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**CSW**

**COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

**BRIEFING PAPER  
HABSMUN 2024**

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# Disparities in sanitary products access

Hello everyone, my name is Gauri Samani, and I will be chairing the Commission on the Status of Women alongside Emma Bernholt at the HabsMUN Conference 2024. MUN is a great opportunity for young people to experience what a real UN conference might look like, and it is my pleasure to welcome first time delegates and experienced delegates to join us. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. You can send an email to me at [GSamani210581@habsgirls.org.uk.](mailto:GSamani210581@habsgirls.org.uk)

# What do you need to do?

Being a delegate, you are required to produce a position paper. A position paper should be 50– 100-word summary on the stance that your given country takes on the choices issue, in this case it is the disparities in sanitary products. Your position paper should be emailed to me prior the debate, allowing myself and Emma to be informed about the viewpoint of your country on the topic. As well as the position paper, we ask you to produce a resolution paper on what your country aims to do about the selected issue. The resolution paper is not obligatory, but it will enhance your experience and it will create a more realistic conference, so we urge you to write one. You can bring your resolution papers on the day, and you do not have to send it to me before, however it would be extremely helpful if you sent me a copy before the debate.

We ask that you provide a separate position paper and resolution paper for each topic that we are debating to reduce chances of confusion.

# Topic of debate

The topic for our first debate is Provision of Abortion. The question we ask is **how should countries and international cooperations respond to disparities for sanitary product access?**

# Background information

Access to sanitary products has been a global issue, with disparities arising due to various factors such as economic status, cultural norms, and infrastructure. In many low-income regions, women

may face challenges in affording or obtaining sanitary products, leading to resorting to improvised and less hygienic alternatives. Economic disparities contribute significantly, as affordability becomes a barrier. The cost of commercial sanitary products, including pads and tampons, can be prohibitive for many individuals, especially in developing countries. This financial constrains forces some to resort to using old rags, newspapers or other inadequate substitutes, impacting hygiene and overall well-being.

There are also cultural taboos and societal norms surrounding menstruation also play a role. In certain communities, menstruation is stigmatized, leading to a lack of education about proper menstrual hygiene practices and limited access to sanitary products. This stigma can contribute to girls missing school during their periods, affecting their education and future opportunities.

Furthermore, insufficient infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, poses challenges. Lack of proper sanitation facilities, including disposal system and private spaces, can make it difficult for women to manage their menstrual hygiene effectively.

Efforts to address these disparities include initiatives promoting menstrual health education, providing subsidised or free sanitary products, and advocating for policy changes to ensure accessibility. Breaking down societal taboos and fostering awareness are crucial steps towards creating a more include and equitable environment for menstrual hygiene management.

# Points to consider

* Is your country being affected by menstrual hygiene such as high prices for sanitary products and limited access to sanitary products etc, if so, how does your country plan on ensuring the safety of women who are at risk?
* Does your Dictator/President/Prime Minister/Parliament believe in providing sanitary products for women who need them?
* Will your country take preventative action to reduce the number of women and young girls who does not have access to sanitary products?
* What will your national response be to women’s needs for sanitary products?
* What should be the international response be to women’s needs for sanitary products?