



## GWU UPDATE - 02 November 2016



*IrFUW at their annual conference with honoured guest and speaker, Sabina Higgins, wife of Irish President Michael D. Higgins.*

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### — Graduate Women International news —

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#### **GWU participates in the 65th Session on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women**

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is an international treaty adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly. Often described as an international bill of rights for women, CEDAW outlines an agenda for national action that will eliminate discrimination and violence against women and advance equality between the genders. The [65th session of CEDAW](#) began on 24 October at Geneva Palais des Nations and will continue until 18 November. On 25 October 2016 Canada presented to the committee their state periodic report. Graduate Women International (GWI) Executive Director Stacy Dry Lara attended the day's session on behalf of GWI's Canadian federation. Canada has made significant strides in addressing inequality experienced by women and girls in Canada since their last periodic review before the Committee in 2008. Canada's initiatives include "Canada Child Benefit", which helps families with childcare costs and combat poverty. In addition, the Government of Canada is focused on eliminating gender-based violence; the Minister of Status of Women is working to develop a federal strategy that strengthens efforts to reach this goal. The Federal Strategy on ending violence against women is expected to be released in 2017. GWI supports The Canadian Federation of University Women in their efforts to eliminate violence and discrimination against women and girls in Canada.

GWU also recognised United Nations (UN) Day on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October, which marked the anniversary of the entry into force of the UN Charter and celebrates the successes of the United Nations.

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### — GWU member news —

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## Irish Federation of University Women (IrFUW) Annual Conference

The [Irish Federation of University Women \(IrFUW\)](#) held its Annual Conference in Dublin on 21/22 October 2016, with the theme “How Far Can She Go – Class, Glass, and Culture”. The Conference was opened by Sabina Higgins, wife of Irish President Michael D. Higgins, who spoke of the cultural and class barriers women face globally, and emphasised how education empowers women and enables them to overcome these obstacles. Senator Marie Louise O’Donnell spoke of women and communications, of her own role in education, and of female role models. Interesting presentations were delivered by Emer Smyth, Research Professor and Head of the Social Research Division at the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), Mary Daly, Principal of St Dominic’s College with a specific interest in educational inequality, and Aishling Lennon of Aidlink who outlined the charity’s work in supporting female attendance at schools in southern Kenya. The Conference concluded with a lively panel discussion, during which the speakers were joined by student union officers and university representatives in the areas of access and student welfare. Interesting themes to emerge from this were the importance of public speaking and debating for girls, and the issue of female compliance which can be an obstacle to advancement.

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## — Advocacy —

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### “From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Make Education Safe For All”

November 25<sup>th</sup> is [the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women](#) and marks the beginning of the 16 days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. Sadly, one in three women worldwide have experienced physical or sexual violence, however prevention is possible and essential. Violence against women severely impacts a woman’s future, specifically by increasing unwanted pregnancies, perpetuating poverty, and decreasing the chance of receiving an education. In recognition for the need of change, the UN Security General’s UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign is encouraging everyone to “Orange the world,” which symbolises a brighter future without violence. Events are taking place across the globe to support the prevention of violence. GWI advocates for the elimination of violence against women and the advancement of education as a means of protection. To read more on ending violence against women and girls [click here](#).

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## — Scholarship opportunities —

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### Sub-Saharan Africa Excellence Scholarships at Delft University of Technology

[Delft University of Technology \(TU Delft\)](#) is offering four Sub-Saharan Africa Excellence Scholarships. The scholarships cover all TU Delft MSc programmes and living expenses for two years. The purpose of this scholarship is to provide students from Sub-Saharan Africa to enhance their education and to strengthen the relationship with the candidate’s home university. For more information [click here](#).

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## — Give the gift of education —

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GWI’s *Teachers for Rural Futures* project provides scholarships and mentoring support to young women from rural areas of Uganda to become qualified teachers and ambassadors for girls’ education. Through our [GlobalGiving](#) campaign we hope to raise \$50,000 to support 50 women student teachers. Donate now to help us train women teachers to educate 1000s of students. For more information on GWI’s Teachers for Rural Futures [click here](#).

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## — Other information and events —

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October 24 – November 18

[65<sup>th</sup> Session of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women](#), Geneva, Switzerland

November	16	<a href="#">10<sup>th</sup> Further &amp; Higher Education and Research Conference</a> Accra, Ghana
November	22	<a href="#">Boosting Youth Employment: Growth &amp; Quality Jobs</a> Brussels, Belgium
November	27 -30	<a href="#">Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning</a> Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
November	28 - 30	<a href="#">5<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Women's Museums</a> Mexico City, Mexico
November	25 – December 10	<a href="#">16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign</a>
December	7 - 8	Girls CHARGE Annual Strategy and Research Release, Brookings Institution in Washington, DC

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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 and ILO.

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