



GW I UPDATE – 17 March 2021



On 6 March 2021, Graduate Women International (GWI) members from around the globe joined the Young Members Network (YMN) in celebrating International Women's Day (IWD) and building connections across generations.

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— Graduate Women International News —

GW IWD Virtual Celebrations, 6 March 2021

By Sudha Srivastava, British Federation of University Women BFWG Member and GWI Young YMN President.

“We rise by lifting others! As women we all have faced unprecedented challenges over the past year of pandemic in all of our roles, be it as students, teachers, working women, mothers, grandmothers and so on. The time is to reflect and work on how the GWI global network of 15,000 women in over 60 countries can help each other to lift and rise. I would like to quote Susan Ariel Rainbow Kennedy that “the circles of women around us weave invisible nets of love that carry us when we are weak and sing with us when we are strong”. Let’s make a cohort of multigeneration as I believe in the analogy of ‘rivers’ where experiences flow from all sides.

GWY Young Members Committee launched project– ‘Connecting Across Generations’ under the leadership of Sudha Srivastava with its first webinar celebrating IWD on 6th March. The theme was in-line with this years’ United Nations IWD “Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world”.

Members from across the globe joined the interactive virtual celebrations. We were honoured to have been joined by GWY President, Terry Oudraad, who set the stage with her welcome message and kicked off the IWD celebrations! The session was moderated by GWY YMN President Sudha Srivastava and supported by GWY Executive Director Stacy Dry Lara. GWY VP Membership Eileen Focke-Bakker beautifully explained the concept of ‘intergenerational connections’ and detailed on current and future activities to get involved. YMN is thankful for Eileen’s efforts of bringing us all together.

We were delighted to welcome our excellent guest speaker Silvia Perel-Levin, Chair NGO Committee on Ageing Geneva. Silvia promotes protecting rights of ageing population and bridging gaps between generations. Silvia believes “all the time is the time for everybody”. We need international binding to protect the rights of older people and younger generation need to support the convention. Putting in place age friendly system today will enable the young of today to age better. Intergenerational relations are a two-way street, nurturing both with mutual agreements. Mentoring works both ways for example evidences of older people using the ICT tools with the help of younger.

Buket Altınçelep, GWY Civil Society speaker at 40th Session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) and young member of GWY from Turkey, shared her video message. Buket emphasised how important the intergenerational relations are to solve the problems of today’s world and make the generation best educated, most connected and egalitarian in history! The session concluded with the IWD messages from participants. Q&A reflected the engaging and insightful thoughts of participants. IWD 2021 #ChooseToChallenge was enjoyed with the thumbs up from the audience.

The three poll results showed that many members were willing to contribute to this project further. Please do get in touch with Stacy, Eileen or Sudha. If you have missed attending the webinar or want to watch again, a recording is available to all GWY members on the [member corner](#). The videos are password protected and accessible freely to GWY members. GWY members can contact info@graduatewomen.org to obtain the necessary password to view the videos and share with member networks. Please visit the [GWY Member Corner](#) for more information on the previous and upcoming GWY webinars.

Call from YMN President to all NFAs:

Please share the database of young members in your country so we can connect them all together and make a strongest and inclusive YM Network. Email to Stacy, Eileen or Sudha”.

Judge Miatta Samba, SLAUW member, appointed to the Hague International Criminal Court



Judge Miatta Maria Samba. Photo credits: Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria

Sierra Leonean judge and SLAUW Member Miatta Maria Samba was recently elected as a Judge of the ICC for a nine-year term between 2021 and 2030. The swearing in ceremony of the six elected judges took place last week in the Hague. The election of Samba and five other judges took place during the 19th session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the ICC. The 49-year-old, who is a judge of the Court of Appeals in Sierra Leone, has more than 20 years of international and domestic experience as a criminal law practitioner and judge. The international network of GWY members joins SLAUW in congratulating our outstanding member and GWY sister Justice Miatta Maria Samba.

— CSW65 —

65th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW65)



CSW65 will take place from 15 to 26 March 2021. Alongside the CSW65 is the NGO Committee on the Status of Women New York (NGO CSW NY) Forum. The Forum functions as the civil society side of CSW65. The Forum provides civil society, called *Advocates*, the opportunity to engage in the processes and events of CSW. The Forum and associated parallel events will be held 100% virtual this year. [Registration for the Forum is open and is free](#). Click [HERE](#) to register for the Forum. Click [HERE](#) for a how to register tutorial.

GWJ Parallel Event

Women and Corruption. In today's complex and volatile world, corruption is everywhere. Existing social, economic, political, legal, and gender inequalities make women especially vulnerable to the consequences of corruption. Women best be aware of ways to prevent victimization by corruption and understand corruption interventions. This Panel will consider tools and good practices for women to be alert to corruption and deal with corruption, individually and collectively, on personal, family, and community levels. **The parallel event will be held 19 March 2021, 4:30pm-6:00pm CET and is co-sponsored by the [Women's UN Report Network \(WUNRN\)](#) and [Transparency International](#).**



Please go to the [Member Corner CSW65 Documents](#) for more CSW65 information.

— GWJ Member News —

Japanese Association of University Women (JAUW) CSW65 Parallel Event

Gender Equality and Empowerment for Japanese 100 Years Old Life

This event, organised by JAUW member Hiromi Ishizuka, will highlight the challenges facing women reaching the age of a hundred. Dr Ishizuka will present the current state of women's life in Japan and propose a new tax system to support gender equality and women and girls' empowerment. A few university students, representing Japanese young women, along with other JAUW members from older generations, will participate in the panel and provide their own perspectives on Dr. Ishizuka's presentation. A discussion with all participants will follow. The event will be held **TODAY 17 March, 10:00pm-11:30pm Central European Time**. [Click HERE to register](#).

Women Graduates-USA (WG-USA) CSW65 Parallel Events

Empowering Women of the Congo DRC through Education and Training for Equality

After decades of instability, a new movement to provide education and training for women and girls of the Congo DRC shows great promise. **The event will be held 18 March 2021, 4:30-6:00pm Eastern Standard Time** [Click HERE to register](#).

A Seat at The Table: Addressing Violence in Sex Trafficking and Prostitution

Survivor leaders and allies will discuss the 2020 Trafficking In Persons Report (TIP) and its recommendations to countries with an emphasis on justice, equality and inclusiveness. **This event will be held 19 March 2021, 4:00-5:30pm Eastern Standard Time.** [Click HERE to register.](#)

Reclaiming Our Humanity: Urgent Need for Women's Leadership in Migration Issues

The three North American NFAs - Mexico, USA, Canada (CAMEUS) - are working together by addressing the movement of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants seeking to escape poverty, violence and conflict in their countries. Experts will discuss a framework of women's leadership to replace the current devastating policies of the political economy, racism and isolation. **This event will be held 23 March 2021, 3:00-5:30pm Eastern Standard Time.** [Click HERE to register.](#)

Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) CSW65 Parallel Event

Mobilizing for Impact: Strategies to Mobilize Toward Positive Change



This panel will feature four trailblazing women for a discussion on developing strategies to mobilize communities and governments toward positive change. **This event will be held 24 March 2021, 12:00pm – 1:30pm Eastern Standard Time.** [Click HERE to register.](#)

Other Notable Side Event

Women on Boards – Impactful Leadership for Systemic Change and Inclusive Entities

Join other women directors to understand barriers to entry and demystify selection practices. Learn pathways and strategize to influence and escalate opening doors to inclusion. This event is organised by STEM Institute Founder and GWI Member Shaila Rao Mistry. Participating will be French Association of University Women (AFFDU) member and University Women Europe (UWE) President, Anne- Bergheim Nègre. **The event will be held TODAY, 17 March 2021, 4-30pm-6:00pm Eastern Standard Time.** [Click HERE to register.](#)

GWU CFUW – GW-NL Partnership Project

As part of the Membership Marketplace, two GWI National Federations and Associations (NFAs), the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) and Graduate Women – Netherlands (GW-NL) have joined forces in an NFA-to-NFA Partnership Project to raise awareness of and support women's rights in the Afghan Peace Negotiations. The project, titled "Afghan Peace Negotiations: their Perilous Significance for Women in Afghanistan" is composed of two main events:

Stand on the Bridge: in accordance with local COVID-19 regulations and starting 8 March 2021, CFUW and GW-NL local groups have been invited to have two to five members stand on a local bridge, or alternate location, holding signs recognizing their local group and NFA and showing message of hope and support for Afghan Women. Photos of each group mobilisation are then shared with local media and through the NFA newsletter.

Walking to Kabul: there are 30,000 km between Ottawa, Canada and Kabul, Afghanistan. Starting 8 March, CFUW and GW-NL members have been signing up for a virtual, collective walk. Each kilometres travelled by CFUW and GW-NL members and their friends and family will be added to make up a total on this virtual walk, with the goal to “reach” Kabul by 24 April, which will mark the end of the walk with a global webinar on Afghan Women and their place at the Afghan peace table. Speakers will include Afghan women with close ties to the Afghan Peace talk and who will share their experience with GWI participants from all around the world. [More information to come soon. Click HERE for more background and information.](#)

— Advocacy —

A shocking 16 million hours per day of girls’ education are lost due to lack of water

On 22 March, GWI will join the global community in observing World Water Day that was established by the United Nations (UN) in 1993. Each year international communities join together to find cooperative solutions to water scarcity. On this day, GWI will be advocating for not just the challenge water scarcity poses to populations in need, but the hardship it inflicts on women and girls. The theme for 2021 World Water Day “Valuing Water” highlights that the value of water is about much more than its price: water has enormous and complex value for our households, food, culture, health, education, economics and the integrity of our natural environment. Without a comprehensive understanding of water’s true, multidimensional value, we will be unable to safeguard this critical resource for the benefit of everyone. Globally, women and girls bear a disproportionate amount of the burden and consequence of irregular access to clean, safe, water. Among these burdens and consequences is the time water collection takes from women and girls’ education. The UN International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) estimates that globally women spend 16 million hours a day collecting water. That is 16 million hours that women and girls are not in school. GWI will launch a social media campaign on 20 March addressing the negative consequences water scarcity creates for women and girls. This year, World Water Day will be celebrated in an online event. Click Here to learn more. You can follow our social media campaign on the GWI [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Twitter](#) pages.

— GWI at the United Nations —

GWI co-sponsors oral statement to the 46th session of the Human Rights Council

Along with the NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning (NGO WG on HREL), GWI cosponsored an oral statement titled “COVID-19, human rights and youth”. Delivered by the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA), the oral statement reaffirmed that, one year after the pandemic, human rights and human rights education should not be paused. The statement further encouraged Member States to address the human rights impacts of the pandemic in a concrete way through recommendations during the UPR Working Group sessions and in particular the right to quality of education.

— Give the gift of membership—

Give the gift of education to women and girls around the world by contributing to our new [Girls' Education for Brighter Futures Post-COVID-19 Programme](#), which directly supports GWI's advocacy work and microprojects held throughout the world to remove socio-cultural, gender-related and economic barriers girls face towards education endeavours. To contribute to GWI's work towards the safe access to quality education and to raise awareness about the gender barriers in education please click [HERE](#).

— Dates and events worth noting —

9-20 March	CSW65 United Nations, Virtual
16 March	GWI Parallel Event – Mock Trial – Women's empowerment through responsive quality education, Global
18 March	WG-USA Parallel Event - Empowering Women of the Congo DRC through Education and Training for Equality, Global
19 March	WG-USA Parallel Event - A Seat at The Table: Addressing Violence in Sex Trafficking and Prostitution, Global
21 March	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Global
22 March	World Water Day, Global
23 March	WG-USA Parallel Event - Reclaiming Our Humanity: Urgent Need for Women's Leadership in Migration Issues, Global
23-27 March	Little by Little Matching Campaign (Global Giving)
29-31 March	Generation Equality Forum Mexico, Global/Hybrid
23 April	World Book & Copyright Day, Global
23 April	International Girls in ICT Day, Global
28 May	Menstrual Hygiene Day, Global
12 June	World Day against Child Labour, Global
19 June	International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, Global
20 June	World Refugee Day, Global
23 June	International Widows Day, Global

Follow us on social media!



Empowering women and girls through lifelong education for leadership, decision-making and peace. GWI, formerly IFUW, is in special consultative status with ECOSOC since 1947 and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO and ILO.

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