

UNITED NATIONS ENTITY FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

UN WOMEN



CERVMUN IX

BACKGROUND GUIDE

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I. LETTER FROM THE UN WOMEN COMMITTEE PRESIDENT

Dear Delegates,

First of all, I want to congratulate each delegate who is reading this guide and thank you for having the courage to be in a committee as important as this one, taking into account that this may be the first MUN you attend and that you will not regret living this experience.

If there is one thing I have been able to learn all these years in my MUN experiences is to always trust yourself in any circumstance or adversity, and that will be your key to the road to success. By participating in MUN, you are making a big difference since you are not afraid to speak up and be yourself, making you a unique and irreversible delegate.

As Mahatma Gandhi said “I will not let anyone walk through my mind with their dirty feet”. Never be able to have someone destroy your goals and be the difference you want to see in the world.

As your chair I am also a talented delegate just like you, with the same capabilities and values.

Without further ado, let’s live this experience together and welcome to CERVMUN IX.

See you soon.

-President Maria Paula Royero
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II.

TOPIC A: BOKO HARAM CONFLICT; SEXUAL SLAVERY AND CAPTIVES AS HUMAN BOMBS.

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, the extremist group Boko Haram has been active since approximately 2009, and its insurgency has had a devastating impact, especially in the northeast of the country. Boko Haram's tactics have included village attacks, suicide bombings and the abduction of women and girls, the most notorious case being the abduction of more than 200 girls from a school in Chibok in 2014.

Women and girls abducted by Boko Haram are often subjected to physical and psychological abuse, forced to marry their captors, and used in combat operations, including as bomb carriers in suicide bombings. Those who manage to escape or are released face stigmatization and the challenge of reintegrating into their communities, as well as dealing with the trauma of their experiences.

The conflict has generated a humanitarian crisis with millions of internally displaced people seeking refuge in camps where living conditions are precarious. Women in these camps often face increased vulnerability to domestic violence and sexual exploitation, and have limited access to reproductive health services and psychosocial support. The security situation in Nigeria remains volatile, and while the government has made some progress against Boko Haram, the group remains a significant threat to the safety and well-being of women and girls in the affected regions.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Boko Haram's origins trace back to the early 2000s when Mohammed Yusuf founded the group in Maiduguri, Nigeria. Initially, it operated as a non-violent Islamic movement advocating for a strict interpretation of Sharia law. However, tensions escalated in 2009 when the Nigerian government launched a crackdown on the group after clashes between Boko Haram members and security forces.



The death of Mohammed Yusuf during the crackdown led to the radicalization of the group under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau. Boko Haram began launching more violent attacks, including bombings, assassinations, and raids on villages, targeting both civilians and security forces. The group gained international attention in 2014 when they abducted over 200 schoolgirls from the town of Chibok in northern Nigeria.



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The group gained international attention in 2014 when they abducted over 200 schoolgirls from the town of Chibok in northeastern Nigeria. This incident sparked the global #BringBackOurGirls campaign. While some of the girls have been rescued or escaped, many remain missing. Boko Haram's tactics have evolved over the years, including the use of women and children as suicide bombers. These individuals are often coerced, brainwashed, or forced into carrying out attacks, sometimes without their knowledge. Women and girls abducted by Boko Haram have been subjected to sexual slavery, forced marriages, and other forms of exploitation. The conflict has had devastating consequences for the people of northeastern Nigeria, leading to widespread displacement, loss of life, and a humanitarian crisis.



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CURRENT SITUATION

While the Nigerian military, with support from neighboring countries and international allies, has made some gains in pushing back Boko Haram, the group has proven resilient and adaptable. Boko Haram has splintered into factions, with the main faction led by Abubakar Shekau and other factions aligning with the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP).



ISWAP, considered more tactically sophisticated, has increasingly focused on military targets, while Shekau's faction has continued to target civilians, including abducting women and girls for sexual slavery and deploying them as human bombs. Despite losing

territory, both factions still maintain a presence in the region, using hit-and-run tactics, suicide bombings, and guerrilla warfare to destabilize the area. The humanitarian situation in northeastern Nigeria remains dire, with millions displaced from their homes and in need of assistance. Women and girls who have escaped or been rescued from Boko Haram face significant challenges, including stigmatization, trauma, and reintegration into their communities.



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Efforts to address the root causes of the conflict, including poverty, marginalization, and governance issues, are crucial for achieving lasting peace in the region. Additionally, international support for humanitarian aid, peacebuilding initiatives, and security assistance remains essential in addressing the complex challenges posed by Boko Haram and its impact on the population, particularly women and children.

In 2024, Boko Haram is still active in northeastern Nigeria and, although its actions have been losing strength and notoriety, mass abductions, murders and massacres of civilians are still rampant. So far this year in March and April are approximately 500 displaced people specifically women and children.



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GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. In what relevant actions present in this conflict does my country participate?
2. Is my country directly involved in the conflict?
3. Has my country helped or sponsored the belligerent group “Boko Haram”?
4. Has my country been involved in supporting cases of sexual slavery?
5. What is the situation with women and girls in my country regarding human rights?

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III.

TOPIC B: GENDER EQUALITY REGRESSION IN MYANMAR.

INTRODUCTION

Gender equality in Myanmar has experienced significant challenges and regression in recent years. Traditionally, Myanmar's cultural norms and societal structures have placed women in a subordinate position to men, leading to systemic gender-based discrimination. Despite some progress, including increased female participation in education and employment, the situation has deteriorated due to political instability and ongoing conflicts.



The military coup in February 2021 marked a critical turning point, exacerbating gender inequalities. Women have been disproportionately affected by the violence, economic downturn, and displacement caused by the coup. Furthermore, women's rights activists and female political leaders have faced targeted repression, undermining efforts to advance gender

equality. The combination of entrenched cultural biases, political turmoil, and economic challenges has led to a significant regression in gender equality in Myanmar, requiring urgent attention and comprehensive interventions to reverse the trend.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The regression of gender equality in Myanmar has deep historical roots, shaped



by a complex interplay of cultural, political, and economic factors. Traditionally, Myanmar's society has been patriarchal, with cultural norms and practices that limit women's roles and opportunities. Women have historically been underrepresented in political and decision-making roles, and their contributions have often been undervalued.

During the colonial period (1824-1948), British rule introduced some modernizing influences, but these did little to alter the deeply ingrained gender disparities. Post-independence, Myanmar struggled with internal conflicts and political instability, including decades of military rule starting in 1962, which further marginalized women's roles in society. The military government, under the Burma Socialist Programme Party, restricted civil liberties and suppressed women's rights movements. The transition to semi-civilian rule in 2011 offered some hope for gender equality. Reforms during this period included increased opportunities for women in education and employment and greater participation in civil society.



The government ratified international conventions like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and there were efforts to address gender-based violence and discrimination. However, the progress was uneven and faced significant

setbacks, particularly in rural and conflict-affected areas where traditional gender norms remained strong.

The military coup in February 2021 marked a dramatic regression. Women have been disproportionately affected by the ensuing violence, economic instability, and displacement. Female activists and politicians have faced heightened repression, and the rollback of democratic reforms has undermined efforts to promote gender equality.



Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing inequalities, with women bearing the brunt of job losses, increased caregiving responsibilities, and heightened exposure to domestic violence. The combination of political

repression, economic hardship, and societal norms has significantly regressed gender equality in Myanmar, necessitating urgent and comprehensive measures to address the crisis.

CURRENT SITUATION

The current situation regarding gender equality in Myanmar is dire, marked by significant regression due to the military coup in February 2021 and ongoing socio-political instability. This regression is reflected across various dimensions:

1. Political Repression and Violence: Women, particularly those involved in political activism and civil society, have been targeted by the military junta. Many female activists have been arrested, detained, and subjected to violence. The crackdown on protests and dissent has disproportionately affected women, who have been at the forefront of resistance movements.



2. Economic Impact: The coup and subsequent instability have severely impacted Myanmar's economy, exacerbating existing gender disparities. Women, who often occupy lower-paying and less secure jobs, have faced higher rates of unemployment and income loss.

The economic crisis has forced many women into precarious work or increased dependency on humanitarian aid.



3. Health and Education: The healthcare system in Myanmar has been strained by the coup and the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to reduced access to essential services for women and girls. Educational disruptions have disproportionately

affected girls, who are more likely to be pulled out of school for economic reasons or to care for family members. This interruption in education risks long-term impacts on women's empowerment and economic opportunities.

4. Gender-Based Violence: There has been an alarming increase in gender-based violence, including domestic violence, sexual harassment, and human trafficking. The breakdown of law and order has left many women and girls vulnerable, with limited access to protection and justice. Reports indicate that the military has used sexual violence as a tool of intimidation and control.



abuse in camps and informal settlements, where access to basic services and support is limited.



5. Displacement and Humanitarian

Crisis: The conflict has led to widespread displacement, with women and children comprising the majority of those forced to flee their homes. Displaced women face heightened risks of exploitation and

6. Civil Society and Human Rights:

The repression of civil society organizations, many of which focus on women's rights and gender equality, has hindered efforts to address gender-based issues. The shrinking civic space has made it

difficult for these organizations to operate, advocate for change, and provide support to affected women and girls.

Overall, the regression in gender equality in Myanmar is a multifaceted crisis, with political, economic, and social dimensions all contributing to the deterioration of women's rights and opportunities. Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort from the international community, humanitarian organizations, and local actors to support and protect women and girls in Myanmar.



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1.What specific actions have neighboring countries taken in this issue?
- 2.Is my country directly involved in the conflict?
- 3.Has my country given humanitarian aid to the affected women in Myanmar?
- 4.What role has your country taken in protecting and guaranteeing women human rights?

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