



IFUW Update – 25 March 2015



International News Round-Up: March 2015

Inequality in China and the impact on women's rights (The Conversations, 19 March)

In 1995, China hosted the Fourth World Conference on Women, which produced the [Beijing Platform for Action](#), a document outlining concrete measures to achieve gender equality worldwide. At the 59th meeting of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon declared "Women are not just victims; they are agents of progress and change." Yet today China's authorities are actively thwarting women's ability to act to achieve their goals. On March 8, International Women's Day, police detained five women's rights activists planning an action to raise awareness about sexual harassment on public transportation. Read [in full](#).

Murders should not be used as a lesson for women (The Australian [Opinion] 19 March)

When a woman is murdered or raped by a stranger in Australia, the message from police seems to be the same. Women should not walk alone at night. After the killing of 17-year-old Masa Vukotic in Melbourne this week, Detective Inspector Mick Hughes took to ABC radio with some advice for women. "I suggest to people, particularly females, they shouldn't be alone in parks — I'm sorry to say that, that is the case," he said. Detective Inspector Hughes' comments were way off in this case. They were patronising and sexist. If Hughes wanted to send a message at all, it should have been that violence against women will not be tolerated, ever. Read [in full](#).

When you buy sanitary pads from this company, you'll give a girl in need a month's supply (The Huffington Post, 17 March)

Because girls may not have sanitary pads and lack access to proper sanitation facilities in schools, they [stay home when they're menstruating](#), according to Wash United – the group behind Menstrual Hygiene Day. In Ghana, for instance, [girls may miss up to five days of school](#) each month just because they're menstruating. But one feminine hygiene company that launched last October is attempting to change the status quo through its innovative business model. With every purchase of product, [SHEVA](#) gives a one-month supply of sanitary pads to a girl in need, as well as [works to educate her on menstruation](#), Mashable reported. Read [in full](#).

Africa: CSW59 – Post-2015 gender agenda compromised as donors zip purses (All Africa [Opinion] 16 March)

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that have not yet closed shop are only just surviving. Funding is so tight that even routine operations and programmes are difficult to carry out. "It is really disturbing that big organisations formed after the 1985 Women's Conference in Nairobi and after the Beijing Conference are dying because of lack of funding," said Dr Musimbi Kanyoro, President and CEO of Global Fund for Women. Another major concern is that donors are less inclined to administer multi-year funding for women's rights issues. Most are now funding one-year, project-based activities, without allocating enough funds for institutional development and sustainability. Read [in full](#).

No, science isn't 'A Boy Thing.' And these genius girls prove it (The Huffington Post, 10 March)

Science isn't just for one gender - just ask the girls in Microsoft's new ad. [Microsoft's ad](#) – which was launched in honour of International Women's Day on Sunday – addresses the gender gap when it comes to students pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). According to the ad, seven out of 10 girls are interested in science, but only [two out of 10](#) will pursue a career in a related field. Read [in full](#).

International Women's Day 2015: What does it take to empower Latina leadership in business? (Latin Post, 8 March)

Brazilian CEO Maria das Graças Silva Foster contributes her talents to the oil company Petrobras, a company that's produced 90% of Brazil's oil and 91% of Brazil's gas. But it isn't easy for Latinas to trek to the top of the business world, particularly due to barriers disabling the path to the frontier of leadership. The reality for many Latinas is that home remains a part of their focus even when seeking education, and a lack of financial resources means that attention has to also be directed holding down multiple jobs. No amount of motivation or confidence will allow a Latina to succeed if she doesn't receive mentorship, guidance and encouragement from like-minded female leaders who have fiercely encouraged equity and equality in the workforce to strike down discrimination and promote workforce diversity. Read [in full](#).

International Women's Day: Why educating girls should be a priority for Arab states (Brookings Institution [Blog], 6 March)

This International Women's Day, Arab leaders across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), along with their partners in the international community, must reassert the right to education for every child—especially for girls. As more countries in the Arab world are embroiled in conflict, it is also important to consider the role that educating and empowering women can play in establishing peace and security. Yet, despite the benefits, Arab countries have one of the highest [gender inequality rates](#) in the world, second only to sub-Saharan Africa. A review of education data from 2000 to 2012 provides some insights. Read [in full](#).

Canada's failure to effectively address murder and disappearance of Aboriginal women 'grave rights violation' – UN experts (UN News, OHCHR, 6 March)

In a report published today, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) says that the Canadian police and justice system have failed to effectively protect Aboriginal women, hold offenders to account, and ensure that victims get redress. "Aboriginal women and girls are more likely to be victims of violence than men or non-Aboriginal women, and they are more likely to die as a result. Yet, despite the seriousness of the situation, the Canadian State has not sufficiently implemented measures to ensure that cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women are effectively investigated and prosecuted," said CEDAW members Niklas Bruun and Barbara Bailey. Read [in full](#).

Germany: Quota for number of women in boardrooms (BBC World News, 6 March)

Germany's parliament has passed a law making it compulsory for the country's biggest companies to appoint more women to their boards. From next year, around 100 of Germany's largest businesses must ensure 30% of their supervisory boards are women. Watch the [video news article](#).



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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