



March 2019 e-newsletter



Dear Zonta members and friends,

Greetings from the 63rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York. It is wonderful to be here at the United Nations in New York City with 9,000 women and men who work on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and particularly on achieving goal #5 (gender equality). 110 Zonta members from 23 districts are here to make sure our collective call to end child marriage is being heard throughout the CSW. The highlights of the week, so far, are our Zonta International Child Marriage Seminar, our panel discussion with UNICEF USA, and the participation of our first Zonta Youth Observer to the CSW, Aysha. You can read more about these events and find a link to Aysha's blog below.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susanne von Bassewitz".

Susanne von Bassewitz
President

Zonta Child Marriage Seminar sets the tone for the CSW

On the eve of the start of the 63rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, nearly 70 Zonta members gathered at the offices of UNICEF USA for the Zonta international Child Marriage Seminar. Attendees heard from experts in the field, including Nankali Maksud, Senior Advisor for Harmful Practices at UNICEF and the Coordinator of the UNICEF/UNFPA Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage, which Zonta International is supporting with a contribution of US\$2 million, and Dragica Mikavica, Senior Advocacy Adviser at Save the Children's United Nations Advocacy Office in New York.



A presentation from UNICEF on the Global Programme to End Child Marriage included updates on progress made in 2018 and plans for 2019 and beyond, while an interactive discussion highlighted the intersecting causes and consequences of child marriage. Attendees left the seminar invigorated for the week ahead and equipped with information to support Zonta International's call to end child marriage.

Partnerships key to achieving gender equality

Zonta International's first official CSW event emphasized the importance of partnerships in achieving our programmatic goals and realizing positive changes for women and girls. Zonta International President



Susanne von Bassewitz was joined for a panel discussion by Susan Findel, philanthropist and founding donor of UNICEF's Let Us Learn program, Caitlin McCurn, Deputy Director, Global Programs for UNICEF, Veena Khandke, Director, Grants and Partnership for Dining for Women, and Aysha Emmerson, Zonta Youth Observer to the CSW. Let Us Learn Madagascar was highlighted as one program that has successfully brought together UN organizations, governments, NGOs and private donors to benefit the

hardest to reach children, especially out of school girls.

Zonta International has contributed US\$2 million to this project since 2016 and was pleased to have Susan Findel join the panel to discuss the origins of the Let Us Learn program and share her experiences working with the girls in Madagascar and the other four program countries.

Zonta International President Susanne reinforced the importance of working together and recognized those in attendance.

"I am enthusiastic about the women that are here. It inspires and gives me confidence that what we are doing here supports the change makers," she said.

[Learn more about Let Us Learn Madagascar](#) and watch for updates from the field when four Zonta members visit Madagascar in April.

Zonta's Youth Observer to the CSW shares insights from the week

2018 Women in Public Affairs Awardee Aysha Emmerson has been in New York attending the 63rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women as the first-ever Zonta Youth Observer to the CSW.

Aysha has participated in events with fellow influential youth, shared her experiences working with young women impacted by child marriage, and attended various sessions.

Read an excerpt from one of Aysha's blog posts below and follow along throughout the rest of CSW63.



"Between the metal jungle of security scanners and officers, people navigating spotless hallways, the hum of foreign languages, and interspersions of national flags and art installations, entering the premises of the United Nations gave me the unusual sense of being in an airport. As anticipation fluttered in my stomach, I felt like I was taking off into the world of international affairs. I couldn't believe

I was actually standing here — at the launch pad for global change."

— Aysha Emmerson, Zonta's Youth Observer to the CSW

[Read more on the blog](#)

Zontians in Action

Every month, we highlight the incredible service, advocacy and membership initiatives of Zonta clubs around the world. [Share Your Story](#) through our website and tag your social media posts with #ZontiansInAction.

Zonta clubs of Botany Bay and Colombo II

Members of the Zonta Club of Botany Bay, District 24, and Zonta Club of Colombo II, District 25, came together to host a two-day training workshop for nurses in Sri Lanka related to supporting women's health.

[Learn more](#)





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