



## UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW ISSUE PRIMER:

# RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

In January 2015, the United States will undergo a “Universal Periodic Review” (UPR) of its human rights record at the UN Human Rights Council, the UN’s top human rights body. To constructively contribute to the review, the **goal of this forum is to have a grassroots, open discussion on the U.S. human rights record concerning promoting and protecting the rights of women and girls.** Participants are encouraged to share individual perspectives, offer observations, and make constructive recommendations for the U.S. review. Ultimately, results of the consultation will be synthesized into a report and sent directly to the Human Rights Council and State Department.

### Optional Issue Areas to Consider

- **LBGT Discrimination**
- **Equal Pay for Equal Work**
- **Employment Discrimination**
- **Trafficking of Women and Girls**
- **Access to Health Care**
- **Forced or Bonded Labor**
- **Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**
- **Reproductive Health**



### Sample Civil Society Input from the first U.S. UPR in 2010

- One NGO noted that “there is also a lack of affordable housing, job shortages and income insecurity, particularly among minorities and women.”
- One NGO “called on the US to ensure that all women have access to maternal health care services.”
- One NGO noted that in the U.S. 14.5% of women are below the federal poverty level.

### Status of Core UN Treaties: United States

Treaty or Declaration	Signed?	Ratified?
Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)	★	⊘
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	★	⊘



## Sample UN Member Recommendations during the first U.S. UPR in 2010

- One country recommended that the U.S. should “take the necessary measures in favor of the right to work and fair conditions of work so that workers belonging to minorities, in particular women and undocumented migrant workers, do not become victims of discriminatory treatment and abuse in the work place . . .”
- One country recommended that the U.S. should “further foster its measures in relation to migrant women and foreign adopted children that are exposed to domestic violence.”
- One country recommend that in the U.S. “further measures... be taken in the areas of economic and social rights for women and minorities, including providing equal access to decent work and reducing the number of homeless people.”

## Relevant U.S. Legislation

- **Girls Count Act of 2013** (Pending): Commits government to ensure proactively that all girls are registered at birth.
- **Paycheck Fairness Act of 2013** (Pending): Would expand enforcement of capacity of 1963 guaranteeing women equal pay for equal work.
- **Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) of 2013** (Pending): Bans employment discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- **Violence against Women Act (VAWA) of 2013**: “Cornerstone” of U.S. response to domestic and sexual violence.
- **Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009**: “The Act reinstates prior law and makes clear that pay discrimination claims on the basis of sex, race, national origin, age, religion and disability ‘accrue’ whenever an employee receives a discriminatory paycheck . . .” (National Women’s Law Center).

## Research Resources

**Planned Parenthood Federation of  
America**

**American Civil Liberties Union**

**UN Women**

**Polaris Project**

## UN Resources

Official Results of First U.S. UPR Review in 2011

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/USSession9.aspx>

US National Report: UPR 2011:

[http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/session9/US/A\\_HRC\\_WG.6\\_9\\_USA\\_1\\_United%20Stat es-eng.pdf](http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/session9/US/A_HRC_WG.6_9_USA_1_United%20Stat es-eng.pdf)