



## News Letter No 1 on ZONTA and UN

### On the News Letter

Dear Zonta friends,

As the new Chair of the UN Committee in District 13, I want to use a News Letter to come in touch with clubs and members. My hope is to give inspiration for commitment to Zonta's cooperation with UN through knowledge and interaction.

Please, contact me if you have some questions: [astrid.g.eikseth@gmail.com](mailto:astrid.g.eikseth@gmail.com)

### Why have Zonta women to know something about UN?

Since the start in 1919 Zonta has had an international commitment in advancement of the status of women. The history tells that Zonta's Past International President, Helvi Sipilä, had a break through in the work on women's rights when she was UN's Assistant Secretary General (1972-80):

- She was in charge of the first UN Women Conference in Mexico 1975, and made the General Assembly to adopt the Women's Decade 1976-86.
- She led the "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" (CEDAW) to a victory in 1979.

Today Zonta and UN interact in two ways:

- Lobbying and advocacy work towards UN bodies
- Service projects in cooperation with different UN programs

Zonta's voice is listened to when the civil society try to influence the governments' decision making processes in the UN system. Therefore we have a high level consultative status in UN.

### UN Women

UN's work with women's rights become more effective in 2010 when several small units were united in "UN Women". They coordinate the work of Commission on the Status of Women and the UN system's responsibility for «empowerment of women».



Phumzile Mlambo NGcuka,  
Executive Director of UN Women

## 2015 – a special women’s year in UN

First, this marks the 20th anniversary for The Beijing Declaration and Beijing Plan of Action adopted at the fourth UN Women Conference in Beijing 1995. There it was ascertained that women’s rights are human rights, and a radical plan of action was adopted. Through the process «Beijing 20 +» the UN system has evaluated how far the nations have reached the goals. Organisations and institutions from civil society were involved, like Zonta.

### **Geneva NGO Forum UN ECE Regional Review 2014**

This was a part of the evaluation. The photo shows Governor Eva Nielsen and myself in Geneva (3.-5.Nov)



along with 700 people, among them 100 Zontians. In interactive round tables the

audience gave action oriented recommendations to governments in Europe and North America (ECE). We listened to ZI President Maria José Oestergaard focussing on violence against women and professor Torhild Skard on women in power and decision making positions. The box to the left shows the recommendations.



**10 clusters of recommend.**

1. Women’s Rights are Human Rights
2. Violence against women: Building peace
3. Poverty and social development: Money!
4. Women in decision making processes
5. Environment and Climate Justice on Earth
6. Solidarity with Migrant Women’s Rights
7. Women and Health. Wellbeing for all.
8. Girls in all Generations: Building a Common Future
9. Education, Technology, Innovation for all
10. Breaking Stereotypes in Media and Communication

Read more: <http://beijing20.ngocsw-geneva.ch/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Geneva-NGO-Forum-Beijing-20-Outcome-document.pdf>

### **The Commission on Women (CSW59) in New York, March 2015**

It was great expectations connected to the follow up statement after the Beijing platform and the Millenium Goals from 2000. But a conservative wind blew too hard among the governments, and fighters of women’s rights were disappointed.

### **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) to the General Assembly, Sept 2015**

A longstanding and complex work reached its high peak the night of August 3. when representatives to standing ovation adopted a proposal with 17 SDG to be fulfilled before 2030. Extreme poverty has to be eliminated, dangerous climate changes to be reduced. SDG no. 5: «Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls» is very promising. I will return to this later on, as I will attend the official Norwegian delegation to the General Assembly in New York.

Read more about sustainable development goals:

<http://una-gp.org/the-sustainable-development-goals-2015-2030/>

## What may your club do on the theme Zonta and UN?

- Share knowledge about UN – i.e. have an «international corner» in club meetings (10-15 minutes)?
- Early planning for «Zonta says No to violence against women»
- Celebrate UN's birthday October 24. with a Quiz at October meeting?
- The day of action November 25. «Zonta says NO»
- Human Rights' Day December 10.: stands and selling candles in town?

## Ideas to the action on November 25

Zonta International's web pages are overwhelming with flows of ideas. Not all of these are suitable for your home place.

In some welfare states it is a challenge to find good service projects in the local society.

Advocacy projects which make influence on attitudes and legislation are important.

Some ideas: Work together with other local organisations who have common goals as Zonta and highlight important themes, i.e. "rape". Or visit schools and have discussions with youths on themes like gender discrimination, party cultures which develop violence, stereotypes when talking about gender.

*Good luck with the focus on  
the Zonta and UN cooperation!  
Tell good stories to share with others  
in the next news letter!*

Best Zonta regards from Astrid

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Trondheim, 06.08.2015

