

STATEMENT

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70th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

Parallel Event

Raising Justice Awareness of Mountain Women Through Student-Engaged Learning

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Good afternoon. My name is Erynn Lammi, and I am a philosophy major at Utah Valley University(UVU), where I serve as the Rotaract Club President. It is an honor to address you today at this session of the Commission on the Status of Women. I want to advocate for raising justice awareness specifically for inclusion of mountain women and girls in the final document of this forum, as their unique challenges and contributions are too often overlooked in international discourse.

According to reports from the Hellenic Statistical Authority and the European Institute for Gender Equality, women in rural mountainous regions of Greece experience significantly lower employment rates, reduced access to higher education, and fewer institutional resources disproportionately affect women and girls. This disparity is not merely a geographic inconvenience; it constitutes an injustice. When mountain women lack equitable access to education and policy participation, they are denied equal opportunity to influence the economic and political structures that shape their lives. Without access to education and legal literacy, many women remain unaware of protections available under Greek law and European Union gender equality directives.

The Student Engaged Learning (SEL) model brings together traditional and non-traditional students to apply classroom knowledge in real-world settings through collaborative projects that directly benefit mountain communities with a mentor. A Non-traditional student is a student over 24 and is enrolled part time, such as myself. By partnering with local NGOs and international organizations, I have engaged with students from diverse backgrounds to promote women's rights. With the Orem-Lindon Rotary Club, I was able to help provide coats to mountain children and lead the Rotaractors during the 50th anniversary event of the local Rotary club. The SEL model can help Greek women by teaching civic and legal literacy and fostering leadership skills, giving them the knowledge and confidence to participate in policy, advocate for their rights, and engage with decision-makers. By creating opportunities to learn, SEL empowers women to take active roles in economic, social, and political life, improving their own lives and driving sustainable development in their communities.

As a nontraditional student, I am grateful to the UVU Political Science Department, UVU College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the Orem-Lindon Rotary Club for empowering mountain women like myself. Denying mountain women and girls access to education and participation in policy is a clear injustice. UVU's Student Engaged Learning model builds awareness, civic engagement, and advocacy skills. Empowering mountain women in this way not only transforms individual lives but strengthens entire communities. I urge this session to ensure that mountain women and girls are explicitly included in all discussions, frameworks, and actions on gender equality and sustainable development. Thank you.