



GW I UPDATE – 20 April 2021
Commission on the Status of Women 65th session (CSW65)
Special Edition

Graduate Women International at CSW65



CSW65 took place from 15 to 26 March 2021 under the priority theme: Women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality, and the empowerment of all women and girls.

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— CSW65 —

The intense excitement surrounding CSW65 may be over but GWI's work continues on behalf of all women and girls. Historically, since its inception in 1947, the two-week Commission on the Status of Women is a time for like-minded women to gather, discuss, learn from each other, advocate and coalesce around the rights of women and girls.

The CSW65 Priority Theme was *Women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls*. The session also reviewed agreed conclusions of the CSW sixtieth session, *Women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development*.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, CSW65 was held 100% virtual. Alongside CSW65, the NGO Committee on the Status of Women New York (NGO CSW NY) Virtual Forum (Forum) provided an online space for civil society to organise events to inform, engage and inspire grassroots efforts and advocacy needed to empower women and girls.

Each year, GWI has the honour of being represented by a delegation of dynamic and dedicated GWI members. Alongside the GWI Board, National Federation and Association Presidents, Committees, UN Representatives, Young Member Network, and Staff, GWI delegates participate actively in official CSW sessions, side events (governments) and parallel events (civil society), which provide a unique avenue to promote and advance our collective vision for a just and equal society.

Thank you everyone for exemplifying the determination, leadership and single-mindedness that it takes to achieve our collective vision for a just and equal society.

GWI VP Advocacy and Education CSW65 Summary Report

The GWI CSW65 Summary Report, prepared by Louise McLeod, GWI Vice President Advocacy and Education, provides 24 pages of condensed, essential information on the sessions and outcome of CSW65 and GWI's participation in the two-week event. This document provides a comprehensive list of key outtakes, elements handy resources in relations to CSW65, as well as a thematic summary of reports submitted by the GWI advocates during the session. This summary report is critical to the legacy of CSW65 and future advocacy work and provides calls to action for governments, public and private sectors, educational institutions, and NGOs stemming from CSW65. Click [HERE](#) to access the Full CSW65 Summary Report.

GWI CSW65 written statement

GWI submitted a written statement to CSW65 highlighting the detrimental impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the advancement of the status of women. Along with its cosponsors, GWI appeals to Member States to navigate back on track towards advancing the human rights of women and acknowledging the positive impact women have on societies when empowered to participate in decision-making processes fully. Click [HERE](#) to read the full GWI CSW65 written statement.

GWI 2021 Advocate Handbook

This Advocates' Handbook contains summaries of preparatory documents that will enhance the "Advocates" experience. Items include summaries of the Expert Group Meeting discussing this year's Priority Theme, the [United Nations Secretary General's report for CSW65](#), [report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of UN-Women](#), list of GWI official delegates, and additional valuable

information. The GWI 2021 Advocate Handbook is an essential reference pre and post-CSW65 and it can be accessed [HERE](#).

— NGO CSW65 Virtual Forum —



Women's United Nations Report Network (WUNRN)
Graduate Women International (GWI)

WOMEN AND CORRUPTION :
Root Causes and Impact on Women's Potential

Parallel Event Summary

Women and Corruption parallel event recording and summary document

On 19 March 2021, GWI and the Women's United Nations Report Network (WUNRN) along with co-sponsor Transparency International, held a parallel event entitled, *Women and Corruption: Root Causes and Impact on Women's Potential*. The event aimed to mobilise organisations into action, create support networks for those affected by corruption, offer methods to dismantle gendered corruption, and propose actions to address the multifaceted effects corruption has on women, families and communities. On the heels of this impactful event and to continue encouraging robust discussion and exchange to tackle corruption locally and globally, GWI produced a comprehensive parallel event summary highlighting the key takeaways from panelists and their presentations. Panelists were Jennifer Sarvary Bradford, Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Officer, United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime; Lena Wängnerud, Professor in Political Science, Gothenburg University; Monica Kirya, Senior Adviser, U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre; Lucia Bird, Senior Analyst, Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime; and M. Emilia Berazategui, Interim Head of Policy and Advocacy Secretariat, Transparency International with moderator Stacy Dry Lara, GWI Executive Director and President, NGO CSW Geneva. Click [HERE](#) to access the [Women and Corruption parallel event Summary](#) and [HERE](#) for the full, public, [parallel event recording](#).



GRADUATE WOMEN INTERNATIONAL (GWI)

MOCK TRIAL

Women and Girls' Empowerment through
Responsive Quality Education

Parallel Event Recording



GWJ Mock Trial “Women and Girls’ Empowerment through Responsive Quality Education

On 16 March 2021, GWJ held a Mock Trial on *Women and Girls’ Empowerment through Responsive Quality Education*. The Mock Trial explored the role of quality responsive education with regard to the digital learning environment necessitated by COVID-19. Statements derived from GWJ experienced knowledge-base about the challenges and inequalities stemming from the emerging distance learning culture were presented for debate by invited subject expert panelists. A panel of GWJ judges then deliberated to decide the validity or non-validity of each statement. Participants interacted with the event via live opinion polls. In order to pursue the goal of this parallel event further and engender discussion within their organisations on how to address current critical issues of digital learning and schooling, GWJ is releasing a [comprehensive summary document](#) and the event [full, public, event recording](#). The parallel event summary includes the Mock Trial statements debated, pro and contra arguments and a comprehensive list of GWJ expert resources used to formulate the statements and to frame the event as a whole. Click [HERE](#) to access the Mock Trial parallel event summary and [HERE](#) for the [parallel event recording](#).

FEMU parallel event: The Pandemic’s Effects on Women’s Lives

On 15 March 2021 FEMU held a parallel event entitled, *The Pandemic’s Effects on Women’s Lives*. FEMU members as well as Dr Alicia Alicia Girón, Dr Regina Samperio Gi and Dr Ydalia Pérez-Fernández jointly discuss domestic violence in Mexico, a curse that is crucially increasing since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis. Click on the link [HERE](#) to watch the full event recording.

Japanese Association of University Women (JAUW) parallel event: Gender Equality and Empowerment for Japanese 100 Years Old Life

In this event, held on 17 March 2021, JAUW member Hiromi Ishizuka discussed the challenges that women face reaching the age of a hundred, but also the current state of women’s life in Japan and he proposed a new tax system to support gender equality and women and girls’ empowerment. Several 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. See the full event recording [HERE](#).

Women Graduates-USA (WG-USA) holds three parallel events:

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

This parallel event, held on 18 March 2021, presented a new movement to provide education and training for women and girls of the Congo DRC. The event programme offered several approaches by researchers in the field who have produced successful outcomes in improving health, reducing violence and offering independence and empowerment for the marginalized women and girls of that country. Speakers highlighted that targeted efforts to make education and training accessible for women and girls resulted in a decrease of poverty, as well as stabilization in family life and the improvement of healthcare for women. If you missed this parallel event, click on the link [HERE](#) to watch the full video recording.

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

On 19 March 2021, WG-USA parallel event entitled, *A Seat at the Table: Addressing Violence in Sex Trafficking and Prostitution*. Attendees heard survivors, human trafficking expert leaders and allies discuss the destructive impact of non-state torture, familial trafficking, child trafficking, law enforcement perspectives and actions. The parallel event provided a focus on the 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report and its recommendations, including justice, equality and inclusiveness. The event recording is available [HERE](#).

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

The three GWI North American National Federation and Associations - Mexico, USA, and Canada - together known as GWI CAMEUS region - worked together by addressing the movement of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants seeking to escape poverty, violence and conflict in their countries. During this side event, held on 23 March, experts discussed a framework of women’s leadership to replace the current devastating policies of the political economy, racism and isolation. The event recording is available [HERE](#).



Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) parallel event: Mobilizing for Impact: Strategies to Mobilize Toward Positive Change

While the world fights and recovers from COVID-19, 2021 is a time for reflection on the past and an opportunity for collective visioning of the future. This parallel event aimed to reflect on possible strategies in order to mobilize governments and communities towards positive change. See the full event recording [HERE](#).

GWI Co-Sponsors NGO CSW, Geneva first-ever Consultation Day

GWI co-sponsored the first-ever NGO CSW, Geneva Consultation Day entitled, *International Geneva: Heart of Human Rights and Service to Humanity*. The Consultation Day was held virtually on Sunday, 14 March 2021. Hundreds of women’s rights supporters from around the world gathered for this global event to kick off CSW65.

Stacy Dry Lara, Executive Director, Graduate Women International, and President of the NGO CSW Geneva, said, “Consultation Day participants should leave the event informed, enthused and committed to looking beyond short-term goals of CSW65 towards becoming more involved in policy and legislative agendas concerning women in decision-making in public life”.

The *International Geneva: Heart of Human Rights and Service to Humanity* Consultation Day [dynamic programme](#) provided a roadmap for maximizing attendance during the entire CSW65 and Forum and aimed to inspire, build knowledge, and galvanise women’s movements around the world. United Nations of Geneva (UNOG) Director General, Tatiana Valovaya, delivered opening remarks and highlighted UNOG’s commitment to women and girls. Presentations were given also by Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe; Delphine O, Ambassador, Secretary General for the Generation Equality Forum (Beijing+25); María del Socorro Flores Liera, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations Office in Geneva; Christine Löw, UN Women, Geneva Director; and Melissa Upreti, Vice Chair, UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls; and Adrienne Cruz Senior Gender Specialist, Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch, International Labour Organisation. The event recording is available [HERE](#).

GWI Co-Sponsors Women and Girl’s Human Rights: United Nations Language and Terminology

GWI Co-Sponsored the NGO CSW Geneva parallel event on the United Nations Language and Terminology. The women’s movement over the decades has redefined terms to express the lived reality of half the world’s population in all its diversity. Equality has not been achieved and to a large extent this is due to the limitations of existing systems that seek to deny opportunity based on scientific facts. As the gender

terminology in the culture of languages has gained in popularity and its meaning and object have been expanded, the parallel event examined, without bias, the present use of the United Nations gender terminology. The event recording is available [HERE](#).

NGO CSW65 Virtual Forum continues to be accessible until March 2022

The virtual Forum will be accessible until March 2022. This means you'll be able to continue to network with other attendees and watch any available recordings of events! To improve future NGO CSW65 Forums, please take 5-10 minutes to complete [this feedback survey](#) and send your suggestions. This survey will provide NGO CSW NY with invaluable input and data to improve future NGO CSW Forums. Watch this [ten-minute compilation video](#) that recaps the NGO CSW65 Virtual Forum for a quick snapshot of the two-week Forum! Women's civil society organizations must keep the momentum post-CSW65 by holding governments accountable for the [Agreed Conclusions](#).

NGO CSW/NY Exhibit Booth Events

If you missed any of the NGO CSW/NY Exhibit Booth events or want to watch them again, the recordings are available on the [NGO CSW NY Youtube channel](#).

— Dates and events worth noting —

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
15 July	Youth Skills Day, Global
30 July	International Day for the Elimination of Trafficking in Persons, Global
31 July	Pan-African Women's Day, Global
9 August	Indigenous Peoples' Day, Global

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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 since 1947 and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO and ILO.

Graduate Women International

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