



Graduate Women  
International (GWI)

# Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Geneva, Switzerland, 9 April 2024** - During the 55th session of the Human Rights Council (HRC55), held at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva from 26 February to 6 April 2024, Graduate Women International (GWI) showcased its 105-year commitment to advancing the status of women and girls through access to education and lifelong learning. GWI contributed a written statement, sponsored one of four High-Level Segment General Segment civil society speakers, and participated in multiple side events, adding constructive comments about the positive impacts of education on the lives of women and girls.

Kicking off GWI's contributions is a written statement titled: [Advancing Green Education: GWI Urges States to Embrace Green Education for Sustainable Future of Women and Girls](#). This statement attests to GWI's commitment to integrating environmental principles, sustainable practices, and climate change education into formal and informal environments, especially as women are often disproportionately burdened by the damages caused by climate change. "GWI's international advocacy for inclusive education is unrelenting, and we will continue to work tirelessly towards our vision of education for every woman and girl so they can realize their full potential," says Stacy Dry Lara, GWI Executive Director.

Further, GWI sponsored one of four civil society speakers selected for the General Segment. Chizuko Suzuki, a Japanese Association of University Women (JAUW) member, delivered a powerful oral statement on access to Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). Suzuki called for the implementation of CSE in public education and in local governments to empower youth, specifically girls, to make informed decisions and avoid various pervasive risks relating to a lack of knowledge on sexual health and rights.

GWI participated in multiple side events addressing critical issues relating to education. At one event, Strengthening a Culture of Peace: Time for the Human Rights Council to Take Action, GWI engaged in a discussion regarding the role of the HRC in fostering a culture of peace to achieve sustainable development and uphold human rights. GWI brought to the surface the importance of integrating a culture of peace through education and the role of HRC in promoting education for women and girls, which, in turn, contributes to establishing peace.

GWI also participated in a side event regarding the *Digitalization of Education*. This event addressed the potential of digital technologies for equitable access to education while addressing challenges arising from the digital divide. Specifically, this event put forward the importance of strong legal and policy frameworks to regulate access to digital technologies and ensure that the digitalization of education can be enjoyed by everyone equally. As HRC55 ends, GWI remains committed to advocating for gender equality, inclusive education, and the empowerment of women and girls worldwide.

About GWI: GWI is a membership-based international NGO based in Geneva, Switzerland, in over 60 countries. Founded in 1919, GWI is the leading girls' and women's global organization advocating for women's rights, equality, and empowerment through access to quality education and training up to the highest levels. GWI is in special consultative status with ECOSOC since 1947 and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO and ILO.

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Contributing to this press release is Sophia Schaaper, GWI Intern.