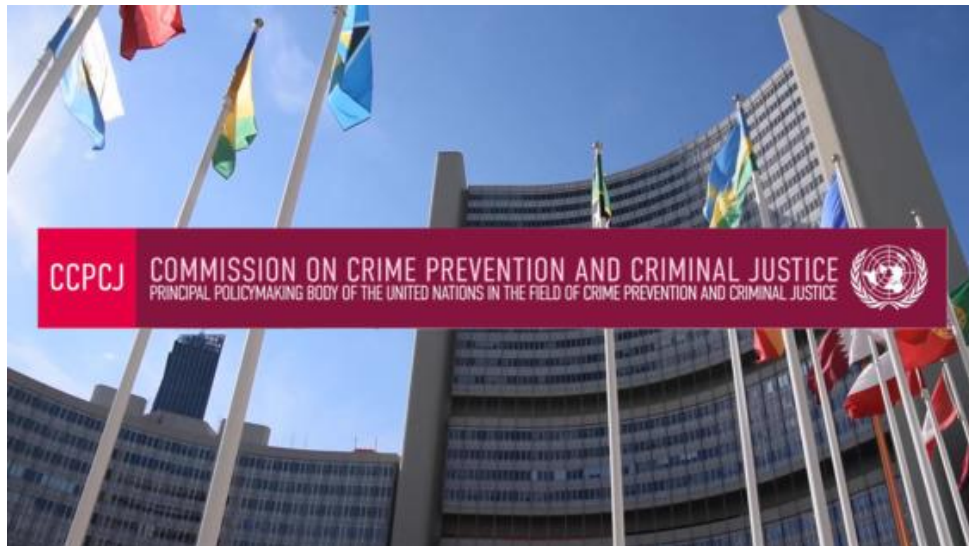




## GW I UPDATE – 24 May 2023



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### — Graduate Women International (GWI) News —

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#### **GW I Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) side event**

As part of the 32nd session of the CCPCJ being held from 22 to 26 May at the United Nations in Vienna, GWI is co-sponsoring a side event alongside the Alliance of Non-Government Organisations on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the NGO Committee on the Status of Women, Vienna, Soroptimist International and Zonta International. The hybrid side event is entitled, “Ending harmful practices: preventing violence and ensuring access to justice – good practices” and will take place on 25 May 2023 at 9am CEST. Panellists, including GWI United Nations Representative in Vienna, Elisabeth Francis, will discuss the obstacles and good practices concerning child marriage and female genital mutilation and how to develop appropriate laws and policies and community-level transformations. **GW I invites you to participate in the CCPCJ side event, which is without pre-registration, by scanning the QR code on the flyer at the bottom of the Update or by clicking [HERE](#) at the scheduled time.**

#### **GW I is Renewing and Rebuilding: Here’s how to start an affiliate in your country.**

Do you live in a country that does not have a GWI National Federation and Association (NFA)? Then why not start an affiliate to connect the graduate women in your area and support the international efforts of GWI towards the safe access to quality education and lifelong training. You might be wondering the benefits starting an NFA? There are many such as organizing a group of graduate women in your country comprised of like-minded women who actively address social and economic challenges for women and girls’ education, who have desire to boost educational rights that empower women and girls. **We invite you to click [HERE](#) to learn how to start an NFA in your country. For questions, please reach out to the GWI Membership Team, at [membership@graduatewomen.org](mailto:membership@graduatewomen.org). GWI is committed to helping its membership develop and grow.**

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## — GWI Member News —

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### **Graduate Women New Zealand (GWNZ) Pacific and Graduate Women Fiji join to offer scholarships**



**PG Awardees, Miriama Gemina Waqa (L) and Lucy Tifere, 2022.**

Dr. Shirley Gillett, GWI Vice President, Education, details the creation and success of the GWNZ Centenary Scholarship for Pacific graduates. These two scholarships of NZD 5000 were awarded to female applicants studying in male-dominated areas of learning. Dr. Gillett expresses her hopes for the award, saying, "I hope the award will enable the recipients to succeed in their studies and also further develop relationships between NZ and the Pacific". Lucy Tifere and Miriama Gemina Waqa were the scholarship recipients. Tifere is currently a second-year Fiji

National University student pursuing a Bachelor of Engineering with Honors, specializing in Electronics Engineering (System and Control). Gemina Waqa has completed her first year of Certificate IV in Carpentry. Her vision is to attain a Bachelor's degree in Construction and work as a builder or Project Manager for a few years before starting her own construction company. Both women discuss their motivation for pursuing areas of study, despite the discouragement and scrutiny from societal norms and gender stereotypes. Gemina Waqa states, "This is my dream. I believe by doing so, I am inspiring other girls to think outside the box and see not only men leading construction companies; women can do it too if they want". Tifere discussed the social stereotypes and doubt that women and their abilities receive when studying in a male-dominated area of learning, saying, "I am determined to make my dream a reality even if I have to sit in a room full of Men [*sic*] nothing will stop me from finishing this race". The financial stretch of their education was met with challenges by both Tifere and Gemina Waqa and they are grateful to Graduate Women Fiji and Graduate Women New Zealand for the opportunity the scholarship provides to further their studies and pursue their dreams.

### **GWI Spanish-Speaking Culture Bridge Project holds women and handicrafts event**

The Association de Mujeres Universitarias de Marbella (AMUM), an affiliate of the GWI Spanish Federation of University Women (SFUW) and co-founding member of the GWI Membership Marketplace NFA-to-NFA Spanish-Speaking Cultural Bridge Project organized on 9 May 2023 an event on the theme "crafts as a way of empowering women," which was also broadcast live on their YouTube channel. AMUM developed the event idea from the premise that in Latin America, handicrafts are a very precious employment opportunity for women, empowering them and preserving their cultures. Panelists presented several models aimed to inspire artisan women to be actors in the social and professional life of their countries and communities, which still experience many socio-economic difficulties. Speakers from Spain, Panama, and Paraguay, with rich and exciting messages motivated all participants. GWI congratulates AMUM on this initiative highlighting women, giving them confidence in the fantastic work they do. GWI also invites readers to view and share the recording **that will be soon published on the Spanish-Speaking Culture Bridge Youtube channel [HERE](#).**

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## — GWI at the United Nations —

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### **GWI introduces conclusions of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) for France and Israel**

From 1 to 12 May 2023, the 43rd session of UPR took place at the United Nations in Geneva. The UPR is a unique process in the world that includes a review of the human rights records of all United Nations Member States. It provides an opportunity for each state to report on the steps it has taken to improve

the human rights situation in their country, and other Member States make recommendations, much of which are followed by action. Each state is subject to review every four years, and GWI encourages readers to discover the main recommendations and conclusions of two GWI NFAs who passed the UPR during this session: France and Israel, and former member Romania.

### **France**

According to many, France has been seen as a pioneer country in the field of human rights. The Member States have renewed their felicitations to France for the diversity and scope of protected rights in the country. GWI welcomes the fact that the French delegation was led by a woman, as well as the recent reform of the criminal law of minors which creates a Penal Code in which particular emphasis is placed on education. However, some shadows remain: on the one hand, the almost totality of states have denounced the management of the violent and inappropriate order of the police and the state when the recent protests. In addition, they reminded France that all minors must have access to education, including refugees, French nationals in overseas departments and disabled persons, who still suffer discrimination and inequalities. Finally, fellow Member States called on France to take urgent measures, for example inspired by Spain, to reduce violence against women and feminicides, being one of the countries where the rate is the highest in Europe.

### **Israel**

Israel passed its UPR on 9 May 2023, just days before the 75th anniversary of its independence. Despite a complicated geopolitical context, Israel recalled that it has signed seven of the most important United Nations Conventions and many other human rights mechanisms – being for example the only non-European country to have signed the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Human Trafficking. In the midst of a major legal reform with an important popular dialogue, the Israeli legal system remains stable despite the historical crises since their independence. GWI welcomes the increase of women working in high-ranking institutions. Recently women were elected as the country's first prosecutor, first military major, and two of the four new Supreme Court justices are women in addition to the president. Most of the recommendations from Member States were, not surprisingly, concerned with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In addition, Member States recommended that Israel pay greater attention to the respect of the rights of minors, including those in prison, as well as respect the rights of persons from ethnic or religious minorities, whose complaints are disproportionately frequent. Finally, Member States called on Israel to lift all restrictions on civil society, although enormous progress has already been made in recent years.

### **Romania, former GWI NFA**

Romania has made a lot of progress in recent years on human rights and has been at the forefront of providing support to Ukrainian refugees geographically very close. However, Member States have recommended that Romania establishes more inclusive access to education for girls, people with disabilities, and Roma children, a Romanian community experiencing racism and discrimination in access to employment and education. In rural Roman areas, the rate of school dropout is particularly high, so this problem is also to be solved as a priority. Finally, Member States suggested that Romania adopt a more ambitious and pro-active policy on gender-based violence, and integrate women more into the country's political institutions, and to adopt a new strategy against discrimination. Romania accepted the UPR recommendation pledging, "More women in the parliament would result in more access to better healthcare, education, more courageous approach to issues, equal opportunities, would create more discussions and conversations".

### **GWI submits written statement to the CCPCJ**

As contribution to the 32nd session of the CCPCJ being held from 22 to 26 May at the United Nations in Vienna, GWI submitted a written statement on education as a tool for improving criminal justice. The CCPCJ is the body of the United Nations that discusses all crime-related matters and adopts

resolutions and decisions thereon. The theme of this year is, "Enhancing the functioning of the criminal justice system to ensure access to justice and to realize a safe and secure society". GWI therefore submitted a statement on the importance of access to quality and comprehensive education as a cornerstone for reducing crime, avoiding recidivism, and improving access to justice, with many concrete recommendations for Member States. **GWI thanks GWI intern, Paloma Martial, for her research and writing contributions and GWI UN Representative, Vienna, Elisabeth Francis, for taking the time offer edits and input for the statement, and invites readers to access and share the statement by clicking [HERE](#).**

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## — Give the gift of Education —

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Give the gift of education by contributing to the Teachers for Rural Futures project. In rural areas of Uganda, many girls are not enrolled in school or forced to drop out, in part due to a lack of women teachers. The GWI Teachers for Rural Futures programme, created in 2015, is increasing access to and completion of quality secondary education for girls in rural communities in Northern and Eastern Uganda through teacher training and development. The project aims to increase the number of qualified and trained women teachers in secondary schools in these rural communities. The project aims to produce local role models and mentors for younger girls. One student recently wrote words of thanks for GWI's support of her summer teacher training, "I will forever be grateful to you and the entire graduate women international family for this opportunity of education". Together we can make a difference. Each donation is much appreciated and can be made via the following [LINK](#).

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## — Did you know? —

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On 19 May 2023, GWI submitted its tri-monthly GlobalGiving report on the Teachers for Rural Futures project. Thanks to the kind donations of the contributors, three female students will soon begin their summer teacher practice training to become teachers and role models and teachers for many students in their rural region in Uganda, allowing many new opportunities for themselves and their community. The contributions will also provide our teachers with the necessities of education, for example, monthly menstrual hygiene supplies, tuition, and stipends. **GWI thanks all the contributors and invites you to read and share the full report [HERE](#).**

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## — Dates and events worth noting —

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22-26 May	CCPCJ, United Nations, Vienna
8-26 May	85 <sup>th</sup> CEDAW Session at the United Nations, Geneva
28 May	Menstrual Hygiene Day, Global
3 June	South Africa Association of University Women Centenary
12 June	World Day Against Child Labour, Global
19 June – 14 July	53 <sup>rd</sup> Human Rights Council Session at the United Nations
20 June	World Refugee Day

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# ENDING HARMFUL PRACTICES: preventing violence and ensuring access to justice – good practices

#CCPCJ32

Thursday, 25 May, 9-10AM CEST  
VIC, Room MOE100 & [online](#)

Panelists will discuss obstacles and good practices concerning Child Marriage and FGM including how to increase knowledge and change attitudes, develop and support implementation of appropriate laws and policies, and support community-level transformations of social norms and practices concerning these topics.

Scan to  
join  
online



## SPEAKERS

Video message from UNICEF/ UNFPA  
Global Programme to End Child Marriage



Ute Scholz, ZONTA International  
President



Umyma El Jelede, FGM Expert,  
Women's Health Care Centre  
FEM Süd



Elisabeth Francis, Graduate  
Women International

## MODERATOR



Linda Witong, Soroptimist  
International



## Follow us on social media!



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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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