



## GWI UPDATE – 19 July 2023



*7th International Federation of University Women (IFUW) Conference - Crakow, Poland, 1936*

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

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#### **Graduate Women International (GWI) celebrates 104 years**

GWI, formerly International Federation of University Women, was founded in 1919 by a group of visionary women graduates, Caroline Spurgeon, Professor Rose Sidgwick, and Dean Virginia Gildersleeve, from Great Britain, Canada, and the United States of America. Their goal was to foster understanding and friendship among women graduates to prevent future catastrophes like the recently ended World War. Their legacy inspires women to pursue their educational aspirations at all levels, from secondary to higher and continuing education. On its 104th anniversary, GWI pays tribute to its founders who advocated for women's education and empowerment. Today, thousands of women graduates worldwide continue to carry their principles and vision forward. Dr. Elizabeth M.E. Poskitt has preserved the organization's history in her archives, which is a testament to GWI's enduring impact. **GWI invites you to read more about its exceptional history [HERE](#).**

#### **GWI raises awareness on World Youth Skills Day**

On World Youth Skills Day, celebrated annually on 15 July, we must recognize the challenges young people, especially women, face in entering the workforce. The theme for 2023 is "Skilling Teachers, Trainers, and Youth for a Transformative Future." An infographic by GWI highlights the importance of accessible skill acquisition and offers practical advocacy ideas. Click [HERE](#) to read and share the infographic. **GWI thanks Salomé Delsaux, summer intern, for her valuable contribution to the infographic.**

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## — GWI Member News —

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### **University Women’s Association Pune (UWAP) President, Neelam Jagdale, bids farewell**

In her parting letter in the UWAP progress-eves newsletter, Neelam Jagdale, outgoing UWAP President, reflects on the numerous memories and experiences that made her four-year tenure fulfilling. “So many memories of so many things that have occurred in the last four years of UWAP spring forward in my mind as I bid good-bye to a job that has given me so much enrichment, making it the most eventful journey of my life”, writes Jagdale in progress-eves. Despite the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, UWAP remained steadfast in their commitment to making the safety of their 22 hostel residents a top priority. The newsletter also highlights various accomplishments, including their GWI Membership Marketplace NFA-to-NFA collaboration with the Egypt Association of University Women on a project aimed at tackling sexual harassment in the workplace. This initiative culminated in three webinars that witnessed the participation of hundreds of GWI members. Furthermore, the newsletter features news briefs on the hostel and other webinars that were organized during her tenure. Overall, Jagdale expresses her sincere gratitude for the enriching journey that her term as President has been. The full progress-eves newsletter can be accessed [HERE](#). **GWI congratulates Jagdale on a presidency well-done and thanks her for her excellent leadership. GWI’s family wishes her the best for the future.**

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## — GWI at the United Nations —

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### **GWI Intern, Salomé Delsaux, writes about her experience of the HRC53**

During my internship, I had the privilege of participating in the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council 53rd session (HRC53). The Council took place from 19 June to 14 July, and it has been an intense session. This session witnessed fervent discussions and debates concerning a range of human rights issues, with particular emphasis on violence and discrimination against women and girls. While the session effectively succeeded in shedding international light on these concerns through the adoption of multiple resolutions, it is important to acknowledge that many issues remained inadequately addressed. In fact, I was able to attend to different side events that highlighted genuine problems and featured excellent panellists. However, some of these events fell short in terms of offering tangible solutions. Undoubtedly, they provided valuable exposure to issues such as the interrelation between education and child marriage, as well as gender disparities with the world of sport. Nevertheless, I am inclined to believe that a lot of work still need to be done, necessitating the establishment of strong legal framework to tackle these issues. Moreover, I also noticed that despite the presence of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and their valuable expertise, their voices are not listened to enough, undermining the effectiveness of the session. It is for me crucial for state officials to consider and prioritise the insights provided by NGOs, as they possess a wealth of knowledge and first-hand experiences that can contribute to more comprehensive and impactful human rights solutions.

### **GWI participates to a HRC53 side event: Menstrual Health and Gender Discrimination**

As part of the HRC53, GWI participated in the ide event, Menstrual Health and Gender Discrimination. Panellists included Dr Olivia Ahn, CEO and Co-Founder, FLUUS and Gloria Orwoba, Senator, Parliament of Kenya. Highlighted by all panellists is that menstruation is still surrounded by taboos in many countries leading to a lack of and erroneous information. The expert panellists also highlighted that menstrual hygiene should be approached through a human rights lens. It was emphasised that it is the responsibility of corporate and States, and more precisely the officials in charge of education to make training on menstrual hygiene management accessible, and comprehensive for all women and girls. Orwoba, emphasised the fact that awareness raising campaigns are successful and are necessary

to break taboos. She went on to emphasised that removing the tampon tax is not enough to end period poverty. She explained that removing tax from finished products does not increase accountability for providing the sanitary products in schools. She explained that in Kenya the government's annual budget has been increased from \$260 million to \$940 million for the provision of sanitary towels. On Menstrual Hygiene Day (28 May) GWI released a comprehensive infographic on the importance of education on menstruation. GWI encourages you to see the infographic [HERE](#).

### **GWI reports on HRC53 side even on advancing gender equality in and through sport**

Within the context of HRC53, GWI participated in a side event sponsored by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Global Observatory for Gender Equality in and Through Sport, the Swiss Mission, and UN Women. The event focused on the advancement of gender equality in the domain of sports. Distinguished panellists highlighted the persisting presence of gender inequalities within the sports world, with alarming statistics revealing that one in five girls has experiences sexual violence in this realm. The panellists emphasised that multiple barriers impede the realisation of equality, encompassing discrimination, stigmatisation, and limited opportunities faced by women in sports. Notably, in certain countries, women have to disguise into men in order to be able to compete. Addressing these issues necessitates the implementation of strategic frameworks, exemplified by the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) framework adopted in September 2022, which focuses on upholding human rights and emphasised the imperative of achieving gender equality in the sporting sphere (click [HERE](#) to read it). Magali Martowicz, the Head of Human Rights at the IOC, affirmed that the gender equality program implemented within this framework aims not only to combat discrimination against women in sports but also to promote their representation in leadership positions.

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## — Give the gift of Education —

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Give the gift of education to women and girls worldwide by contributing to the Girls' Education for Brighter Futures Post- COVID-19 programme, which directly supports GWI's international advocacy work and projects held throughout the world to remove socio-cultural, gender-related and economic barriers girls face towards education endeavours. GWI's goal is for 500 supporters to commit to a moderate monthly donation.

To learn more about the Girls Education for Brighter Futures project, click [HERE](#). **Join the 500+Challenge today by clicking [HERE](#).**

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## — Did you know? —

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Did you know that GWI has a Young Member Network (YMN) with more than 100 members? Every year on 15th July, World Youth Skills Day is celebrated as an official United Nations Day of Observance, emphasizing the importance of youth acquiring new skills to succeed in the job market. GWI's YMN provides a platform for young women to connect and engage in cultural and professional activities, contributing to their growth and development in line with this year's World Youth Skills Day theme. To know more about GWI's YMN, please click [HERE](#).

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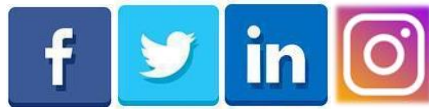
## — Dates and events worth noting —

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10-19 July	High-Level Political Forum, United Nations, New York
17-21 July	Session of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Geneva
30 July	World Day against Trafficking in Persons, Global
31 July	Pan African Women's Day, Global
9 August	International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, Global
18-19 September	SDG Summit, New York
21 September	International Day of Peace

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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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