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LAMUN XXXVI**

**UN WOMEN**

**Topic B Handbook**

**“Female Genital Mutilation in Subordinate Countries”**

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Dear delegates,

In the name of the Universidad de las Américas Puebla and the chair, I give you a warm welcome to the committee UN WOMEN of the Thirty-Sixth edition of the Latin American Model United Nations, LAMUN. We, as a committee, feel extremely grateful for your participation and we are thrilled to meet you on the day of the event and see your performance as delegates. I have no doubt that it will be outstanding. As a committee we are expecting compromise, participation and, more than anything, enthusiasm from your part. Come prepared, do a deep research of both topics, how every country on the committee has been involved with the issue and the posture of your country. But most importantly, we invite you to participate and have fun.

Sincerely,  
The Chair of the UNWOMEN Committee



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## UN WOMEN

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women is the full name of the United Nations agency which was created in order to promote issues about women. The creation of UN Women was not easy as it was after decades of activism that finally in 2010 the agency was established and started operating until 2011. This was made through a resolution of the General Assembly.

The creation of UN Women was necessary, as it was created because of the necessity to start making a discussion and solutions about gender equality and women rights. This agency has the mandate to work for the elimination of not only violence but also discrimination against women, to encourage them to have more participation and leadership, to promote gender equality when talking about conflict situations and to develop policies and programs for gender equality.



## TOPIC B

### Female Genital Mutilation in Subordinate Countries

Female genital mutilation (FGM) consists of the removal of the external genitalia. This practice is based on different justifications. For some people, the justification is religious, aesthetic, socioeconomic, cultural, or psychosexual. However, all of them have the goal of controlling women's sexuality to ensure that they arrive as virgins to marriage. In some cases, it is performed when the girl is a baby and in other cases when the girls are between 10 and 15 years old because this practice is a rite which represents the transition from girlhood to womanhood.

This ablation does not carry any benefit. It is usually practiced with unsterilized tools and without anesthesia, which often causes death. On the other hand, surviving women are involved in consequences that affect both their mental and physical health, which are problems that accompany them throughout their lives, preventing them from having good human development. Furthermore, female genital mutilation violates the human right to life, health, freedom, dignity, and childhood.

It is a problem of global interest because it is spread across different areas of Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Eastern Europe, South America, and the West. In total there are around 50 countries, in which there are ethnic groups that think that keep practicing female genital mutilation. In 2020, the United Nations Population Fund estimated that between 2015 and 2030, 68 million girls will undergo genital mutilation (UNFPA, 2023). As the population grows, the number of victims increases. That is why it is necessary to address this issue so that nations agree on measures to prevent the future of these practices.

World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) issued a joint statement against the practice of female genital mutilation (WHO, 2023) and began working to achieve global elimination. After this declaration, several countries prohibited carrying out this practice. The punishments in some of them are six months in prison, life imprisonment and financial fines.



Over the years, several policies, both international and national, have attempted to eradicate this problem. There is also a goal of trying to persuade the communities and ethnic groups that they can maintain the essence of their culture without the need for practices that threaten the life and rights of women. The goal is to eliminate female genital mutilation by 2030.

In 1979 the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women start dealing with the issue as well as the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in 1984; the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989; the Declaration and Vienna Program of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993; the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995; the Commission on Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs of the United Nations in 1999.

In 2010 the Commission on the Status of Women passed a resolution to eradicate this practice. In 2012 the European Parliament Resolution focused on eradicating the problem and in 2014 the Human Rights Council did the same. In 2018, WHO showed a clinical manual on the implications that female genital mutilation entails and how to prevent it to raise people's awareness. WHO pointed out that this practice in the short term can cause infections and even death and in the long-term physical problems that can permanently complicate health, psychological disorders and in most cases surgeries.

However, although there are many laws that prohibit female genital mutilation, these practices continue to exist, and they are increasing as the population levels rises. Therefore, it is necessary that the affected countries, with the help of international organizations, work together to create new ways to prevent mutilation with the purpose of achieving the goal of eliminating it by 2030.



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In 2012, the UN General Assembly designated February 6 as the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, a day of awareness to expand and direct efforts to eliminate this practice. This 2023, the joint Population Fund Program (UNFPA) and UNICEF about the elimination of female genital mutilation present the theme: "Partnering with men and boys to transform social and gender norms and end female genital mutilation." UNFPA and UNICEF call on the global community to partner with men and boys and engage them to accelerate the elimination of this practice and give women and girls a voice.

Organizations around the world have launched various initiatives to engage and partner with the male population to take an active role. These proposals have gained more male allies, such as religious and traditional leaders, health workers, law enforcement officials, members of civil society and grassroots organizations, among others, and have led to notable achievements in the protection of women and girls.

Although the practice has continued for more than a three thousand years, there is reason to think that female genital mutilation can be ended in a single generation. This is why the United Nations fights for its complete eradication by 2030, following the spirit of Sustainable Development Goal 5. To this end, since 2008 it has had the largest global program to accelerate the elimination of FGM led by the UNFPA and UNICEF. That program currently focuses mainly on 17 African countries.

Currently, this collaboration has led to important achievements. Through the joint program, more than 6 million girls and women received prevention, protection or care services related to FGM. In addition, around 45 million people publicly demonstrated to abandon this harmful practice, and the number of communities that established surveillance structures to track girls managed to protect 532,158 girls. (UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation, n.d.)



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### **Guiding questions**

- What is the situation regarding the issue of your delegation?
- What actions has the government of your delegation taken to resolve the crisis?
- What is the historical context of your country with the topic at hand?
- What is the ideological posture of the country regarding this kind of topic?
- Has your country collaborated before in similar problematics and if it has, in what ways was the cooperation done?
- Given the context of the problem, in which ways could the government of your country collaborate on the issue?
- What's the diplomatic posture of your country's allies regarding this topic?



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