



Welcome the Women's Rights & Gender Equality Caucus Updates

Activities leading into CSW 65th Session (2021)

Continuing on the momentum from Beijing + 25 and building on the conversations taking place in the lead up to the Commission on the Status of Women 65th Session. A number of webinar discussions will be taking place during the months of October and November that link with the CSW 65th thematic areas. These webinars are a collaboration of a number of WR & GE Caucus member organisation with the network.



Save the date



Tuesday, 20th October, 2020 (1pm to 2:30pm)

Freedom from sexual and gender-based violence is a fundamental precondition for womxn participation in all areas of public and private live.

The webinar will take a form of a panel discussion highlighting two main issues:

- the need to embed an intersectional gender lens in both prevention and responses to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and broader in policy making; and
- the role of women's specialist services working on SGBV and broader women's human rights defenders working on gender issues.

To sign up for this webinar [Link to event here](#)

Other webinar topics coming up

Public participation in Australia today
Women's Leadership

More to follow.... Check out the [website](#), twitter and [facebook](#) pages

Report back by Caucus Members

As things ramp up in the UN calendar and the backlog of meetings due to COVID-19 shutdowns begins to move, a number of UN meetings are taking place. Members of the WR & GE Caucus were in virtual attendance at the following meetings.

Virtual Expert Group Meeting on “Implementing Beijing+25 Commitments in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic”

15 – 16 September, 2020, Bangkok, Thailand



The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) organized a Virtual Expert Group Meeting on “Implementing Beijing+25 Commitments in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic” on Tuesday 15 September 2020 from 09:30 –12:30 hours (Thailand Standard Time) and Wednesday 16 September 2020 from 09:00 –12:30 hours (Thailand Standard Time).

The objectives of the virtual Expert Group Meeting (EGM) were two-fold: to

- (a) facilitate the exchange of knowledge, good practices and lessons learnt with respect to the progressive implementation of Beijing Platform for Action, including in the context of COVID-19 pandemic; and to
- (b) develop key recommendations for priority actions to advance the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Beijing+25 Review, which was adopted by the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+25 Review in November 2019.

[Papers, links to the notes and discussions here](#)

75th session of the UN General Assembly



In the midst of a global pandemic, the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly opened virtually on 15 September. With COVID-19 continuing to put at risk the hard-won gains of women’s rights, gender equality is on top of the agenda for decision-makers. The session will mark the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action with a High-level event where world leaders are expected to present actions to accelerate the full realization of gender equality.

This session highlighted the progress gained through the Beijing Platform for Action and the ways in which the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action can be used to counteract the impacts of COVID-19 for women in all their diversity across the world to build back sustainably.

Read more here : [English](#)

National updates on UN processes for Australia

CEDAW Committee Updates



Australia has announced the nomination of **Natasha Stott Despoja AO** as Australia's candidate for the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women for 2021-2024. This followed an open, merit-based process with a final decision by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Women, Senator the Hon Marise Payne.

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is the body of [independent experts](#) that monitors implementation of the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#).

CEDAW Committee consists of [23 experts](#) on women's rights from around the world.

[More info here](#)

Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Update



The UN UPR NGO Coalition report has been submitted to the UN. The Joint Submission is endorsed, in whole or in part, by 202 NGOs across Australia. The submission was coordinated by the Human Rights Law Centre, the Kingsford Legal Centre and the Caxton Legal Centre, working with an advisory group comprised of 16 NGOs, which provided expert guidance on the content and focus of the submission. This submission was finalised in April, 2020, at a time when COVID-19 pandemic was sweeping Australia and the world, resulting in the delays in UN Universal Periodic Review processes. This submission was submitted in July, 2020

with an annexure that addresses COVID-19 and human rights developments in Australia between April and July 2020.

[Copy of the Report Here](#)

In our Memories..

Sue Salthouse



Sue Salthouse was many things to many of us. She was a strong advocate for disability, employment and financial security and women's rights, she was an inspiration to us all and for many of us a dear friend and colleague. Sue was tragically taken from us in July after a tragic road accident in Canberra. Her legacy continues through her work. Deepest condolences go to her family, friends and all the communities she was part of. Vale Sue - gone too soon

It was sad to hear of the passing of feminist icon Ruth Bader Ginsberg at the age of 87. Ruth Bader Ginsburg was a passionate, astute and outspoken advocate on women's rights, civil liberties and the rule of law. She paved the way and brought many women along with her. Her work in the areas of gender discrimination, abortion rights, civil liberties, search and seizure, international law and first nation peoples was ground-breaking and changed legislation for many people to achieve their rights. Her fiery remarks and dissents earned her the nickname "the Notorious R.B.G.". Deepest condolences go to her family, friends and communities that surrounded her. Vale RBG your work inspires many of us.

