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Zonta News

Build a Better World for Women and Girls



Dear Megan,

“The poison of patriarchy is back, and it's back with a vengeance. But there is an antidote, and the antidote is action.”

UN Secretary-General António Guterres spoke these words during his opening remarks at the 69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69) in New York City this past week. He reminded us that the world is facing significant challenges, and gender equality must be at the forefront of our efforts.



Zontians at CSW69 in New York City proudly display the empowering "Negotiate your salary, not your rights!" tote bags.

While I have just returned home from CSW69, I do so feeling revitalized and focused on our mission. I am grateful that I and some of my fellow board members were joined by more than 150 members from every Zonta continent in person and online for this event. I was also privileged to meet and learn from our [Youth Observers Inika Narayan and Selin Tegethoff](#), who gave their perspective on the current environment and their own futures.

It is one thing to know about the topics that impact women, but another to be fully informed and educated on how to act upon them. This is why CSW is so important. We must take part in the global conversation and share what we learn so that we move ahead with global standards.

As [Sima Bahous, Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UN Women](#) said: “Rising to the challenges and opportunities of gender equality requires collective, decisive action across Member States, now more than ever. At a time when hard-fought gains for gender equality are under attack the global community has come together in a show of unity for all women and girls, everywhere.”

Zonta was founded by the unwavering grit and courage of advocates who envisioned a world where women's rights are human rights, and every woman and girl deserves the opportunity to fulfill her potential. This dream remains alive today. While global current events may have dimmed that reality, Zonta's fight, our fight, is not over. We remain steadfast in our mission to build a better world for women and girls and call for the reaffirmed commitment to the SDGs. [Please read our two recent statements on our website](#) and share them.

Please also take part in the [webinar organized by the Zonta International Council of Europe \(CoE\) Committee on 26 March](#) and learn more about how to be a women's rights advocate and the CoE, the continent's leading human rights organization. Read more below.

If we continue to dare to dream and speak out against the systematic injustices faced by women, girls, and other disenfranchised groups, we can truly build a better world for all.

As you read on and learn from what Zontians discovered at CSW69, I encourage you to apply these insights in our ongoing battle for gender equality.

Warm regards,



Salla Tuominen
President 2024-2026
Zonta International and Zonta Foundation for Women



MARCH 2025

Meet the Youth Observers



[Click here to learn more about Inika and Selin, members of #GenerationZonta](#)

Updates from Zontians at CSW69

Hear what members learned and how they plan to take action!

"I was deeply moved by the address from Antonio Guterres, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in which he said:

"The fight for gender equality is not just about fairness. It is about who gets a seat at the table and who gets locked out. It is about dismantling the systems that allow inequalities to fester."



Zonta International Advocacy Chair Helen Bowie
Zonta Club of Wellington, New Zealand



"Organizations and governments must empower adolescent girls by including them in the planning and solutions for their challenges. This will lead to improved outcomes and nurture the leaders of tomorrow."

Zonta Says NO Working Group Member Lisa Burton
Zonta Club of New Rochelle, USA

"I am truly inspired by this global initiative that collaborates with girls and for girls, promoting structural changes that engage them everywhere. The goal is to strengthen their rights, elevate their well-being and empower their leadership capacity."



The "Invest in Girls, Transform the World" event powerfully reaffirmed that investing in girls is not just a matter of justice; it is a vital strategy for transforming our world. Their empowerment is a fundamental driver of global social and economic progress."

Foundation Development Committee Member Leonilda Cussotto
Zonta Club of Portofino Tigullio Paradiso, Italy



Join us in celebrating **four decades** of building a better world for women girls and share your inspiring Zonta stories of impact and membership!

ZONTA FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN
40 YEARS
www.zonta.org/Foundation40

BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE

2023-2024
Zonta Foundation for Women Annual Report is now available.

Available for download at www.zonta.org/annualreport

[Read now](#)



Zontians in Action

Zontians are taking action to create a better world for women and girls! Read the stories below highlighting how Zonta clubs and student clubs are making an impact in their communities and beyond.

Zonta Club of Parma sponsors exhibition on women's role in automotive history

The Zonta Club of Parma, Italy, sponsored a photographic exhibition celebrating the significant contributions of women to the evolution of the automotive industry. The event, promoted by the National Council of Italian Women (CNDI) and sponsored by the Municipality of Parma, provided a thought-provoking experience, highlighting women's ingenuity, determination and innovation in a



field traditionally dominated by men.

The exhibition showcased pioneering women who left their mark on automotive history, including the first female car driver, the chemist who invented Kevlar, the creator of the windshield wiper and the first woman to travel around the world by car. Their passion and courage reshaped the industry, proving that women have played a crucial role in technological and mechanical advancements.

Zonta Club of Madagascar launches literacy initiative for women

The Zonta Club of Madagascar, Madagascar, held a special session with women from Ambohimalaza Antananarivo Avaradrano to introduce a new literacy initiative to empower the community. This is a key step in strengthening the skills and independence of women in the community.

The meeting served as an initial contact session to discuss the annual calendar, establish discipline guidelines and select a promotion name for the group. Training is part of the club's ongoing commitment to advancing education and independence for women.




The club's mission through this initiative is to empower and support women through education. Plans to expand efforts include teaching young girls in the future.

Click on the buttons below to be inspired by Zontians taking action within their own communities. Then, tell us how you are changing the world by sharing your story!

[Local Service & Advocacy](#)

[Zonta Says NO](#)

[Share Your Story](#)



We proudly highlight our [#ZontiansinAction](#).

See the steps our members have taken to make a difference around the world.

[WATCH NOW](#)

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH TWO NEW ZONTA AWARDS



 ZONTA WOMEN IN STEM AWARD

 ZONTA WOMEN IN BUSINESS LEADERSHIP AWARD



Show off your actions at the Share Your Story Festival

Don't miss the chance to shine! Share your inspiring story on the Zonta International or Zonta Say NO websites by April, and your club could be celebrated in the virtual Share Your Story Festival on August 26. Watch your inboxes for more information to come.

Share Your
Story



Webinar: Being a women's rights advocate – what you should know about the Council of Europe (CoE), the continent's leading human rights organization

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

The Zonta International CoE Committee is pleased to invite you to a webinar to enhance members' knowledge on the relevance of the CoE in the field of international standards of human rights, specifically women's rights and gender equality. Focus will also be on structure and functioning of the CoE as an intergovernmental organization as well as on Zonta's active role through its participatory status granted in 2003.

Wednesday, 26 March
12:00 PM CDT

Register



This Earth Day, on **22 April**, we are taking strides to address gender equity within climate justice.

This year's plans include:

- Learning how you can partner with local sustainable groups and businesses.
- Taking action to ensure your community addresses gender needs within their disaster-ready plans.
- Leading the conversation on how Earth Day is about gender equality.
- Continuing to support the Zonta Says NOW to Gender-Equal Climate Action campaign.

Meet this month's Remarkable Woman: Adrijana Hanušić Bećirović



Adrijana Hanušić Bećirović is a human rights lawyer and activist with 15 years of professional and volunteer experience. She has contributed to significant changes in laws, policies and judicial practices during this time. One of the most notable achievements has been the establishment of the practice of awarding compensation to victims of conflict-related sexual violence in criminal proceedings in Bosnia and Herzegovina. She has also been involved in key strategic human rights litigation, achieving important national and international outcomes.



Adrijana met with Lynne Foley OAM, host of the Remarkable Women, Powerful Stories podcast, to share her story as a refugee during the Bosnian War and highlight the significance of every person's story in the pursuit of justice. As a dedicated human rights lawyer and activist, she illuminates the hidden narratives of war crimes and passionately fights for a secure future for all.

Listen to Adrijana's story on the go | [Spotify](#) | [YouTube](#)

Congratulations to our club anniversaries this month!



Zonta Club of Jackson
USA, District 11
85th anniversary

Zonta Club of Bombay I
India, District 25
65th anniversary

Zonta Club of Gallivare
Sweden, District 21
65th anniversary

We applaud your efforts in advocating for the women and girls in your community and beyond. To see which other clubs are celebrating a milestone anniversary in March, visit [Zonta News](#).

Important Dates and Events

- 10-21 March: [CSW69](#)
- 26 March: [Council of Europe Webinar: Being a women's rights advocate - What you should know about the CoE, the continent's leading human rights organization](#)
- 4-6 April: [Asian Interdistrict Meeting](#)
- 22 April: [Earth Day](#)
- 2-4 May: [European Interdistrict Seminar](#)

- 20-22 June: [North American Interdistrict Meeting](#)



www.zonta.org

[Zonta International](#) is a global organization based in 64 countries building a better world for women and girls. Zonta International envisions a world in which women's rights are recognized as human rights and every woman is able to achieve her full potential. In such a world, women have access to all resources and are represented in decision-making positions on an equal basis with men. In such a world, no woman lives in fear of violence.

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