**General Assembly: Commission on the Status of Woman**

**Norway : Position Paper**

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This year in the General Assembly: Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), there are three critical issues to be discussed. The first topic being, Women and Sustainability, is an increasingly important topic as the the connection between women and sustainable development is immense. Gender inequalities extract high economic costs, leading to social inequalities, followed by environmental degradation all over the world. Elimination of Gender-Based Violence, the second topic, is another crucial issue, one that Norway has fortunately been very progressive and taken action in. Lastly, and probably most important to the third world is Women in Education and Employment which should be the main concern to fixing the overall problem of inequality among gender.

**Topic 001: Women and Sustainability**

Norway has played an extremely crucial role in the developing the connection between women and sustainability. Ever since the 1840s and the first feminist movement in Norway, women have played a large part of economics and the control of consumerism of products internally in Norway.[[1]](#footnote-0) Although this seems as if it has no consequential relation to the development of sustainability and women in this decade, it has to be noted that consumerism plays a large part into environmental damage or sustainability.

In Europe, a 2009 Earthsense poll revealed that 80 percent of adult women believe strongly that individuals can affect the environment but that they personally are not doing enough. Other Norwegian specific polls show that over 72 percent of women consumers consider clean energy and recycling important to their purchasing and consumerism decisions. [[2]](#footnote-1)

**Topic 002: Gender Based Violence**

What constitutes Gender Based Violence? The United Nations defines violence against women as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. More than 600 million women live in countries where domestic violence is not jurisdictional.[[3]](#footnote-2) Over 60 million girls are child brides. These children are married off before their 18th birthday without any consent to it. [[4]](#footnote-3)Today there are more refugees in the world than ever since the Second World War. Female migrants live with an especially high risk of violence.

All women have the right to a life without violence. Today 1 in 3 women experience physical or sexual violence during their lifetime. [[5]](#footnote-4)Even in Norway, one of the most gender equal countries in the world, gender based violence is still a major problem in family households and abusive relationships.It is quintessential to unite in fighting violence and harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation. To succeed in fighting violence, boys and men must be part of the solution. Men have a crucial role to play as fathers, brothers, friends, decision makers, and community and opinion leaders.

**Topic 003: Women in Education and Employment**

Girls and women must have equal access to education, jobs and decision-making. This is the only way we can reach our goals. Sustainable development depends on women's empowerment. Fair and equal access for all, regardless of gender will promote human rights, development and sustainable peace.

Norway has introduced universal and free primary education for all more than one hundred years ago, ever since the 1920 feminist movement. Now, three out of five university students in Norway are women, one of the highest ratios in Europe and the whole nation. Close to 80 percent of women have a job, while we maintain a birth rate at almost 2, one of the highest in Europe, proving our success in women and it is important to implement such values into countries struggling with equality in education, Norway constantly strives for equality in women values. [[6]](#footnote-5)

This can be shown in the fact that Norway contributes more than 80 million US dollars per year to UNICEF’s program to educate girls in developing countries.[[7]](#footnote-6) Also Norway supports poor women’s access to information and communication technologies, in particular mobile phones, to enable their entrepreneurship.

Many seem to believe that a country must develop and become rich before it can afford to promote gender equality and empowerment of women. Although there may be some truth to that, it is still essential to understand that countries can still change and promote gender equality and empowerment of women without funds, as did Norway many decades ago while Norway was still a impoverished country. [[8]](#footnote-7) What it took was the vision and political struggle by the poor and the progressive and not just women to make not only growth, but also social justice and equity. As a result of that struggle came the implementation of many regulations, legislations and taxations. With it introduced paid parental leave and subsidized child-care.

The only way that the world as a whole can attain sustainable peace and strive for excellence in development can be achieved is if we protect all women’s human rights and ensuring women’s full and equitable participation in political, social and economic life. In order to attain women protection and promote sustainability, education and safety Norway will continue to play a leading role so that women all over the world will be able to set their own goals, define their own future and fulfill their potential in our world.

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