



## **FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES DES CARRIERES JURIDIQUES**

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### **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENCY FIFCJ 2014**

On the occasion of the Administrative Council Meeting of the International Federation of Women in Legal Careers to be held soon in Paris, France, we offer the following report of the activities undertaken by the Presidency this year.

On March 14, 2014, the FIFCJ Bureau met in New York, United States of America. With our mediation, the event took place at the offices of the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations. It also coincided with the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. As a result, the attendees had the opportunity to participate in conferences and workshops organized as part of the CSW58. This year, the theme was "Challenges and achievements in implementing the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls".

As it does every year, the FIFCJ coordinated an interactive panel, this time on the status of the Millennium Development Goals in light of the Post-2015 Agenda, "ODM & CEDAW. Working together for the empowerment and advancement of women". We proposed that the activity could consist in the presentation of several reports prepared by authorities from the different regions represented in the Federation. Thereby, along with Johanna Sterbin (USA), Herilda Balduino (Brazil), Denise Scotto (USA), Maria Imaculada Melo (Angola), Liisa Kiiianlina (Finland), Anna La Rana (Italy), Osvalda Joana (Mozambique), Esther Susín (Spain) and Shang-Luan Yan (associated member, Taiwan) we share our views on the central topic.

Also in March 2014, we presented the 2008–2012 Quadrennial Report that the Economic and Social Council of the UN requests from each Non Governmental Organization with consultative status. The preparation of this document provided a valuable opportunity to evaluate past actions. Recently, we were informed that the ECOSOC approved our report.

We continue to follow closely the news about the abduction of nearly 300 girls and young women that occurred in April 2014 in Chibok, Nigeria, and act according to the resources we have at hand. At first, we called upon the members of the FIFCJ to require of all Nigerian diplomatic missions concrete actions aimed at the release of the victims. Then, we sent communications to several international authorities on human rights with which the Federation has connections: Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, the Executive Director of UN Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka and the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations. We have also participated in the global campaign "Bring Back Our Girls" through the web.

In order to strengthen links between the Federation and other international organizations, in June 2014, we attended the 103th International Labour Conference in Geneva, Switzerland. Luciana Delfini and Caterina Flick (Italy) were also part of the

delegation that participated in some of the meetings scheduled for the occasion. The key achievement of this event was the adoption of the Protocol to the Convention 29 on forced labor, an instrument to eliminate modern forms of slavery.

We attended two events in Geneva. The first one, "Strengthening the Rule of Law in Venezuela", was organized by the International Commission of Jurists and the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute. The conference analyzed the weakening of the political institutions of that country in connection with the case of María Lourdes Afiuni, a Venezuelan judge imprisoned without a trial based on the content of a sentence. After this encounter, we regain contact with the group of defense lawyers involved with the case and expressed our solidarity and support.

Chaired by Arancha Gonzalez, Executive Director of the International Trade Center, and with final comments of Navi Pillay, High Commissioner for Human Rights of the UN, "The Power of Women Empowered" was the second event that we attended in Geneva. It explored the connection between empowerment and community development based on the experiences of a group of women entrepreneurs and leaders from around the world.

We recommend reviewing the corresponding report for further information about the last International Labour Conference.

Moreover, we cooperated in the registration process of our delegations for the following events: 58° session of the Commission on the Legal and Social Status of Women (New York, USA, March 2014), 103° International Labour Conference (Geneva, Switzerland, June 2014), 65° Annual DPI/NGO United Nations (New York, USA, August 2014), 1° International Forum of NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO on the theme "Education" (Paris, France, October 2013), 2° International Forum of NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO on the theme "Access to Water for All in Africa" (New York, United States in America, August 2014), and the 3° International Forum "The Role of Youth in Safeguarding Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage", organized by UNESCO (Sofia and Sozopol, Bulgaria, September 2014). Likewise, we paid the corresponding 2014 membership dues payments to those institutions.

Along with the Secretary-General of the Federation, Norma Chiapparrone, in July, we traveled to Santiago to attend the meeting "Gender and Justice", with which the Chilean Judges Association celebrated its incorporation into the International Association of Women Judges. The occasion was also used to meet with the representatives of the Federation recently formed there and with Teresa Esterio Stevens, historical activist for the rights of women in her country.

The other communication that we would like to highlight is the one sent to Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. Through this note, the Federation welcomed the new Director of UN Women, with whom we hope to continue the fluid contact we had with the organization over the direction of Michelle Bachelet.

We participated in the analysis that the Major Group of Women made after the definition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The outcome of this debate, published last July, notes the restrictions that the SDGs could have. The information related to this project was released through our normal communication channels.

Also in July, we presented a statement against the ruling of the Supreme Court of the United States of America regarding the case known as Hobby Lobby. In our opinion, this decision has a direct impact on the sexual and reproductive rights of women in that country, especially those with fewer resources. We also participate in the campaign organized by the National Organization of Women, which denounced the discriminatory nature of such a decision.

Another statement, this time in unequivocal support, was presented to celebrate the entry into force of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, better known as the Istanbul Convention. During the month of August, we shared some information about this important binding instrument, which includes as a crime all forms of violence against women: physical, psychological and sexual violence, including rape, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, harassment and forced abortion and sterilization

Due to the ban on foreign exchange transactions currently at place in Argentina, we put at the disposal of all national associations and individual members a new bank account that will allow them to pay their memberships without inconveniences. As a result, payments may be made in two different modes: cash and through the aforementioned bank account, which details were informed via email.

A key part of our work has been concentrated in the area of communications, engaging in a open dialogue with representatives of the Federation and other partner organizations. It is a task that involves a daily and sustained effort, but is very rewarding, as we estimate that through our email ([infopresident@fifcj-ifwlc.com](mailto:infopresident@fifcj-ifwlc.com)) and website (<http://fifcj-ifwlc.com>) we are more cohesive group and more aware of projects developed at local and regional level. These platforms, along with our Facebook page, have allowed us to keep track of events emerged in places as distant as Ukraine and Nigeria, events that deserve our attention and commitment.

Finally, I would like to report that we nominated Kelsey Jost-Creegan, who was intern in our organization, in the process of selection of Youth Representatives to serve in the Advisory Group of the Global Civil Society UN Women. Her selection would give us a new forum for discussion and exchange. Moreover, the Presidency received a second intern, also from the United States. Miranda Wodarsky worked with us during the months of June and July 2014. We are sure that the presence of these young women has been beneficial to all.

We conclude this report with renewed energy to take on another year of activity and with the confidence that the Administrative Council Meeting of the International Federation of Women in Legal Careers will be an stimulating and enriching encounter.

Best regards,



María Elena Elverdin  
President FIFCJ