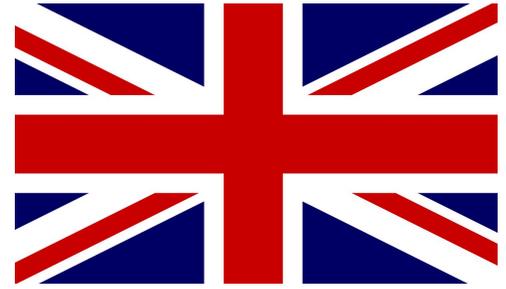


Country: United Kingdom

Committee: UN WOMEN

Agenda Item: Strengthening protections around women's fundamental rights in the MENA region



The United Kingdom believes that advancing gender equality and challenging discrimination is not only what needs to be done, but also a policy from which everyone benefits¹. Gender equality brings freedom, boosts prosperity and trade, strengthens global security and builds resilience. Women around the world can not flourish if misogyny goes unchecked ([gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)) Gender equality is in fact the fundamental building block of all healthy democracies.

We are committed to our three E's: education, empowering women and girls and championing their health and rights, and ending violence. Our government is investing and partnering with others across the world in order to assist everyone who identifies as, and is born as female to receive education, gain economic dependence, be represented in politics and live a life free from violence; with full bodily autonomy. We support all the brave women around the world who are struggling for their freedoms and rights; on every continent².

Women's rights violations remain a persistent global issue, with women in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region facing a range of structural and societal challenges. We recognize MENA is not a monolith; but is in fact a region of racial diversity and differing cultures, which makes broad generalizations inaccurate. However, gender-based disparities remain present within the region, disproportionately affecting women. Some of the issues that

¹ UK Government, *International Women and Girls Strategy 2023–2030* (London: Government of the United Kingdom, 2023), accessed 25.12.2025, GOV.UK.

² UK Government, *International Women and Girls Strategy 2023–2030* (London: Government of the United Kingdom, 2023), accessed 25.12.2025, GOV.UK.

are to be addressed include: financial dependence, restrictive gender norms, limited access to feminine sanitary products and comprehensive healthcare, underrepresentation in politics, exploitation of official and unofficial female workers and last but not least; disregard of bodily autonomy. It is important to note, that while many countries have taken legal action, participated in and have ratified international legal frameworks such as; Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) to improve current conditions; weak enforcement mechanisms and persistent social barriers often limit the effectiveness of such measures.

In response, the United Kingdom is aiming to support countries in the region, in strengthening women's health, safety, and legal protections through culturally respectful cooperation, while working to eliminate harmful practices that undermine women's fundamental rights. We will specifically be focusing on the affirming financial independence of women, via establishing and funding an international "Women's Bank", and pushing towards making sex education and information regarding reproductive health accessible, free as well as mandatory by law.

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