



THE MUN FACTORY

(TMF)

UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

(UNCSW)

DELEGATE GUIDE

AGENDA

Examining the Consequences of the Iran Conflict and Evaluating the Consistency of Major Powers in Applying International Law and Human Rights Standards on Women's Physical and Mental Health

30 OCTOBER – 1 NOVEMBER

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A note from The MUN Factory

This guide is a starting point, not a substitute for independent research. Delegates are expected to read the primary sources listed on the final page and to arrive with a grounded, country-accurate position. Facts and figures relating to the ongoing conflict were accurate at the time of writing; because this is a live, rapidly evolving situation, delegates should verify the latest developments before the conference.

02 About the UNCSW

Introduction

The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. Established in 1946 as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Commission develops global standards, monitors the implementation of international commitments, and recommends measures to advance the political, economic, civil, social, and educational rights of women worldwide. The Commission also reviews progress on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), one of the most comprehensive international frameworks for advancing women's rights, and prepares recommendations that feed into the wider work of ECOSOC and the General Assembly.

Mandate

- Promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls worldwide
- Protect and advance women's civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights
- Monitor implementation of international commitments on women's rights, including the Beijing Platform for Action
- Recommend policies and measures to ECOSOC on urgent issues affecting women
- Review global progress annually through a priority theme and negotiated Agreed Conclusions

Membership

- 45 Member States, elected by ECOSOC for staggered four-year terms
- Seats distributed geographically to ensure equitable regional representation
- The Commission convenes annually at UN Headquarters in New York, typically in March, alongside a Ministerial-level segment and side events with civil society and NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC

Powers and Limitations

Like other functional commissions of ECOSOC, the CSW has no enforcement powers. It cannot impose sanctions, authorise the use of force, or compel State compliance, and its Agreed Conclusions are not legally binding. Its influence instead rests on normative authority, diplomatic pressure, and the political weight of consensus-based negotiation among Member States. The Commission works in close coordination with UN Women — established in 2010 as the UN entity dedicated to gender equality — which provides secretariat support, expertise, and field-level programming, and with the CEDAW Committee, the treaty body that monitors the separate, legally binding Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Working Methods

- Annual sessions negotiate and adopt Agreed Conclusions on a priority theme, generally by consensus

- The Commission may adopt resolutions on urgent or emerging issues affecting women, including in situations of armed conflict
- National governments, UN entities, and accredited NGOs may deliver statements and organise parallel events during sessions
- The Commission's outcomes inform, and are informed by, the work of UN Women, OHCHR, WHO, and UNFPA

How a CSW Session Runs

Each annual session is guided by a Bureau — a Chair and four Vice-Chairs, one from each UN regional group — elected to steer negotiations and represent the Commission between sessions. Sessions open with a Ministerial segment featuring a general debate and high-level round tables, followed by interactive dialogues, expert panels, and negotiation of the session's Agreed Conclusions. Every five years the Commission also adopts a multi-year programme of work, setting the priority themes for the following sessions. In March 2025, CSW69 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action ('Beijing+30'), adopting a political declaration reaffirming the Platform and a new multi-year programme of work; CSW70, held in March 2026, took up the resulting priority theme of ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls. TMF-UNCSW will follow this same format in miniature: a general debate, negotiation blocs, and a drive toward consensus-based Agreed Conclusions or resolutions, rather than a simple majority vote.

CSW and CEDAW: Not the Same Body

Delegates frequently confuse the Commission with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (the CEDAW Committee). They are distinct: the Commission is an intergovernmental, Member-State body that sets policy and normative direction, while the CEDAW Committee is a treaty body of independent experts that monitors compliance with the legally binding CEDAW Convention. The two interact but do not report to one another.

	CSW (this committee)	CEDAW Committee
Nature	Intergovernmental — 45 Member States	Treaty body — 23 independent experts
Legal basis	ECOSOC resolution 11(II), 1946	CEDAW Convention, 1979
Main output	Agreed Conclusions and resolutions	Concluding observations on State reports
Bindingness	Not legally binding	Binding on States that ratify CEDAW
Iran's status	Iran is an eligible UN Member State	Iran has not signed or ratified CEDAW

03 Understanding the Agenda

Definitions

- International Humanitarian Law (IHL) — the body of law, chiefly the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, that regulates the conduct of parties during armed conflict and seeks to limit its effects by protecting civilians, medical personnel, and those no longer taking part in hostilities.
- Human Rights Law — the framework of protections owed to individuals at all times, in peace and in war, applicable in parallel with and complementary to IHL.
- Armed Conflict — protracted armed confrontation between States, or between a State and organised armed groups, that triggers the application of IHL.
- Women's Physical Health — encompasses maternal and reproductive healthcare, injury and mortality from direct violence, and access to medicine, nutrition, and clean water during crisis.
- Mental Health — psychological wellbeing, including trauma, anxiety, depression, and stress arising from conflict, displacement, and loss.
- Gender-Based Violence (GBV) — violence directed at a person because of their gender, which increases in frequency and severity in conflict and displacement settings.
- Displacement — the forced movement of people from their homes, whether within a country's borders (internal displacement) or across them (as refugees).
- Accountability — the mechanisms, judicial and non-judicial, through which violations of IHL and human rights law are investigated, attributed, and remedied.
- Double Standards — the inconsistent invocation, interpretation, or enforcement of international legal obligations depending on the identity of the parties involved; a central concern of this agenda.

Scope of the Agenda

This agenda asks the Commission to examine two interlinked problems and to propose remedies for both. The first is the humanitarian toll of the ongoing conflict involving Iran — an escalating confrontation that has unfolded in two major phases since June 2025 — on the physical and mental health of women and girls, in Iran and across the wider region. The second is the comparative consistency, or inconsistency, with which major powers invoke, apply, and enforce international humanitarian law and human rights standards across this and other conflicts. Delegates are not asked to assign blame to a single State, but to critically and evenhandedly assess whether legal principles are being applied uniformly, or selectively, and to propose mechanisms that better protect women's health regardless of which parties are involved.

Why the Issue Matters Today

- Two major escalations within roughly eight months — the June 2025 Twelve-Day War and the war that began on 28 February 2026 — have produced record civilian tolls among women and girls, including the killing of more than 165 schoolgirls in a single strike on a primary school in Minab on the first day of the 2026 war.

- The UN Security Council's 'snapback' reimposition of multilateral sanctions on Iran in September 2025 has revived long-standing debate over whether formal humanitarian exemptions meaningfully protect women's access to maternal, reproductive, and life-saving healthcare in practice.
- The closure and contested reopening of the Strait of Hormuz has disrupted global energy and food supply chains, raising fuel and food prices and compounding maternal-health and food-security risks for women far beyond the conflict zone.
- Mass protests inside Iran in December 2025 and January 2026 coincided with the international conflict, compounding risks of arbitrary detention, internet shutdowns, and violence against women demonstrators.
- Divergent international reactions to civilian harm in Iran, compared with the international response to other conflicts, raise recurring questions about whether major powers apply international law consistently or selectively.

04 Historical Background

Establishment of Modern Iran and Regional Tensions

The Islamic Republic of Iran was established following the 1979 Revolution, which ousted the Pahlavi monarchy and installed a theocratic government under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Israel, which had maintained relations with the pre-revolutionary monarchy, became one of the new Iranian government's principal regional adversaries. Since the mid-1980s, Iran and Israel have waged a sustained proxy conflict, with Iran supporting armed groups including Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in Gaza, and the Houthi movement in Yemen, while avoiding direct military confrontation with Israel for decades.

Nuclear Negotiations and Sanctions

Concern over Iran's nuclear programme drove years of diplomacy and sanctions. In 2015, Iran and the P5+1 (the five permanent Security Council members plus Germany) concluded the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), lifting broad sanctions in exchange for verified constraints on Iran's nuclear activities, endorsed by Security Council Resolution 2231. In 2018, the United States withdrew from the JCPOA and reimposed unilateral sanctions under a policy of 'maximum pressure'. Direct military exchanges between Israel and Iran occurred twice in 2024, foreshadowing the larger confrontations that followed.

Escalation of Hostilities (2025–2026)

On 13 June 2025, Israel launched Operation Rising Lion, a surprise campaign of strikes on Iranian nuclear and military facilities and the killing of senior military commanders and nuclear scientists. Iran retaliated with missile and drone strikes on Israeli territory. The United States joined the campaign on 22 June with strikes on Iran's Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan nuclear sites; Iran responded with a strike on the US Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar. A ceasefire brokered by the United States and Qatar took effect on 24 June, ending what became known as the Twelve-Day War.

In September 2025, the Security Council's 'snapback' mechanism under Resolution 2231 was triggered, reimposing multilateral sanctions on Iran over compliance concerns with its nuclear programme. Domestic unrest followed: mass protests beginning on 28 December 2025 were met with lethal force, and a near-total internet and telecommunications shutdown was imposed from 8 January 2026. On 23 January 2026, the Human Rights Council held its 39th special session on Iran, extending the mandates of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission and the Special Rapporteur on human rights in Iran.

On 28 February 2026, Israel and the United States launched renewed, coordinated strikes on Iranian targets, opening what is now referred to as the 2026 Iran war; the Supreme Leader was among the senior officials killed. On the same day, a strike on a primary school in Minab killed more than 165 girls, an incident that became a focal point for concern over the conflict's impact on women and girls. Iran responded by closing the Strait of Hormuz to shipping, disrupting a corridor that carries roughly a quarter of the world's oil trade. On 11 March 2026, the Security Council adopted Resolution 2817 condemning Iranian attacks on neighbouring States, by a vote of 13 in favour, none against, and two abstentions (China and the Russian Federation).

A two-week ceasefire between the United States and Iran, mediated by Pakistan, took effect on 8 April 2026, intended to reopen the Strait; within hours, Israel struck targets across Lebanon, killing hundreds. Talks in Islamabad between US and Iranian officials failed on 11–12 April, after which the United States imposed a naval

blockade of Iranian ports on 13 April. A memorandum of understanding signed on 14 June 2026 sought to resolve the conflict within 60 days, but by July 2026 the arrangement had unravelled: President Trump declared the ceasefire over amid renewed strikes, with safe transit through the Strait of Hormuz remaining the principal obstacle to further negotiation. The situation remained fluid and unresolved as of the conference dates, and delegates should follow developments closely in the weeks before the conference.

Women's Role During the Conflict

Iranian women have been central to recent political life, from the 2022 'Woman, Life, Freedom' movement to the protests of December 2025 and January 2026, and have faced harassment, arbitrary detention, and violence for their activism. Women also make up a substantial share of frontline healthcare workers and caregivers, placing them disproportionately at risk from strikes on hospitals and from the collapse of health infrastructure, while also bearing the burden of family and community care during displacement.

Timeline of Major Events

Date	Event
1979	Islamic Revolution establishes the Islamic Republic of Iran.
1985–present	Iran–Israel proxy conflict, waged chiefly through non-state armed groups.
2015	JCPOA signed by Iran and the P5+1; endorsed by UNSC Resolution 2231.
2018	United States withdraws from the JCPOA and reimposes 'maximum pressure' sanctions.
2024	Two direct military exchanges between Israel and Iran.
13–24 Jun 2025	Twelve-Day War: Operation Rising Lion, US strikes on nuclear sites, ceasefire.
Sep 2025	UN 'snapback' mechanism reimposes multilateral sanctions on Iran.
28 Dec 2025–Jan 2026	Mass protests in Iran met with lethal force; nationwide internet shutdown from 8 Jan.
23 Jan 2026	HRC holds its 39th special session on Iran; Fact-Finding Mission mandate extended.
28 Feb 2026	Renewed Israeli–US strikes begin the 2026 Iran war; Minab girls' school strike.
11 Mar 2026	UNSC adopts Resolution 2817 condemning Iranian attacks on neighbouring States.
Mar–Apr 2026	Strait of Hormuz closed by Iran; global shipping and energy markets disrupted.
8 Apr 2026	Pakistan-mediated US–Iran ceasefire takes effect.
13 Apr 2026	Islamabad talks fail; United States imposes naval blockade of Iranian ports.
14 Jun 2026	Memorandum of Understanding signed, aiming to resolve the conflict within 60 days.
Jul 2026	Ceasefire declared over amid renewed strikes; Strait of Hormuz access remains contested.

05 Current Global Situation

The Numbers at a Glance

496+ Women reportedly killed in Iran as of 21 April 2026, with about 4,000 injured (Iran Ministry of Health and Medical Education)	165+ Girls killed in a single strike on a primary school in Minab, Iran, on 28 February 2026	3.2M People estimated displaced within Iran as of late March 2026; UN Women estimates roughly half are women and girls
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Impact on Women in Iran

According to figures reported by the Iranian Ministry of Health and Medical Education, at least 496 women had been killed and around 4,000 injured by 21 April 2026 as a result of military operations since the war began on 28 February. Displacement inside Iran has been extensive, with UN Women estimating that up to 3.2 million people have been displaced and that roughly half are women and girls. Restrictions on internet and mobile connectivity, imposed both during the December 2025–January 2026 protests and amid the wider conflict, have reduced women's access to information, livelihoods, and services, and have heightened risks for women who attempt to document abuses or seek help. Strikes on oil and gas infrastructure near populated areas have additionally raised concern about environmental and reproductive health effects for women living nearby.

Regional Spillover

The conflict's humanitarian consequences have not been confined to Iran. In Lebanon, at least 277 women were reportedly killed and 1,250 injured by 26 April 2026 amid a parallel escalation involving Israeli strikes, and more than 150 attacks on healthcare facilities and personnel were recorded there between 2 March and 29 April 2026, including the killing of medical staff and the destruction of hospitals. In Gaza, border-crossing closures and constraints on humanitarian access, compounded by the wider regional escalation, have further reduced the delivery of life-saving support to women and girls. The closure and later blockade of the Strait of Hormuz — through which roughly a quarter of the world's oil passes — disrupted humanitarian supply routes linking the Middle East to East Africa and South Asia, driving up energy and food prices in regions where women and girls already face some of the world's highest rates of food insecurity and maternal mortality.

Physical Health

- Damage to hospitals, clinics, and maternity wards from strikes and from the broader collapse of infrastructure
- Interrupted maternal and reproductive healthcare, including antenatal care, safe delivery services, and contraception
- Shortages of medicines and medical equipment, compounded by banking and supply-chain disruption linked to sanctions
- Rising food insecurity linked to disrupted trade routes through the Strait of Hormuz and broader regional instability

- Possible reproductive and environmental health effects from strikes on oil, gas, and industrial infrastructure

Mental Health

- Trauma, anxiety, and depression among women and girls exposed to strikes, displacement, and loss
- Psychological distress compounded by internet and telecommunications shutdowns that cut off access to information, family members, and support services
- Stress arising from family separation and repeated displacement, including in overcrowded shelters
- Compounded trauma for women who have faced both wartime violence and domestic repression linked to the December 2025–January 2026 protests

Sanctions and Access to Healthcare

Multilateral sanctions on Iran, reimposed through the September 2025 'snapback' mechanism, formally exempt food, medicine, and medical equipment on humanitarian grounds. In practice, researchers, UN human rights experts, and civil society organisations have long documented that these exemptions frequently fail to translate into real access: banks and suppliers, wary of legal and financial exposure, decline to process transactions for goods that are technically permitted, leaving critical treatments unavailable despite being formally exempt. The UN Special Rapporteur on unilateral coercive measures has identified women-led households, alongside people with severe illness, disabled people, and refugees, among the groups most adversely affected by these gaps between exemption on paper and access in practice — a pattern with direct relevance to the resolution this Commission is asked to produce.

06 International Legal Framework

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

Article 3 guarantees the right to life, liberty, and security of person. Article 5 prohibits torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. Article 25 recognises the right to a standard of living adequate for health and wellbeing, including medical care, and specifies that motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance — provisions of direct relevance to women's health in conflict and under sanctions.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

Adopted in 1979, CEDAW is the principal binding international treaty on women's rights, ratified by 189 States. Iran is one of a small number of UN Member States, along with Sudan, Somalia, and Tonga among others, that has not signed or ratified CEDAW, a fact that shapes debate over which legal instruments can be invoked to hold Iran accountable for its treatment of women, distinct from the question of how other States conduct military operations affecting Iranian women.

Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols

The 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols form the core of international humanitarian law, protecting civilians, medical personnel, and medical facilities during armed conflict, and prohibiting attacks on civilian objects such as schools — directly relevant to incidents such as the strike on the Minab school. IHL applies to all parties to a conflict regardless of the lawfulness of their resort to force, and operates alongside, rather than instead of, international human rights law.

Rome Statute (1998)

Establishes the International Criminal Court's jurisdiction over war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, including gender-based crimes and attacks directed at civilians and civilian objects such as schools and hospitals.

UN Charter

Article 2(4) prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, subject to exceptions including self-defence under Article 51 and Security Council authorisation under Chapter VII, which also empowers the Council to impose sanctions.

UN Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015)

Endorsed the JCPOA and established the mechanism, since triggered, by which sanctions on Iran could 'snap back' into force in the event of significant non-compliance — the same mechanism invoked in September 2025.

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)

Identifies women and armed conflict, and women and health, among its twelve critical areas of concern, calling on States to reduce the disproportionate impact of conflict on women and girls and to guarantee their access to healthcare.

Sustainable Development Goals

- SDG 3 — Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all, including maternal and reproductive health
- SDG 5 — Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- SDG 16 — Promote peaceful, just, and inclusive institutions

Delegate tip: no single instrument obliges States to assess, in advance, how sanctions or military operations will affect women's health, and no standing mechanism verifies whether humanitarian exemptions function in practice. Identifying and closing that gap is central to this agenda.

07 Evaluating Major Powers

This committee is not intended to assign guilt to any single State. Rather, delegates should critically and evenhandedly assess whether international legal principles are applied consistently across conflicts, and propose mechanisms that make consistent application more likely in future. Delegates should support arguments with verified evidence while maintaining diplomatic language.

Sanctions and Humanitarian Impact

Delegates should examine whether sanctions regimes, including the multilateral sanctions reimposed on Iran in September 2025, are designed and monitored with women's health outcomes in mind. Formal humanitarian exemptions for food and medicine exist, but researchers and UN experts have repeatedly found that banking restrictions and supplier caution can render such exemptions ineffective in practice, raising the question of whether sanctioning States bear responsibility for monitoring and correcting these downstream effects on maternal and reproductive healthcare.

Consistency in Applying International Humanitarian Law

Delegates should consider whether the international response to civilian harm, including strikes affecting schools, hospitals, and residential areas in Iran, Lebanon, and elsewhere in the region, has been consistent, or whether responses have varied depending on which State caused the harm. The Security Council's divided votes on resolutions concerning this conflict, including the 13–0–2 vote on Resolution 2817, illustrate how geopolitical alignment can shape which violations receive formal condemnation.

Impartiality of Investigations and Accountability Mechanisms

Delegates should assess how consistently fact-finding missions, commissions of inquiry, and international courts are mandated and resourced across different conflicts, and whether their findings translate into meaningful accountability. The mandate extensions granted to the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission and Special Rapporteur on Iran in January 2026 offer one case study; delegates should compare the pace and reach of accountability mechanisms applied to Iran with those applied to other parties to this and comparable conflicts.

Are Women's Rights Consistently Prioritised?

Delegates should examine whether the specific health needs of women and girls are addressed as a distinct priority in ceasefire negotiations, sanctions design, and humanitarian response planning, or whether they are folded into general civilian-protection language that does not translate into targeted action such as maternal-health corridors, protection of health workers, or GBV response funding.

Guiding Questions

- Are sanctions regimes evaluated in advance, and monitored on an ongoing basis, for their humanitarian and gender-specific impacts?
- Is international humanitarian law, including the prohibition on attacking schools and hospitals, applied and enforced equally regardless of which party is responsible?
- How do humanitarian exemptions function in practice, and who is responsible when they fail?

- Are investigations into civilian harm resourced and mandated impartially across different conflicts?
- Are women's health needs treated as a distinct priority in ceasefire and humanitarian planning, or addressed only incidentally?

08 Country & Regional Bloc Positions

Positions below are generalised starting points only. Delegates must verify their assigned country's specific record, statements, and voting history — blocs are rarely unanimous on this agenda.

P5 (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States)

The P5 are deeply divided on this conflict. The United States and, to varying degrees, the United Kingdom and France have supported military and diplomatic pressure on Iran and generally frame the conflict around Iran's nuclear programme and regional conduct, while facing their own scrutiny over the humanitarian consequences of strikes and sanctions. China and Russia abstained on Security Council Resolution 2817 and have generally emphasised sovereignty, opposition to unilateral coercive measures, and caution about resolutions they view as one-sided.

European Union

EU Member States have generally supported humanitarian access and diplomatic de-escalation while participating in or maintaining sanctions frameworks; the bloc has also called for independent investigation of civilian harm, including the Minab school strike.

Gulf Cooperation Council

Gulf States have faced direct exposure to the conflict through the Strait of Hormuz crisis and regional strikes, and have generally prioritised de-escalation and protection of shipping lanes over taking sides, while voicing humanitarian concern for civilians on all sides.

Arab League

Positions vary considerably; several member states have condemned strikes on civilian infrastructure across the region, including in Lebanon and Gaza, while relations with Iran differ widely across the bloc.

African Union

AU member states have generally called for de-escalation and protection of civilians, and have raised concern about the conflict's spillover effects on global food and fuel prices, which disproportionately affect food-insecure regions of Africa.

ASEAN

The bloc's foundational principle of non-interference generally limits collective action on this conflict; individual members have expressed concern chiefly over the economic impact of Strait of Hormuz disruption on energy imports.

Latin America (GRULAC)

States in this region have generally called for adherence to international humanitarian law and for humanitarian exemptions to function effectively in practice, drawing on the region's own experience with the humanitarian effects of sanctions regimes.

Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

Generally supportive of strengthened international protections for civilians but constrained by limited diplomatic capacity on this specific conflict; often prioritise the issue's global economic spillover, including fuel and food price rises, over the underlying geopolitical dispute.

09 Previous UN Action

Recent CSW Sessions

Session	Dates	Priority Theme
CSW68 (2024)	11–22 March 2024	Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls
CSW69 / Beijing+30 (2025)	10–21 March 2025	Review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, thirty years on
CSW70 (2026)	9–19 March 2026	Ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls

Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security

Resolution	Focus
Resolution 1325 (2000)	Women, Peace and Security — recognises the disproportionate impact of conflict on women and calls for their participation in peace processes.
Resolution 1820 (2008)	Recognises conflict-related sexual violence as a threat to international peace and security.
Resolution 1888 (2009)	Strengthens mechanisms for the protection of women from violence in armed conflict.
Resolution 2467 (2019)	Advances a survivor-centred approach to conflict-related sexual violence.

Action on the Current Conflict

- UNSC Resolution 2817 (11 March 2026) — condemned Iranian attacks on neighbouring States as the 2026 war escalated; adopted 13–0–2, with China and the Russian Federation abstaining.
- HRC 39th Special Session (23 January 2026) — addressed the deteriorating human rights situation in Iran amid the December 2025–January 2026 protests; extended the mandates of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Iran and the Special Rapporteur on human rights in Iran.
- HRC Special Session (24 November 2022) — an earlier special session on the situation of human rights in Iran, with particular reference to women and children.
- UN Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015) and its 'snapback' mechanism — the legal basis for the September 2025 reimposition of multilateral sanctions.

UN Women and Humanitarian Response

UN Women has issued a series of statements since the escalation began on 28 February 2026, welcoming ceasefire announcements, condemning attacks affecting women and girls including the Minab school strike, and calling for de-escalation, unimpeded humanitarian access, and gender-responsive humanitarian action. UN

Women has scaled up protection and livelihoods programming across the region and continues to publish updated figures on women killed, injured, and displaced.

Other UN Bodies

- WHO Emergency Health Initiatives — supporting health-system response in Iran and Lebanon, including efforts to sustain maternal and reproductive health services
- UNFPA Humanitarian Response — coordinating reproductive health and GBV response for displaced women and girls across the region
- OHCHR — supporting the Fact-Finding Mission and Special Rapporteur mandates on Iran, and monitoring the humanitarian effects of sanctions

10 Questions a Resolution Should Address

A strong draft resolution answers concrete questions rather than restating the problem. Delegates should use the following as a checklist while drafting operative clauses.

- Protecting women's health in conflict: what concrete measures — protection of hospitals and health workers, safe corridors for maternal care, rapid-response medical support — should states and the UN system establish for women in high-risk conflict environments?
- Humanitarian access: how can unimpeded, verified humanitarian access be guaranteed for women and girls, including through and around contested chokepoints such as the Strait of Hormuz?
- Sanctions and health: what monitoring or verification mechanism could ensure that humanitarian exemptions in sanctions regimes function in practice, rather than only on paper?
- Mental health services: what support should be mobilised for women and girls experiencing trauma from displacement, bombardment, and family separation?
- Maternal healthcare: how should the resolution address continuity of antenatal, delivery, and reproductive healthcare during active conflict and displacement?
- Refugee and IDP protection: what specific protections should apply to displaced women and girls, including in overcrowded shelters and across borders?
- Accountability mechanisms: how should attacks on civilian infrastructure, including schools and hospitals, be investigated impartially regardless of which party is responsible?
- Consistency in applying international law: what steps can the Commission recommend to reduce double standards in how major powers respond to comparable violations across different conflicts?
- Gender-sensitive reconstruction: how should reconstruction and recovery planning centre women's needs and leadership?
- Women's participation in peacebuilding: how can the resolution ensure Iranian and regional women are included in ceasefire negotiations and post-conflict planning, consistent with Resolution 1325?
- International cooperation and monitoring: what reporting mechanism should track implementation, and how should it interact with UN Women, OHCHR, WHO, and UNFPA reporting lines?

Drafting tip: operative clauses should specify who is responsible for an action, what that action is, and by when or through what mechanism it will be reviewed — vague calls to 'urge' or 'encourage' without a follow-up mechanism rarely produce change.

11 Delegate Research Guide

Use this checklist to build a complete, defensible country position before the conference begins.

Country Profile Checklist

- Country's position on the Iran conflict and any direct involvement (military, diplomatic, economic)
- Bilateral relations with Iran
- Bilateral relations with Israel
- Position on sanctions against Iran, including any national or bloc-level measures
- Position on humanitarian aid access and funding for the region
- CEDAW ratification status and any reservations
- Humanitarian assistance provided to Iran, Lebanon, Gaza, or other affected populations
- Voting history on relevant Security Council and Human Rights Council resolutions
- Women's health indicators (maternal mortality, access to reproductive healthcare)
- Peacekeeping and humanitarian mission participation in the region

Statistics to Research

- National maternal mortality ratio and trend
- Humanitarian funding contributed to the current response, if applicable
- National CEDAW and Beijing Platform implementation status (via UPR and CEDAW Committee reporting, where applicable)

International Treaties Ratified

- CEDAW, and whether the Optional Protocol allowing individual complaints has been accepted
- ICCPR and ICESCR
- Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court

Key Stakeholders, Allies, and Opponents

- Key stakeholders: foreign ministries, national human rights institutions, and humanitarian agencies engaged in the response
- Possible allies: states with a similar position on sanctions, humanitarian access, or accountability mechanisms
- Possible opponents: states likely to resist language on sanctions monitoring, binding accountability mechanisms, or criticism of specific parties

12 Glossary, Resources & Bibliography

Glossary

- CEDAW — Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the principal binding international treaty on women's rights.
- Gender-Based Violence (GBV) — violence directed at a person because of their gender.
- International Humanitarian Law (IHL) — the body of law regulating the conduct of parties during armed conflict.
- Refugee — a person who has fled across an international border owing to a well-founded fear of persecution or conflict.
- Internally Displaced Person (IDP) — a person forced to flee their home but who remains within their country's borders.
- Accountability — mechanisms through which violations of international law are investigated, attributed, and remedied.
- Humanitarian Exemption — a formal carve-out in a sanctions regime permitting trade in goods such as food and medicine for humanitarian purposes.
- Snapback Mechanism — the process under Security Council Resolution 2231 by which sanctions on Iran can be automatically reimposed following a finding of non-compliance.
- Peacebuilding — measures taken to reduce the risk of a return to conflict and to support recovery and reconciliation.
- Double Standards — the inconsistent application of legal or normative standards depending on the party involved.

Official Resources

- UN Women — <https://www.unwomen.org>
- Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) — <https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw>
- CSW69 / Beijing+30 (2025) — <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/commission-on-the-status-of-women/csw69-2025>
- UN Women — Peace and Security — <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security>
- UN Women — Statements on the Middle East Escalation — <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/statement>
- United Nations Treaty Collection — <https://treaties.un.org>
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- United Nations Charter
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
- Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 2231, 2467, and 2817
- UN Women statements and reports on the impact of the Middle East escalation on women and girls (2026)
- WHO and UNFPA situation reports on the region
- OHCHR and Human Rights Council reporting on Iran (2025–2026)

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This guide was prepared to support delegate preparation and committee research. Facts and figures relating to the ongoing conflict were accurate at the time of writing; because this is a live, rapidly evolving situation, delegates should verify the latest developments before the conference.