted with, this includes the rights of women in politics, the minimum age for marriage and the equal pay between men and women for equal work. At SSUNS 2016, we will be discussing three vital topics that are relevant to gender equality and affect the quality of life for women everywhere, we will be talking about women and sustainability, the elimination of gender-based violence and employment and education opportunities with women. With these topics in mind, we delegates will use our different perspective to come up with an effective solution to the gender inequality status.

Topic 1 Women and Sustainability

Historically agriculture has played a significant role in our economy, in 2003 it showed that 40 percent of Filipino workers were in the agriculture industry and agriculture contributed an average of 20 percent to the Gross Domestic Product. Women are active in the agriculture industry and are landless workers, traders of agricultural and fishery products, and engaged in micro-manufacturing enterprises. But in recent years we have begun to expand and develop to different ways (industrial production) in order to improve and diversify our economy. Because of our expansion there has been environmental problems that are affecting our citizens, especially women. There has been destruction of forests, pollution of air and water and we believe that the role of women is critical in combating poverty and controlling population in order to work for the protection of the environment and natural resources and achieve sustainable development. Women in the Philippines have a special knowledge of the environment we live in, this is because of the day-to-day tasks such as growing, collecting or buying food, tending domestic

animals, gathering wood and water, and caring for children and the home. Because of these issues, we have come up with plans/solutions to try and reduce the risks and overall eliminate the problems presented. We have written up the Philippine Strategy for Sustainable Development on November 29, 1989, the Cabinet passed Cabinet Resolution No. 37 approving the Conceptual Framework of the PSSD. The overall goal in this is to view environmental protection and economic growth as mutually compatible. This implies that growth objectives should be compatible not only to the needs of society but also to the natural dynamics and carrying capacities of ecosystems. The goal of the PSSD is to achieve economic growth with adequate protection of the country's biological resources and its diversity, vital ecosystem functions, and overall environmental quality. This covers the areas of concern such as population, environment and natural resources, agriculture, industry and energy. We have developed strategies in order to help deal and resolve these issues, integration of environmental considerations in decision-making, proper pricing of natural resources, property rights reformed, promotion of environmental education and inducing growth in rural areas. Also in the Philippine Development Plan for Women (PDPW), 1989-1992 was adopted through Executive Order No. 348. Also enacted shortly was the "Women in Nation-Building Act" (RA 7192), which promotes the integration of women as full and equal partners of men in development and nation-building. Because we believe that women's involvement in society ultimately benefits the country.

Topic 2 Elimination of Gender-Based Violence

Violence against women (VAW) appears as one of our country's pervasive social problems. According to the 2008 National Demographic and Health Survey conducted by the National Statistics Office, one in five Filipino women age 15-49 has experienced physical violence since age 15. Several government mechanisms have already been put in place to address VAW. Non-government organizations also take part in this crusade. It is uncertain when this trend will totally diminish in our country, but as long as current efforts to fight VAW are sustained, hope could be set high. We have made improvements such as the Cory administration (Corazon Aquino) released political detainees, restored the writ of habeas corpus and created the

Commission on Human Rights. During the Ramos administration (Fidel Ramos) put into effect the Anti-Rape Law (R.A. 8353) which was finally passed, the Anti-Rape Law reclassified rape as a crime of violence against persons, making it possible for citizens to lodge criminal complaints against their attackers. Under Arroyo, a new law (R.A. 9262) further strengthened the law by adding children to the list of victims, and increasing the penalties for rape.

Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act in 2003 has seen to halt the abuse and sexual exploitation of women, children and even men, this law has been created to abolish trafficking and sexual slavery. In the Philippines, divorce is illegal. We face the criticism but even though we are one of the only countries where divorce is banned like the Vatican City, we should be proud of this distinction because we believe that family cannot be destroyed. Divorce is unconstitutional and unnecessary, but we do not approve of domestic abuse. If domestic abuse is happening within a family and the wife and is unhappy she can look to The Family Code which currently provides three options for spouses who want to get out of their marriage: legal separation, annulment or a declaration of nullity of marriage. Many many see this as an infringing on women's liberties, Filipinas view this as a protection against abandonment and loss of support by wayward husbands. The Magna Carta of Women is a comprehensive women's human rights law that seeks to eliminate discrimination through the recognition, protection, fulfilment and promotion of the rights of Filipino women, especially those belonging in the marginalized sectors of the society. It includes the need for every barangay is mandated to create a women's desk to assist victims of wife battering and sexual harassment.

Topic 3 Women in Education and Employment

We have ranked 9th in the 2014 Social Institutions and Gender Index. Since 1989 Filipino women have outperformed Filipino men when it comes to both simple and functional literacy rates. There is no gender gap in secondary enrollment, primary, secondary and even tertiary education enrollment. We believe that men and women should have equal accessibility, opportunities and the resources to an education. However, we lack on the employment standards for women in the Philippines. Usually when people begin looking for jobs women become

pregnant and the importance is shifted to taking care and providing for the family. However improvements and steps to stop this are being made, under the Cory administration, a significant piece of legislation to address this gender imbalance was put in action. These were intended to outline what women are not to be discriminated against in terms of pay, training opportunities, and promotions. Under Fidel Ramos, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)'s Women's Center was established to train and strengthen women's proficiency in fields usually dominated by men. TESDA also sought to expand opportunities for community-based employment for girls who had only completed primary and secondary education.