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Country: Republic of Rwanda
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Topic: Advancement of women: Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

2018 was a revolutionary year for women. Although not loud and clear, they finally got their voice heard and their actions showed us that they are not going to stop fighting to fully achieve gender equality. In 2019, we must reach out to everyone to discuss and understand why we are still far away from achieving gender equality worldwide and what must we do to accelerate this process.

Since 1945, when the United Nations was established, gender equality and the advancement of women have been a recurring topic. In 2000, the United Nations created the Sustainable Development Goals to be achieved until 2030 and one of them was gender equality. In 2017, the Gender Equality Working Group that was established by the Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations started functioning. This year is also the 40th anniversary of The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Also, some other important measures were taken such as The Istanbul Declaration and Programme of Action, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and The International Day of the Girl Child. Not only did these measures encourage gender equality but also reinforced and highlighted the need for it to be discussed.

Yes, women did get to the guidelines in 2018 but, in 2019, we must also put attention to the whole text. Meaning, we have to explore profusely the problems that have been stopping humanity of achieving gender equality and also analyze issues that are not frequently published in the media. It is indispensable that governments and major leaders from different countries unite to discuss ways to achieve gender equality. They are the ones that can take major actions to combat problems such as unpaid care work, wage gaps between men and women, inaccessible health care, child care, education, gender inequality within the political realm, maternity leaves and so on.

Countries such as Canada, Finland, Germany and others that are close to fully achieving gender equality shall try to find a middle ground with countries like Saudi Arabia, Iran, Libanon and others which are farther away from achieving this goal. Also, political parties such as the

Republican Party in the United States, Partido Social Liberal in Brasil and others whose leaders and participants have shown to not care about this issue and deny its existent should try to sit down with other parties and talk with leaders with others views to try and find a middle ground as well.

Not only governments shall unite, but also society as a whole needs to band together because there is no way to discuss gender equality without all genders present. With this union, we can find solutions such as applying good and accessible social protection systems, sustainable infrastructure and public services.

The Republic of Rwanda, with the second-best score in the 2009 Social Watch Gender Equality Index, while reinforcing the United Nations disapproval of gender inequality, also believes that the committee must respond to the goal the best way possible, finding middle grounds on behalf of contrasting ideas and also collaboratively encountering coherent solutions for the problems discussed in the committee.

After the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi population of Rwanda, where hundreds of women were raped and assassinated, Rwanda decided to commit a vast part of its time to gender equality. Some of the measures taken in order to achieve the goal were: The National Gender Policy created in 2010, the creation of a Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, a Gender Monetary Office and the creation of The Girls' Education Task Force (GETF) to promote the education of young girls. Rwanda's government also supports programs such as the Women for Women International Rwanda which focuses on women becoming economically independent and also the Rwanda Women's Network that helps combat physical and sexual violence against women. Rwanda also came in contact with Harvard's Public in Health to reform the countries health care and better its accessibility to women. Finally, Rwanda's government has a strict commitment to gender-based budgeting and it was the first country in which 50% of the parliament was female.

Since the genocide, the United Nations has been a fundamental partner in helping Rwanda. In 2008, the country was chosen to implement a UN strategy called "One UN" on development assistance. Rwanda also pledged to act accordingly and be committed to achieving the sustainable development goal of gender equality. In addition to contributing to the SDG 5, Rwanda has also planned to increase the economic participation of women until 2030.

The president of Rwanda Paul Kagame at the 2008 General Assembly said “With regards to empowering women and promoting their socio-economic and political participation, we continue to make modest progress. We believe that, besides improving gender relations in our country, this marks healthy progress towards realizing our vision of a united, democratic and prosperous Rwanda”.

The Republic of Rwanda understands the need to take measures to protect women and promote their advancement. It also recognizes the need to act accordingly to the sustainable development goals and include points of views while discussing the issue. Also, Rwanda comprehends the difficulty upon achieving gender equality and requires help from private institutions and from a vast amount of countries belonging to developed and developing regions. Also, it is extremely important to discuss marginalized groups of women such as women from rural areas, with physical and mental disabilities and also those suffering from unpaid care work and more. Taking into consideration what was previously said, the Republic of Rwanda brings to the committee the following ideas and solutions:

- 1) Rwanda calls for the creation of education programs that attend elderly and female adults with the goal of reeducating their views on rights and inform them about gender equality policies.
- 2) Rwanda encourages private institutions to team up with the Member States of the United Nations to create accessible and good quality sustainable infrastructure in the field of health care.
- 3) Taken into consideration the inequality within the political realm, Rwanda encourages that the Member States require a percentage of at least 30% of female politicians participating in the country's government.
- 4) In order to prohibit unpaid care work, Rwanda promotes the idea of increasing access to financial services for women as well as improving the use of available financial products.
- 5) In rural areas, where most of the gender equality policies are not correctly applied, Rwanda incentives that the Member States reinforce legislation and if yet not created, then to do so.
- 6) Furthermore, to try and diminish wage gaps between man and women, Rwanda believes that a country's government shall take care of topics such as maternity leaves and child care so that women can finally be seen as an equal employee candidate than men.

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