

## **Statement**

### **Parallel event “Mountain Women Empowerment Through the Inclusive Student-Engaged Learning Model”**

#### **65<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women**

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**A coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University**

I am an international student at Utah Valley University majoring in political science. It is my pleasure to be a part of Utah international mountain forum to fight for empowering women and girls who live in mountain areas. It is also my honor to speak today at this highest gender forum of the United Nations. Being a member of Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs at UVU has assisted me to be engaged in the advocacy of the United Nations sustainable development goals and mountain targets in particular. My involvement with the coalition has exposed me to the activities of the United Nations and taught me important professional skills. Since the Spring of 2019, I have been engaged in excess of 15 activities with my peers at UIMF in advocating for the sustainable development of mountain communities.

I was born and raised in the West of Saudi Arabia on the Sarawat Mountains, which start at the city of AL-Aqaba in the mountainous country of Jordan and end in Sanaa, Yemen. Even though I live in between the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina, we still do not have sufficient access to the most basic human needs such as adequate healthcare and quality education. This is a serious issue present not only where I live, but almost every mountain community is facing the same obstacles. Climate change today is another emerging challenge for these mountainous populations as well. These modern difficulties only make their lives more difficult. Unfortunately, mountain families and people are frequently ignored and neglected on the national and international levels, and my native country as well.

I participated in the 63rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2019 already. Together with my peers that year we advocated for the mountain women to be included in the final document of the CSW63, but our language was rejected by the secretariat as based on geographic preference. At the same time, to our surprise, language about women from small island states was still kept in the final document. Therefore, those activities have helped me to be more persistent in pursuing this goal. In addition, it encouraged me to study the situation with mountain communities and families in my native country.

I am adding my voice to that of my colleagues here to say that mountain communities, families, and women in particular have to be in the focus of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.