

US Resistance to the UN Treaty on Women's Rights: Problems of International Law

The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is an international treaty that sets out a comprehensive framework for achieving gender equality and eliminating discrimination against women. The convention was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979 and has been ratified by 189 countries, including all but six of the world's largest economies. However, the United States is one of the few countries that has not ratified CEDAW.

The US government has expressed concerns about CEDAW's definition of discrimination against women, arguing that it is too broad and could be used to justify discrimination against men. The government has also objected to CEDAW's provisions on reproductive rights, which it believes could be used to promote abortion.



Defying Convention: US Resistance to the UN Treaty on Women's Rights (Problems of International Politics)

by Lisa Baldez

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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The US Government's Concerns About CEDAW

The US government has expressed two main concerns about CEDAW: its definition of discrimination against women and its provisions on reproductive rights.

The US government argues that CEDAW's definition of discrimination against women is too broad and could be used to justify discrimination against men. The government has pointed to the treaty's definition of discrimination as "any distinction, exclusion, or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field."

The US government argues that this definition is too broad because it could be used to justify discrimination against men in any area of life, even if the discrimination is not based on sex. For example, the government argues that CEDAW could be used to justify a law that requires women to pay lower taxes than men, even if the law is not based on sex but on the assumption that women earn less money than men.

The US government also objects to CEDAW's provisions on reproductive rights. The treaty states that women have the right to "decide freely and

responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health." The US government argues that this provision could be used to promote abortion, which is illegal in many parts of the United States.

Criticisms of the US Government's Resistance to CEDAW

The US government's resistance to CEDAW has been criticized by human rights groups, who argue that it undermines the global effort to promote gender equality. Human rights groups also argue that the US government's concerns about CEDAW are unfounded and that the treaty is fully compatible with American law.

Human rights groups argue that CEDAW's definition of discrimination against women is not too broad and that it is necessary to ensure that women are not discriminated against in any area of life. They also argue that CEDAW's provisions on reproductive rights do not promote abortion and that they are fully compatible with American law.

For example, the Center for Reproductive Rights has argued that CEDAW's definition of discrimination against women is "consistent with the Equal Protection Clause of the US Constitution, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex." The Center for Reproductive Rights has also argued that CEDAW's provisions on reproductive rights do not promote abortion and that they are "consistent with the Supreme Court's rulings on abortion."

The US government's resistance to CEDAW is a major obstacle to the global effort to promote gender equality. The US government's concerns about CEDAW are unfounded and the treaty is fully compatible with

American law. The US government should ratify CEDAW and join the global community in working to eliminate discrimination against women.

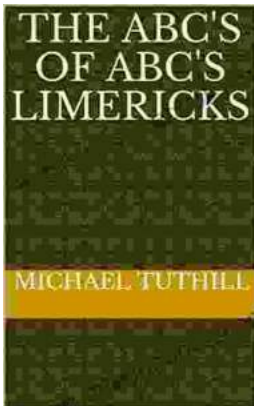


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