



GWI oral Statement Annual half-day discussion on the rights of indigenous peoples

Safe access to education is a precondition to girls and women's empowerment and prevention of violence against indigenous girls and women.

Graduate Women International (GWI), is the leading girls' and women's global organisation advocating for women's rights, equality and empowerment through access to lifelong, quality education and training up to the highest levels.

GWI is concerned at the high levels of violence suffered by indigenous girls and women, and the high levels of impunity of perpetrators. Fear of violence directed towards indigenous girls and women prevents them, and the societies they live in, from reaching their full potential.

GWI strongly believes that providing, quality, human rights-based education accessible to all sectors of the population, in combination with full access to justice mechanisms, is essential to addressing violence and abuse against indigenous girls and women. GWI therefore makes the following recommendations:

GWI calls for states to ratify existing conventions that call for equal rights to education for indigenous girls and women including the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the proper implementation of these conventions including indigenous peoples' rights to culture and language, as in Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

GWI recommends that states work with indigenous communities to strengthen and implement existing legislation to protect indigenous girls and women against violence, including the design of education and public awareness campaigns specific to those communities, and allocate sufficient funds for this work consistent with Article 22(2) of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

States must strive for safe access to human rights-based, quality education in line with Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 5 that include indigenous girls and women. This should be adapted to the unique environment of marginalised groups, and reinforce the value of traditional cultures.

States must ensure indigenous girls and women have full recourse to justice through indigenous languages, through full availability and access to agents of justice, and through enforcement of legislation providing protection against all forms of violence.

States must ensure adequate funding for collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data on indigenous girls and women as an essential measure for progress of the Sustainable Development Goals in regard to these groups.