



IFUW Update – 15 October 2014



Panellist speakers [left - right] Ms. Mihaela Racovita (Small Arms Survey), Mr. Jawad Raha (Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the UN), Ms. Danièle Castle (IFUW) and Ms. Karen Tse (International Bridges to Justice) during the film screening of "Peace Unveiled" hosted by IFUW and AGFDU at the University of Geneva

International Federation of University Women news

IFUW urges concerted action on International Day of the Girl Child

IFUW marked the occasion of [International Day of the Girl Child](#) by issuing a [press release](#) urging local, national and international policy makers to prioritise the situation of the girl child and legislate to protect against harmful practices including female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage. The statistics reveal the deeply concerning number of victims where – of the girls and women alive today – 250 million girls were married before the age of 15, while 125 million have been subjected to FGM. Read more statistics on [child marriage](#) and [FGM](#).

Strong turnout at IFUW and AGFDU film screening

IFUW, in partnership with Association genevoise de femmes diplômées des universités (AGFDU), hosted a public screening of "Peace Unveiled" from the series "[Women, War & Peace](#)" at the University of Geneva on 9 October 2014. After the film, panellists discussed the different issues raised, including the role of women in peace negotiations. In terms of progress made in Afghanistan – the setting of the film – Second Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations Mr. Jawad Raha highlighted that the country is the only Islamic state to have ratified the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) without any reservations. Other positive developments in Afghanistan include the jump in life expectancy of both men and women. Despite significant signs of progress, certain barriers for equality still remain, where, for example, only approximately [2%](#) of the police force are women. IFUW and AGFDU will host a second film, "Pray the Devil Back to Hell" in French at the University of Geneva (Uni-Mail) on [16 October 2014](#), which will also be followed by a panel discussion. For more information see IFUW's [events page](#).

National Federation and Association (NFA) news

Canada

On 4 October 2014, people across Canada gathered for Sisters in Spirit Vigils to honour missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls, and to call for a national inquiry on their disappearance. The Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW)'s President, Doris Mae Oulton, with CFUW Ottawa members attended the vigil organised by the Native Women's Association of Canada in Ottawa. Read [more](#).

Rwanda

The Rwandan Association of University Women (RAUW), in partnership with the Goethe-Institut, will show films from the series “Women, War & Peace” on 7 – 28 October at the Goethe-Institut in Kiyovu, Kigali, Rwanda. The screenings are part of IFUW’s global campaign on women and peace building. Speakers will give a brief introduction before each film with the possibility for group discussions after the showing. The films will be in English and will be shown every Tuesday in October at 6.30 pm. Read [more](#).

Advocacy

#BringBackOurGirls: Global Week of Action

14 October 2014 marks six months since the abduction of 276 schoolgirls in Chibok, Nigeria, by the militant Islamist group Boko Haram. While 57 of the girls managed to escape the extremists, some 219 still remain in captivity. On 11 – 18 October, numerous voices from all over the world will unite in efforts for a [global week of action](#) “to demand renewed actions for the immediate and safe release of the girls”. IFUW strongly urges its members and readership to support the campaign by signing the [petition](#) and by supporting the online social media campaign on [facebook](#) and [twitter](#). #BringBackOurGirls #ChibokGirls

Nobel Peace Prize 2014

IFUW strongly commends Malala Yousafzai and Kailash Satyarthi, this year’s [winners](#) of the Nobel Peace Prize. The momentous occasion pays due recognition to the remarkable advocacy efforts in the field of education and children’s rights championed by both individuals, despite the numerous threats and challenges they have faced. Ms. Yousafzai is particularly iconic for IFUW’s mission given her inspirational stand for the education of girls in Pakistan, enduring extreme adversity and personal sacrifice in the process. IFUW’s President Catherine Bell congratulated Ms. Yousafzai by way of letter, describing her as “a role model for all girls”. Her resilience is proof that the universal right to education applies to all people, of all nations. States must ensure that all students – *especially* vulnerable girls – are protected from violence, extremism and harassment. It is essential that they are provided with a secure learning environment and safe passage to and from school.

Programmes & Proposal

Feminist Leadership, Movement Building, and Rights Institute—South Asia

The “Feminist Leadership, Movement Building, and Rights Institute-South Asia” is a week-long residential training programme designed by the international human rights organisation [CREA](#), based in New Delhi, India. This Institute is designed for women working in non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in South Asia in mid-level leadership positions. It aims to build the conceptual clarity of participants on gender, feminism, feminist leadership, and movement building, and their links to human rights in the South Asian context. The programme will be conducted in Dhaka, Bangladesh on **1 – 6 December 2014**. To apply online, [click here](#).
Deadline for applications: **28 October 2014**.

Save the date!

IFUW will host its next triennial conference in Cape Town, South Africa in August 2016. The five-day conference will adopt a new format, with two days of internal General Assembly and three days of external speakers, workshops and interventions, plus more. Join us at this exciting event, where IFUW will be celebrating its 97th year!

Other information and events

Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund

On October 24, 2014, the Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund (VGIF), based in New York and which provides small grants for grassroots projects that empower women and girls in developing countries, is celebrating its 45th anniversary. Since its founding in 1969, VGIF has funded more than 475 projects in 89 countries, focusing on a broad range of issues; from education and health, to economic empowerment and human rights. VGIF is a co-funder of the International Federation of University Women's Bina Roy Programme in International Development (BRPID) and also co-funded an IFUW capacity building workshop in Mexico.

October 7 – 18	Film screenings "Women, War & Peace" series, Goethe Institut , Kigali Rwanda
October 13 – 16	World Investment Forum , Geneva, Switzerland
October 16	IFUW and association genevoise de femme diplômées des universités (AGFDU) film screening and panel discussion (French), Geneva, Switzerland
October 17 – 19	Irish Federation of University Women annual conference , Galway, Ireland
October 23 – 28	IFUW Board meeting, Geneva, Switzerland
November 3 – 5	Geneva NGO Forum-Beijing+20 , Geneva Switzerland
November 6 – 7	UNECE Inter-governmental Regional Review , Geneva Switzerland
November 17 – 22	Global Education Conference , Virtual Forum
November 18 – 19	Trust Women Conference, London, Great Britain
November 25	International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, Global
November 20	25th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, high-level meeting of the General Assembly, United Nations, New York
December 3	International Day for Persons with Disabilities , Global
December 10	Human Rights Day , Global
December 18	International Migrants Day , Global

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Empowering women and girls through lifelong education for leadership, decision-making and peace. IFUW is in special consultative status with ECOSOC and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO.

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