

MINORITIES AND GENDER: ACTIVITY THREE

ACTIVITY CARD

A major reason why national identity and the unity of many countries are still a problem today is due to the treatment of minority groups and women. Culture is a big factor in defining relations between groups, and within groups. For example, culture defines the relations between men and women and between people of different ethnicities, languages, religious beliefs, and cultural practices. This can make the development of a sense of national identity a huge and serious problem in many countries where multiple groups of people try to find peaceful, fair and equitable ways to live together successfully. The full integration and empowerment of women in society remains a major task worldwide, and violations of women's rights are still largely unrecognized.

A key question asked by the international community regards where to draw the line between states' rights to sovereignty, and the rights of groups within states to self-determination. Governments can take one of two approaches to the question of how to deal with their women and minority populations. They can either adopt policies that are inclusive or exclusive.

When policies towards minorities are based on discrimination, violence, or the violation of human rights, other problems may arise, like civil war and the break-up of countries. Because it is not considered a major social, economic or political concern in most countries, the violation of the human rights of women goes largely unreported. The ill treatment of women can, however, contribute to sustained poverty within a country, and impact the health and welfare of children. Such problems require the international community's response. How the international community responds depends very much on the perceived severity of the situation and the costs of any proposed action.

Directions: As a group, discuss the questions below so that you become knowledgeable about your country's position on gender and minority rights. Use your "World Problems Scenario" as a resource. In addition, investigate the websites that have been provided in both the human rights section and the beginning of the country profiles section.

1. What is the present situation for the country you represent regarding the human rights issues of its women and minorities? What kinds of policies has your country used to deal with its minority populations and its women? Inclusion? Exclusion?
2. What kinds of tensions exist in the country you represent between its right of sovereignty and the right of self-determination of its minority groups and women? What kinds of international responses have your country experienced regarding its treatment of women and minority populations?
3. Identify key human rights problems and challenges that do or do not exist in your country. Prioritize the existing problems and challenges in terms of seriousness and immediacy regarding the need for attention.
4. Define the goals your country has in dealing with the key minority and women's rights problems and challenges that you have prioritized. Prioritize your goals for dealing with your country's human rights issues.
5. Identify strategies for achieving the goals your group has prioritized. Identify the strategies that your country could implement at both the national and international levels to address these human rights issues. Remember, your strategies must realistically reflect and address the way you have prioritized your goals in your country.

Task: Design a visual that has four distinct sections: 1)A summary of the human rights situation of minority groups and women in your country and the policy approaches that have been used; 2)A prioritized list of the key minority and women's rights problems and challenges for your country; 3)A prioritized list of the goals your country has for dealing with the impact of minority and women's issues on its nation; and, 4)The national and international plans and strategies you have for achieving your goals for dealing with women's and minority issues in your country. Present your visual to the class with the kind of depth and breadth explanations that will thoroughly teach your fellow delegates about the issue of women's and minority human rights.

TASK EVALUATION CRITERIA

- **Visual includes four distinct sections and makes use of color, symbols, maps, timelines, charts, graphs, or other visual techniques that help to convey information.**
- **Visual includes a summary of key points on the current minority and gender rights situation in your country and summarizes the policy approaches your country has used in dealing with minority and gender rights.**
- **Visual includes a prioritized list of the key minority and gender rights problems and challenges your country faces.**
- **Visual includes a prioritized list of the goals your country has for dealing with its minority and gender rights issues.**
- **Visual includes the national and international plans your group has for achieving your country's minority and gender rights goals.**
- **Presentation teaches the class about the issue of minority and gender rights in your country.**