



## GWI UPDATE – 24 April 2024



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

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#### **GWI Calls for increased support for public libraries on World Book and Copyright Day**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) dedicates 23 April annually to World Book and Copyright Day to promote the pleasure of reading books, publishing, and copyrighting. As advocates for literacy and education for 105 years, GWI highlights in a press release that public libraries are vital institutions for providing equitable access to books and reading spaces yet also voices concern for limited access to public libraries by millions of women and girls. **GWI invites you to read the full press release [HERE](#).**

#### **On International Earth Day, GWI urges States to include women in their climate change strategies**

In honour of International Earth Day, celebrated annually on 22 April, GWI highlights in a press release and infographic the disproportionate impact that climate change has, especially on low-income, rural women, and urges States to include women in devising strategies to mitigate climate change and its detrimental effects through adequate funding and educational initiatives and addressing their needs and rights within policy agreements. **Read the full press release [HERE](#). Access the infographic [HERE](#). Access the Spanish version of the infographic [HERE](#), kindly translated by the GWI Spanish-speaking Culture Bridge.**

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### — GWI Member News —

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#### **Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) hosts Earth Day GWI Outreach Conversation**

The Belleville & District of CFUW hosted a GWI Outreach Conversation Event entitled, “Planet

vs. Plastics: Elimination of Single Use Plastics” featuring expert speakers from Canada, Ghana, and Spain on Earth Day, this past 22 April. The event drew nearly 200 registrants who gathered to hear powerful presentations from Beth Junkins, member of the CFUW Environment and Climate Change Subcommittee, Dr. Genevieve Etonam Adukpo, Senior Lecturer at the University Cape Coast School of Physical Sciences Department of Chemistry, and Laura G. De Rivera, a science journalist and lecturer based in Spain. The event featured various global perspectives and facilitated an insightful breakout room session where participants discussed how their communities are making strides to reduce the use of single-use plastics. **Access the Zoom Recording [HERE](#).**

**Indian Federation of University Women's Association (IFUWA) International Conference: “Working Together for a Sustainable Future” held on 1-2 March** [IFUWA organised an international conference](#) on the theme “Working Together for a Sustainable Future” on 1-2 March, in Pune, India. The conference offered multiple presentations, panel discussions and conversations on the theme. “We heard voices of eminent women coming from the domains of environment activists, lawyers, and from industry too, all of whom are both nationally and internationally working on different aspects of sustainability and creating connectors, spreading knowledge and encouraging activism to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),” said Dr. Meera Bondre, GWI Vice President of Membership.

The conference's inaugural session began with traditional rituals and welcoming addresses from various speakers. Dr. Ranjana Banerjee, President of IFUWA, highlighted education's transformative power for women's welfare globally. Dr. Meera Bondre discussed efforts to revive and strengthen women's associations across Asia within the GWI framework. GWI President Patrice Wellesley-Cole extended her support and emphasized IFUWA's historical contributions. Dr. Ujwala Chakradeo, Vice Chancellor of SNDT at Women's University in Mumbai, underscored the importance of education in women's empowerment, referencing the legacy of Maharishi Karve. Environmental activist Dr. Vandana Shiva stressed the interconnectedness of nature and women's roles in preserving it. Industrial leader heading Thermax Ltd, a leading Energy and Environmental Engineering Company, Ms. Meher Pudumjee, discussed sustainable practices in business. Dr. Akram Khatoun, though absent, highlighted poverty eradication strategies. Human rights activist Ms. Nimalka Fernando emphasized peace and gender equality.

The SAARC panel, moderated by journalist Swati Bhattacharya, discussed gender equality efforts in South Asian countries, focusing on sustainability. Representatives from Pakistan, Bhutan, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, and India shared insights into various challenges and initiatives.

The conference also featured sessions on SDGs, moderated by academician and educator Dr. Muckta Karmarkar. Speakers from Japan, Thailand, Pakistan, Hong Kong, and Bangladesh presented on issues like economic empowerment, water preservation, youth engagement, education, and cyber safety for women.

Affiliates of IFUWA presented their sustainability initiatives, including environmental conservation, menstrual hygiene, plastic awareness, and advocacy efforts.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks, highlighting the collaborative nature of the conference and the importance of education and collective action for a sustainable future. This echoes Kenyan political activist and Nobel Peace Prize recipient Wangari Maathai's words on the vital role of education and environmental stewardship, reminding us all that we are part of a global effort.

**GWJ congratulates IFUWA for their organisation of this relevant event.**



**Dr Ujjwala Chakradeo, Vice Chancellor, SNDT Women's University**

Dr. Chakradeo's keynote address emphasized the importance of education in the empowerment of women and girls

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## — GWJ at the United Nations —

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### **The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) 46<sup>th</sup> session to be held 29 April - 10 May at the United Nations Geneva (UNOG)**

Representatives from the GWJ headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland will actively participate in the 46th session of the UPR where Member States' human rights records will be under review. During this session, UPR will be reviewing two GWJ NFA countries: New Zealand and Cyprus. **Reports on the session will be published in upcoming Updates so please check back.**

### **Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) for the Sustainable Development Goals to be held in New York City 9-10 May**

The 2024 STI Forum will be convened by the President of The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Her Excellency Paula Narváez, and will feature the theme "Science, technology and innovation for reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions." This forum connects with GWJ work on The United Nations International Telecommunication Union's (ITU) Girls in ICT Day, which highlights the need to promote technology career opportunities for women and girls. **GWJ will issue a comprehensive international advocacy toolkit for Girls in ICT Day, so please check back.**

## **The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 88<sup>th</sup> session to be held 13-31 May at the UNOG**

Representatives from the GWI headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland will actively participate in the 88th session of CEDAW, where the Committee will review the reports of various countries, including our NFAs countries of Rwanda, El Salvador, Singapore, and The Republic of Korea. **Reports on the session will be published in upcoming Updates so please check back.**

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### — Give the Gift of Education —

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Give the gift of education to women and girls around the world by contributing to our [Girls' Education for Brighter Futures Post- COVID-19 programme](#), which directly supports GWI's advocacy work and projects held throughout the world to remove socio-cultural, gender related and economic barriers girls face towards education endeavours.

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### — Did you know? —

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#### **GWI welcomes new intern, Ondine Deruaz-Scheiblin**



Ondine Deruaz-Scheiblin, Spring Intern

My name is Ondine Déruaz-Scheiblin, I am a first-year student at Geneva Graduate Institute, pursuing a Master's degree in International Relations and Development Studies with a specialisation in Gender, Race, and Diversity. It is a privilege to be part of this brilliant team of interns until August 2024, and I am eager to contribute to Graduate Women International's work while promoting gender equality through lifelong education. During my Bachelor's degree in Political Science, I attended several gender studies classes that sparked my interest in gender issues. These courses deepened my understanding of the origins of gender-based inequalities and confirmed my commitment to dedicate my career to promoting equality for all. Specifically, I'm intrigued by the significance and influence of intersectional feminism in unravelling gender inequalities. During my Internship I aim to gain

hands-on experience in advocacy work at both grassroots and international levels, refining my communication and research skills in the process. Following this internship, I plan to graduate from my master's program. Afterwards, I aspire to join a United Nations Volunteer Program in Latin America, focusing on improving women's access to education, to broaden my understanding of global gender inequalities. Subsequently, I hope to work for either a non-governmental organisation or an international organisation, developing projects and advocating to advance gender equality globally.

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## — Dates and events —

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25 April	International Girls in ICT Day
26 April	Deadline EMRTD call for inputs
29 April - 7 May	46th Session Universal Periodic Review Working Group
6 - 24 May	Convention on the Rights of the Child
9 - 10 May	Forum on Science Technology and Innovation, New York
13 - 31 May	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
28 May	Menstrual Hygiene Day
11 July	Graduate Women International 105 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary
10 - 13 Sept 2025	GWI 35th General Assembly and Conference

### 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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