



MODELO DE NACIONES UNIDAS LCUN 2026

UN WOMEN

Study Guide

AGENDA TOPICS

Topic A: Mandatory use of gender quotas in high-level positions of power

Topic B: Protection of women's rights in Iran amid the escalating conflict with the United States

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Welcome Letter

Welcome delegates to LCUN!

My name is Sabina Rodríguez and I am honored to serve as your Committee President for UN Women. Alongside the chair, I welcome you to a space designed for debate, diplomatic rigor, and international collaboration.

UN Women plays a crucial role in advancing global gender equality and protecting fundamental human rights. In this edition of LCUN, we will address two critical issues: the mandatory implementation of gender quotas in positions of power and the protection of Iranian women's rights amidst heightened international geopolitical tension.

We expect all delegates to approach these topics with diplomacy, academic research, and a commitment to reaching multilateral solutions anchored in international law. The chair is available to assist you throughout your preparation. We look forward to a successful debate.

Sabina Rodríguez President, UN Women

General Context of the Committee

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, known as UN Women, was established by the UN General Assembly in July 2010 through resolution 64/289. UN Women functions as the primary international authority tasked with accelerating progress on gender equality and women's empowerment globally. Its mandate centers on assisting Member States in setting global standards for gender equality, formulating laws and policies, and executing initiatives that address systemic gender discrimination. Furthermore, the committee works directly with governments and civil society to build effective laws, policies, and services needed to ensure that standards are implemented effectively.

Operating within the UN system, UN Women plays a critical role in supporting Member States toward achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5). The entity holds normative, operational, and coordination responsibilities. It monitors the implementation of international conventions, conducts field research, provides technical assistance, and ensures that gender perspectives are integrated across all UN operational agencies.

Our committee will be held in English, discussing the following topics:

- 1. Mandatory use of gender quotas in high-level positions of power (political, business, etc.)
- 2. Protection of women's rights in Iran in the context of the escalating conflict with the United States: How can international organizations simultaneously address structural gender-based violence against women?

Context of the Topics

Topic A: Mandatory Use of Gender Quotas in High-Level Positions of Power

The underrepresentation of women in leadership across political, economic, and institutional sectors remains a global challenge. While women constitute half of the world's population, structural barriers, deep-seated cultural biases, and unequal access to capital continue to limit their access to decision-making roles. Historically, the implementation of legislative and voluntary candidate quotas gained momentum following the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Proponents argue that quotas correct systemic market failures, ensure fair political representation, and diversify decision-making processes. Conversely, critics raise concerns regarding political autonomy, meritocracy, and potential public backlash against beneficiary groups. Key international actors include national legislatures, political parties, multinational corporations, and civil society organizations advocating for systemic policy changes.

Topic B: Protection of Women's Rights in Iran in the Context of Escalating US-Iran Conflict

Women and girls in Iran face persistent legal, political, and social discrimination, enforced through restrictive laws on personal autonomy, freedom of movement, and dress codes. The domestic humanitarian environment has further deteriorated alongside escalating military and diplomatic tensions between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States, as well as broader regional instabilities.

Geopolitical confrontations, economic sanctions, and heightened national security measures often exacerbate internal human rights crises. International organizations face complex challenges when attempting to address structural gender-based violence (GBV) within a sovereign state during periods of geopolitical conflict. Heightened political tensions risk sidelining gender issues or turning domestic human rights defense into geopolitical leverage.

Main actors in this conflict include the Iranian government, international human rights monitors, foreign diplomatic powers, and local grassroots movements advocating for fundamental freedoms under severe constraints.

Previously Discussed Proposals, Measures, or Solutions

International efforts to address these issues have focused heavily on legal frameworks, multilateral conventions, and targeted institutional mechanisms, which have resulted in the following solutions:

Topic A: Mandatory Use of Gender Quotas in High-Level Positions of Power

- **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979):** Article 4 (Temporary Special Measures) authorizes state parties to implement "temporary special measures" (such as affirmative action and gender quotas) to accelerate de facto equality between men and women without being considered discriminatory. Article 7 (Political & Public Life) mandates that states ensure women have equal rights to hold public office, participate in policy formulation, and serve in non-governmental organizations.
- **Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1952):** The first international instrument to explicitly safeguard women's political rights globally, granting women equal rights to vote, run for election, and hold public office.

- **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1966):** Articles 3 & 25 guarantee equal rights between men and women in enjoying civil and political rights, including the right to participate in public affairs and access public service.
- **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995):** Strategic Objective G.1 ("Women in Power and Decision-Making") urges governments to establish specific targets and quota mechanisms to ensure gender balance in government, public administration, and private sector leadership.
- **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5 - Target 5.5):** Aimed at ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life.
- **EU Gender Balance on Boards Directive (Directive (EU) 2022/2381):** A legally binding regional directive mandating that listed companies in European Union Member States achieve at least 40% female representation among non-executive directors (or 33% across all director roles).

Topic B: Protection of Women's Rights in Iran in the Context of Escalating Conflict with the United States & Addressing Structural Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

- **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1966):** Article 6 (Right to Life), Article 7 (Prohibition of Torture/Inhuman Treatment), and Article 9 (Liberty & Security of Person) provide the legal basis for international monitors to demand protection against state-sanctioned violence, corporal punishment, and arbitrary arrests of female activists.
- **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966):** Guarantees non-discrimination in education, employment, and social protection, which international bodies leverage to address structural socioeconomic violence against women.
- **UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace, and Security:** Requires all parties in international conflicts to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, especially in regions experiencing political instability or military escalation.
- **UN Security Council Resolution 2467 (2019):** Focuses specifically on ending sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, emphasizing structural prevention and accountability for perpetrators.
- **Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict (1974):** Prohibits attacks, persecution, or dehumanizing treatment of civilian women and children during international emergencies and geopolitical conflicts.
- **UN Human Rights Council Resolution S-35/1 (2022):** Established the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran to investigate alleged human rights violations related to protests following the death of Jina Mahsa Amini, with a strong focus on structural gender-based violence.
- **UN General Assembly Resolution 48/104 (1993) – Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVaw):** Defines structural gender-based violence (physical, sexual, psychological) by both state actors and private entities, serving as the international benchmark for UN Women's violence-prevention programs.

Guiding Questions

- 1. What international legal frameworks or treaties support your delegation's position regarding mandatory gender quotas in public and private institutions?
- 2. How can national governments balance mandatory gender quotas with corporate and political autonomy without compromising meritocratic principles?

- 3. What mechanisms can UN Women utilize to protect women's human rights in states where national sovereignty conflicts with international human rights standards?
- 4. How do international economic sanctions affect civilian women's socio-economic status and access to basic human rights during times of geopolitical conflict?
- 5. How can the international community support civil society and women human rights defenders in high-conflict zones without compromising their safety?
- 6. What concrete multilateral agreements can your delegation propose to address structural gender-based violence independently of regional political tensions?

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