

LmunA 2026

Research Report

Forum: Commission on the Status of Women

Issue: Ensuring the Protection of Women's Rights Under
Restrictive Regimes

Student Officer: Ethan Li

Position: Main Chair



LMUNA

Lorentz Lyceum
Model United Nations
Arnhem

LmunA 2026

Introduction

Women's rights are an extremely pressing issue in today's world. From Afghanistan to the USA, women all around the world are having their freedoms restricted and their dignity stripped away from them as a result of the restrictive regimes they are under. This results in extreme oppression and inequality, which has detrimental effects on societies as a whole. Bodily autonomy, suffrage, and independence are but a few of the fundamental rights that many women around the world do not have access to. So what can be done to address these violations of women (and human) rights? And what measures can be taken to ensure that they do not become taken away again? It is our task as the Commission on the Status of Women to discuss solutions that address the lack of protections on women's rights, and ensure that these solutions not only solve the issue on a surface level, but also address the root causes of the issue to prevent it from happening again.

LmunA 2026

Definitions of Key Terms

Bodily Autonomy

Bodily autonomy is the right that you have to your own body and to make decisions about your own body without any external influence, namely from coercion, violence, or men. A term that is commonly associated with and advocates for bodily autonomy is “my body, my choice”. Bodily autonomy often encompasses all decisions concerning your body. Some examples of this include; gender affirming healthcare, plastic surgery, *abortions*, and surgeries.

Gender Development Index (GDI)

The Gender Development Index, or GDI, is an index that measures gender inequalities using three of the main characteristics of human development, health, education, and control over economic resources.

Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDC's)

A Less Economically Developed Country, or LEDC, does not have the same access to healthcare, education, or housing as some more developed countries do. These countries are mostly a result of colonialism, where colonial powers invaded these nations, and stripped their natural resources away, resulting in these nations not having enough resources to fend for themselves.

Misogyny

Misogyny, simply put, is the hatred of women. It is an extremely pressing issue in today's world, where women are constantly harassed, abused, violated, and discriminated against. The roots of misogyny stem from religion, where many religions consider women as lesser than men, merely meant to serve them as wives. It can present within people in many different ways, including through stereotypes, belittling, and sexual harassment.

LmunA 2026

Patriarchy

The patriarchy is a system in society where the men possess all the power and hold the authority over the entire community, meaning women have little to no power over the management of the country or even of themselves. Though this is not the case in many modern societies, the consequences of historical patriarchal societies are evident in many governments today.

Self-determination

Self-determination - Self-determination is the right to freely decide your political beliefs and affiliations, and your association with a state. However, it also has a secondary definition, being that a state has the right to freely decide its own social, political, economic, and cultural systems.

Suffrage

Suffrage is the right to vote in elections, either to elect public officials such as senators, presidents, and prime ministers, or to decide whether to adopt or reject certain proposed legislation. Essentially suffrage is the right to help decide how the country should be managed.

Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

Women, Peace and Security, or WPS, is an index that, like the GDI, uses different indicators to help determine the degree of gender equality within a certain country. In this case, there are 13 related to women's well-being, security, and freedom, to measure how free and secure a woman is in a specific country. The score ranges from 0 to 1, where 0 is the worst and 1 is the best. As of 2025, Denmark scored the highest, and Afghanistan scored the lowest.

LmunA 2026

General Overview

Women's rights and the patriarchy

The rights of women should not be any different than the rights of men. However, as a result of the patriarchy, many roles and responsibilities have been exclusively given to men, which has resulted in women being not only severely underrepresented in the government, but also oppressed, consequently giving them less power and rights than men in many parts of the world. A very prominent example of this is the right to vote. Though the Vatican City is now the only place where women are explicitly prohibited from voting, many places make it nearly impossible for a woman to vote, either by transforming it into a tedious process, or by removing a woman's right to self-determination, making her vote likely to be heavily influenced, if not directly decided, by her husband.

How women's rights are further threatened under restrictive regimes

In restrictive regimes, since citizens already have less rights in general due to the oppression of the government, women's rights as a result will be even more restricted. Some examples of this are in Afghanistan, where women were entirely prohibited from speaking in public, Iraq, where the age of consent for women is to be lowered to 9, which will condone and normalize child marriage, and Argentina, where their National Institute Against Discrimination, Xenophobia and Racism had been shut down. Furthermore, with the rise in global conflicts over the recent years, not only countless women, but also young girls have been victim to physical and sexual violence, with reports recording around an 87% increase in conflict related sexual violence. Many of the 'justice' systems of restrictive regimes turn a blind eye to such atrocities, often as a result of the laws that have been implemented by men that simply allow these crimes to go unpunished.

LmunA 2026

Major Parties Involved

Federal Republic of Nigeria

Nigeria, though it may be not as directly restrictive as some other countries, still do have issues in terms of women's rights, specifically in voting. With a whopping 92% of representatives being men, a succession of misogynist presidents, and "less legislative barriers to voting than there are societal" (Aspinall), its extremely negative attitude towards women voting has severely harmed their fundamental rights and their willingness to vote at all. The commission must discuss these societal barriers to find a way to protect women's rights in this restrictive regime.

Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan

Afghanistan is a major party in the sense that it is ranked incredibly low on both the GDI and the WPS, with respective scores of 0.622, ranking second to last, and 0.279, ranking last. It is one of the most restrictive regimes for women in the world, with the Taliban removing nearly all of their rights, to the point where they cannot even speak in public anymore. These human rights violations must be addressed by the commission and dealt with accordingly.

Kingdom of The Netherlands

The Netherlands is an incredibly strong advocate for women's rights, and the results of their legislation prove that. Not only is 39.1% of the Dutch parliament composed of women; 91.1% of Dutch women have in fact received secondary education; and 64.1% of women are employed.

Republic of Yemen

Similarly to Afghanistan, Yemen is also ranked incredibly low on both the GDI and WPS, with respective scores of 0.456, ranking last, and 0.323, ranking second last. Only 6% of women in Yemen are employed, including informal work, and the average education rate for women in the

LmunA 2026

country is 2.9 years, the lowest of all of the Middle East and North Africa. Additionally, less than 0.5% of seats in Parliament are held by women.

State of Qatar

Qatar is another one of the nations where women not voting is a direct result of the patriarchy, and pressure from the men in their families keep them from wanting to vote. As of 2018, only one seat of 29 in the elections had been filled with a woman, the other 28 all being men. Furthermore, the country operates under Sharia Law, a religion-based legal system known for being oppressive towards women.

LmunA 2026

Timeline of Key Events

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 31 October 2000 | The S/RES/1325 was adopted, one of the main UN resolutions written advocating for gender equality, which became the groundwork for many resolutions in the future. |
| 29 October 2019 | The S/RES/2493 was adopted, one of the latest Security Council resolutions that advocate for women's rights. Through this resolution, the United Nations recognizes that armed conflict has had a detrimental effect on women, and the need for stronger protections for women's rights in nations in a conflict, especially against violence. |
| 8 March 2022 | The European Commission adopted a proposal to combat domestic violence against women, with the establishment of new laws, shelters, and help lines to help victims of such violence. This is a major moment for the European Commission, as they are working towards protecting women and their rights. |
| August 2024 | New laws by the Taliban in Afghanistan make it illegal for women to speak or show their faces in public, "to avoid leading men into temptation and vice" (Kelly and Joya). This is an important moment as it marks the beginning of an era where women are not only being blamed for men's lack of decorum, but are also suffering from it, to the point that their freedoms are being deprived of them merely so that they will not be harassed. |

LmunA 2026

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

Though there have not been many attempts specifically targeted towards protecting women's rights in restrictive regimes, there has been a lot of action taken in the past years towards ensuring equal rights for women and protecting them.

- One attempt was the Gender Equality Strategy of 2026-2030. It was adopted on the 5th of March, 2026, and aims to improve many policies to work towards gender equality and protect women. Examples of this include; tackling gender-based cyberviolence, closing gender gaps in employment, and widening our understanding of women's health, specifically gender-related conditions that have been severely underresearched.
- Another more UN specific example would be the S/RES/1325, which is a Security Council Resolution that urges both Member States and the Secretary General to provide more opportunities to women and ensure that they are more financially, socially, and legally protected and equal to men. This includes; urging the Secretary General to appoint more women as representatives for the United Nations, increasing aid towards women that need it, and ensuring that girls and women are protected in the judicial system.
- Lastly, the European Commission has also adopted a new EU-wide proposal to combat violence against women and domestic violence and abuse, officially criminalising certain forms of violence, and demanding the establishment of help lines and shelters to help women who have been victims of such violence.

LmunA 2026

Possible Solutions

- A possible solution would be to address the root causes of misogyny as a whole, and start global-scale gender equality campaigns including human-made videos, posters, and games that can teach not only the men and children of the world that women are equal to men and deserve to be treated as such, but also the women that they are as competent, as powerful, and as smart as men. This could be one of the first steps towards reversing countless generations of trauma and abuse from the patriarchy. An issue with this solution is that many of the restrictive regimes likely would not permit this, as it would begin to threaten the patriarchy they've built over decades, centuries even. Even if they did permit it, there would still be challenges with accessing the people, as many of these restrictive regimes are managing Less Economically Developed countries, and therefore getting the media to these people would be a challenge that has to be overcome.
- Another solution would be introducing universal legislation to ensure that even in restrictive regimes, women's rights are not taken away discriminatorily. So to ensure full gender equality even in restrictive regimes, all laws that restrict women's rights or abilities to do something will automatically apply to men as well. This will not only ensure equality regardless of what rights people have, but also likely allow for more rights to be given to women as this legislation ensures equality, and the government is consequently forced to give women more rights so that men can have them too. Any Member State that does not comply with this drafted legislation will have sanctions imposed, and men legally a citizen of said State will have their rights equal to that of a woman in whatever country they travel to. A possible issue with this solution is that a good few governments are likely to retaliate against this, and it is more of a brute force and aggressive kind of option, where the outcome is not guaranteed and it could be a very risky method, as the success entirely depends on how the governments react to the legislation, as there is in fact a chance that it doesn't even pass at all.

LmunA 2026

- Furthermore, an investigation and judicial body could be created, or a pre-existing one could be employed, to closely monitor activity within restrictive regimes to protect the rights of women. Any individuals who are under reasonable suspicion of violating any laws will be given a fair trial, and any governments who either already have discriminatory laws or implement new ones will be given appropriate consequences. An issue with this solution is that it, though effective, does not have as much power to make change as the other solutions, as it merely addresses the surface of the issue. Therefore, it would be wise to implement this solution with another one to properly address the issue.
- Lastly, the death penalty should be made mandatory in all Member States for any individual found guilty of gender-based violence, especially sexual abuse, which will help highlight the severity of the issue for everybody and also discourage people from committing such heinous acts.

Further Reading

[Critical Overview of Patriarchy, Its Interferences With Psychological Development, and Risks for Mental Health](#)

- This study explains the concept of patriarchy, outlines its impact and origins, and discusses its relevance in relation to the systemic oppression of women.

[The Global Struggle for Equality for Women and Girls](#)

- This article describes the situation (in terms of gender equality) in the world currently, and the noticeable disparities between certain nations, while still acknowledging the fact that no nation has achieved full gender equality.

LmunA 2026

Women's rights are regressing worldwide, warns UN gender equality chief

- This article based off of a speech given by the UN Women Director focuses on the injustice that many sexual violence victims face due to a lack of proper laws being set in place to prevent sexual violence from happening.

Bibliography

Aspinall, Georgia. 'Here Are the Countries Where It's Still Really Difficult for Women to Vote'.

Grazia, Grazia, 6 Feb. 2018,

<https://graziadaily.co.uk/life/real-life/countries-where-women-can-t-vote/>.

Britannica. *Patriarchy | Social System. Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2023,

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/patriarchy>.

Chamie, Joseph. 'The Global Struggle for Equality for Women and Girls'. *Globalissues.Org*, 17

Feb. 2026, <https://www.globalissues.org/news/2026/02/17/42362>.

Concern Worldwide. '10 Of the Worst Countries for Women's Rights'. *Concern Worldwide*,

Concern Worldwide, 21 Feb. 2022,

<https://www.concern.net/news/worst-countries-for-womens-rights>.

Council on Foreign Relations. 'Understanding Sharia: The Intersection of Islam and the Law |

Council on Foreign Relations'. *Cfr.Org*, 25 Apr. 2005,

<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounders/understanding-sharia-intersection-islam-and-law>.

European Commission. 'Gender Equality Strategy'. *European Commission*, 2023,

<https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rig>

LmunA 2026

https://gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en#strategic-engagement-for-gender-equality.

European Council. 'Violence Against Women and Girls: EU Sanctions Nine Individuals and Three Entities Under Its Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime'. *Consilium*, 7 Mar. 2023, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/03/07/violence-against-women-and-girls-eu-sanctions-nine-individuals-and-three-entities-under-its-global-human-rights-sanctions-regime/>.

Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security. 'Women, Peace, and Security Index'. *Georgetown Institute of Women Peace and Security*, 2023, <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/the-index/>.

Global Awareness. 'What Is LEDC?'. *Global Awareness*, Global Awareness, 13 Feb. 2013, <https://globalawareness1212.wordpress.com/what-is-ledc/>.

Gupta, Mayank, et al. 'Critical Overview of Patriarchy, Its Interferences With Psychological Development, and Risks for Mental Health'. *Cureus*, vol. 15, no. 6, June 2023, <https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.40216>.

Kelly, Annie, and Zahra Joya. "'Frightening" Taliban Law Bans Women From Speaking in Public'. *The Guardian*, 26 Aug. 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/article/2024/aug/26/taliban-bar-on-afghan-women-speaking-in-public-un-afghanistan>.

Nater, Olivia. 'What Are the Top Countries for Gender Equality?'. *Population Connection*, 8 Mar. 2024,

LmunA 2026

<https://populationconnection.org/blog/what-are-the-top-countries-for-gender-equality/>

.

Plan International. 'Plan UK'. *Plan International UK*, 2026,

<https://plan-uk.org/our-work/health-and-rights/what-bodily-autonomy>.

Srivastava, Kalpana, et al. 'Misogyny, Feminism, and Sexual Harassment'. *Industrial Psychiatry*

Journal, vol. 26, no. 2, 2017, pp. 111–13, https://doi.org/10.4103/ipj.ipj_32_18.

The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. *Self-Determination | Definition, History, & Facts*.

Encyclopædia Britannica, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/self-determination>.

The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica. *Suffrage | Government*. *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2013,

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/suffrage>.

UNDP. 'Gender Inequality Index'. *Human Development Reports*, UNDP, 2023,

<https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>.

United Nations. 'Document Viewer'. *Un.Org*, 2025, [https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/1325\(2000\)](https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/1325(2000)).

———. 'Document Viewer'. *Un.Org*, 2025, [https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2493\(2019\)](https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2493(2019)).

———. 'Women's Rights Are Regressing Worldwide, Warns UN Gender Equality Chief'. *UN*

News, 4 Mar. 2026, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/03/1167081>.

United Nations Development Programme. 'Gender Development Index'. *Hdr.Undp.Org*, 2024,

<https://hdr.undp.org/gender-development-index#/indicies/GDI>.

World Population Review. 'Gender Equality by Country 2025'. *Worldpopulationreview.Com*,

2025, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/gender-equality-by-country>.