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Topic: ECOSOC / Advancement of Women

Today I went to the ECOSOC committee room to report on the topic advancement of women. Advancement of Women discusses how to protect women's rights. Around the world women have to work through all types of challenges to accomplish anything. Even just getting a job is difficult. And if you do it is unlikely that you will be appreciated as much as a man with the same amount of training and experience as you. Women frequently get assaulted in the US and even more often in developing countries. In addition to this women are often uneducated. These among other things are the challenges that women face every day.

In the committee room I interviewed many different countries. Most countries had similar beliefs and all agreed that it is important to advance women. In their resolutions several countries, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Vietnam and Lebanon, thought that having a shelter that offered free child care, healthcare and counseling would help women, especial those suffering from sexual harassment.

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There is a lot of problems with rape. A lot of countries view this as one of the most pressing issues to address. Lebanon wants workplace harassment to be addressed instead of ignored. Jamaica wants to teach women how stand up for themselves and Kazakhstan wants to teach men and boys that rape and sexual harassment is wrong. Haiti has an especially difficult situation, women and girls as young as 13 are selling themselves or having paid sex. This is happening so often that it is believed to be normal now.

Eritrea has a complicated issue with the military. The military takes girls as young as 15 to work in the army. They end up staying in camps deemed rape camps. Most girls that get taken to work in the military can't leave unless they get pregnant. Eritrea believes that things would be better for women if a portion of the military funds were donated to build shelters for them.

Child marriage is another problem for many countries. In their resolution they decided to recommend that women shouldn't be married before they reach legal adulthood in their country or 18 years old. To add to this they also put in their resolution to keep children in school until a certain age.

Another topic that was discussed was the pay gap. It is especially challenging for countries that have a low GDP, these countries also usually have less types of jobs and rely mainly on agriculture. Belarus has a three year maternity leave, which is good for bonding with the mother and child, but it also makes it hard for women to return to the workforce after so long at home. Some moms have a hard time getting childcare or schooling for children, especially for girls. It may be too expensive or there just might not be anything accessible. Often times this forces mothers to stay at home.

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Stereotypes were often mentioned in my interviews. Kazakhstan said that stereotypes about men working and women being the ones who cook and clean are what cause many of the problems for women and girls today. Belize commented that men holding power there are creating sexist stereotypes

After listening to what all the delegates said I believe that there is still a lot of work to do to give women the rights they deserve. I have concluded that there are a lot more challenges for women in developing countries than developed countries. This gives bigger countries a responsibility to help advance women in developing countries where they suffer the most.