

## **STATEMENT**

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**Utah Valley University**

**70th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women**

**Parallel Event**

***Raising Justice Awareness of Mountain Women Through Student-Engaged Learning***

**March 10, 2026**

Fellow delegates, faculty, and advocates, I am Angie Macias, Political Science major with a minor in Leadership in Nonprofit Organizations at Utah Valley University. As someone from Honduras, I have personally witnessed the realities faced by women in rural and mountainous communities. I am honored to address this session to advocate for the inclusion of mountain women in the commission's final document.

Mountain communities, specifically women and young girls, experience a lack of justice, legal protection, and institutional access. Mountainous and rural communities experience inequality as the structure of their lives, starting at childhood. Mountain women have to carry burdens from a young age due to limited educational and institutional opportunities. These inequalities reinforce the violence that mountain women experience, which typically goes unreported.

The UVU Student Engaged Learning Model (SEL) allows students to get involved and recognize the issues that affect a community. The SEL encourages students to challenge the inequalities of mountain women through advocacy, policy, and academic research.

In my research of Armenia, mountain women experienced limitations to education, institutional access, economic growth, and civic opportunities due to traditional gender norms and geographical location. According to UN Women, around 56% of women in the mountainous regions live in poverty. Various factors are the reason as to why; women spend 58.5 hours per week on domestic work, lack of property registration to their name, less than 10% of leadership positions belong to women, and they earn 25 to 30% less than men. It is essential to raise awareness and advocate for mountain women to strengthen their voice that has been silenced. Ensuring that women have access to resources that are limited.

I urge this commission to recognize mountain women in its final documents and encourage member states to create policies that will strengthen education access and legal protection in rural regions. Thank you.