



UN WOMEN

Addressing Outdated Work Culture and Securing
Women's Place in Business

STUDY GUIDE

Bengs İlban

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Letter from Secretary-General

It is my utmost pleasure to welcome you all to the Modern Model United Nations Conference. My name is Berçem Aydın, and I will be serving you as the Secretary General for this special event. I have been involved in the Model United Nations world for 8 years, and as the founder of Future Flow Social, I am excited to collaborate with Modern Eğitim College for this event.

Many of you may have your reasons for attending this conference; perhaps some of you were drawn by the excitement of the conference or the chance to connect with new people! However, I can assure you that Model UN is about so much more. It offers a unique opportunity to explore professional life, immerses you in a dynamic diplomatic environment, and helps forge friendships that feel like family. Additionally, it enhances your language, debating, and lobbying skills while encouraging you to find innovative solutions to global challenges, fostering your analytical thinking.

This year, our theme is "Resilience and Innovation in a Changing World." In today's fast-paced environment, the ability to adapt and innovate is crucial. We will explore how we can cultivate resilience and leverage creativity to address the pressing issues our world faces.

I encourage you to approach each session of this intellectual journey with an open mind, a spirit of collaboration, and a commitment to finding innovative solutions that embody resilience in a rapidly changing world. Your active and enthusiastic participation is fundamental to the success of this conference, and I am confident that your contributions will make it truly exceptional. I firmly believe this will be an unforgettable experience for all of us, and my final advice is to make the most of the three days you will spend with us!

With warm regards,

Berçem Aydın
Secretary General, ModernMUN'24
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Letter From the President Chair

Dear Delegates,

As the President Chair of the UN Women committee, I welcome you to the committee with immense gratitude for the first session of ModernMUN'24.

I am Bengs İlban, a senior student from Bahçeşehir University with double bachelor's degrees in English Language Teaching and Sociology; and I am pleased to serve you as your President Chair. Our agenda item, Addressing Outdated Work Culture and Securing Women's Place in Business, and the committee itself are crucial regarding the daily global challenges we observe. I have tried my best to prepare a beneficial guide for encountering such issues. I want to remind you that the guide you will read will give you general information. For detailed information, please view clause seven: Further Reading. I expect you to address the importance of cooperation and challenge differences by drawing attention.

I encourage all delegates to come prepared, engage actively, and collaborate with fellow delegates to make ModernMUN'24 a memorable and enriching experience. Your passion, commitment, and innovative ideas are essential in achieving the committee's goals and positively impacting the world.

Lastly, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Secretary-General Berçem Aydın and the organisers of this conference for their determined efforts. Their dedication and hard work allowed us to unite and engage in meaningful discussions on urgent global issues.

I wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at ModernMUN'24, a Modern Approach to Model United Nations Conferences.

Kindest Regards,

Bengs İlban

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Introduction to the Committee

Historical Context

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, also known as UN Women, was established on July 2, 2011. After years of various separate UN entities, the General Assembly adopted the resolution 64/289 thereby UN Women was created. Before establishing such a UN entity, 4 distinct parts of the UN system were functional. The mentioned parts were operational and remained active until they merged into UN Women. These parts are;

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

UNIFEM provided financial assistance to programs that promoted women's rights, economic security, empowerment, and gender equality.

Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)

DAW worked to advance the global agenda on gender equality and women's voices to be fully integrated into all international policies.

United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)

INSTRAW focused on providing research and statistics on issues relating to gender.

Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI)

The main objective of the OSAGI was the efficient implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

UN Women works on the idea to "enhance, not replace, efforts by other parts of the UN system (such as UNICEF, UNDP, and UNFPA), which will continue to have a responsibility to work for gender equality and women's empowerment in their areas of expertise." as well as the 9 areas of concern.

Main Areas of Concern

UN Women's main areas of concern are not limited to gender inequality and empowerment of women, but it extends beyond these points. Currently, UN Women focuses on 9 areas. Mentioned areas are;

1. Women's Leadership and Political Participation

As stated by the 2011 General Assembly "Women in every part of the world continue to be largely marginalised from the political sphere, often as a result of discriminatory laws, practices, attitudes and gender stereotypes, low levels of education, lack of access to health care and the disproportionate effect of poverty on women.", from the local to the global level, women's leadership and political participation are restricted due to several mentioned reasons.

2. Economic Empowerment

Investing in women's economic empowerment sets a direct path toward gender equality, elimination of poverty, and economic growth. Women make enormous contributions to economies, whether in businesses, on farms, as entrepreneurs or employees or by doing unpaid care work at home.

3. Ending Violence Against Women

Despite fundamental human rights, one in three women worldwide experience physical or sexual violence, mostly by an intimate partner. And only 40% of women who experience violence seek any kind of help or report the incident according to the Global Database on Violence Against Women data (2023).

4. Peace and Security

War, terrorism, violent conflict, and extremism have differential effects on women and girls. Despite being troubled by such occurrences women remain largely

invisible to, and excluded from, peace processes and negotiations. Proven by the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda (WPS), women's participation in peace processes contributes to longer, more resilient peace after conflict.

5. Humanitarian Action

As the world faces crises from conflicts, climate disasters, and pandemics, it is critical to understand their impacts on women and girls from the very start to better respond to their needs. The response should be tailored not only to fill their immediate needs but also to integrate resilience-building for women and girls against future shocks and transform discriminatory and harmful social norms into positive, gender-equitable ones.

6. Governance and National Planning

National plans, policies, institutions, and budgets are where governments begin to translate commitments to women into progress. Too often, however, they overlook measures to ensure that public services respond to women's needs and priorities. Viewing these dimensions of governance through a gender equality lens means putting aside the assumption that they are gender-neutral.

7. Youth and Gender Equality

Across the world, young women continue to face gender-based discrimination, marginalisation, and violence, including unequal access to education and opportunities for leadership and participation. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development must deliver equal gains for youth.

8. Women and Girls With Disabilities

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Report on Disability shows that one in five women live with a disability. Women with disabilities experience various types of impairments that may or may not come with functional limitations. In addition, the diversity of women with disabilities includes those with multiple identities across all contexts, such as ethnic, religious, and racial backgrounds; their status as refugee, migrant, asylum-seeking, and internally displaced women; LGBTIQ+ identity; age; marital status; and living with or being affected by HIV.

9. HIV and AIDS Epidemic

Sexual violence, a widespread violation of women's rights, intensifies the risk of HIV transmission. Many women living with HIV struggle with stigma and exclusion, aggravated by their lack of rights. Regardless of whether they are living with HIV, women generally assume a disproportionate burden of care for others who are sick from or dying of AIDS. This, in turn, reduces prospects for education and employment.



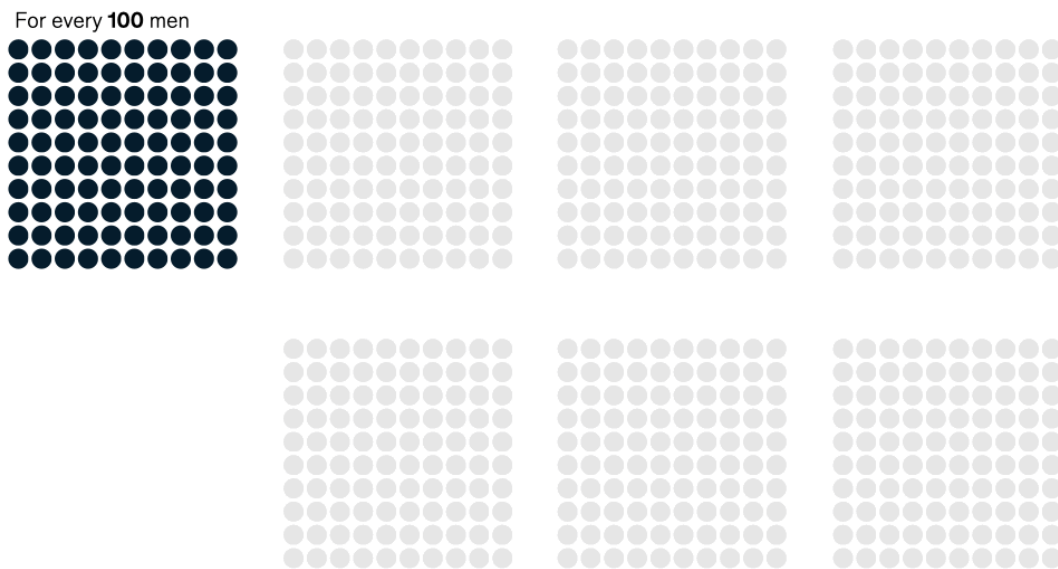
Introduction to the Agenda: Addressing Outdated Work Culture and Securing Women's Place in Business

Significant Obstacles

According to the “Women in the Workplace: 2023” statistics, there are more women in the workforce than before. Despite women flooding into the workplace in the last half century, the workforce has remained almost exactly as it was established. There is an apparent gender inequality in the work environment whether it is related to the pay gap or microaggressions and many more.

The pay gap is the most prominent issue with a day dedicated to raising awareness, November 15 in 2023. Every year, the date of “Equal Pay Day” changes according to how far into the year women must work to earn what men earned in the previous year. As mentioned by Donald Sull, a professor at MIT School of Management and author; women have to work extra an average of 73 days to compensate and earn as much as their male counterparts. In 2018, women have been earning approximately %80 of what their male peers with the same status have been earning. This percentage peaked at %85 in 2022 and since then the pay gap has been widening. In 2023 findings decreased to %84, it may not feel significant on its own, but it shows a clear regression. One important component mentioned in the figures overlooks the average. When variables such as ethnicity, race, disability, and sexual orientation are included in the research, conflicting results emerge. Such as;

Women promoted to manager for every 100 men promoted to manager, by ethnicity, number



Work and life balance is another obstacle women in the workforce face every day. Working mothers name this challenging situation as a “double shift” regarding their active role in both the workplace and housework & childcare. As stated by the findings of “Women in the Workplace: 2020”, %30 of working mothers considered downshifting their careers or resigning due to unbalanced work and family responsibilities.

Common Myths

Regarding women in the workforce, four myths appear persistently and are used as an excuse. However, the reality behind such myths disproves and shows how far from reality these perspectives are.

Myth 1: Women are becoming less ambitious

With the work flexibility provided during the pandemic and present today allowed women to be more ambitious than ever. Findings of “Women in the Workplace: 2023” show that %90 of young women aged 30 or younger want to be promoted and %75 of them intend to be senior leaders. With a percentage of %88, women of colour aim to be promoted to a higher position contradicting the myth as well.

Myth 2: The glass ceiling is the biggest factor holding women back

The glass ceiling is the primary justification for why women don’t reach senior leadership positions in their area of expertise. Statistics contradict this perspective. Results of several studies show the obstacle began with entry-level positions. The first step in reaching entry-level management positions is much more challenging for women due to the promotion gap. According to a study by the MIT School of Management, women and men in the same positions receive different performance ratings and have contrasting promotion rates. Female employees in the same roles as their male counterparts performed better and received higher performance reviews. Opposed to the data, findings conclude that female employees are considered for promotion 8.3% less frequently than their male coworkers, although female employees have higher performance ratings. Resulting in women being promoted 14% less than men.

Myth 3: Microaggressions have a “micro” impact

Women face microaggressions such as interruptions, unsolicited advice, and comments twice more than men. Microaggressions force women in the workplace to take undesirable actions such as hiding their personality, muting themselves, and code-

switching to blend in. Thus creating an unpleasant work environment where women have to endure criticism and experience burnout at four times the rate of their male coworkers. The findings of the mentioned study show black women feel the need to code-switch three times more than their male coworkers who have the same racial and ethnic background. LGBTQ+ women are five times more likely to hide their sexual orientation and the aspects of their life. The stress of microaggressions or actions women take to protect themselves results in women being three times more likely to consider resigning compared to their male coworkers.

Myth 4: It's mostly women who want and benefit from flexible work

During and after the Covid-19 pandemic, remote and flexible working conditions became standardised. Many believe this global change mostly benefited women considering women are mostly responsible for childcare and housework as well as their profession. Statistics show that 33% of men think “work flexibility and where & when to work” is a prominent success factor. 25% of men who work remotely state they have experienced less unpleasant interactions with coworkers compared to on-site work. As predicted, women in the same conditions have a higher percentage, 29%, taking into account that women face microaggressions more frequently than men.

Definition of Key Terms

Broken Rung: Obstacles that women and minorities encounter at the **very first step** up to manager-level positions.

Code-Switch: The practice of adjusting or modifying one's behaviour, language, tone, or appearance to fit into the dominant culture or to avoid judgement.

Equality: Provision of the same resources.

Equity: Considering different circumstances, the exact resources for an individual to be successful.

Glass Ceiling: An invisible systematic barrier that prevents certain people, especially women and minorities, from reaching higher levels of status and ranking.

Microaggression: Indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalised group such as a racial or ethnic minority.

Solutions in the Past

Legislative Measures

Several federal agencies and governing bodies took the sternest approach against workplace inequality by incorporating requirements and regulations in legislation. For instance, The United States of America (USA) was one of the first governments to establish an agency dedicated to the matter, The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEOC). After several laws were implemented EEOC was established to monitor and regulate such laws. The Equal Pay Act of 1963 was the first; followed by the Civil Rights Act of 1964, The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act of 2022.

The European Union composed a framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, and to combat discrimination named the Employment Equality Directive. The directive prohibits direct and indirect discrimination with obligations and four minimum requirements. Additionally, these governmental bodies provide legal protection to people affected by discrimination in their work environment.

Awareness Campaigns

Because raising awareness is the first step to diminish discrimination in the workplace, various governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) took action in that matter. Such as the “See Me” program established by the

government of Scotland and the “Know the Line” campaign formed by citizens of Australia.

With the resources provided by the government of Scotland, the “See Me” program executes campaigns almost daily. The most frequent is “Time to Talk”, a campaign where organisers visit workplaces to highlight the psychological impact of discrimination in the work environment and enforce a safe space for discussion. Compared to the “See Me” program, the “Know the Line” campaign has limited resources and mainly operates on social media to raise awareness of sexual harassment in professional settings.

Education and Training Opportunities

Several governments took action regarding education to create equal opportunities for women and girls in the industry. As an example, the government of India has a distinct ministry, the Ministry of Skill Development And Entrepreneurship. The ministry launched a program for women and girls named “Vocational Training Programme for Women” in 1977 with the assistance of the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA). As mentioned before EEOC dwells on training as well, EEOC offers free training and education programs on the topic of “Discrimination” to employees and employers.

Corporate Policies

Beyond legal requirements, corporations established their policies addressing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Such DEI frameworks take into account diverse factors such as race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, and socio-economic class. According to “Diversity Wins” research there are clear correlations between diversity and work performance. Findings between 2014 and 2019 present that companies with more gender diversity in their executive teams were 25% more likely to be high-performing financially than those with less diversity. Several policies are commonly implemented to ensure DEI and representation; for instance, gender quotas and mentorship programs.

Work Arrangements

Ensuring a healthy work-life balance for working parents, particularly women, is on the rise. The European Commission set twenty new incentives to support such actions including; flexible working hours, financial assistance to working parents, daycare and on-site childcare facilities, and the right to take time off to ensure childcare or housework.

Points a Resolution Should Cover

Preambulatory Clauses

As the **introduction** of your resolution, preambulatory clauses should include;

- **Acknowledgment of the Issue**

Recognizing the importance of the issue.

- **Previous Efforts**

Existing efforts by the United Nations, NGOs, and governments.

- **Reasoning**

Reasoning why further action should be taken and why it is necessary.

Operative Clauses

Action-oriented and detailed. Should answer five W's (Who, What, When Where, Why, How).

- **Solutions**

Short-term and/or long-term solutions.

- **Responsibility**

Who will be responsible for what? Governments, NGOs, UN bodies?

- **Funding and Resources**

Who will fund what? Partnership, UN programs, International Aid?

- **Equal Pay**

- **Discrimination in the Workplace**

- **Leadership Opportunities**

- **Work-Life Balance**

- **Education and Vocational Training**
- **Frameworks**
Legal and regulatory frameworks.
- **Women in Developing Countries**
- **Control and Follow-Up**
A control mechanism to ensure actions listed in the Resolution Paper are working as planned.

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