EGMUN 2018

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**Committee:** Commission on the Status of Women

**Topic:** The question of improving safety, justice and equal rights in courts and legal systems

Research Paper Regarding The question of improving safety, justice and equal rights in courts and legal systems

A fundamental principle of the United Nations Charter is equal rights for men and women. It is increasingly recognized that meaningful development and lasting peace cannot be achieved without the elimination of discrimination against women.

Equality between women and men requires changes in attitudes and power relations, in institutions and law, in economic regulations and the centres of political decision-making. It is up to States, international organizations and civil society to safeguard women's rights to education, political participation, freedom of choice, safety and security, health care and employment The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted in 1979 by the General Assembly, is often described as an international bill of rights for women. Most Arab countries have ratified the Convention, but generally with reservations, in particular to article 2, which prohibits discrimination against women in national constitutions and laws.

Few Arab States have ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention, thereby limiting the right of women to file individual complaints to international human rights bodies. The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) affirms women’s right to sexual and reproductive health. Ensuring full respect for women’s rights is essential to building the rule of law, yet achieving this goal is challenging in many countries.

To improve women’s access to justice, many countries facilitate mobile courts and support women’s legal aid clinics, as well as paralegal and traveling lawyer programs, which offer pro bono assistance when the services of local attorneys are unavailable or unaffordable. To promote female lawyers’ professional development and harness their potential to advocate for women’s rights, countries offer training and mentoring programs as well as support for women’s bar associations. And to improve countries’ responses to domestic violence, systematic rape, harmful traditional practices and other atrocities, countries makes legal empowerment workshops, advocacy campaigns and legal aid programs.

**Helpful Links**

1. <http://www.unwomen.org/en>
2. <https://www.globalfundforwomen.org/womens-human-rights/#.W91x_C0kqLI>
3. <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>