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UIMF MEMBER
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS) STATEMENT
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Your Excellency, My name is Stephan Child. I am a non-traditional student at Utah Valley University studying political science with a concentration in global politics.

Target 4.7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development works to ensure that all-learners, regardless of age, acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development through education and community leadership.

To implement this, we, as students at Utah Valley University, advocate for sustainable mountain development in Utah through a student-engaged learning model. The student-engaged learning model encourages students to solve real-world problems as a group, with a faculty member serving as a mentor.

I have learned from the student engaged learning methods that mountain communities globally share similar challenges, whether it is tourism in Peru or in Wyoming, Women's rights in Utah or Yemen, Water rights in Montana or Switzerland. Mountain communities worldwide have a unique connection which can be used to build together towards a goal of sustainable mountain development.

I originate from the US mountain state of Wyoming which is also known as the "Equality State." and for a good reason. In December, 1869, Wyoming passed the first unconditional law in the U.S.A. permanently guaranteeing women their inherent right to vote and hold office. On September 6, 1870, in Laramie, Wyoming, Louisa Swain made history by becoming the one of the first women to cast an electoral ballot under laws giving women full civil and political equality with men. These same laws were never changed, even as Wyoming was admitted to the Union in 1890.

Wyoming has continued this trend of women's development and equality, as of 2022; the State of Wyoming is ranked 13 out of 50 states in the United States for the empowerment of women in politics. The last few years have been record-setting years for women running for office across the country, and we see similar trends happening in Utah. In my Sustainable Mountain Development class, I am researching the role of women in the mountain communities within Yemen. I was thrilled to learn that Tawakkol Karman, a Yemenie woman, won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011 for her work in the nonviolent struggle for the safety of women and for women's rights.

It is remarkable that Wyoming and Yemen can show how mountain communities are benefitting from women in leadership and provide opportunities for each of them to share those experiences.

The example of Tawakkol Karman and Lousia Swain can encourage women and girls in other mountainous states to bring equality to women and provide them a higher quality of life and learning.