

POSITION PAPER

Committee: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

Agenda: Reproductive, Sexual, and Maternal Health

Portfolio: Spain

Introduction:

Ensuring the continuity and survival of a species, reproduction is the most vital phenomenon to maintain life on the planet. Humans have long revered reproduction as a sanctified activity necessitating life, and indigenous cultures have placed **maternal and sexual health at par and synonymous with life.**

In the 21st century, the technological world; we often overlook the basics of democracy, the right to reproductive and sexual education, where the young population is subject to uninformed decisions and misinformation. These stem from government inefficacy, lack of an integrated healthcare system that fails to encapsulate reproductive health with overall well-being, and purported taboos/misconceptions.

Reproductive and maternal healthcare are the strongholds of a population and need to be treated as such. By strengthening this area, we as governments ensure a better, inclusive and compassionate future.

Spreading awareness about this issue, accessible contraceptives, legal abortions and bodily autonomy must be our prime goals in addition to providing a comprehensive platform for parents to voice their concerns. Treating reproduction not as blasphemous but as a basic life process is what will help advance a nation, both on the population and global level.

Country stance:

The government of Spain has adopted innumerable methodical measures to ensure the well-being of its populace, through comprehensive policies for the issue in question. We as a nation have adopted the following policies to establish an inclusive, non-discriminatory healthcare framework:

- Focus on the development and **research on male contraception to encourage men's co-responsibility.**
- **Pre-birth leave from the 39th week of gestation**, compatible with subsequent maternity leave, and good obstetric and gynaecological practices will be promoted through a protocol that incorporates international and national guidelines.
- Affordable abortion wherein parents don't have to travel long distances for MTPs. Exercise of the right to termination of pregnancy for women aged 16 and 17 years and those with a disability **does not** require the consent of their legal guardians.

- Reproductive exploitation, forced abortion and pregnancy, forced sterilisation and forced contraception are **recognised as forms of violence against women**, as set out in the Istanbul Convention.

We as a nation believe in the all-round holistic development of our populace and have stringent measures in place to eliminate abuse on reproductive and maternal health grounds. We have several other policies in the pipeline, which once implemented will elevate the taboos associated with this issue and pave way for gender diversity and acceptance. **We, however, do not wish to elucidate them as they are our internal policies.**

Proposed solutions:

Reproductive and maternal well-being is a versatile and conducive state encapsulating all areas of health- physical, mental, emotional and social. The following are certain recommendations which can help in alleviating problems faced regarding this issue.

- Promoting affordable safe-to-use contraceptives, sanitary supplies, abortion and therapy through public-private partnership.
- Providing a non-discriminatory framework of qualified healthcare professionals to enable the populace to make informed decisions regarding STIs and bodily autonomy.
- Sexual education mandating in schools to promote a healthy attitude toward a supposedly taboo subject.
- A research-based implementation of policies regarding gender diversity, sexual identities, parturition, and post-birth care.

I urge the international community to establish a comprehensive framework to deal with the issue in question, and to implement research-backed policies for this sensitive agenda.

Conclusion:

I would like to put forth answers to questions mentioned in the Background Guide. The key perpetrators of bad reproductive and maternal health are the unhealthy attitudes of both the population and governments toward a supposedly taboo issue.

Spain has always been committed to promoting a healthy environment regarding the agenda in deliberation. The Constitution of Spain has stringent measures in place to check abuse and illegal activities related to the agenda. **We do not wish to elaborate since it would violate our internal policies. We, however, assure the Council that the Government of Spain is working tirelessly to improve its standing on the agenda.**

Lastly, as mentioned in the previous section, the points enumerated should enable the international community to promote overall sexual, reproductive and maternal well-being.
