



# WCHSMUN2019 BACKGROUND GUIDE



# Letter from the Chair

Dear delegates,

Welcome to WCHSMUN 2019! My name is Anais Kneppers, and I am honoured to be your head chair this year for the IOC Women's committee. Along with my vice-chairs, Dilys Wang and Ana Flechas, I hope to make your experience at WCHSMUN exciting and engaging. We encourage all delegates to take the opportunity to speak and participate in committee proceedings in the supportive atmosphere we hope to create; that said, we also recognize that respect goes both ways and we welcome any questions and concerns from our delegates as they may arise.

This year at WCHSMUN, we will be allowing delegates the use of personal computers, laptops and technology for the duration of the conference; we feel that this will improve the platform for resolution writing and allow delegates to focus on the issues that they will be discussing. We also believe that this will allow the committee to move forward in a timely manner, allowing greater opportunity for debate and dialogue. We also hope that encouraging the use of technology will decrease our carbon footprint, as we will be using less paper.

The IOC women's committee will follow standard MUN procedure but will take place in a historic setting. We will begin in 1922, after the First World War, and spend the first few committee sessions discussing female suffrage, working towards passing a resolution encouraging or restricting it, and then we will jump forward in time to 1950 for our second topic, which will be the role of women outside the home. We hope to be able to use the time skip to present delegates with the ramifications of the first topic, in order to shape debate and resolutions for the next one. Delegates will represent countries but are encouraged to bear in mind that their countries may have experienced drastic shifts in foreign policy between 1922 and 1950, which should be appropriately represented by delegates. We will encourage all delegates to put aside their personal beliefs and represent those of their nation, whatever they may be.

Although these conditions may present each of you with unique challenges when it comes to preparation and research, I don't doubt that you will be able to produce innovative solutions and fruitful debate. I look forward to welcoming you all to WCHSMUN 2019!

Sincerely,  
Anais Kneppers  
Head Chair  
IA Women committee

# Committee Overview

The International Alliance of Women (IAW), originally the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, was founded in 1902 in Washington, DC; the organization advocated for universal female suffrage, or female enfranchisement, as it was often called.<sup>2</sup> By the mid-1920s, it had partially achieved its goal, with suffrage for women in Australia, parts of northern Europe, and North America.<sup>3</sup> The IAW gradually grew and became more implicated in issues other than suffrage. In 1948, for instance, it achieved consultative status at the UN ECOSOC, largely due to the work of former president Hanna Rydh.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the IAW began expanding its influence in Africa and the Middle East, where women often didn't have as many rights as in more progressive countries.<sup>5</sup> The IAW thus developed and offered a number of female education seminars, particularly in Nigeria, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, and encouraged others to be created.<sup>6</sup>

During the 1950s, the IAW sought fair legislation, which would achieve “equal representation and equal rights-equal responsibilities.”<sup>7</sup> Although this was partially achieved in some progressive countries with the help of certain UN resolutions, many countries did not adopt liberal attitudes towards women for decades. The IAW also sought voting rights for women in countries that had not yet granted female enfranchisement, with more success, particularly in Asia. In following , the IAW continued to advocate for fairer legislation towards women in following decades.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> IAW

<sup>3</sup> International Alliance of Women, *The International Woman Suffrage News, Centenary Edition*, 2004, p. 9. [Centenary]

<sup>4</sup> Centenary, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Centenary, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> Centenary, p. 11.

<sup>7</sup> International Alliance of Women, “Human Rights,” womenalliance.org. <https://womenalliance.org/human-rights> (retrieved February 3, 2019). [Human Rights]

<sup>8</sup> Human Rights.

# Topic 1: Female Suffrage (1922)

## Overview

Although the IAW achieved women's suffrage in many nations throughout the 1920s, there was still widespread opposition to the cause. With that in mind, IAW president Carrie Chapman Carr presented the following four questions for consideration during a speech in 1923:

1. "How may enfranchised and unenfranchised women unite to secure the repeal of the last vestige of those outworn codes of law that have placed women in the same status as children and feeble minded?"
2. How may the enfranchised women within the alliance most effectively aid the unenfranchised women of self governing countries to get their vote?"
3. How may the alliance aid women voters to a full realization of the dignity and duty which belong to their new status?"
4. How may women voters most effectually serve the common good of their nation and the world? Many are now enfranchised but not emancipated."<sup>9</sup>

While these questions espouse the progressive views of many liberal countries, many nations were opposed to female suffrage and female progression. Although these nations were not necessarily members of the IAW, we have included them in our committee for the purpose of expanding the scope of debate. These comparatively conservative nations include most Latin American countries,<sup>10</sup> as well as strongly religious nations, such as Vatican City and Yemen.

Furthermore, even in liberal nations, female suffrage still experienced many limitations. In the United States, for instance, as of 1918, women could only vote in 15 states.<sup>11</sup> This was a trend in many countries, where women could often vote locally, but not federally. Furthermore, suffrage was often restricted only to white women, such as in Canada and South Africa, where first nations and black women, respectively, did not gain suffrage until much later.<sup>12</sup> These conditions will be important to bear in mind during debate, as many of the ostensibly "progressive" countries still imposed racial limits.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Centenary, p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> Centenary, p. 9.

<sup>11</sup> *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 8th ed., s.v. "Woman Suffrage." Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2009. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/woman-suffrage> (retrieved February 1, 2019).

<sup>12</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica.

<sup>13</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica.

## Britain and Commonwealth

Britain was among the countries with the strongest feminist movements after World War I, and is where feminism first developed. In 1792, Mary Wollstonecraft published her groundbreaking *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, which is generally seen as the founding text of feminism.<sup>14</sup> That said, women only received the right to vote in 1918, with an age restriction set at 30 - 9 years older than their male counterparts.<sup>15</sup> This was the case as legislatures feared that, due to the many deaths during the first world war, women, who outnumbered men, would become the largest voting group in elections.<sup>16</sup> 1928, this was changed to 21, rendering them fully politically equal with men.<sup>17</sup> The pressure for female suffrage was largely peaceful, consisting of protests and awareness campaigns, and was largely directed by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS), which by 1913 contained "nearly five hundred regional suffrage societies."<sup>18</sup>

Many Commonwealth nations were similarly progressive, and a few even granted women enfranchisement before Britain did; New Zealand was the first country to grant female suffrage, including the native Maori population, in 1893, which established New Zealand as a leader in the sphere of women's rights.<sup>19</sup> Australia became the next commonwealth nation to grant female suffrage in 1902, followed by Canada (with limited rights for aboriginals) in 1918,<sup>20</sup> and South Africa in 1930 (although only for white women).<sup>21</sup> These laws were often passed to nominally please feminists, without actually granting women rights equal to those of men. The most divisive issue for the Commonwealth was thus not women's suffrage, but whether this right should be limited to certain racial groups and in-line with men's suffrage.

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<sup>14</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica.

<sup>15</sup> Johanna Alberti, "Keeping the Candle Burning: Some British Feminists Between Two Wars," In *Suffrage and Beyond: International Feminist Perspectives*, edited by Caroline Daley and Melanie Nolan, p. 295 - 312, (New York: NYU Press, 1994), p. 296.

<sup>16</sup> Alberti, p. 296.

<sup>17</sup> Alberti, p. 295.

<sup>18</sup> Rebecca Myers, "General History of Women's Suffrage in Britain," *The Independent*, May 28, 2013.

<sup>19</sup> Raewyn Dalziel, "Presenting the Enfranchisement of New Zealand Women Abroad," In *Suffrage and Beyond: International Feminist Perspectives*, edited by Caroline Daley and Melanie Nolan, p. 42 - 64, (New York: NYU Press, 1994), p. 42.

<sup>20</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica.

<sup>21</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica.

## Europe

While Europe saw many developments in feminist movements post-World War I, suffrage was granted to women at varied times. For example, suffrage was only granted to women in Spain in 1931 and in Switzerland in 1971.<sup>22</sup> In contrast, female enfranchisement was granted in Iceland in 1915, and in Czechoslovakia and the USSR in 1920.<sup>23</sup> To this day, Vatican City remains the only country to deny women the right to vote, due to strong religious beliefs.<sup>24</sup> These dates imply the eventual success of the suffrage movement; however, political nuances vary from country to country. For example, the USSR granted women rights due to the Bolshevik revolution, while the end of World War I motivated female regression in Belgium. In the USSR, this resulted specifically in the Family Code of 1918, giving women equal status to men (including suffrage), secularised marriage, legalized abortion, and made divorce easily obtainable; thus, the Soviet Union would be considered very progressive.<sup>25</sup> In comparison, Belgium granted suffrage, but professional activity was discouraged to increase the birth rate.<sup>26</sup>

It should also be noted that suffrage shifted with external influences. This was prevalent in new-found democracies, where separation between men and women was foundational to society. In French law, for example, a wife's obedience was conceptualized as a virtue and legitimized by the pretense of the public good. Similarly, the English common-law doctrine of coverture dictated that women lived under the "cover" of her husband, who—as the head of household—enjoyed the status of civil citizenship. Married women thus had no legal status, a law which was eventually embraced by many other nations, particularly British colonies.<sup>27</sup> The legal subordination of married women was more than a simple matter of exclusion: it helped "define civil citizenship, for it was by protecting, subsuming and even owning others that white male property owners and family heads became citizens."<sup>28</sup> In addition, fights for libertarianism and communism were associated with heads of the female suffrage movement; however, their different ideologies made it difficult to put up a united front.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Centenary, p. 18.

<sup>23</sup> "Europe," Women Suffrage and Beyond, accessed February 4, 2019, [http://womensuffrage.org/?page\\_id=97](http://womensuffrage.org/?page_id=97).

<sup>24</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica.

<sup>25</sup> Katie McElvanney, "Women and the Russian Revolution," *The British Library*, accessed February 5, 2019, <https://www.bl.uk/russian-revolution/articles/women-and-the-russian-revolution>.

<sup>26</sup> "What Women did During the War," *Radio Television Belge Francophone*, accessed February 5, 2019, [https://www.rtb.be/ww1/topics/detail\\_what-women-did-during-the-war?id=8355940](https://www.rtb.be/ww1/topics/detail_what-women-did-during-the-war?id=8355940).

<sup>27</sup> Claudia Zaher, "When a Woman's Marital Status Determined Her Legal Status: A Research Guide on the Common Law Doctrine of Coverture," *Law Library Journal*, Vol. 94, No. 3 (2002), p. 459.

<sup>28</sup> Ruth Rubio-Marín, "The achievement of female suffrage in Europe: on women's citizenship," Oxford Academic, April 3 2014, <https://academic.oup.com/icon/article/12/1/4/628588>.

<sup>29</sup> Rubio-Marín.

## Africa/Middle East

In 1922, Africa and the Middle East were under colonial or non-democratic governance, which disqualified them from granting women suffrage and, thus, prevented these nations from joining our list. That said, delegates representing colonial powers should consider the interests, and suffrage, of the citizens of their colonies.

In the 1920s, female suffrage was often overshadowed by the struggle for independence and suffrage of non-white men. In Egypt, for instance, following the 1919 revolution, feminism was closely associated with nationalism, as feminists often worked in conjunction with nationalists, participating in boycotts and protests.<sup>30</sup> The feminist movement was thus associated with nationalism and the role of women in emerging states.<sup>31</sup> Ethiopia, Yemen and Liberia experienced similar problems, tending to focus on independence and the fight against racism rather than on female suffrage.<sup>32</sup> Delegates are therefore encouraged to advocate for policies that would combat racial discrimination and support suffrage for non-white people.

## Americas

As of 1923, most nations were reluctant to grant women suffrage; this is attributed to the disorganisation of many feminist movements, which did not seek to grant women rights beyond that of suffrage.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, South America embraced tradition, thereby imposing boundaries on female participation in society.<sup>34</sup> This was prevalent in the semiarid backcountry, where a dramatic lack of industry left little need for motivation to change the role of women.<sup>35</sup> As such, the majority of South American countries adopted, as of 1922, a conservative stance on this issue.

In contrast, Canada and the US granted women suffrage, but excluded indigenous peoples.<sup>36</sup> Both countries had women who contributed greatly to the war effort, as well as strong female suffrage movements such as the National American Woman Suffrage Association, which pressured their governments to acquiesce.<sup>37</sup> Thus, North America would support female suffrage, but, as mentioned previously, would oppose making suffrage available to indigenous and non-white women.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Nadjie S. Al-Ali, "The Women's Movement in Egypt, with Selected References to Turkey," *Civil Society and Social Movements Programme Paper*, no. 5, (April 2002), p. 11.

<sup>31</sup> Al-Ali.

<sup>32</sup> Al-Ali.

<sup>33</sup> Chaney, p. 331.

<sup>34</sup> Chaney, p. 331.

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/Latin-America/New-order-emerging-1910-45>

<sup>36</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica.

<sup>37</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica.

<sup>38</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica.

## Asia

Voting rights for women in Asia were sporadic, at best, in the 1920s. Afghanistan granted women the right to vote in 1919, but after a coup in 1929 that restored more conservative rule, this right was rescinded, and Afghani women have faced struggle ever since.<sup>39</sup> Although this can be seen as a step backwards, it did give women a glimpse of more equal conditions, and inspired many to fight for female suffrage. This is largely due to the traditional values of the region, often associated with religion, which inhibited the opportunities available for women.<sup>40</sup> Women were often confined to the home, and thus had very few opportunities to interact with the feminist movement, particularly in rural areas. Other nations experienced similar issues, particularly during the 1920s, when traditionalism was predominant.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, many Asian nations sought independence at this time, which often interacted with feminist movements. Rebels often embraced women's rights because the governments being overthrown were often quite traditional, and in order to provide a stark contrast and gain support. For example, Turkey's move to "Westernise" society led to female suffrage in 1930, thanks to unusually receptive government officials.<sup>42</sup> In spite of that, women still faced social discrimination, as mentioned before, often on the basis of religion. As such, most Asian nations had comparatively conservative stances with regards to female suffrage, due to traditionalist attitudes rather than explicit government objection.

## Questions to Consider

1. What role did tradition/religion play in your nation in regards to gender roles, treatment of civilians, and acceptance to change?
2. How did suffrage and legal treatment of civilians in your nation shift between minorities, genders, and economic classes?
3. Were there any politically active feminist organisations in your nation? If so, how did they interact with other political organisations? How were they viewed by civilians and government?
4. In what ways do laws and governance restrict the role of women in society? How can these methods be changed? Is there willingness in government to accept changes or a more 'westernized' system?

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<sup>39</sup> Central Asia Institute, "The Fight for Women's Voting Rights," *General Field Notes*, November 7, 2016.

<sup>40</sup> Central Asia Institute.

<sup>41</sup> Central Asia Institute.

<sup>42</sup> Gokcen Basaran Ince, "The Depiction of Women's Suffrage in Turkey in the Editorial Cartoons of the Era," *Journal of Yaşar University*, no. 10 (2015): p. 6416.

## Topic 2: Women Outside the Home (1950)

### Overview

In the 1950s, the feminist movement began to focus on social liberation through “second wave feminism.”<sup>43</sup> An important aspect of this was female employment outside the home, which will be the topic for our committee. Women in more progressive countries also began to advocate for female reproductive rights, while feminism became a broader movement - middle class, lower class, and non white women were embraced as sisters.<sup>44</sup> Following World War II, previously employed women in traditionally male industries - due to war-time labour shortages - lost their jobs, which caused widespread outrage.<sup>45</sup> Women thus responded by seeking social equality through employment opportunities.<sup>46</sup> Many women got jobs as secretaries, nurses, and teachers, but more began attending university and pursuing less traditionally feminine commandants. This wasn't always accepted, as some employers were reluctant to hire women due to the risk of pregnancy and maternity leave.

Meanwhile, westernisation was leading to female suffrage and employment opportunities.<sup>47</sup> Although many nations still firmly adhered to traditional beliefs, the need to industrialize pushed more women into the workforce.<sup>48</sup> In many cases, feminism was also associated with nationalist and independence movements, which gave women more leverage when advocating for their cause.<sup>49</sup> With the role of women in the workforce in mind, the IAW's goals were and continue to be as follows:

1. The integration of a gender equality perspective in all recovery programmes
2. Equal participation in decision making at the highest levels (preferably through the adoption of quotas) in the formulation and implementation of all policies, in particular economic/financial and in the corporate/private sector, in order to rectify the negative effects of these policies on women wherever they exist
3. The elaboration and implementation of macro-economic policies that respect human rights and gender equality<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Daily History, “What was the Second Wave Feminist Movement?” [dailyhistory.org](https://dailyhistory.org).

[https://dailyhistory.org/What\\_was\\_the\\_Second\\_Wave\\_Feminist\\_Movement%3F](https://dailyhistory.org/What_was_the_Second_Wave_Feminist_Movement%3F) (retrieved February 3, 2019)

<sup>44</sup> Martha Rampton, “Four Waves of Feminism,” [www.pacificu.edu](http://www.pacificu.edu). <https://www.pacificu.edu/about/media/four-waves-feminism> (retrieved March 1, 2019).

<sup>45</sup> Daily History.

<sup>46</sup> Daily History.

<sup>47</sup> Yuhui Li, “Women's Movement and Change of Women's Status in China,” *Journal of International Women's Studies*, Vol, 1, Issue 1 (January, 2000): p. 32.

<sup>48</sup> Alan Taylor, “Japan in the 1950s,” *The Atlantic*, March 12, 2014. [Taylor, Japan]

<sup>49</sup> Basaran Ince.

<sup>50</sup> International Alliance of Women, “Gender and the Economic Crisis,” [womenalliance.org](http://womenalliance.org).

<https://womenalliance.org/gender-and-the-economic-crisis> (retrieved February 3, 2019). [Economic Crisis]

## Britain and Commonwealth

After the WWII in Britain and the Commonwealth, many middle-class women continued to hold jobs attained by necessity, with over 40% of married woman working in the UK.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, job diversity for these women increased dramatically, including positions as teachers, clerks, nurses, and some trade professions.<sup>52</sup> That said, women were often paid less for doing the same job as men, and social stigma regarding women in the workplace remained.<sup>53</sup> Although it is difficult to find data about the size of the wage gap, one contributor to it was workplace benefits - women often received less vacation time than men did. Even those women who did get jobs often gave them up upon marriage.

Similar conditions were experienced the Commonwealth. In Australia, for instance, women in newfound positions were limited to traditionally “feminine” jobs, and often were not paid equally for their work.<sup>54</sup> This was in part due to discrimination, but also because women did less highly paid work than men, such as secretarial and clerical work, and because they worked less than men due to childbearing and maternity leave.<sup>55</sup> This paralleled attitudes in Canada, New Zealand, and, to an extent, South Africa; however, the struggle for racial equality in South Africa overshadowed the quest for gender equality.<sup>56</sup> That being said, Commonwealth nations during the 1950s were generally progressive and lacked legal restrictions barring women from working, although social norms, unequal pay, and employment only in traditionally feminine industries was prevalent.

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<sup>51</sup> Stanford E. Lehmborg, Thomas Heyck, and Thomas William Heyck., *A History of the Peoples of the British Isles, Volume 3*, (London: Psychology Press, 2002) p. 230.

<sup>52</sup> Lehmborg, p. 230.

<sup>53</sup> Lehmborg, p. 231.

<sup>54</sup> Glenda Strachan, “Still working for the man? Women’s employment experiences in Australia since 1950,” *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, Vol.45 No.1 (Autumn 2010), p. 118.

<sup>55</sup> Strachan, p. 120.

<sup>56</sup> South African History Online, “History of Women’s struggle in South Africa,” sahistory.org <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/history-womens-struggle-south-africa> (retrieved February 3, 2019).

## Europe

After World War I, engineering assembly work, food and drink industries, and clerical work became dominated by female workers; however, these jobs were low pay while involving long working hours.<sup>57</sup> Furthermore, women workers were usually excluded from supervisory roles or “skilled” work, despite previously holding such jobs during WWI.<sup>58</sup> Although women generally made way for men returning from the war, they often told their daughters about their wartime experiences, which fuelled feminist movements in the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>59</sup> The wartime demand for wage equality employed by trade unions unfortunately were ‘forgotten’ during the interwar years. Instead, they campaigned to restrict women’s employment in certain industries through a ‘marriage bar,’ in spite of the increasing amount of women who were members of trade unions.<sup>60</sup>

By 1951, female wages had fallen to pre war levels, and many women had ceded their jobs to men.<sup>61</sup> During this period, women’s suffrage contributed to efforts to resolve issues of inequality, as politicians had to consider the growing role of women in the electorate, but women were still discouraged from pursuing employment opportunities.<sup>62</sup> Immediately after WWII, little political headway was made. While lip-service was occasionally paid to equality for women in international negotiations, decisions regarding ongoing territorial disputes, violations of minority rights, and deterrence of future war was left in the hands of men.<sup>63</sup> This was largely because women did not hold many elected positions, and thus men were responsible for making important decisions.<sup>64</sup> Consequently, during this period many feminist movements struggled to gain importance and political power in Europe.

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<sup>57</sup> Lucy Noakes, “Did WWII Change Life for Women?” *BBC*, September 17, 2019.

<sup>58</sup> “The Interwar Years,” *Striking Work*, accessed February 4 2019, <http://www.striking-women.org/module/women-and-work/inter-war-years-1918-1939>.

<sup>59</sup> Noakes.

<sup>60</sup> Noakes.

<sup>61</sup> Noakes.

<sup>62</sup> Noakes.

<sup>63</sup> Ingrid Sharp, “Women’s International Activism during the Interwar Period,” *Taylor and Francis online*, accessed February 4 2019, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09612025.2016.1181332>.

<sup>64</sup> Annette McDermott, “How World War II Empowered Women,” *History Network*, October 31, 2019.

## Africa/Middle East

Feminism in Africa and the Middle East in the 1950s was essentially divided into secular and Islamic strains.<sup>65</sup> Secular feminism echoed western second wave feminism, emphasizing human rights and democratic practices, and seeking to codify them in law, whereas Islamic feminism sought to advance women within the framework offered by the Qur'an.<sup>66</sup> This meant that although women were often still restricted to the home, practices such as marital abuse were discouraged and women were granted more legal rights with regards to their children. Egypt, for instance, espoused Islamic feminism during the 1950s, as it sought to maintain religious principles while offering moderate reforms; in fact, Egypt is arguably birthed Islamic feminism in reaction to the "imperial feminism" of the western world.<sup>67</sup> After the 1952 revolution, for instance, women were encouraged to enter the workforce, and in a more Islamic context, an Egyptian feminist by the name of Bint al-Shati wrote "a series of books on the lives of women of the Prophet presented as paragons of virtue and active involvement in the community."<sup>68</sup> A lot of women were intrigued by these changes, but were often prevented from taking full advantage of their rights by restrictive families.<sup>69</sup>

Yemen exhibited a more nuanced fusion of feminism. Under this form, women sought to achieve rights, which they felt obligated to by the Qur'an, but which society denied them.<sup>70</sup> That said, in the 1950s, societal and religious pressure often prevented women from achieving the liberation they desired, as the culture with which they had grown up made them feel obligated to remain at home instead of participating in the workforce. For these reasons, the feminist movement was led by the wives of European colonialists, who wished to work outside of the home via charity.<sup>71</sup> Although this eventually trickled down through society, Yemen remained religiously conservative and laws guaranteeing women significant rights weren't passed until the mid 1970s.<sup>72</sup>

Finally, countries such as Ethiopia and Liberia were crippled by unstable governments and poverty. By 1951, Liberia had granted suffrage, but women still didn't habitually work outside the home; similar conditions were present in Ethiopia at the time.<sup>73</sup> This meant that women were dependant on their husbands for support and thus that they were very vulnerable when widowed or when married to bad husbands.

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<sup>65</sup> Margot Badran, "Between Secular and Islamic Feminisms: Reflections on the Middle East and Beyond," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Winter, 2005), p. 6.

<sup>66</sup> Badran, p. 6.

<sup>67</sup> Badran, p. 12.

<sup>68</sup> Badran, p. 20.

<sup>69</sup> Badran, p. 22.

<sup>70</sup> Badran, p. 21.

<sup>71</sup> Susanne Dahlgren, "Revisiting the Issue of Women's Rights in Southern Yemen," *Arabian Humanities*, No. 1 (2013): p. 4.

<sup>72</sup> Dahlgren, p. 7.

<sup>73</sup> BBC News, "Liberia Profile - Timeline," *BBC News*, January 22, 2018.

## Americas

By 1950, most nations in South America still upheld traditional gender roles; therefore women who wanted to start a career faced social stigma against their choices along with home-life strain.<sup>74</sup> In Chile, First Lady Rosa Markman de Gonzalez Videla was the first to openly encourage women to participate in politics. Initially, the movement didn't have a lot of support in traditional patriarchal Chilean society, but with the First Lady's status, she was able to create the effect of dramatically increasing the participation in politics.<sup>75</sup> In the 1940s the education of women caused the number of women in the workforce to increase; the majority of these women were from lower classes who required additional income. Having both higher and lower income women working towards the same cause led to a unique feminist movement in Chile compared to the rest of South America.<sup>76</sup> In 1950's Mexico, women were seen as the head of the household, and were expected to engross themselves with household matters. This restricted mothers who wished to leave the home. Therefore, women in Mexico had more barriers to overcome before achieving acceptance in the workforce. In result, Mexican women entering the workforce dragged behind the rest of the Americas.<sup>77</sup>

In contrast, in the U.S, one in three women were in the workforce.<sup>78</sup> During this time, labour unions such as the Airline Stewardess Association progressed a sense of liberation, which increased demands for a say in regards to their working conditions.<sup>79</sup> After this, labour unions were formed as other female groups felt the need to demand unions in their workplace. Unfortunately, after the war, many servicemen regained their positions from women, and remaining female workers made only 60.3 cents for every dollar a man was making. Most women after the war became complicit wives instead of pursuing a career in times that they weren't valued on the same level as men. That being said, in 1949 the U.S imposed a law against workplace discrimination;<sup>80</sup> legislation such as this led to more equality in the workforce, but was unable to completely eliminate social pressure to be a supportive housewife.

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<sup>74</sup> Dhara Shah, "The Evolution of Women in the Workforce," *The Evolution of Women in the Workforce (1865-2015)*, April 23, 2015, , accessed March 06, 2019, <http://workingwomen.web.unc.edu/>.

<sup>75</sup>FINAM.

<sup>76</sup> Eugenia Muchnik de Rubinstein, "Determinants of women's employment in Chile: a life-history approach," (Department of Agricultural Economics, School of Agriculture, Catholic University of Chile), 2-3.

<sup>77</sup> Maria Magdalena Camou, "Historical Patterns of Gender Inequality in Latin America: New Evidence," *Faculty of Social Sciences*, (2015), 12-15.

<sup>78</sup> Caroline Dorey-Stein et al., "A Brief History: The Four Waves of Feminism," *Progressive Women's Leadership*, August 27, 2018, , accessed March 06, 2019, <https://www.progressivewomensleadership.com/a-brief-history-the-four-waves-of-feminism/>.

<sup>79</sup> Dhara Shah, "The Evolution of Women in the Workforce," *The Evolution of Women in the Workforce (1865-2015)*, April 23, 2015, , accessed March 06, 2019, <http://workingwomen.web.unc.edu/>.

<sup>80</sup> Dhara Shah.

## Asia

By the year 1950, women's rights had drastically improved. For example, Japanese women were granted full political rights following the second World War.<sup>81</sup> Japan in particular pursued rapid westernisation, with corresponding liberation for many women.<sup>82</sup> At this time, whereas Japan was embracing Western capitalism, China embraced communism.<sup>83</sup> Under the leadership of Mao Zedong, women were granted "equal rights with men in political, economic, cultural, educational and social life."<sup>84</sup> Women were even encouraged to find jobs, in order to contribute to the economic reorganisation and development of the country.<sup>85</sup> Mao even promoted "progressive legislation that enabled women to divorce, work outside the home and have autonomy over [their bodies]," which had positive effects for women across the nation.<sup>86</sup>

However, increased equality did not take place everywhere. In Nepal and Mongolia, women continued to be oppressed in the name of "traditional practices."<sup>87</sup> In Nepal, for instance, it was traditional for women to be evicted from family homes during menstruation. They were often forced into cattle sheds or a corner of the room in order not to contaminate their families with their "impurity."<sup>88</sup> This prevented them from things as basic as interacting with their families, and also severely inhibited their abilities to find a job. Meanwhile, in countries such as Afghanistan, although traditional practices were still important, modernisation began to occur.<sup>89</sup> Thus, delegates must consider the balance between modernisation and traditional practices, as each Asian nation had a unique way of striking a balance.

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<sup>81</sup> Centenary, p. 101.

<sup>82</sup> Taylor, Japan.

<sup>83</sup> Li, p. 31.

<sup>84</sup> Li, p. 31.

<sup>85</sup> Li, p. 32.

<sup>86</sup> Gregory Freitag, "Mao a Feminist?" *International Journal of Current Chinese Studies*, No. 1 (2010), p. 159.

<sup>87</sup> Nalini Burn and Oyuntsetseg Oidov, *Women in Mongolia: Mapping Progress under Transition*, New York: The United Nations Development Fund for Women, 2001, p. 17.

<sup>88</sup> Shobha Rana Grover, "9 Customs That Oppress Women Across the World," *Huffington Post*, March 24, 2017.

<sup>89</sup> Alan Taylor, "Afghanistan in the 1950s and '60s," *The Atlantic*, July 2, 2013. [Taylor, Afghanistan]

## Questions to Consider

1. What framework of feminism was prevalent in your nation? To what extent did it permeate into industry, society, and politics?
2. What political, industrial, and social barriers limited the type and degree of work available to women outside the household? How can these barriers be eliminated?
3. What is the relationship between women and unions in your nations? Is there a way that these relationships can be shifted to eliminate gender pay disparity and economic issues?
4. What was the state of female involvement in governmental and political decision-making, and how willing is your society to possible shifts in this state? What are the necessary steps required to shift this dynamic to become equitable?

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