

ICW-CIF

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Contents

- 02 President's Message
- 03 ICW-CIF Elected Officials 2018-2022
- 05 Report: Virtual Board Meeting on March 24, 2022
- 06 Report: UN CSW66

- 11 Reports from UN Representatives
- 18 Message of Board Coordinator of Standing Committees
- 20 Reports from Standing Committees
- 27 News from Member Councils (NCWs)
- 35 Condolences
- 35 Upcoming Event

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN



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President's Message



Greetings,

I dearly hope this message finds each of you in good health and high spirits in these difficult times, yet we continue our struggle for equality without pause. It is hard to believe that 7 years have passed since I assumed the honorable position of president of the International Council of Women (ICW). How quickly time flies!

Facing the unprecedented challenges brought on by COVID-19 and the Ukraine war, I am entirely grateful to ICW member councils and sisters for their continued strong support to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. The difficulties imposed by current situations would certainly seem much more formidable were it not for that we all recognize the worthiness of our goals.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, the 66th session of the commission on the status of women (CSW66) was held from March 14th to 25th virtually for the most parts including all side and parallel events with a few exceptions. As in years past, we ICW, also held a virtual parallel event on March 17th with the theme of 'Women's Empowerment in a Future World of Work Impacted by Climate Change'. The event was very successful with fruitful discussions and 90 participants from around the world. I give my sincere thanks to all the distinguished speakers and participants who shared their important views and expertise to make the event a grand success.

The 36th ICW General Assembly (GA) is just around the corner on the 16th of May. I am so excited to see all of you in person at the GA in Avignon, France. At the upcoming GA, we will evaluate women's status in relation to development around the world. We will also assess the work and consequent progress of ICW affiliates in the promotion of the current triennial theme, "Social Protection for All Women and Girls: Sustainable Development for the World". Likewise, we will establish the next triennial theme for 2022-2025. As an added major benefit, we will also strengthen our global network of women through reinforcing solidarity and friendship among members.

NCW France has worked so hard for the meeting so that all of us could enjoy the charm of French people and their culture. The ICW board would like to express its profound gratitude to NCW France for its dedicated contribution to make the 36th GA successful.

I look forward to meeting all of you soon in the beautiful and historic city of Avignon.



Jungsook Kim (Ed.D)
President of ICW-CIF

ICW-CIF Elected Officials 2018-2022

International Council of Women would like to thank
All Board Members, the Standing Committees, and UN Representatives
for their dedication to ICW-CIF for the last four years.



ICW Board Members

ICW-CIF Board

President	Jungsook Kim
Vice President	Linda Liu, Doris Bingley, Jamal Hermes Ghibril, Fatma Fatos Inal, Giwo Rubianto Wiyogo
Board Member	Isin Atala, Pushpa Hegde, Elisabeth Newman, Hean Bee Wee
Treasurer	Martine Marandel
Assistant Treasurer	Marie-Claude Bertrand

UN Representatives

New York	Elizabeth Carll, Iryna Kurowyckyj, Kathy Adler
DGC (DPI)	Lindsay Ashby, Jeanne Kim, Bogena Dergalo
Geneva	Mohinder Watson, Brigitte Polonovski, Martine Marandel, Emma Rommerts
Vienna	Eleonore Hauer-Rona, Nora Aschacher, Helga Hasso
UNESCO	Francoise Bouteiller, Lise Bedossa, Simonne Mirabel
FAO	Nanda Nobile
ESCAP	Chularat Israngkool Na Ayutthaya, Sirirat Tamrongterakul
UNIDO	Eleonore Hauer-Rona
UN HABITAT	Emmy Galama

Standing Committee Members

Status of Women Standing Committee

Co-ordinator	Chularat Israngkool Na Ayutthaya	
Advisors	Implementation of Conventions	Vivi Germanos-Koutsounadis
	International Relations & Peace	Mazal Renford
	Legislation	Radhia Jerbi
	Human Rights	Claudie Bourgon-Guibert

Sustainable Development Standing Committee

Co-ordinator	Hadriani Uli Tiur Ida Silalahi	
Advisors	Women & Employment	Mae Chu Chang
	Rural and Urban Women	Saida Zniber
	Economics	Ayfer Yilmaz

General Well-Being Standing Committee

Advisors	Health	Lyudmyla Porokhnyak
	Habitat	Siririat Tamrongterakul
	Environment	Wendy Rainbird
	Nutrition	Rakhi Shetty

Communications Standing Committee

Co-ordinator	Leonie Christophersen	
Advisors	Arts and Letters	Jennifer Ann Davies
	Music	Eleonore Hauer-Rona
	Education	Young-ae Ha
	Mass Media	Annamaria Castelfranchi

Social Issues Standing Committee

Co-ordinator	Gloria Laraba Shoda	
Advisors	Child and Family	Sheila Pepper
	Ageing	Maragret Jip Kuo

Report: Virtual Board Meeting on March 24, 2022



The ICW board held a virtual board meeting on March 24 with the participation of all the board members. ICW President Jungsook Kim expressed her disheartenment of the war in Ukraine inviting all to make a strong voice for peace development strategies and to encourage the safety and security of women and children, even though, she stressed, ICW should not be deeply involved politically. But, as a global women's organization, we could do it for humanitarian reasons. She appreciated the board members' participation at the ICW parallel event at CSW66. She thanked Linda Liu for her moderation and for summarizing the discussion. Jungsook Kim noted that some member councils such as NCW France, Ukraine, Bangladesh, Canada, Indonesia, and Great Britain organized their side and parallel events.

Jungsook Kim also expressed her appreciation to Mazal Renford, Linda Liu, and Elisabeth Newman for making the ICW statement to remark the International Women's Day (IWD) and reported that ICW cosigned some statements initiated by global women's NGOs for Ukraine situation, IWD, and so on.

Martine Marandel discussed with the board the detailed programs and the budget of GA and gave an overview of the ICW finances. She will be preparing a budget for the next triennium 2022-2025 which needs to be passed at the next board meeting before the GA. Jungsook Kim said according to the ICW constitution we need one-third of the member councils to participate in the GA to meet the quorum. Elisabeth Newman accepted to prepare the Interfaith Service and someone from NCW France will be in charge of the Gift Shop.

Doris Bingley explained the Small Development Funds and pointed out that the Pakistan project "Human Rights Protection in the COVID-19 Pandemic" and Nigerian project "Handmade Reusable Sanitary Towels" have been finalized and NCW Bolivia will start their project "Women Working in the Construction Building" in June 2022. Pushpa Hegde and Elisabeth Newman briefed on the Standing advisors' activities and Elisabeth noted that she asked SCs to prepare a report on their activities during this Triennium. She is also working on the Plans of Action and Resolutions for the GA. The next board meeting will be held in Avignon on May 14-15, 2022.

Reported by Isin Atala, ICW-CIF Board Member

Report: UN CSW66



Due to the continued impact of the COVID-19, the 66th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW66) once again took place in a hybrid format from 14 to 25 March 2022. The priority theme was “Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes”. As the

CSW66 is the UN's largest gathering on women's rights issues, there were 213 government side events and 800 NGO parallel events. The CSW66 recognized with concern the disproportionate impacts of climate change on all women and girls and stressed the urgency of eliminating historical and structural inequalities. The agreed conclusions adopted by Member States are a blueprint for world leaders to promote women's full participation in the designing and implementation of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes moving forward.

< NGO CSW66 Consultation Day >

NGO CSW66 Consultation Day opened to the beautiful sound of the Harlem Youth Choir at the Apollo Theater in Harlem on 13 March 2022. Announcing participation of more than 27,000 registrants for the 800 plus parallel events at NGO CSW66 Forum, Houry Geudelekian, NGO CSW/NY Chair, launched the 50th anniversary celebration of CSW NGO/NY. She stressed that strong feminist movements are indispensable to stop democratic movements from backsliding and confirmed that CSW will always be a safe space for the global feminist movement.

Ambassador (Amb.) Abdulla Shahid, President of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly 2022, emphasized that climate justice and gender inequality are two sides of the same coin. He noted that women and girls are disproportionately impacted by climate change and possess skills and knowledge in natural resource management but are excluded from mitigation efforts. He closed with a promise to work for gender equality during his term.

Reaffirming the complementary role of civil society with governments and international governmental organizations, Dr. Sima Bahous, Executive Director of UN Women, congratulated NGO CSW/NY for 50 years of pushing the UN and all governments to do more for women at CSW. She saluted the Ukrainian women and all women suffering in wars and crises, saying that wars disrupt the livelihoods of



women, displace them as they flee to seek safety, and urged all women to help other women. What is most important is to stop the war, to stop the violence and to raise our voices for them because women are the ones to keep the peace.

Turning to CSW, Dr. Sima Bahous, replied that climate disasters affect women the most as they are the first to suffer and may lose their livelihoods, therefore governments must know what women's needs are so that they can enact policies to help women impacted by climate change. Also, violence against women increases with disasters and must be included in the solutions. The COVID-19 pandemic showed that women are at the forefront of the work and the response, even having to add extra hours of unpaid care work, therefore rethinking the care economy is critical for women's economic empowerment, for bringing their different perspectives to the table and for them to be part of the solution.

Amb. Nason added that when women are involved in a decision, the decisions tend to be more durable. The conversation moved to how civil society encompasses women from various sectors who live the issues every day and therefore are the best sources for governments to hear what women need. Underscoring the power of NGOs to move things forward through their governments and through their advocacy, Dr. Bahous promised that the UN Women would be a bridge for civil society to push ideas and governments. The three speakers concluded that CSW is a constructive partnership between civil society and governments to reach a positive outcome and implement the actions for gender equality and climate change.



Houry Geudelekian then invited Lopa Banerjee, Civil Society Director, UN Women to speak on the link between generation equality and CSW. Lopa Banerjee explained that Beijing Platform for Action was a successful model of collaboration between feminists within and outside the government. But, instead of celebrations, its 25th anniversary found women and young people demonstrating to hold their governments accountable for undelivered promises. UN Women saw the need to look to young activists to continue to monitor and hold governments accountable, and launched the generation equality campaign for activists of all ages to work side by side to achieve what was promised.

Ivy Koek, NGO CSW/NY Vice-Chair, reported on the activities and advocacy trainings organized by their Advocacy and Research Group (ARG) throughout the year and during the CSW. She introduced the online advocacy resources, including the Advocacy training guide and "Women's Human Rights Teaching, Learning and Advocacy Resource." Rosa Lizarde and Pamela Morgan, the two NGO CSW66 Forum co-chairs, invited the participants to attend the caucuses, trainings, conversation circles and activities hosted by NGO CSW/NY and closed the program by calling on all activists to advocate for peace because without peace we cannot achieve the aspirations of climate change, gender equality, disaster risk mitigation, healthy environment and sustainable development.

< ICW Parallel Event: Women's Empowerment in a Future World of Work Impacted by Climate Change >



Dr. Jungsook Kim

After warmly welcoming some 90 participants to Women's Empowerment in a Future World of Work Impacted by Climate Change, the virtual parallel event at the UN CSW66 sponsored by the International Council of Women (ICW) on March 17, 2022, ICW President Dr. Jungsook Kim maintained that climate change has led to extreme weather events, infectious disease, environmental degradation and damage to infrastructures, and is triggering changes in the future workplace from job losses, productivity decline, automation,

economic restructuring and the rise of new industries. It is therefore necessary to understand the challenges and opportunities in the changing world of work facing women and girls, who already suffer inequalities from existing social norms, unpaid care burden and gender power imbalance.

The moderator of the event, ICW Vice-President Linda Liu, introduced the objective of the event to discuss issues, challenges, opportunities and policies for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment in a workplace transformed by climate change as well as measures and best practices to build the capacity of women to adapt and thrive in the world of work. The excellent panel of experts discussed the aforesaid from varying perspectives including the role of international institutions, participation and leadership, legal systems, human rights and social norms.



Ms. Linda Liu



Dr. Kyung-wha Kang

Dr. Kyung-wha Kang, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, focused on the critical role of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in setting international standards to promote women's economic empowerment and gender equality in the workplace through conventions, declarations, guidelines and reports. These standards addressed issues confronting women at work, advanced women's status and protected their rights in the workplace, such as maternity rights, equal remuneration, non-discrimination in

employment, right to collective bargaining, violence and harassment, and elimination of child labor.

Aware that impacts of climate disasters and the pandemic have been much more severe on women than men resulting in a widening of the gender gap, the ILO, in its *2019 Centenary Report on the Future of Work and 2021 Global Call to Action*, gave priority to adopting a transformative agenda to achieve work-life balance and gender equality and to ensure equalities of opportunity, participation, treatment and pay in addition to promoting investment in the care economy. Dr. Kang encouraged civil society to strongly advocate for the transformation of the unpaid care burden of women and girls through greater investment in and formalization of the care economy in order to achieve women's empowerment in the changing world of work.

Ms. Irene Natividad, President of the Global Summit of Women, indicated that COVID and climate change have curtailed the progress made for women at work since the Beijing World Conference on Women. During COVID-19, 45 million women lost their jobs in the service industries with only 42.5% of women returning to work, while 20% of women owned businesses have permanently shut down. The pandemic also accelerated automation and digitalization, which has led to robotics replacing jobs mostly held by women. Increasing frequency of natural and environmental disasters from climate change also transforms the workplace and negatively affects food production, a sector heavily represented by women.



Ms. Irene Natividad

Globally, women are only 13.5% of the top government leaders, 26% of ministers, 26.1% of parliamentarians and 15% of ministers of environment, so there are not enough women at the climate tables. Noting the effectiveness of quotas in raising the numbers of women in parliament and senior management, Ms. Natividad recommended the use of quotas and legislative mandates to accelerate women's leadership in all sectors and urged women to support women candidates so that there will be more women in the political sphere.



Dr. Caren Grown

Dr. Caren Grown, the Global Director of the World Bank's Gender Group, used the findings of World Bank's report *Women Business and the Law* to show that legal reform is an important precondition for fostering women's labor market participation. According to the World Bank's research, women's labor force participation has been stagnating for the last three decades and as economies transition away from fossil fuels, more women will be out of work. Surveys conducted by the World Bank during COVID show that the pandemic has caused a hefty reduction

in women's employment, entrepreneurship and return to work. The major reasons are laws preventing and restricting women from participating in the economy, children out of school and social norms putting the care burden on women. Dr. Grown stressed that to have legal equality in the workplace, laws alone are not enough; there must be regulatory frameworks and adequate budgetary support to effectively implement the laws and the social infrastructure must be transformed through financing investment in care and changing male norms that are not in sync with women at work.

Ms. Melissa Upreti, the Vice Chair of the UN Human Rights Council Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls (WGDWG), noted that gendered impacts of climate change are consequences of institutional and structural challenges arising from deep-rooted causes of discrimination and exploitation such as social norms, religious doctrines and traditional values. Moreover, the disproportional impact of climate change on women and girls, is also the result of their lack of participation in decision-making and discussions on climate change. Although rural and indigenous women often play an important role in agriculture and natural resource management, their knowledge is not often acknowledged or employed in designing solutions for climate change.



Ms. Melissa Upreti

Furthermore, creating a world of work where women contribute equally with men needs a rethinking of the structures of work and economy that places women's human rights at the center, where women can expect job security, decent work conditions, equal pay, respect, freedom from violence and harassment in the workplace, access to the right skills and training, and support for care responsibilities. To ensure that changes in the future workplace from climate change will not exacerbate its disproportionate impacts on women, there must be targeted action in the following areas: ensuring freedom from sexual harassment at work through gender violence laws; recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid care and domestic work between men and women; disrupting patterns and values of women and men's work; ensuring all women can enjoy their rights, including social protection, without discrimination; and supporting women's collective action and organizing for work security, income security, food security and social security.

Ms. Hyeshin Park, Gender Programme Co-ordinator of the Networks, Partnerships and Gender Division at the OECD Development Centre, explained that OECD measures the invisible drivers of inequality that are entrenched in social institutions and social norms with the Social Institution and Gender Index and found that countries with less gender inequality take more climate actions, which decreases vulnerabilities to consequences of climate change. Women are more vulnerable to impacts of climate change because discriminatory social norms and unequal power dynamics limit women's access to resources, decision-making, information, education, and mobility. Restrictive masculinity norms, such as men being the breadwinner and financially dominant, prevent women's voices from being heard, reinforce the unequal distribution of unpaid work, and hamper women's ability to pursue paid work and political leadership roles.



Social norms and legal restrictions are also drivers of gender segregation in industries, like construction and transportation, relevant to climate change and energy production. To tackle climate change inequalities faced by women, addressing root causes of gender inequality is a key priority and increased involvement of women at all levels and in all sectors is necessary to ensure integration of gender equality concerns in the development and design of climate policies and initiatives.

The substantive discussions introduced the theoretical underpinnings of the nexus between gender equality and climate change as well as the policies, measures and best practices to achieve women's empowerment in a world of work impacted by climate change. Running 20 minutes overtime, the high caliber speakers captivated the audience with a wealth of knowledge that not only flowed smoothly from one to the next but also build upon each other.

With the plight of the Ukrainian people on everyone's minds, the speakers and moderator all expressed concern and solidarity with the women and children of Ukraine, and called for the fulfillment of humanitarian needs and the resumption of peace so that they can return to their lives. NCW of Ukraine showed slides warning of the dangers of environmental disasters from warfare damaging the nuclear power plants.

Reported by Linda Liu, ICW-CIF Vice-President

Reports from UN Representatives

UN Geneva

The 49th regular session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) took place from February 28 to April 1, 2022, which unfortunately overlapped with the CSW66. NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC were allowed to deliver statements for the interactive dialogues, panel discussions and UPR adoptions in person or through pre-recorded video messages, but statements for the general debates were by video only. No side events were allowed inside the Palais des Nations during the 49th session, but some online panels were held.

Issues considered during the 49th session of the HRC, included a focus on the situation in Ukraine, the protection of human rights defenders, freedom of religion or belief, protection and promotion of human rights while countering terrorism, and reports by the Special Rapporteurs on the right to food and right to adequate housing. Also addressed were the human rights situations in Nicaragua, Venezuela, China, Syria, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Iran, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Myanmar, Eritrea, among others.

A considerable amount of time was devoted to organizing an International Expert Group Meeting on March 10 in the run up to CSW66 to explore the evidence on the link between climate change and child marriage, an area which had not been adequately addressed. The Chair of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Mikiko Otani, whom I had previously met and discussed child marriage with at length, delivered the opening remarks. Due to her work on the CRC, she stayed to listen to the full four-hour program and subsequently shared information from our meeting with the other members of the CRC.



Mohinder Watson, ICW-CIF
Representative to UN Geneva (left),
Mikiko Otani, Chair of the UN CRC (right)



Ambassador Joyini,
Chair of the CSW66 Bureau

As with every year, the ICW organized and sponsored several well attended events during CSW66 from 14 to 25 March. The CSW66 priority theme recognized that women and girls are disproportionately affected by climate change, which should be reflected in all policies and programs in this area. The two key outcomes from the review of CSW working methods, which covers how the two-week CSW session is organized, were stronger language around the participation of civil society and that in the future, CSW will incorporate a dedicated interactive session for youth participation. The Agreed Conclusions produced new norms and standards for women's participation in climate change, environmental degradation and disaster risk reduction, providing a blueprint for governments and leaders.

Some other CSW highlights included for the first time including the protection and rights of migrants and their families, the rights of Indigenous people, also linking climate change with human rights obligations, e.g. women's and girls' rights to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, creating a space for young women to help shape decisions on climate change, environmental degradation, and disaster risk reduction, which will affect their future.

Other topics covered included recognising the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination which some women face, so that policies and programs take account of these. The impact of climate change and environmental degradation and disasters on the health of women and girls was raised including the availability of health services, particularly sexual and reproductive health education and services which should be available, particularly in times of disaster. CSW strongly encouraged integrating a gender perspective into the design, funding, implementation and monitoring and evolution of programs and policies on climate mitigation and adaptation, resilience and disaster risk reduction, biodiversity protection, and environmental degradation and pollution.

On March 10, I took part in the Regional Forum on sustainable development for the UNECE region which asked whether the UNECE region was on track to meet the Goals by 2030. Such annual reviews occur in all five of the UN's regional commissions. However, the world has changed considerably since the SDGs Agenda was set. The COVID-19 pandemic, while threatening health and economies and deepening existing inequalities, has also brought setbacks, so a renewed commitment to the 2030 Agenda is needed to accelerate progress towards sustainable development. Good data and reliable statistics are essential for good technical analyses of achievements and allow a meaningful political and societal debate about future actions. Based on this assessment, the UNECE region will achieve only 26 targets (25 percent of measurable targets) by 2030. For 64 targets, progress has to be accelerated, and for 15 targets, the current trends need to be reversed.

Ms. Reem Alsalem, United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences spoke on 'Why do we need Femicide Watches?' The shadow pandemic of violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a global crisis compounded and complicated by other crises. Despite many efforts, VAWG remains a threat to human rights and a serious impediment to achieving the SDGs, and more specifically SDG5. Official data-collection instruments very often lack critical measures, variables, accuracy and consistency that could assist the prevention of femicide, hampering the access of researchers, advocates, service providers and policymakers to the right information. The institutionalization of mechanisms to monitor femicides, such as femicide watches or observatories, is a powerful tool to uncover the scope of the issue and put in place evidence-based responses in a coordinated and collective manner.

The UNECE Forum also organised round tables and peer learning on several SDGs. Due to lack of space, only SDG 4 on education and SDG 5 on gender equality are reported here.

Key messages on SDG 4: Quality education and lifelong learning in the context of COVID-19: sharing best practices and lessons learnt for enhancing inclusion policies and strategies

Education systems must become more resilient to prepare for future crises including through digital learning for all. Lessons must be learned from the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the continuity of learning including by offering more flexible curricula and assessments at all levels. Collaborative policy planning should involve multi stakeholder consultations.

Barriers facing learners in a particular context should be addressed. A gender perspective should be mainstreamed in all education policies and investment should be made to ensure education systems are

inclusive and resilient with a particular focus on vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, minorities, learners with special needs and refugees.

Education systems must offer more support to enhance digital skills and competencies for all. Connectivity for all schools should be prioritised. Students in all grades should be provided with digital resources and teachers should receive appropriate support. An important dimension of education for sustainable development is that learners must be prepared to navigate uncertain futures and must help create a more peaceful, just and sustainable world. Education systems urgently need to move beyond literacy and numeracy and inculcate values, knowledge and skills that promote peace, sustainable development, human rights, and democracy.

Key messages on SDG 5: Accelerators of gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic



The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated underlying structural inequalities, and raised the risk of reversing progress, especially regarding gender-based violence (GBV). There is a need to develop gender responsive standards for policies and legislation regarding GBV.

Sufficient resources should be made available for national gender equality mechanisms and women's organisations, the collection of disaggregated data must be improved to enable progress to be tracked and gaps to be addressed. The equal participation of women is a responsibility of all stakeholders and equal political representation is essential. The gender imbalance in managerial positions must be reversed. Gender sensitive institutions are necessary to deliver quality services to women. Universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights must be available for all, especially marginalized groups. Quota systems should be used to institutionalise representation of people in all their diversity. Gender inequalities continue in the workplace; improved care services and flexible working arrangements are needed. Gender reforms supporting equal access to work must be implemented.

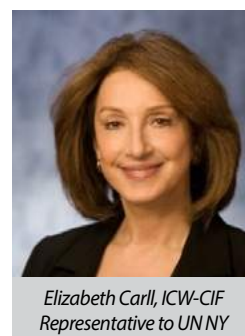
With CSW66 over, I am looking forward to the ICW General Assembly in May as an opportunity to re-connect with and meet many of you in person after several years.

Mohinder Watson, ICW-CIF Main Representative to UN Geneva

UN New York

The 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women was once again virtual for the most part including all side and parallel events with a few exceptions. The live opening session was attended mostly by government delegates, agencies and a very few NGOs due to space restrictions. The opening remarks by UN Secretary-General António Guterres' were especially timely recognizing the urgency of global crises, especially on women and girls.

The Secretary-General stated in part, "Everywhere, women and girls face the greatest



threats and the deepest harm. Women's equal leadership and participation are vital to create peaceful, resilient communities and societies. We cannot separate the perilous state of peace in our world from long-standing structures of patriarchy and exclusion. And the war in Ukraine is another clear demonstration of this everywhere. The climate and environmental crises, coupled with the ongoing economic and social fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, are the defining issues of our time. Our collective response will chart our course for decades to come. To forge the sustainable future we need, women and girls must be front and center, leading the way."

As members of ICW, we are all aware the realization of this necessary change will only occur when governments implement the aspirations we continue to hear. We will need to continue to work tirelessly to move this agenda forward. Women from around the world participated in the many events taking place at CSW66. A variety of excellent events were produced by members of ICW.

Each year for the UN CSW, Dr. Elizabeth Carll spearheads organizing a government sponsored side event on behalf of the ICW UN team in New York. For this year's event: "Women's Health and Well-Being: Impact of the Environment and Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)", was a continuation of a long-term agenda to integrate women's life course healthcare into the UN agenda with a focus on Universal Health Coverage (UHC), especially in context of the greatest burdens of global, diseases. These included the major NCDs, specifically, cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, respiratory illnesses, and mental health and neurological illnesses. With the challenges of COVID-19, NCDs have taken center stage in relevance to healthcare.

With the increasing concerns of the consequences of the impact of climate change and the environment, the major role of women in family health, and providing frontline community healthcare, the importance of UHC and women's health and well-being must be addressed in a systematic and cohesive manner. This event described current examples and recommendations for the path forward. The event was sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations and International Council of Women; and cosponsored by CCCUN; and PPSEAWA. These entities have a longstanding interest in women's health and the factors impacting it and looking at solutions.

The introductory keynote remarks and country perspectives were delivered by Ambassador Supark Prongthura, of the Permanent Mission of Thailand to the UN. Thailand is well known for their exemplary support of universal health coverage for all, especially women, and focus on the importance of mental health and well-being. Mr. Werner Obermeyer, Director, WHO Office at the United Nations in New York, gave an excellent overview of the WHO's current work and focus on climate change and health. Dr. Susan Clayton, from the College of Wooster and co-editor of Psychology and Climate Change has been a longstanding researcher in the areas of climate change and mental health and was a participant in one of our events five years earlier, when she was first discussing this important topic. Dr. Gita Mishra, the Deputy Head, School of Public Health, University of Queensland in Australia has been an ardent researcher in women's health and NCDs. Dr. Elizabeth Carll, ICW Main UN Representative based in New York served as the moderator.

Elizabeth Carll, ICW-CIF Main Representative to UN New York

UN Vienna

< The 65th session on Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) >

On the first day of the 65th session of the CND, a Joint Call to Action on availability and access to controlled substances for Medical and Scientific Purposes was held with UNODC, WHO and INCB. “No patient left behind” was the theme of this joint call raising awareness for the critical need to improve both access and availability to controlled medicines globally, including in emergency situations. Global unified efforts must be made to build back better from the COVID-19 crisis for example and from conflict situations and humanitarian crises. Unimpeded access and the production of quality assured medicine are the cornerstones of the three Drug control conventions (1961, 1971 and 1988).



Prevention and a public health approach should be a priority accompanied by full respect of human rights, removal of stigma and support for the SDGs. Drug users have a right to a dignified life and to the necessary health care. “People suffering from substance use disorder should be met with help and treatment instead of criminal reactions”. New forms of work are needed because of the COVID-19 pandemic and new institutions on addiction taking into account the acute humanitarian crisis. Details of changes in the scope of control of substances can be found on the INCB (International Narcotics Control Board) website.

Full implementation of the drug control conventions will not only contribute to the achievement of SDG 3 good health and well-being as well as SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, but will also lead to the protection and promotion of human rights. This is because the ultimate aim of the conventions is to safeguard the health and welfare of humankind and this includes the full enjoyment of human rights. INCB calls on Member States to place human rights at the centre of their drug control policies. Violations of human rights in the name of drug control are inconsistent with the objectives of the drug control conventions. INCB renews its calls for Member States to ensure that responses to drug-related offences are consistent with the principle of proportionality and respect for due process and the rule of law.

A number of speakers referred to the growing links between drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organized crime, as well as corruption, trafficking in persons and firearms, fraud, money-laundering, cybercrime and terrorism, and described examples of activities undertaken at the national, regional and international levels to address those links. It was highlighted by some speakers that organized criminal groups were highly flexible and able to adapt to changing circumstances across borders, making international cooperation and coordination at all levels indispensable for the effective detection, disruption and prevention of such crimes

Together with the view that addiction cannot be reduced to a criminal matter, but should be seen as a chronic illness with consequences for those affected directly and for society as a whole services and policies should

realise medical, health and social dimension of the issue. Problems of countering the increasingly evolving, multi-faceted challenge of illegal drugs and substances, the increasing number of drug-related deaths and the growing opioid crisis need a balanced and comprehensive approach.

The important role of NGOs was reiterated several times stressing that research cannot be done without being fed with their experience and their very concrete work on the ground.

The 2022 UNODC-WHO Informal Scientific Network Meeting “Substance Use Prevention and Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Care for Girls and Women” stating that globally one in three people who uses drugs is a woman but only one in six people treated for drug use disorders is a women made the following recommendations:

1. Eliminate all forms of discrimination and stigma against girls and women with substance use disorders and against treatment providers. Substance use disorders are health disorders and best addressed through a biopsychosocial health response.
2. Enhance workforce development to provide effective training to support prevention and treatment of substance use disorders for girls and women.
3. Implement effective prevention and health promotion for girls and women of all ages, that benefit them equally to their male counterparts.
4. Avail adequate resources for the effective prevention and treatment of substance use disorders for women and girls, including pregnant women and women in the criminal justice system, along a continuum of care, and across the lifespan to close the prevailing treatment gap.
5. Invest in research to increase our understanding of the risk and protective factors associated with substance use in girls and women, and the most effective prevention and treatment strategies in different socioeconomic contexts.
6. Promote and evaluate gender-sensitive policies to address substance use that allow for the provision of public health and human-rights based treatment interventions for women with substance use disorders.

The Study on Arbitrary Detention in relation to drug policy by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention of the Human Rights Council was presented and caused lengthy discussions. The speaker of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights drew the attention to 2019 International Guidelines on Human Rights and Drug Policy.

No consensus was reached on the draft resolution “Strengthening international cooperation in combating the misuse of information and communications technologies for drug trafficking and drug related money laundering”. It was suggested to postpone the resolution.

For more details: www.unodc.org

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

A number of activities by the new Director General Gerhard Mueller was seen during the first months after his election. For example, the cooperation with the Vienna based IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) was intensified. How nuclear science helps to control pests, can add to food safety, and allows us to develop new crops - these were some of the topics covered during last week's visit to the IAEA laboratories in Seibersdorf. Over the last 60 years, the IAEA's eight nuclear applications challenges laboratories in Seibersdorf have trained thousands of scientists in nuclear techniques that can be applied in addressing environmental, food security and human health challenges.

Circular Economy is high on the agenda in our days when energy problems arise as a result of conflicts. In these situations, the gender aspect is gaining more and more importance. Therefore "Why adopting a gender-inclusive approach towards Circular Economy matters" is vital:

"By failing to adopt a gender perspective in the elaboration of circularity-related public policies we risk perpetuating, instead of challenging, current gender inequalities."

"The circular economy must be gender-responsive to actively bridge gaps and overcome barriers to ensure a just transition for all."

"Circular Economy to fight climate change: Are countries walking the talk?" We NGOs have to watch the implementation of their existing obligations.

"Pollution, climate change, habitat destruction and over-exploitation of natural resources such as fresh water and fisheries are doing great harm to human health, wellbeing and livelihoods, especially among poorer regions, and is undermining the prospects for a long-term resilient and robust economy. One of the prerequisites for industry to flourish in a sustainable manner is the availability of an assured supply of affordable and clean energy, together with improved resource efficiency.

The risks of climate change are well documented and its impacts are already affecting people and ecosystems. Meeting the climate challenge requires industries and institutions — both public and private - to be able to assess and understand climate change, design and implement adequate policies and to work towards resource efficient societies and low emission growth. 'Decoupling' natural resource use and environmental impacts from economic growth is a key requirement for overcoming the pressing challenge of growing resource consumption levels."

These texts cover but a few areas of UNIDO's wide range of activities, but give an overview of the impact of women's contribution to the work of the organization.



*Eleonore Hauer-Rona,
ICW-CIF Representative
to UN Vienna & UNIDO*

Eleonore Hauer-Rona, ICW-CIF Main Representative to UN Vienna and UNIDO

Message of Board Coordinator of Standing Committees



In looking back over this past Triennium what can one say? At the General Assembly of 2018 held in Yogyakarta, the Theme "Social Protection for All Women and Girls: Sustainable Development for the World", was adopted and thus formed the basis for the 2018 -2021 Plans of Action. Standing Committee members left Yogyakarta full of enthusiasm to continue ICW-CIF's commitment to improve the standing of women in all facets of life with no conception of what was to occur about 16 months later. COVID-19 struck and restrictions curtailing movement of people were in force world-wide by March 2020.

CSW was cancelled with a week's notice. In 2021 and 2022 it was held virtually, not the ideal. Much is learnt from casual meetings with delegates over a cup of coffee, something which is impossible with virtual meetings. On the positive side the ICW-CIF parallel and side events were well received. The 2021 Generation Equality Forum, sponsored by UN Women and co-hosted by the Governments of Mexico and France has, in collaboration with multi-stakeholders, launched an ambitious action plan to accelerate the achievement of gender equality.

At the 26th Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP26), held in Glasgow in November 2021, it was identified much needs to be undertaken urgently to slow global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees and achieve zero emissions by 2030. In closing the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, said: "The approved texts are a compromise. They reflect the interests, the conditions, the contradictions and the state of political will in the world today. They take important steps, but unfortunately the collective political will was not enough to overcome some deep contradictions." Unfortunately, such remarks can apply to many such outcomes. Political Will is so often seen to be lacking.

In April 2022, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) reported that since the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted in 2015, financing has been sticking point to the goals being achieved by 2030. This challenge has been increased due to the inequalities caused by the COVID-19 crisis. Also, conflicts are impeding progress.

That women and children suffer most following natural disasters and in times of conflict has been well illustrated during this Triennium, e.g. in Tonga, following the massive volcanic eruption of January 2021; after the many Pacific cyclones which are becoming for ferocious and frequent; in many countries around the world the increase in poverty has given rise to girls dropping out of school and a rise in the number of childhood marriages; in Afghanistan the treatment of women and girls is alarming, particularly girls not being allowed to have an education and alarming of that girls are sold for under Canadian \$300 so women only household have money for food; in Ukraine the loss of so many children and the trauma suffered by those who survive the conflict. Prayers and thoughts are with the Ukrainians, and with all who are suffering due to conflict.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused disruption on a scale never seen before. Poverty has increased with adjunct poverty; the stresses caused by the pandemic are considered the underlaying causes to the rise in poor mental health. With the lockdowns came the very noticeable increase in domestic violence against women and an alarming increase of the abuse of children. With the COVID-19 restrictions came the curtailing of rights which have given governments and other entities the opportunity, perhaps unwittingly, to push back on women's empowerment and gender equality and therefore fail to address women's safety adequately. Women are mobilizing to reverse this trend.

It is against this backdrop and more that the Standing Committee Members have worked. I thank them for their work this Triennium with its extra year. Not all is doom and gloom as several have highlighted in their reports. Good has occurred such as hearing that the UN General Assembly recently passed a resolution recognizing the rights of widows. At the 2009 ICW-CIF General Assembly I, with Margaret Owen from the UK, proposed a resolution, from the General Well-being Standing Committees which highlighted the plight of widows with the need for their rights to be granted. Progress is being made in gaining gender equality although it is not as fast as we would like. Several National Councils have sent reports about successful projects and of celebrations they have held, some during times of adversity. I thank them and all who have supported the Standing Committees, the backbone of ICW-CIF.



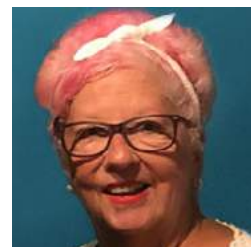
Ms. Elisabeth Newman

Elisabeth Newman, ICW-CIF Board Coordinator of Standing Committees

Reports from Standing Committees

Report by ICW-CIF Arts and Letters Advisor

Our Colleagues in Ukraine produced Posters, Pamphlets, Possibilities, Protests, Parental advice and Education throughout the assault of the COVID-19 Pandemic! President of NCW Ukraine, **Lyudmyla Porokhnyak** advised of the effects of jobs lost overall and home job losses because of poor communications in rural villages. Throughout difficulties, the NCW Ukraine distributed 30,000 booklets, 5,000 posters to schools, rural areas, and villages. SDGs 3/2/1/10/11/12/16



Jennifer Ann Davies,
Arts & Letters Advisor

Dr. Donnell Davis, immediate Past President Queensland UNAA, issued invitations for an online event, Housing as a UN Human Right. In Australia in general and Queensland in particular vulnerability has escalated through COVID-19, economic downturn, soaring housing and rental costs and flood displacement. SDGs 11/10/1/3/16/17



Annamaria Castelfranchi Galleani, ICW Mass Media Advisor, celebrates the immortalization of great women in Italy. In February 2022, a statue (shown in the photo here) was dedicated to Cristina Trivulzio de Belgioioso (Milano 28 Jun 1808 – 5 July 1871) and was installed in Milan. This outstanding woman was a heroine during the Italian Risorgimento. SDGs 5/4/11/10

Lea Koenig-Stolper was born in Poland of Yiddish actors Dina and Józef Kamien, and later lived in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. At 92 years of age, this extraordinary woman is still performing! Her father was murdered in the Holocaust and Lea and her mother emigrated to Romania where Lea studied at the National University of Arts in Bucharest. She migrated to Israel in 1961 where she became First Lady of the Israeli Theatre ("The Jerusalem Post") with performances nationally and internationally, as her talents extend to multilingualism: English, Hebrew, German, Polish, Romanian, Russian and Yiddish. SDGs 3/4/5/12/17



Lea Koenig-Stolper



Yehudit Saportas

Award winning Artist, **Yehudit Saportas** continues to develop her art works in both Israel and Germany, beginning with many household objects, expanding to moving images, large-scale exhibits combining sculpture and drawings, recently including natural scenes. In 1994, in addition to producing a multitude of art works, Yehudit became a Professor at the Bezalel Academy of Arts in Jerusalem. Extract from report by Hedva Bachrach Israel 2022. SDGs 4/3/5/8/12

Donors to **Mary Mackillop** today raised funds in Australia to progress their theme of 'Reaching the Margins', and held an invaluable workshop in Papua New Guinea developing policies and practices to better ensure the safety and wellbeing in schools and educational contexts, of the 75% of children in PNG who already experience violence at home. Co-ordinator Alice Embe said the workshop was a 'successful milestone'. Callan Services. Mary's News Today Autumn 2022 p.4

In rural communities across Timor-Leste, the sisters of St. Joseph continue literacy work begun 30 years ago. A library of Tetun language resources was developed and two Tetun story books were published in July 2020. The books explore the rights, challenges and dignity of children living with disability and educate the community about gender equality. The Ministry of Education with the Australian Government produced two more titles in 2022, about health, hygiene and environmental sustainability. p.3 NGO ANCP Generous support for publication of two new story books from the family of the late Diane Petersen. SDGs 4/3/10/17

Theatre! – Puppets – **"The Wider Earth"** A wonderful treat in chaotic times! Dead Puppet Society is an Australian design led theatre company based in Brisbane. Founders, **David Morton** and **Nicholas Paine** integrate a wide range of performance forms and technologies. In 2013, in Cape Town, South Africa, they learned that **Charles Darwin** was only 22 years of age when he joined the HMS BEAGLE on its surveying voyage. This ignited ideas of creating puppets to represent the exotic and iconic creatures encountered by Darwin, so workshops on "The Wider Earth" proceeded at St. Ann's, New York, with a unique presentation at the Natural History Museum, London, the custodian of Darwin's legacy. Souvenir Programme/Dead Puppet Society p.4 2022 SDGs 4/3/14/15

Jennifer Ann Davies, ICW-CIF Arts and Letters Advisor

Report by ICW-CIF Environment Advisor

The 36th Session of the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific was held from 8 to 11 March, 2022 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Some of the key concerns are:

1. Actions to promote climate resilient agrifood systems in Asia and the Pacific Region (APR).
2. Identifying One Health priorities in APR. One Health is about the interlinking of our health and the health of our environment for the food we eat, the water we drink and the air we breathe.
3. The FAO has priorities that include Better Production, Better Nutrition, Better Environment and Better Life that are anchored in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Some of these SDGs referred to in presentations were about SDG 1 Ending poverty, SDG 2 Ending Hunger, SDG 10 Ending Inequalities, as well as SDG 13 taking urgent action on climate change.



4. There are hundreds of FAO projects and they have prioritized for example Rural Women's empowerment. Also, resilient agrifood systems particularly with the impacts of climate change. Water scarcity is a major concern in many countries, and spokespeople described as its impact on food security being at breaking point for many countries, even Vietnam. There are transboundary dependencies for Vietnam and other countries, increased water demand, low access to clean safe water, with a lot of contamination of water, plus low efficiency of water use. The Mekong Delta is unusually dry which has led to crop failures, and increased poverty. The Vietnamese spokesperson said their priorities are to strengthen legal frameworks, have better plans and strategies for water management, a national irrigation network, and upgrade existing water facilities.
5. Scaling up inclusive digitization in agricultural value chains. The on-going e-commerce revolution is happening at the same time that mobile-based business models are emerging to provide advisory, marketing and financial services at scale to smallholder farmers. Some countries mentioned the ageing, and declining numbers of small-scale farmers, but with the use of drones, smart devices and other digitization, young people can get engaged in agrifood production.
6. Presenters and leaders spoke about how science, technology and innovation can lead to more efficient, inclusive and resilient agrifood systems. This is across all sectors, is people centred, evidence driven, ethics based and gender equal. Bangladesh presented a video that included Digital Village Centres that have been set up across Bangladesh. There were women in the room, and people are being educated in internet use, that can help with pest management, markets and market pricing, so farmers are more connected and can develop business planning and get support. Another example was Samoa Women's Association that provided women access to develop micro-businesses, online platforms to sell products as 70% of market stallholders were women. One example was in vanilla production.
7. One of the FAO Priorities is for better nutrition and a number of countries' representatives spoke about increasing urbanization together with changing diets and importation of processed foods that are not always better for our nutrition. They spoke about programs for promoting healthy food and more equitable food systems.
8. The impact of COVID-19 on food chains was mentioned by many representatives. The Thai spokesperson said about the importance of social protection and safety nets. In Japan, both the Japanese government and FAO helped to improve food supply chains, while Singapore, that is so dependent on food imports, they are working on producing more of their own food, on roof-top gardens, in aquafarms, and indoor vegetable farms. The Samoan spokesperson told about COVID amplifying the challenges of climate change impacts, and their dependence on processed, imported food. In Korea, they developed a National Food Plan based on food security, environmental sustainability, and healthy food. They expanded precision agriculture and reduced food waste.
9. The session on the Strategy on Climate Change reported about its impact on food production and the need for urgent action and enhanced actions. They spoke about the potential to combine adaptation and mitigation in agrifood systems. For example, Japan spoke about forest conservation benefiting water catchments and therefore water supply, and sequestering CO₂. Also, the value of carbon sequestration in soils that also improve soil nutrition.

10. In Nepal, with help from the World Bank, they developed GIS mapping over the country, and integrated that with provinces and sub-sections to find the most suitable food production within those regions. They explored climate change impacts on land and crop use. They improved the location of market hubs according to types of food produced. But serious climate change impacts are the melting of the Himalayan glaciers, and extreme rain events associated with the monsoons, leading to flash flooding, general flooding, mudslides and land slides impacting dwellings as well as crops. Other countries like Thailand and Vietnam are mapping the increased impacts of dry season and the need to manage water allocations.
11. Some countries reported about greener agriculture by using bio fertilizers and bio pesticides, climate resilient plants and distribution of their seeds.
12. The leader from the Maldives was passionate about the impacts of climate change on their country from sea level rise, to salinity into taro and coconut areas so they cannot be grown, to ocean acidification and high water temperatures causing coral bleaching. This in turn impacts tourism which is important for the Maldives. He said climate change is an existential threat to them and urged countries to be very strong on climate mitigation.



Wendy Rainbird,
Environment Advisor

Wendy Rainbird, ICW-CIF Environment Advisor

Report by ICW-CIF Education Advisor



Young-ae Ha,
Education Advisor

The tragedy of the Russia-Ukraine war is reflected in many different realms, but perhaps none so moving as the impact of the conflict on women and children. When we see the news broadcasts of burned-out homes, hospitals, and schools, we witness the physical destruction and we can readily imagine the trauma associated with having to start all over rebuilding our homes and institutions. Seeing bodies on the streets brings tears to the eyes.

As sad as these realities are, it is the ongoing tragedy involving the millions of women and children that scream for our attention. The numbers, simply put, are difficult to fathom, as there has been nothing of this scope in some seventy years. We can only imagine what goes through the minds of these unfortunate women. "Will my husband, off fighting the war, be a survivor? Will my elderly parents, who were too old to join us in our exodus, be fortunate enough to escape with their lives the destruction of the buildings in our hometown? Will my children ever be able to return to a "normal" life after what they've gone through?" We can see the supreme struggle on the faces of these women.

For better or worse, the news we watch from Ukraine is often presented at a very personal level. Such reports let us know, but they also make us feel deeply. Take for example a recent report from Dong-A Ilbo where a six-year-old boy, Vlad Tanuk, stands alone in front of his mother's backyard grave weeping. His mother, Ira, died from hunger and the stress associated with the war. Reports of this nature are not uncommon and are broadcast throughout the free world. Perhaps we all respond differently. Some of us just feel sad, others feel anger at the reality, still others may stop to reflect on just what they, as individuals, might do to help in one way or another.

The United Nations Human Rights Office recently reported 3,455 civilian casualties, including 292 children. Tragic. But then there's the matter of sexual assault, where accurate data may be harder to come by. Knowledge of precise numbers is not as important as knowledge that women are, all too frequently, being raped and abused. This must stop! We, particularly as women, must not accept this as a normal part of war. It cries for action, united action. Feeling sadness or anger, while perhaps something that motivates a person, do not in themselves lead to fixing a problem.

In 1981, the International Association of University Presidents formulated the Costa Rican Resolution. This resolution called for the United Nations General Assembly to take all action necessary to prevent the outbreak of World War III. It was drafted in realization of the dangers associated with the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and as such, it proposed the establishment of the International Day of Peace. The UN General Assembly passed the resolution and made September 21st a day of heightened peace consciousness. The presidents of the two superpowers, President R. Reagan of the U.S. and General Secretary M. Gorbachev of the former Soviet Union, exchanged peace messages for the people of the opposite side and Dr. Young Seek Choue proclaimed that "peace is more precious than triumph". These words of wisdom are oh so relevant for everyone who wishes the war between Russia and Ukraine to end as soon as possible. While it may not be sufficient to prevent all wars, I would strongly suggest that a philosophy and consciousness of peace should have a prominent part in school education systems around the world.

Certainly, education can play a key role in minimizing the misery associated with war, particularly in a long-term perspective. ICW will do our part in seeing that come to pass. But it is doubtful that education alone can impact the present situation in Ukraine in a meaningful way.

I have been playing a central role as ICW Education Advisor and Chairperson of the International Relations Committee of the Korean National Council of Women (KNCW). The KNCW, together with a number of academic circles and women's organizations, has conducted numerous seminars and discussions regarding education as a tool to help combat COVID-19, the climate crisis, issues concerning world peace and more. These events generally give strong thought to the role that women can play in accomplishing broader objectives.

KNCW celebrated International Women's Day on March 8th. The theme, *Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow*, was appreciated by nearly 300 people, including ICW President Jungsook Kim, government officials, many scholars and congresswomen, and leaders of various women's associations. Movement toward



achieving gender equality was the ever-present goal of the celebration. KNCW also supported women politicians by holding a rally for female candidates who would run in the local council election to be held on June 1, 2022.

Young-ae Ha, ICW-CIF Education Advisor

Report by ICW-CIF Music Advisor

The importance of music for physical and mental health, for mutual understanding and peace in times of crisis is stressed by the UN Secretary General António Guterres' as well as by great musicians such as Ricardo Muti ("**Musicians create more unity than politicians**"), but still not yet understood and recognized by a great number of people. Music can comfort us, can make us forget our worries and spend hope, last but not least it unites us as experienced recently when musicians of hostile parties perform together for peace and fund raising for those in need.

As an ICW Music advisor, I could get information and reports from NCW sisters in the following countries: Australia, Canada, France, Great Britain, Guatemala, New Zealand, South Africa, Taiwan, Turkey, Ukraine.

Six events were taking place since the beginning of 2022 in the Club der Wiener Musikerinnen (Association of Women Musicians of Vienna): the launch of a brochure on "Adalbert Stifter and his relation to music" with compositions performed by a musician-family, a lecture on mechatronic and robotic in the service of music, chamber music and compositions by women composers accompanied by an exhibition with their paintings.



Sona Tamura, student of the programme for gifted children (university of music)

We are continuing with research, performances, lectures on music and medicine, music and literature, music and peace. Promotion of women composers and young musicians, chamber Music programmes and recitals complete our most successful programme. Livestream, YouTube, home schooling and production of CDs are part of our programme. We are trying to keep in touch by circulating our news bringing hope and humour to our colleagues and friends by doing so.

A lot is done for promoting women musicians and women composers, but there is still a lot to do. We congratulate the NCWs using and stressing the multiple benefits of music for the general wellbeing and the social cohesion, and we will continue to encourage NCWs to use music as a universal tool for communication, for peace, physical and mental health, and for achieving the goals of the SDGs and the Agenda 2030.

Eleonore Hauer-Rona, ICW-CIF Music Advisor

Report by ICW-CIF International Relations and Peace Advisor

I had the privilege to join some of the events organized by Forum Dvorah, and Itach-Maaki, two civil society Israeli NGO's that deal with social justice and with the inclusion of women in national security decision-making processes and in peace-making negotiations. It was most interesting to take part in debates of leading women who work intensively towards a more gender-balanced, egalitarian and inclusive society.

As in the past, it was inspiring for me to virtually attend several Panels, Side and Parallel events held during the CSW66, especially those that dealt with peace and sustainable



*Mazal Renford,
International Relations &
Peace Advisor*

development. The main message I received from such events reinforces my belief in fostering peace and development through education. Moreover, we must seek common ground, and try to understand and value the differences we find in the people surrounding us and in the cultures we experience. It was also a privilege for me to be among the speakers at the side-event organized by the National Council of Women in France in cooperation with UN WOMEN France and the European Union of Women.

I have also continued with my mentoring involvement in developing leadership and entrepreneurial skills among young women. In all my interventions, locally and internationally, I put the emphasis on the universal message that women are those who build peaceful relations, based on the belief that all human rights should be respected. Today then it is more important than ever to work towards that goal, encouraging the democratic participation of all peoples so that every voice can be heard in civic decision-making.

It was a pleasure to attend virtually the presentation of the historic joint Statement on Women, Peace and Diplomacy, to the Human Rights Council in Geneva, by the Governments of Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco. This important Statement reaffirmed women's fundamental role in peace processes and conflict prevention, and called on all States to strongly commit to ensuring the advancement of women in preventive diplomacy and peace building.



Against the current background of the war in Ukraine, and the terrorist attacks in Israel, I found myself more and more engaged in the movement Women Wage Peace, trying to help, in any way possible, the thousands of refugees who came recently to Israel from Ukraine. Women Wage Peace thus held, on March 25, a historic event together with Palestinian women, members of the movement

"Women of the Sun". A moving ceremony that included a joint signing of "The Mothers' Cal" took place on the Shores of the Dead Sea. There, both groups formally pledged to work together as equal partners for the sake of future generations. The two movements are now working to train more women to take their place in centers of decision-making, to grow our toolkit of peace-making knowledge and skills, and to plan a regional, women-led summit for 2023 that will accelerate the prospect of leaders from both sides coming to the negotiating table.

In addition, I have had the honor of being elected "Peace Ambassador" by IFLAC – The International Forum for Literature and Culture of Peace, and which forum has active members in 20 countries in different continents.

In the last three months, I have continued to be involved, as a team member of the ICW Resolutions Committee, in the reviewing of the submitted resolutions to be presented at the next General Assembly scheduled to take place in Avignon, in May 2022. Also, I would like to mention that it was my personal pleasure to respond to the request of President Jungsook Kim to draft the ICW Statement towards UN CSW66. The statement was finalized by Jungsook Kim, Linda Liu and Elisabeth Newman, whose valuable cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Mazal Renford, ICW-CIF International Relations & Peace Advisor

News from Member Councils (NCWs)

■ National Council of Women of Australia (NCWA) ■

Australia started 2022 with the Omicron virus which resulted in further Government restrictions amidst rising case numbers. We are an interesting continent as each of the five states and two territories in Australia have their own elected Premiers who impose their own COVID-19 rules. In fact, COVID-19 made us realize we are not really one nation when families and friends who live across the road from each other were suddenly separated by state/territory boundaries and prohibited to come into contact.

Life in Australia has mostly returned to pre-COVID days. Most Australians have received their 3rd dose of vaccination and the elderly and immune-compromised are on their way to their 4th dose. On the political front, the federal government will be calling an election shortly. The big issues facing Australia are aged care, defence, escalating cost of living, child care, adequate (and appropriate) housing, disaster recovery and climate.

At the National Councils of Women around Australia, we continue to hold a combination of in-person and online meetings/events. NCW New South Wales (NSW) kicked off the year with an Australia Day celebratory lunch in January and followed up with a fabulous 125+ year celebration in February.

NCW South Australia released a short documentary to recruit, promote and celebrate volunteers in our community. You can check out National Council of Women SA Documentary via NCWA website. (https://ncwa.org.au/national-council-of-women-sa-documentary-flinders-university-film-makers-final-cut-community-voices-program/?fbclid=IwAR0rqQsX3OOFb18ZRp3OK2gpGFoZZWxyGtd-HhkXL8-ipAjiQUjnp_f3iDg)



*With the Governor of NSW and Patron of NCW NSW,
Her Excellency the Hon Margaret Beazley
AC QC at the NCWNSW 125+ anniversary celebration*



*NCW Victoria followed suit with a 120-year celebration in March
in the Women's Pioneer Gardens in Melbourne replete with a
recounting of NCW's rich history.*

Reported by Chiou See Anderson, President of NCWA

■ National Council of Women of Austria ■

Work in the member organisations was going on as much as possible under the circumstances of the COVID-19. Especially the organisations working on health issues and on psychological support are extremely busy: **INTAKT**, a team of twelve professional specialists, assisting with consultation for eating disorders to overcome inter alia the problems created by COVID-19, **MAS** (Morbus Alzheimer Syndrom) with a variety of offers to help patients and their relatives by telephone consulting, Alzheimer holidays, service centers, internet counselling, etc., **MOKI-Wien Mobile Kinderkrankenpflege** provides professional nursing and palliative care for children aged 0-18 in their living environment in Vienna, Austria, cares for premature babies, for diseased newborns, for children with chronic diseases, for children with disabilities, and for children with life-limiting illnesses.



The **Age Company** is rehearsing for performances to be held in June “hungry for life” (intergenerational contemporary dance) performing with people aged 11 to 86 years. Another challenge for members is working in the Hospital School (a facility for school care for children who cannot follow the lessons in their home schools over a longer period of time because of health reasons) as the pandemic affects also such children and adolescents with oncological, psychiatric, orthopedic, surgical and internal medicine.

The **Club der Wiener Musikerinnen** (Association of Women Musicians of Vienna) had some remarkable events such as the launch of a brochure on “Adalbert Stifter and his relation to music” with compositions performed by a musician-family, a lecture on mechatronic and robotic in the service of music, chamber music and compositions by women composers accompanied by an exhibition.

The CSW66 and its side and parallel events were basis for discussions and provided useful information and contacts. The ICW parallel event on March 17 was a great success for the organisation and raised interest for the climate and gender issues. Discussions on the SDGs were focussing on the possibilities of their implementation.

Last but not least preparations for the ceremony on the 120th anniversary of the foundation of NCW Austria and the 85th anniversary of the death of its founder, Marianne Hainisch, are going on. A documentation is in progress and will be available at the ceremony to be held on May 7, 2022.

Reported by Eleonore Hauer-Rona, President of NCW Austria

■ National Council of Women of Belgium (Dutch Speaking) ■

< International Women's Day >

We participated in the annual event organized by the World March of Women. The same day we launched two of the four episodes of our intersectional podcast 'Woman is Present' and 'Work in Progress' (WIP), namely the one on ecofeminism and the one on decolonization. Will be followed by: women, gender, architecture and public space to be launched on May 2, and self-determination to be launched on April 18.



All the episodes have the same host and slam poet. The aim is to start a dialogue on a number of not so usual subjects whilst reaching a broad audience. It is available on the website, <https://vrouwenraad.be/podcast/>

< The Next Wave Academy >

In follow-up of the Feminist Lab, we established the Next Wave Academy where we focus on a safe and courageous space in which young persons can explore their activism. In March, we organized a weekend for a number of young feminists in a youth hostel. They discussed how to build bridges and how to challenge each other. <https://www.thenextwave.be/>

< Our position on gender registration >

NCW Belgium (Dutch-speaking) prepared its position on the issue of registration of gender and its visibility in the documents concerning the civil status of a person. The federal government has to adjust the legislation on gender registration in these records. So far, no decision has been made yet. The civil society, to which we belong, will be heard. Consequently, we had to prepare ourselves for this hearing.

We cannot accept the abolishment of gender registration. In order for us to denounce inequality and discrimination, we need numbers. To collect numbers, we need to know a person's gender. Another example: health screening programmes destined to men/women also need to know who to invite. We live in a binary world and have to act accordingly. But it goes without saying that non-binary people have their rights too and must be able to register as they wish (x or non-binary or whatever they prefer).



Meron Knikman, President of NCW Belgium

Meron Knikman, President of NCW Belgium, wrote in the newspaper, De Morgen on refugees on March 18 with the topic of 'Let us show our solidarity with all the other refugees as well'. She indicated that our common reaction to the wave of refugees coming from Ukraine is the ultimate proof that another policy is possible. We are able to offer a warm welcome to refugees, not only to those on the run for the war and the violence in Ukraine.

Reported by Meron Knikman, President of NCW Belgium (Dutch Speaking)

■ National Council of Women of Great Britain (NCWGB) ■

In April 2021, National Council of Women of Great Britain (NCWGB) started work to review and update our vision, purpose and aims with a view to updating our image and website. NCWGB members have been active in changes in society for over a century but we realized that we need to support our development in the future and to attract new members. We have carried out a robust programme of market research to test out our ideas and to give us an understanding of how the organization is seen by members and non-members. Our vision: Empowering all women to achieve a fair and inclusive society and our three overarching concepts: Connect, Challenge and Change, will guide our work for the future and will form the basis of the structure of the new website. The logo has been updated and retains the look and feel of the historic, much-loved logo but has been updated for the future. We anticipate that the new website will be live in early summer 2022.

< Network 18-25 >

Recent work by members of the Network 18 to 25 has been ground-breaking. These young women are combining inspirational voluntary activities highlighting serious concerns alongside their further academic studies.

International Women's Day event at the University of Sunderland featured a panel of speakers. Alice, representing the Network, gave a vivid account of her battle to secure diagnosis of her endometriosis, a painful and potentially life-threatening condition. She encountered misogyny and sexism and suggested that her audience of schoolgirls (and their teachers) should stand up for themselves against these. This is a contribution to the national debate focused by the publication a few weeks later of alarming statistics which showed the growing number of women awaiting operations and treatment for this and other similar issues concerning women's health.

During the CSW66, Kirstie hosted (together with the Sisters of Frida) a side event, for the first time by a Network member, which reflects the leadership and initiative of our young women, reaching out on the international scene. Contributing to the priority theme, the panel of activists examined crucial environmental issues in relation to disability including the interconnection between disability and climate justice. There were clear examples of the need for disabled women to be at the table when environmental policy is formulated. Deaf and disabled perspectives must be included to produce disability-inclusive solutions. As Kirstie said "there is no climate justice without disability justice"

Reported by Elsie Leadley, President of NCWGB

■ National Council of Women of India (NCWI) ■

National Council of Women of India (NCWI) held a virtual CEC Meeting as the number of COVID-19 cases again were on the rise in January of 2022. NCWI decided to hold the CEC meeting again next year to celebrate its centenary year in 2023.



On January 26, each state council celebrated Republic Day within their projects while unfurling the tri-color flag in all its glory. Slowly the pandemic-related restrictions are being lifted in India thanks to the roll-out of vaccinations and booster shots across the population. State Council projects are gradually restarting, and schools have been reopened for offline schooling. It is a relief to see a certain level of normalcy being restored in India.

International Women's Day (IWD) was celebrated with great enthusiasm. The Bangalore council celebrated womanhood with a colorful cultural program and felicitation of members. Lunchboxes and stationery supplies were donated. Other state councils also celebrated IWD in their respective projects.

On March 13, 2022, the 'Kutubpur Ananda Sishu Vidyalaya', a Village Welfare project/school is run by the West Bengal Council of Women (WBCW) in Kolkata for 25 years. A grand program was organized by the WBCW president Mrs. Aninda Sen and her team where the children showcased their talents and put up an exhibition of all their art and schoolwork. The NCWI, with the help of the NGO Parijat Foundation, donated school bags to all 85 students and made a cash donation to the project. The WBCW also organized meals for all the children, parents, and staff. The NCWI Child Care Home and Bashirhat project has faced a few problems due to the pandemic and the cyclone that hit Kolkata in 2021 but NCWI is working on raising funds for these projects to help reconstruct the damages sustained.



Slowly but surely, India is getting back to the new normal. Schools and creches are back to working in full swing. Health Clinic, Family Planning Centers, and Women Empowerment projects are again seeing good footfall. The year 2022 has brought good tidings and we are sure that this year will be a wonderful year.

Reported by Rakhi Shetty, President of NCWI

■ Council of Women's Organizations in Israel (CWOI) ■

During the past three months, I have focused on developing partnerships with the purpose of shaping and outlining government policy for the protection and benefit of women. As someone who comes from the parliamentary arena with two decades of experience as an advisor to Ministers and Knesset Members, with a Master degree from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, in the field of Public Policy, while managing a company engaged in providing strategic advice and government relations, I do believe that changes come through legislation, regulation and policy making.

By virtue of my position as chair of Council of Women's Organizations in Israel (CWOI), together with other professional members of our Council, we constitute a part of a team of the Ministry of Economy headed by the Minister of Economy; a team motivated at implementing the government's policy on equal employment

for women in Israel. I also take part in meetings of a team of the Ministry of Social Equality and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, concerned with the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Removal of relevant barriers and building government policy represent my main goal, and the CWOI is cooperating closely with the staff of the Ministry of Justice on the subject of crime victims.



Oshrit Setbon at Knesset (Israeli Parliament)

In addition, the CWOI is a partner in Knesset committees aimed at fighting against legislation that discriminates women in various areas, such as increasing credit points for working women and more. All the above outlines and shapes government policy on issues that promote women and puts us in the position of active partners within the parliamentary and governmental teams which deal with such policy.

Reported by Oshrit Setbon, President of CWOI

■ National Council of Women of Malta ■

During the last week of February, an Argentinian delegation from the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity visited an office of National Council of Women Malta to exchange best practices on gender equality in the private sector between Latin America and Europe Institutions. Dr. Laura Martinez Alvero PHD, a gender expert consultant for Eurosocal+ led the group. President of NCW Malta, Doreen Borg Zammit together with her representatives spoke about the many milestones of the NCW Malta as well as current issues affecting the Maltese society from a gender perspective.



On February 24, 2022, NCW Malta welcomed Her Excellency Agnes Von Der Muhll, Ambassador of France and her delegation to our premises in Blata L- Bajda. Before being appointed Ambassador of France to Malta, H.E von der Muhll was the spokesperson of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and Director for Communication and Press Department. She was also the Senior Official for gender equality at the Ministry. H.E von der Muhll was keen to discuss our organization; its activities, aims and accomplishments, as well as gender equality, domestic abuse issues and also Maltese women in Parliament. Her delegation was particularly interested in the volunteer sector in Malta and how best to encourage more young people towards a volunteering role.

As part of International Women's Day activities, NCW Malta welcomed Her Excellency Tasia Athanasiou, the new Ambassador for the Hellenic Republic to Malta. Prior to joining the Greek Embassy, H.E Athanasiou was the Greek Special Envoy to Syria. During our meeting, Doreen Borg Zammit (NCW Malta President) and Doris Bingley (ICW Vice-president), Grace Attard (NCW Malta Vice-president) and Marie Demicoli (NCW Malta Assistant Hon General Secretary) discussed NCW's work in the community, the courses being held at the

centre, domestic violence issues, the proposed Femicide law being discussed in Parliament and the challenges that women in Malta face today especially working mothers.

< Stories of Home >

NCW Malta invited Janette Marsh, 67 years old, who was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in late 2020 to launch her memoirs 'Stories of Home'. This project led by Andrew Borg Wirth and Marija Grech follows Janette's journey since diagnosis. During the well-attended launch at NCW Malta premises, Janette spoke about her challenging and painful ordeal undergoing chemotherapy and surgery. She also highlighted the importance of empathy between doctor and patient. Her aim is to raise awareness about ovarian cancer whilst also generating funds for the Malta Community Chest Fund.

< NCW Malta gifts an essentials pack to women at the Soup Kitchen OFM – Valletta >

President of NCW Malta, Doreen Borg Zammit, together with members of Executive committee presented a beautiful hamper made up of various toiletries to each lady attending the services of the Soup Kitchen OFM – Valletta on March 8, 2022. A dining room called "Soup Kitchen", which is run by Franciscan Friars, started serving food to insecure and homeless guests in late August. During the height of the coronavirus pandemic, this humanitarian initiative was set up in Valletta to serve nourishment for both the body and the soul to those who need it. Apart from offering free lunch and dinner to the needy, it offers shower and laundry facilities, a barber, as well as legal and psychiatric support. People from all walks of life are welcomed with dignity. Fr. Marcellino makes it a point to get to know all attendees on an individual basis. NCW Malta would like to thank VJ Salomone Consumer lines, VJ Salomone Marketing, Vivian Corporation, and Tal Lira Fgura for their kind sponsorship. This wouldn't have been possible without their generosity and support to the Council's initiative.



On March 6, a Mass to celebrate International Women's Day was held at Saint Patrick's Church in Sliema and celebrated by Fr Eric Cachia. Attending this celebration were the President of Malta and First Lady Mrs. Vella, other distinguished guests, the women's section from the Malta Police and the Armed Forces of Malta, the Executive Committee and affiliated organizations and members.

Reported by Doreen Borg Zammit, President of NCW Malta

■ National Council of Women of Taiwan (NCWT) ■

On February 24, 2022, National Council of Women of Taiwan (NCWT) held its board meeting to report and discuss their activities for the year. As an example of how COVID-19 has changed our lives, most members chose to attend by ZOOM. Even though many corporate CEOs have announced that employees should return to the office, they are finding more resistance than expected, some even choosing to leave the job altogether

if forced to go back to the office. This is a harbinger of more changes in working attitudes as a consequence of the global pandemic and highlights the unexpected changes in the workplace that need to be further understood and addressed.

To celebrate International Women's Day, many leaders of our member organizations were invited to attend the "Women's Power Night" held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foundation for Women's Rights Promotion and Development. Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen and several ministers gave keynote addresses on the progress of gender equality and policies to promote green energy. Civil society engaged in climate actions shared their best practices.



The celebration launched the Taiwan Gender Equality Week from 8 to 15 March 2022 with videos and an exhibition on climate actions undertaken by Taiwan women to promote the message that women and girls have the power to become effective agents for climate action. The week culminated with a Climate Justice Leaders Forum on 15 March 2022 participated by leaders and changemakers from all over the world, including the USA, UK, Marshall Islands and Taiwan. The discussions encompassed environmental policies and initiatives, measures adopted to enhance women's participation in climate decisions, and successful civil society actions to fight global warming.

I am pleased to report that participation of members of NCWT at the parallel events, caucuses and virtual activities at UN CSW66 increased this year. Furthermore, four of our member organizations sponsored a total of six virtual parallel events:

- Pan Pacific South East Asian Women's Association: *Women and Girls' Empowerment for Climate Emergency: The Next*
- Soroptimist International Taiwan: *Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment; Taipei 101 Women's Entrepreneur's Association: The Role of Female Business Leaders in SDGs through Environmental Protection Campaign*
- two events by Zonta District 31: *Cross Border Services under COVID crisis – Best Practices for New Migrants and Immigrants and From Asia to Africa – Gender Equality through Project of Sewing Machine Magic*
- A joint event by PPSEAWA and Soroptimist International: *Asia Actions in Advancing Women's Economic Empowerment*

In addition to joining the CSW formal sessions, I had the honor to moderate and learn from an excellent panel of speakers at the event sponsored by the International Council of Women, Women's Empowerment in a Future World of Work Impacted by Climate Change. Several members of NCWT board also participated as speakers and moderators at other events organized by sister organizations.

Reported by Linda Liu, President of NCW Taiwan

Condolences



Dame Miriam Dell was a life member of NCWNZ since 1982, and until very recently was still active in our affairs. She was NCWNZ President from 1970-1974, and led many initiatives such as being the NZ coordinator of the UN International Women's Year in 1975, and Chair of the Suffrage Centennial Year Trust in 1993. She was a member of the Order of New Zealand, which is limited to only 20 living people at one time - so a very special woman.

Dame Miriam Dell will also be remembered because of her role as President of ICW-CIF from 1979 to 1986, and her continued involvement after that time; for example, organising the ICW-CIF centenary celebrations in Washington in 1988, and being in charge of the development programme until 1991. She was a member of the ICW-CIF Committee of Honour.

Written by Suzanne Manning, President of NCW New Zealand

Upcoming Event

◆ 2022 ICW-CIF General Assembly

- **Date :** 16-21 May, 2022
- **Venue :** Hotel Mercure Pont d'Avignon, France



The International Council of Women is...

the first truly global women's NGO which was founded in 1888 for the advancement of women all over the world. Over the past 134 years, the International Council of Women has remained an active pioneer in promoting international women's rights. ICW-CIF was there when the United Nations was formed to make sure the United Nations Charter included women's equal rights and the Commission on the Status of Women be established. It was there when the International Women's Year was proclaimed in 1975. It has been there through the United Nations Decade for Women and four world conferences, including the Beijing Conference of 1995 and Beijing+25. It will continue to be there, representing women's voice and promoting and protecting international human rights of women to make the world a safer and happier place for women.

***Join International Council of Women,
and join us in changing women's lives for better
everywhere in the world.***



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