



GWI Update – 8 July 2015



Human Rights Council 29, Geneva, Switzerland

Graduate Women International news

Education for girls on the front line of conflict and development

GWI argued in favour of secondary education for girls not being a soft issue, at a panel organised by University of London School of Public Policy on 29 June 2015 in Geneva. GWI's United Nations Representative Nina Joyce stated that girls' education can spark cultural, political and economic change. "Boko Haram understands this and Al Shabab understands this. The higher education space is on the front line of tensions about which direction a society should take." she said, "In secondary education, there is also a conflict between power and ideas." The best indicator of a country's peacefulness is the well-being and education of its girls and women. Girls' education is also the cornerstone for development and employment. This has never been more true than in today's knowledge economy: for example, if India were to increase the proportion of girls in secondary school by 1%, its GDP would grow by USD 5.5bn.

National Federation and Association (NFA) news

UWE

On 29-30 May 2015, University Women Europe (UWE) held a Meet and Greet at Europe House, in London, Great Britain, bringing together over sixty members from across Europe. The event was opened by UWE President, Edith Lommerse, and President of the British Federation of Women Graduates (BFWG), Gloria Banner, who welcomed the participants. Anne Nègre, former Vice-President of GWI, proceeded to share her work as Gender Expert for the NGO Conference of the Council of Europe. Many topics were discussed over the course of the event, providing all participants the opportunity to engage with one and another and share ideas and experiences. Roxana Elena Petrescu, member of the Romanian Association of

University Women (*Asociația națională a femeilor cu diploma universitară din România* - AFU), has written a thorough description of her first Meet and Greet, which is available to [read in full here](#).

Advocacy

GWI participate in the Human Rights Council's 29th session

The 29th session of the Human Rights Council took place on 15 June to 3 July at the United Nations in Geneva. GWI participated in this event and welcomed a focus on girls' right to education and women's rights during the session. In an opening statement, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, stressed that "women's rights should be at the heart of ours". The programme included panel discussions on "Realizing the equal enjoyment of the right to education by every girl" and an "Annual full-day discussion on the human rights of women". The panel on the right to education by every girl was organised by the United Arab Emirates and took place on 16 June 2015. The panel included Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, who stated that "Access to education is the key that unlocks many kinds of achievements and choices. It is a right in itself, but also a multiplier right". The Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Kishore Singh, stressed girls' fundamental inalienable right to education. An interactive dialogue took place on 18 June 2015 with Singh, on his latest report, "Protecting the right to education against commercialisation". GWI co-sponsored an oral statement submitted by the International Organization for the Right to Education and Freedom of Education (OIDEL), in support of this report.

GWI's written statement on the right to education accepted for distribution

[GWI submitted a written statement to the 29th session](#). The statement entitled "Full Realisation of the Right to Education for Girls and Women" emphasised the right to education as a standalone international human right and an enabler of numerous other human rights.

Grants and Proposals

The Human Rights Tulip Award

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the Netherlands is accepting nominations for the 2015 Human Rights Tulip Award. The Award of 100,000 EUR recognises courageous human rights defenders who promote and support human rights in innovative ways. Organisations, collectives and individuals who consider themselves eligible for this award can nominate themselves directly. You can also nominate another individual, collective or organisation. Nominations can be made by filling in the (online) nomination form below as complete as possible and sending it to tulip@hivos.org. All nominations need to be sent in **before July 15th**. [Read more](#).

Donations in favour of GWI

Think of GWI each month: set up a regular monthly donation to support our projects to increase access to lifelong education for girls and women globally. A small sum every month counts less for you and adds up to more for GWI.

Other information and events

July 6 – 10	ECOSOC High-Level Segment on Sustainable Development , UN New York
July 6 – 24	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 61 Session
August 27 – 30	UWE Conference "Networking as a Quality" , Utrecht, the Netherlands
September 25 – 27	Women Graduates USA (WG-USA) AGM , Baltimore, USA
November 14 – 15	Finnish Academic Women's Association (SANL) AGM , Kaunianien, Finland
August 21 – 23 (2016)	GWI General Assembly, Cape Town, South Africa (members only)
August 24 – 26 (2016)	GWI Triennial Conference, Cape Town, South Africa (open to the public)

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

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