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CSW: Topic #1 - Reproductive Rights

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This year, the CSW will focus on two issues affecting women's rights internationally, the first of which being reproductive rights. Women's reproductive rights are lacking in many countries, affecting hundreds of millions of women annually. “About 200,000 maternal deaths result from the lack or failure of contraceptive services.”¹ Without a solution from this international body, women will continue to lack rights of protection over their bodies.

This is a global issue. Although 60 countries have liberalized abortion laws in the past 30 years, there are still many regressing in this field. There are over 20 countries where abortion is illegal, and in those countries, there are 91 million women of reproductive age who have been stripped of reproductive rights².

The consequences of this issue vary. A lack of accessibility to safe abortion options is a major issue, as it results in many unsafe abortions. 45% of abortions are “unsafe”, and can result in complications or death³. Every year, 4.7-13.2% of maternal deaths are due to unsafe abortions.

Additionally, there is a mental health risk to denied abortions. Studies indicate that women denied abortions are more likely to have anxiety, stress, and lower self-esteem than those offered abortion rights⁴.

Although the international community has begun to address this issue and take steps in the right direction, much work is still needed to resolve this issue. The following are some questions to help guide your research:

- How can CSW incentivize state governments and individuals to expand reproductive rights?
- How can CSW create a resolution addressing all possible obstructions to reproductive rights?
- Are there ways to combat the negative effects of a lack of abortion availability?

¹<https://press.un.org/en/1997/19970528.pop647.html#:~:text=%2D%2D%20120%2D150%20million%20women,a%20range%20of%20contraceptive%20services>

² <https://www.axios.com/2022/05/05/only-3-countries-have-rolled-back-abortion-rights-since-1994>

³ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/abortion>

⁴ <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2022/09/news-facts-abortion-mental-health>

- How can CSW work with other organizations, including but not limited to WHO and UNHRC, to combat this issue?

While these are some questions to keep in mind while researching and writing your papers, these questions shouldn't limit your research. Please keep in mind that you are representing your country's view, not your own, and your research should be directed accordingly. Please also make sure to provide citations: you will submit all papers through Turnitin, and any form of plagiarism is not tolerated.

I look forward to hearing all of your ideas. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at thalstuc@mail.yu.edu.

Best of luck!

Talia Halstuch

Chair, Commission on the Status of Women

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