

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN
Congress 2017
NICOSIA CYPRUS

Proposal

IAW Resolution

The 37th Congress of the INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

together in Nicosia, Cyprus on 2017

Considering that

according to UNICEF¹ and UNESCO², about one in 10 girls in developing countries either skip school during menstruation to avoid accidents or have to drop out of school because they don't have sanitary pads. Rural girls are always hardest hit because of poor infrastructure. Menstruation is often one of the strongest taboos and is intertwined with myths.

Referring to the fact that,

girls are missing classes up to 5 days per month due to

- the lack of sanitary pads, often aggravated by a lack of suitable underwear to fix them or keep in place substitutes like blood-absorbent rags from old clothes,
- overall unhygienic conditions, particularly no privacy due to the lack of separate toilets for girls and boys on the school area.
- The use of inappropriate unhygienic material like leaves, dry grass and rags or old cloth to catch the blood often causes infections in the genital area.
- The lack of privacy aggravated by a lack of soap or other disinfectant in the toilet, are additional handicaps.
- The girls risk harassment and even sexual assault.
- The attention required for successful studies both at school and at home is diverted by fear and apprehension of what might happen.

With detrimental consequences resulting for the girl students in an increased risk of dropping out of school due to the recurrent absences.

Demanding of the international community

- alertness to the precarious situation,
- education, particularly addressing the taboo aspects,
- provision of washable and reusable sanitary pads, if possible produced in a local project.

Calls on the IAW president and the IAW board to

- **continue promoting the dissemination of the full sexual and reproductive rights of girls and women through all its media channels on the national and international level,**
- **address in particular the education on and the management of menstruation hygiene of schoolgirls,**
- **sensitize students against unwanted pregnancies,**
- **increase its networking on the national and international level by a strong advocacy addressing communities, governments, and also the private and public sector.**

If this resolution is adopted by the IAW Congress in Cyprus an IAW steering group might be formed by interested IAW members working together evaluating the situation and developing an IAW project which promotes the girls' full health rights on a global level.

Proposal Gudrun Haupter and Ursula Nakamura 31.08.2017

1 UNICEF https://www.unicef.org/wash/schools/files/MHM_vConf_2014.pdf

2 UNESCO <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002267/226792e.pdf>