



## Newsletter No 3 on Zonta and UN 2016-2018

Dear Zonta friends,

May is ending, summer is coming and it is time to look back on this Zonta year.

I will take you back to highlights of the great annual UN meeting on women, CSW61 (The Commission on the Status of Women, 61th time). I was in NY 12-18 March 2017.



District 13 had a large group this time: 3 from Iceland, 1 from Denmark and 2 from Norway! The meeting is held by the only UN agency who works especially for women's issues. The participants were 3 900 from civil society, 89 ministers and 162 member states represented. We were 70 Zontians all in all, 20 with Zonta UN passes.

### Impressions before the meeting started

It was a lot of preparations: paper reading, program selections, to be a member of NGO CSW New York. This is for all organizations who have consultative status in ECOSOC, one of UN's six councils. Zonta arranged a very useful briefing on Sunday before opening, also with a socializing dinner. We Norwegians appreciated highly the NGO CSW Forum, where hundreds of women activists met for music, themes and poetry with the magic Rupi Kaur!

### The big meetings inside UN

The theme «Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work» was focused for the first time. We followed **the opening meeting** (for governments) via Television and it was strong to see top male leaders of UN who fought for women!



Under-Secretary General & UN Women Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka (photo left) said that inclusive economies and positive world of work are powerful ways of breaking the cycles of poverty. Girls from the Youth preconference (photo righth) wanted easier access to the labor market after the school.



Hundreds of people lined up for the historical **Town Hall Meeting** when Secretary-General Antonio Guterres invited all NGO's to dialogue. He pointed to the backlash against many of



the gains women had made and promised to work hard within the instruments UN gave him. And the audience gave questions and concerns on a variety of women's rights.



The Town Hall Meeting with the lively atmosphere, the wit and political flair from Mr. Guterres, was definitely a highlight in CSW61.

## Side events inside UN and parallel events outside UN

The difference between these types is that side events are hosted by a government and parallel events with NGO's as host. Totally it was arranged more than 400 events during the two weeks. You could plan for going to one event and do'nt get a seat, then you have to run to the nabor room, hopefully interesting! We got research, development work and ideas....



### Side Event: Economic Security, Violence against Women and the Workplace (see photo)

This was arranged by Zambia and Zonta International. Leslie Wright, UN Committee Chair, was moderator and president Sonja among others was speaker. Violence against women have consequences for workplaces and women's life. We need guidelides in private sector for safe workplaces developed through social dialogues.

Zonta International has a high standing in the UN system and we are very proud of that!



Eager listeners in good mood, photo from the left: Governor Ingibiörg Eliasdottir, Iceland, and Cecilie Gulbrandsen, Norway.

**In the political work of women's rights** the Nordic national delegations cooperated with NGO's. Iceland (Ingibiörg and Helga) and Denmark (PIP Maria) included Zontians in their delegation. The Mission of Norway invited us to breakfast meetings with other NGO's. Here we gave input to the **Agreed Concluions** and followed the work.

This was exciting! Challenges were in these areas:

1) Violence and sexual harassment, 2) Balancing private and working life, 3) National space and sovereignty and 4) Unpaid carework. But finally, after 100 working hours they agreed! Here you can find an analysis from Ms. Lakshmi Puri, UN Women, on the agreed conclusion

[https://gallery.mailchimp.com/ff9f2a2de058fd0d00c70a2ba/files/8a14c2d7-298b-4ddf-8d90-306a362f20fb/CSW61\\_Analysis\\_Final\\_12\\_Apr....pdf](https://gallery.mailchimp.com/ff9f2a2de058fd0d00c70a2ba/files/8a14c2d7-298b-4ddf-8d90-306a362f20fb/CSW61_Analysis_Final_12_Apr....pdf)  
See also *The Zontian*, issue 2, May 2017 on CSW61.

## Learning, communication, cooperation and friendship!

Next year we should have a larger group from District 13, March 2018 in NY, think about it!

To the right: Closing lunsch with good Zonta friends!  
All photos by me.



Warm Zonta regards, *Astrid Grude Eikseth*  
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