

NGB Meeting 11-13 August 2023
Report on International Wheel and the United Nations
by Rina Maxwell-Hesp IWNZ Vice President 2023-24

International Inner Wheel

International Inner Wheel (IIW) is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) and has been a member of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), with a status of Observer with Consultative Status. We currently have seven members accredited at the United Nations offices in Geneva, Vienna and New York. These representatives in the UN follow and assist in the working sessions of various commissions on topics such as: **Human Rights, Rights of the Children, the Status of Women, the Family and the Elderly, and Substance Abuse**, by focusing on Health, Education, Empowerment and Opportunity. This is the advocacy, the work and recognition of International Inner Wheel since 1972. The presence of NGO representatives in the UN conference rooms alone, makes the delegates aware that they are being listened to. NGO's carry a certain weight to bring issues to the fore and to assist in improving the well-being of women and children.

(as of 31 December 2022, 6343 NGO's enjoy active consultative status with ECOSOC, International Inner Wheel is the only International NGO Represented at the UN).



Karin Rivolett

Representative in Geneva

Karin Rivolett returns as a UN Representative in Geneva and sits on committees on the **Rights of the Child**. The Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is the body of 18 independent experts that monitor implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The committee meets in Geneva and normally holds three sessions per year consisting of 1 three-week plenary and one-week pre-session working group.

Karin is a member of the Inner Wheel Club Geneva since 2004 and was President during 2015-16.



Evie Marinoni

Representative in Geneva

The second Representative in Geneva is Evie Marinoni, who became a Representative last July 2022 and sits on committees on the **Rights of the Child**.

Evie joined the Inner Wheel club Geneva in 2015 and was President during 2018-19.



Ulrike Nemling

Representative in Vienna

Ulrike Nemling is a UN Representative in Vienna and sits on committees on the **Substance Abuse**. Non medical use of psychoactive drugs leads to almost 600,000 deaths due to viral hepatitis, HIV and overdose. Ulrike lives in Vienna and is a member of Inner Wheel Vienna.

The Vienna NGO Committee has 200 members from all around the world, most meetings take place on short notice and are video conferences.



Ceja received a **Margarette Golding Award** in 2003 for Social engagement.

Ceja Gregor-Hu

Representative in Vienna

Ceja Gregor-Hu was born in Leiden, the Netherlands and moved to Austria in 1988. Ceja became an Inner Wheel member in 1993 of the IWC Vienna, where she became President in 1996/97. Since late 1998, Ceja is a Representative in the UN and sits on the following committees: on **Ageing, (Older Persons Rights) the Family and the Elderly, the Status of Women** and **Sustainable Development**. In her UN function Ceja has been a guest speaker on IIW Conventions in Istanbul and Kopenhagen and many National Conferences in Austria, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands. Ceja is a Board member on the Committee on the Status of Women.



Gerda Beck

Representative in Vienna

Gerda Beck has been an active member for Inner Wheel for over 20 years and was the charter member of IWC Linz (2022). Gerda was nominated for UN Representative in April 2022, succeeding Veronique Bicu.

Gerda sits on committees on the **Right of the Child, Status of Women**.



Michelle Burgess

Representative in New York

Michelle Burgess has been an active member of Inner Wheel Niles Fremeont in California, her mother and grandmother have been members of this club since 1981. Michelle is a representative in New York and sits on the forum on **The Rights of Indigenous People**, committee on **the Status of Women, Social Development**, open-ended working group on **Ageing, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**.



Martine Gayon

Representative in New York

Martine Gayon sits on the committee on **the Status of Women, Social Development**, open-ended working group on **Ageing, the Rights of Persons with disabilities**. Martine (IIW France) is a Representative in New York since 2013.

Reports:

The UN Reports can be found by using the following link, they are available on the International Inner Wheel website, and will be updated every year. Paste the link into your browser, or use the QR-code.

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1edZfe2RpyZrHvRZmXSoZf0XiN8ZqGSQS?usp=drive_link

Thanks to the Representatives at the UN, we are kept up to date with what is going on around the world and we will be inspired to continue the good work Inner Wheel members undertake to fight for a world where women and children can live in peace, being treated as equal and live without fear. Below are some extract, or a paragraph from their reports, the full report is on the IIWwebsite, see link or QR-code.

March 2023 VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN - FEMICIDE 1993 - 2023

Human Rights



“On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on November 25th 2022, UNODC Executive Director Ghada Waly said: “No woman or girl should fear for her life because of who she is. To stop all forms of gender-related killings of women and girls, we need to count every victim, everywhere, and improve understanding of the risks and drivers of femicide so we can design better and more effective prevention and criminal justice responses. UNODC is proud to launch the 2022 femicide study with UN Women to galvanize global action and salute the efforts of women’s rights organizations around the world to end this crime.”

May 2023 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONFERENCE OF NGOS

Human Rights

Report by Ceja Gregor-Hu.

”By listening to the keynote speeches, it once again became clear that in order to cover the widest possible spectrum of voices and opinions from all over the world, it is of essential importance for the UN to closely work together with “Non-Governmental Organisations” (NGOs) for fact-finding and opinion-building. They are the eyes and ears of society.”

May 2023 CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Child Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Report by Gerda Beck.

“In case of child marriage there is a new initiative of the United Nations to end child marriage till 2030 and to protect the rights of millions of the most vulnerable girls around the world. A part of this global programme is an intensive work with governments of countries with a high quantity of child marriage. In an example it was told about India, one of the most dangerous countries for women and the federal state of Odisha. With the involvement of families, local communities and governments it was succeeded to establish child marriage free villages. This initiative includes girl’s access to education and health care services, educates parents and local communities on the dangers of child marriage and supports families in case of economic increasing. A law was established, that 18 is the minimum age of marriage. In the meantime 10.000 villages are declared in that area as “child marriage free villages”.

May 2023 NARCOTIC DRUGS

Substance Abuse

Ghada Waly, Executive Director of UNODC reported in her opening speech that Drug production has reached unprecedented heights while the development of synthetic drugs is moving at an alarming pace. She highlights that international drug control system has helped keep people safe and healthy since its inception. She points out that we need to use a gender-sensitive lens and ensure equal access, that we need to reach young people who use drugs now more than ever before, we must help them be part of the solution. She said that it is important to address the links between drugs and other forms of crime, including terrorism. Intelligence sharing and cross-border collaboration must be emphasized so we can keep up with emerging threats. Farmers who are stuck in illicit economies need alternatives.



Narcotics, Crime and Justice Calendar 2030



Ageing

Report by Ceja Gregor-Hu.

In 2010 the Commission on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted General Recommendation No. 27 on Older Women and the Protection of their Rights. This Recommendation identifies the multiple forms of discrimination and includes policy recommendations to mainstream the concerns of older women into national strategies and develop initiatives.

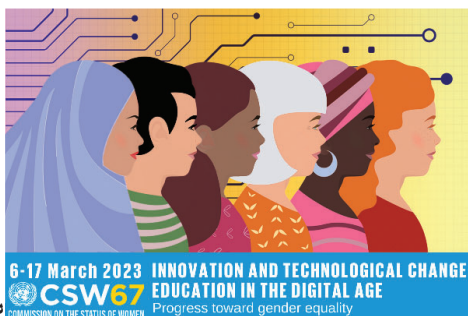


Abuse of older persons can have a serious impact on the physical and mental health.

Unfortunately older women not only suffer from gender based violence but are also confronted with age-related abuse. This group is quite invisible and therefore not in the centre of attention. Violence often takes place within the family, in homes and/or care-institutions.

The Vienna NGO Committee on Ageing was and still is strongly involved in advocating Older Persons Rights. The Committee is now working on a position paper regarding “Violence and Abuse of Older Persons” with focus on women. Good and bad practices will be analysed and reported on during the “International Day of Older Persons” Event on October 2, 2023.

Experts from the Human Rights Council and the European Union will be invited for speeches and discussions.



Status of Women

Report by Ceja Gregor-Hu.

The most extreme form of gender related violence is “femicide”, the intentional murder of a woman or girl because of their gender. Generally these killings take place within the family, in most cases the perpetrator is an intimate partner.

Unfortunately it is almost impossible to prevent gender-related killings and other forms of violence against women and girls. It is a global problem and in some societies not even seen as a criminal act. The right not to be subjected to torture is included in the Human Rights Treaty which was adopted by most of the UN Member states. It says in Art. 5: “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”

Status of Women

Report by Michelle Burgess.

The Sixty-Seventh Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) took place from March 6-17, 2023, and focused on the priority theme of “Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.” The session aimed to analyze the impact of technological advancements on gender equality and explore ways to harness innovation for the benefit of women and girls.

This year’s CSW is the first time we’ve met face-to-face in three years after the Covid-19 pandemic erupted, gathering more than 7,000 participants, including 4 heads of State and government and 116 ministers, 205 side events on UN premises, and about 700 NGO parallel events.

The Rights of Indigenous People

Report by Michelle Burgess.

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) held its twenty-second session from 17 to 28 April 2023 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The session focused on the theme “Indigenous Peoples, human health, planetary and territorial health, and climate change: a rights-based approach.” The session aimed to exchange views and recommendations on enhancing the participation of Indigenous Peoples’ representatives and institutions in meetings of relevant United Nations bodies.

An Interactive Dialogue took place between Member States, Observers of the General Assembly and Indigenous Peoples’ representatives and institutions from all seven socio-cultural regions of the world.

