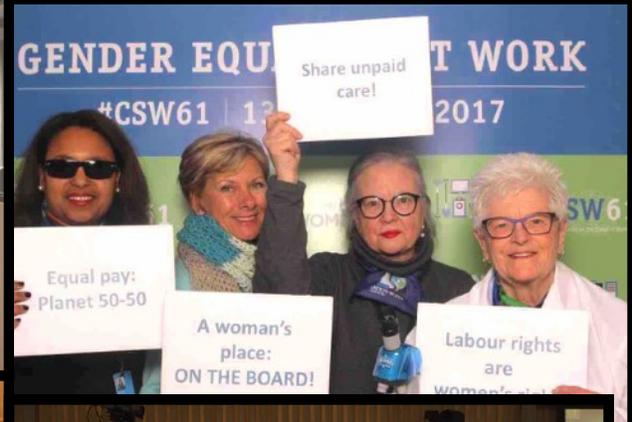


## Report on the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW61)

Respectfully submitted by  
Cheryl Hayles, CFUW VP International Relations



## Cheryl Hayles, VP International Relations, CFUW Oakville



The United Nations General Assembly was opened on March 13, 2017 by H.E. Peter Thomson, President of the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly, 61st session of the Commission on the Status of Women. In his opening statement he remarked that, “The tools and ways of life of the past will not be those of humanity’s sustainable future. Technological innovation and the river of human progress, can be blocked here and there with dams of political and social convenience. But as long as the human spirit flourishes, as long as we have faith in progress and justice for all, the river will flow on, over all those dams and passing diversions, to a time of greater equity; to a time, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, when lack of gender equality will be rightly seen as an absurdity”. This is the hope shared by the more than 8, 500 delegates who registered for UNCSW61.

This is the highest number of registrations the UN has ever experienced for CSW. The rise of neo-conservative values which are positioned to claw back the gains made by the feminist movement accelerated the need for women to stand up in solidarity for hard earned women's rights. CFUW delegates were prepared for the experience with 5 Briefs, a tele-conference and a caucus on the day before the General Assembly opened.



I’m very proud to say CFUW was represented at UNCSW61 by 20 delegates and a number of other CFUW members were there in association with other organizations. CFUW hosted a dinner for national and international NGOs on the Wednesday night of the

first week of the events. Many of the CFUW members were present. Our soloist, Karen Gill - CFUW St. John's, again brought the dinner guests to a thunderous applause for her rendition of "Una Voce Poco Fa" from the Barber of Seville.

The themes addressed on Consultation Day (a UN Women sponsored event preopening of the General Assembly), Side Events (Government sponsored events) and Parallel Events (Non Government Organizations sponsored events) focussed on:

**Priority theme:**

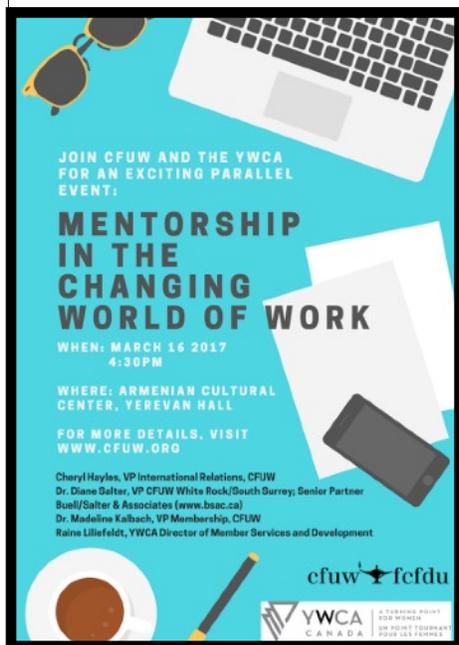
Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work

**Review theme:**

Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls (agreed conclusions of the fifty-eighth session)

**Emerging issue/Focus area:**

The empowerment of indigenous women



To support the priority theme CFUW hosted a Parallel Event with the YWCA entitled, "Mentorship, Women's Economic Empowerment in the Changing World of Work". On average, women are paid 73 cents for every dollar paid to men. Without immediate action, the gender pay gap isn't projected to close for 135 years. That's way beyond achieving gender equality by 2030 as outlined in Sustainable Development goal #5. The presenters argue that mentorship must be an integral part of education and skills training programs for women to achieve full economic empowerment. The YWCA highlighted their national programs

for Indigenous youth.

The attendees from Africa, the Caribbean, USA, Australia and Canada were excited to learn they could replicate the CFUW program at no cost in their own communities. We were asked by the international audience to share our CFUW created mentorship resources. These have been made available on our website, for free, to individuals and organization who would like to use our materials.

Linda MacDonald and Jeanne Sarson, CFUW Truro members, were asked by members of NGAs and government to share their presentation for their Parallel Event entitled, “Using Law to Empower Women & Girls to Live Free from Violence in Work and Family” - Their Panel was - A Canadian Experience: Discrimination in law on non-State torture negates human right equality, social justice & inclusion of victimized women & girls.

Overall UNCSW61 was a most successful event for CFUW. In preparation for the trip we submitted a proposal for a Parallel Event, a Written Statement and an Oral Statement. While attending one of the Side Events on the Wednesday of the first week of proceedings, I received a confirmation email that we were selected to present an Oral Statement in the General Assembly for ministers of government. That was a surreal moment for me! Secondly, on the Thursday we presented our Parallel Event in partnership with the YWCA. Most importantly we were able to secure a private meeting with Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative, Michael Grant to discuss our response to the Draft Agreed Conclusions being negotiated by government representatives.



With Canada being one of the actors in the negotiations for the Agreed Conclusions, we felt strongly we we had to participate in the process. Our intent was to influence the final document and have our wording inserted in sections which align with CFUW’s mandate to serve and protect the rights of women and

girls. Grace Hollett and I were complimented on our presentation and assured that our document would be shared with the Canadian negotiators. We felt confident there was follow through as our document was referenced during the Canadian Briefing on the day the negotiations resumed.

The Agreed Conclusions, which are the affirmations of standards and practices agreed to by all United Nations Member States for implementation in their home countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, was released on March 24th. <https://www.ngocsw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Agreed-Conclusions.pdf>



It must be noted that we made new connections and established working relationship with government, international partners and Canadian NGOs that will support the furtherance of the goals of CFUW.

I would like to personally thank our self funded delegates for embarking on this learning journey to seek better solutions, build community with like minded women, expand their circle of interest and association, advocate for change in areas where women's rights are being ignored and to be a presence in a world that needs to be reminded that "Women's Rights are Human Rights". I am most proud of the friendships that developed among the delegates. Our "buddy system" made everyone feel safe and connected.

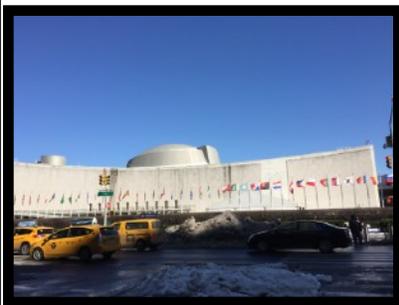
A huge thank you to our social media team who kept everyone at home up to date on our experiences in New York. We increased our number of

Twitter followers daily and your likes, shares and comments on Facebook made us feel supported.

Our hard working group of CFUW delegates were asked to reflect on five questions. Their responses are documented in the following text for our CFUW members to enjoy with a beverage, a cozy reading chair and some dear friends with whom to discuss the contents. We hope that in 2018 your experiences will be the ones documented and shared.

### **Reflections Questions:**

1. I wished to attend because...
2. How the experience has met my expectations
3. Words Learned or New Ideas to introduce to my home club
4. Quote that resonated for me
5. Outstanding Session



### **Sandra Shaw, CFUW Perth and District**

My expectation was that the UNCSW61 would allow me to connect with women's issues outside those I encounter. Activities reacquainted me with basic human rights that the majority of the world's women fight for against the backdrop of fear, subjugation, violence and abuse.

The Commission's diversity reintroduced me to activist women from around the globe who bring different experiences and viewpoints to discourse on gender equality.

New language confronted me. I was unfamiliar with intersectionality, albeit not the concept it represents. Understanding how qualifying factors (e.g. race, socioeconomic position, gender identity, religion, health status) play out in gender issues was an eye opener. The contemporary use of 'civil society' was also new since I had previously viewed this concept from a negative perspective.

Trafficking of women for the sex trade, not only in war torn areas but also in refugee camps and in Canadian Indigenous populations, was particularly disturbing. It is estimated that human trafficking is a 150 billion dollar business run on the backs of 21 to 42 million people. “There is more money in selling women than selling drugs and with fewer penalties,” was stated by an Indigenous Canadian woman presenter.

In every session, the thread of improved women’s education was woven into solutions for gender equality. Better education leads to better work opportunities, higher paid and better work and greater financial empowerment, all needed to decrease women’s vulnerability.

One session which affected me deeply was Indigenous Women and Prostitution: Roots, Realities and Resistance. Four North American Indigenous women candidly outlined their journeys through forced prostitution, the impact this has had on their lives, and the role colonialism, patriarchy and capitalism has played in supporting myths about Indigenous women and their sexual availability.

The knowledge gained from just this one CSW has reignited my activism and reinforced the hard work still required to gain women’s gender equality.

### **Kathryn Wilkinson, VP Education, CFUW Mississauga**

This was my third time attending CSW and it once again met my expectations and beyond. I wanted to attend because of the opportunity it offers to network with government, other groups, and members of our own organization. To learn about the work being done to empower women and girls across the globe is an amazing lifelong learning opportunity.

#### **Words, quotes and ideas:**

Hats not hijabs – migrant women in America afraid to be identified as Muslim

Immigration status should never be a barrier to essential services – Empowerment of Women in Migration

Men change when we change the world around them – Strengthening Men and Boys. Quote from Parmundo, an organization working in Brazil.

Pay gaps can only be reduced if men do half the care work - Parmundo Bell Bajao (Ring the Bell) – a media campaign to end VAW started in India but shared widely in neighbouring countries and some African states

Women not as passive victims of war but as active agents of peace – The Role of Female Parliamentarians in Implementing the Global WPS Agenda

51% of women trafficked in Canada are Indigenous – Indigenous Women Against the Sex Industry

Moving between places is to see and to learn (Swahili saying) – Rural Women’s Economic Empowerment; Contribution to Industrial Transformation in Tanzania

67M domestic workers across the world. 11M are migrants. Only 10% are covered by labour laws – Paid Care Work presented by the International Domestic Workers Federation Apron campaign – no one can force you to wear an apron – Paid Care Work

Child marriage = trafficking and rape – No Girl Left Behind

**Most outstanding session:** Indigenous Women Against the Sex Industry. Four presenters, all Indigenous, one American, three Canadian. Listening to their stories was harrowing; we know of the sixties scoop, murdered and missing women, trafficking, child abuse but to sit in front of women who have lived those experiences and to hear them speak is an unforgettable experience.

**Roberta Ostler Balmer, CFUW Kanata**

‘If you are a woman-you are a worker’

Executive Director of UN Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

Each year, the CSW gathers together in NYC with several thousand women (8,6000) in attendance, it is the largest gathering of international women at the UN and an opportunity is provided for leaders in gender equality and empowerment to influence the UN agenda.

I have had the privilege to attend the CSW for several years, often as a CFUW delegate. This year was an eyeopener, with regard to Human Trafficking.

I did not know that Disney Theme Park Parking lots are a principal location for trading.

I did not know that Truck Stops and Hotel parking serves the same purpose.

There are main routes through Eastern Europe and the Southern States; also world wide. The situation is rife.

Lichtenstein and Nigeria gave an excellent presentation with a panel of experts from ILO and the International Anti-Slavery Association. California also presented a strong case with reference to trafficking, migrants and the facilities for their care.

“It is about power and the exclusion of power. An extremely lucrative model of organized crime” says Aidan McQuade of Anti Slavery International.

Social occasions at CSW provide a great opportunity for networking and meeting eminent people i.e. Mme Monsef, Minister of Status of Women Canada.

Precorization and intersectionality appeared to be the words for this year. Where do we go from here; having been informed and stimulated, let us act on our principles.

**N.B.** on a lighter note:

While slithering along the snowy road, a young man came to my assistance; not content with taking my arm, he picked me up and carried me over the snowbank, then set me down on the Hotel path!



**Teri Shaw, Advocacy Chair, Ontario Council, CFUW Oakville**

I wished to attend because of knowledge gained, contacts made for CFUW, being part of the team that reminds other Canadian NGOs and government members that CFUW is involved, and is knowledgeable, thoughtful and ready to act.

**How the experience has met my expectations:**

Always, but knowing that we read an Oral Statement was the “icing”.  
Thanks, Cheryl.

The Chilean Minister of Women and Gender Equity Claudia Pascual gave a passionate talk in a Parallel session on Paid Care Work sponsored by the International Domestic Workers Federation.

**Words Learned or New Ideas** to introduce to my home club:

Upskill – teachers and parents that need to learn about technology, math and science

Revenge porn – the horrible situation of sharing nude photos of an ex-lover

**4. Quote that resonated for me:**

Hilary Spencer, Director, Government Equalities Office, Department for Education

“Society normalizes the gender roles on a daily basis. The norms come quite softly, but we’re losing the female leaders and the male nurturers.”

Shona on the International Labor Organization’s Convention 189 on Domestic Workers

“making the invisible visible”

Minister Claudia Pascual – translated:

“women take on the cost of the care, sustaining the production of the population. We’re not supported economically or socially.”

**5. Outstanding Session:**

Canadian Briefings Wednesday the 13th, Friday the 17th

Informal meetings with:

Cabinet Ministers and staff (federal and provincial)  
Members of Parliament including our own local ones  
Other members of the Canadian NGO community  
Listening to the work of the negotiators of the Agreed Conclusions



**Sandra Thomson, VP Ontario, Chair of Ontario Council, CFUW Oakville**

The primary reason to attend the UN CSW was to learn about CFUW's role in the global community as an accredited non-governmental organization (NGO). My questions to answer: "How can I, as an individual CFUW member, make a difference?" and "How can CFUW influence and impact the global and national scenes?"

The opportunities to meet and connect with delegates far outweighed my initial expectations. There was enormous potential to create partnerships and connections for the CFUW. From the standing in line for parallel and side events, to Canadian briefings, to the Canada Permanent Mission reception, I talked to many delegates, exchanged business cards, and discussed CFUW's work.

There were two notable occasions for me to profile CFUW:

1. Speaking with Sheila Malcolmson, MP, NDP, BC during a Canada Government briefing (held everyday at 1 p.m.)
2. Meeting Marja Ruotanen, Director of Human Dignity & Equality, Council of Europe.

The impact for CFUW National is that we have the opportunity to submit a brief to Ms. Malcolmson's steering committee on "Economic Security for Women in Canada;" and for Ms. Ruotanen, a possible in-

ternational connection when she attends an April summit conference in Toronto.

Many international experts highlighted education as the means of preventing violence against women, prostitution, and human trafficking. “Economic empowerment contributes to the decrease of violence.” CFUW’s purpose of working to improve the status of women and to promote human rights, public education, social justice, and peace aligns with many of the NGOs’ projects and international experts’ conclusions for enhancing women’s human rights.

Two **quotes** resonating from the Forum: “Women...we are completely necessary.” Dr. Mabel Bianco, 2017 recipient of the Woman of Distinction Award, and “Leave no girl behind.”

And to highlight impactful: CFUW was honoured by having the oral statement accepted and read at the General Assembly. What an accomplishment and international success!

There is no doubt of our ability and of our work to be a force on national and international stages. We are influential and we are recognized.



## **Grace Hollett, President, CFUW St. John's**

Upon becoming National President in January, my reasons for attending CSW6I focused on networking with Canadian Federal and Provincial government ministers on issues of CFUW concern, and meeting with CFUW members and representatives from national and international organizations. Remaining time was spent at Consultation Day and informative sessions.

The experience more than met my expectations. CFUW's VP International facilitated, for our delegates, the networking at the daily Canadian Government briefings. The contact of our members with SW Minister, Maryam Monsef, resulted in a letter from CFUW to her, welcoming the indication of a Canadian national framework for early-learning and childcare. We presented a CFUW letter to Ambassador Marc-André Blanchard, Canada's Permanent UN Representative; I stressed our 8400 members in the 105 Clubs across Canada working to fulfill CFUW's purposes. At the meeting of Cheryl Hayles and I with Geeta Desai, GWI President, and Executive Director Stacy D Lara, Geeta stated she will answer questions on the Financial Revenue and Expenditure Statement – 31 December 2016, will include in the table information on 2015-17 financials, and will get information to us on the proposed dues increase before our AGM.

Ideas for Club: Interact with Indigenous and Immigrant women, consider advocating for benefits for domestic and part time workers, promote women's economic empowerment, work with men and boys to end VAW.

**Quote:** "Our work is grounded in human rights (Susan O'Malley)

**Outstanding session:** "No Girl Left Behind: Securing Inclusion through Education and Economic Opportunities for Married Girls and those at Risk of [child] Marriage.

**Sharon Crabb, PhD, VP Advocacy, CFUW Fredericton**

I wished to attend the UNCSW61 this year for a number of reasons including an opportunity to listen to the voices of the many women who represent numerous countries as they share their achievements, goals, concerns, struggles and views for the future. This is not only an opportunity to reflect on Canada's focus on addressing issues of importance to women and girls but to further recognize the positive impact Canada, and CFUW in particular, is making in the areas of violence against women and girls, migrant women and children (newcomers) as they are welcomed to Canadian communities, childcare and gender equity (pay equity). As well, attendance reinforces those areas where CFUW can increase its lobbying/advocacy/support.

This experience at the UN far exceeded my expectations. The parallel events were particularly outstanding as they afforded the opportunity to listen and dialogue with the grassroots women who work with difficulties specific to Indigenous women, migrant women, care workers and violent conditions as they advocate for women and girls.

Some words which particularly resonated with me were the ongoing reference to "life wage" rather than minimum wage. "support and services needed from the cradle to the grave," "capacity building," and "victimhood." Some ideas for my Club would be a greater focus on the newcomers and their needs/concerns and a focus on developing a stronger relationship with our Indigenous women and girls.

A quote that resonated for me is: "not passive women of war but active participants of peace" and "what about the right of all women to live in a world free of violence."

An outstanding session I attended was "Indigenous Women and Prostitution: Roots Realities and Resistance." These women presenters were survivors of residential schools, prostitution, trafficking, abuse, violence

and separations from family and community. A resonating comment was “too many of us are dead.”

Congratulations to Cheryl Hayles and Madeline Kalbach for their outstanding parallel event, “Mentorship for Women in the Changing World of Work.”

**Dr. Madeline A. Kalbach, VP Membership, CFUW Calgary**

I wished to attend to learn more about the state of gender equality, pay equity and education around the world. I also wished to attend to share my mentorship experiences with other women and to help show case CFUW’s mentorship programme.

The experience was greater than my expectations. Speakers were impressive. It was a wonderful experience to witness the coming together of over 8,500 women to discuss and try to find solutions for the inequities that women suffer around the world.

It provided a great opportunity to meet Canada’s ministers and other elected officials and to hear what they had to say about the issues of advocacy CFUW espouses and supports.

Overall, just being with like-minded women on the issues that affect all women was empowering.

All of the sessions I attended were outstanding. The speakers were amazing. I especially enjoyed the session, “Women’s Rights and Gender Equity in the Changing World of Work. “Decent work is a human right”. One panelist said, “How about an economy that puts human rights first?” Wonderful food for thought in the ideas that were generated in this session. I also believe our session on Mentorship was outstanding.

**Quotes that resonated for me:**

“Society has to live up to women, not the reverse”.

“Work is not just about income”.

“The battle for women’s rights and gender equity will be won or lost in the workplace.”

“Being nice to people is a profession”.

“Education is liberating”.

The idea of marking Person’s Day, International Women’s Day and other significant events that allow us to celebrate women is something my club does not do enough of. UNCSW61 underlined the importance of the power of women working together and the importance of informing the community at large about VAW.

A personal highlight for me was being recognized by UTM as an alumna with an interesting story. I was interviewed about UNCSW61. CFUW and our mentorship programme was highlighted in my responses. The feature will appear in a publication in May 2017.



### **Elys Lagumbay, CFUW Vancouver**

Continuum...is one reason to attend UNCSW61. Empowerment of women and economy as one of concerns set out at Beijing platform in September 1995. The other reason is to meet again women advocates in national and global levels. This is a gathering that met my expectations, a feminist movement that promotes economic empowerment of women

and girls through gender equality. This is continuous voice to prod our government to protect women and girls, envision no more pain from violence and discrimination, no hunger nor poverty as women could have equal pay and value, and educational opportunities for all especially in technological, science and digital fields.

**Quote** to bring home per Gary Barker: "Where we see greatest potential for change, is in how we raise our sons and daughters". I see this as reminder to include women, men and non-binary individuals for accountability to achieve empowerment for all (Iceland's barbershop toolbox side event with the He for She group).

**Most outstanding session** with Minister Maryam Monsef of Status of Women. She embodies the success story of involuntary migrant... and her story of how she was CSW representative 4 years ago and now a minister committed to defend progressive ways for Canada and United Nations to achieve the sustainable development goals (SDG).

### **Karen Gill, CFUW St. John's**

1. I wished to attend because this year's theme of Women's Empowerment in the Changing World of Work is relevant to me as a young woman entering the workforce, and it is a great opportunity to meet and network with people from all over the world.
2. The experience met my expectations entirely. The sessions I attended were amazing and informative, I met great, smart, engaged people, and learned many new things.
3. The main word I'm bringing back to my club is Intersectionality, and the concept I'd like to bring in is engaging men and boys in feminist issues.
4. A quote that resonated for me from the session on Women Parliamentarians is "History does not just happen, we make it happen."

5. For me, two outstanding sessions were the sessions on Engaging Men and Boys at UNFPA, and the panel on the dangers faced by Indigenous Women when moving to Urban Centres.

**Elizabeth Gautschi, University Women's Club of Vancouver**

I wished to attend the UNCSW61 because I believe in the importance of the United Nations in influencing the actions of countries around the world. The experience has met my expectations and more. I found it inspiring to sit in the large assembly rooms at the UN and to hear the messages from UN leaders. In attending the variety of workshops that were offered, I learned what was happening in other parts of the world and also had the opportunity to meet women from many different countries.

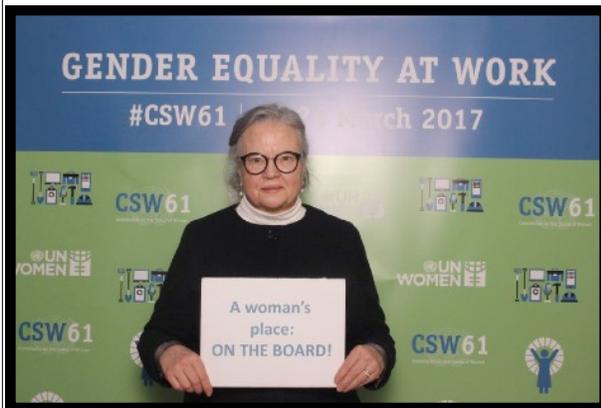
An expression that I heard the first day was, “constructive internationalism”. This was spoken by H.E. Ambassador de Agular Patriota. I don't remember if he gave a specific definition of the term but he did talk about rational behaviour based on humanitarian goals. To me it was the connotation that the term provided in that there are many ways that countries can work together to improve gender equity and to build a better world for all.

A quote that resonated for me was: “Gender inequality is one of the most significant human rights violations of today.”

There were many excellent sessions that I attended but I am going to choose the one entitled “Wanted: Economic Empowerment and Equality, Not the Sex Trade” because of its relevance to my Club which has worked for many years to bring about change to prostitution laws in Canada (which did happen in 2014) but also to work to see the current law strengthened, not eliminated, and to see the law enforced at the local level. The panelists were from Columbia, South Africa and Canada. The stories of the panelists sounded familiar in that I have heard the same types of stories from women in our communities here in Metro Vancouver. Some of the statements that I will remember are: “Believe

us.” “Stop questioning the legitimacy of what we say and work to convince people of the need for change”. The moderator’s comment gave me something more to work on, “See your local ILO representative. They have new policies on violence. Get them to include prostitution.” And in the end, a man in the audience said, “Emphasize the issue of violence and lack of freedom” for prostituted persons.

### **Doris Mae Oulton, Past President, CFUW Winnipeg**



1. The connection with the international women’s community is an important part of the CFUW mandate and the most efficacious place to do this is at the UNCSW. We have been gradually increasing our presence and our ability to ‘grow’ our presence – with a great deal of work and organization.

2. We are so very far ahead of where we were a few years ago – this was an outstanding session for us – we had a private meeting with the ambassador, an oral statement, meeting with the UN Women, request to contribute a chapter to an international publication on water, meetings with other international organizations, etc. We are becoming well known at Canada’s permanent mission and other organizations are seeking us out for partnerships and collaboration. The growth has been very impressive.

3. The experience surpassed my expectations – we were able to attract a number of ‘followers’ on our twitter account, our Facebook postings

were well received and the ‘defiant’ girl wearing the CFUW scarf has had more ‘likes’ than any other post we have ever had. The organization is only getting better every year. The snow day was a disappointment but the time was well spent by delegates with cooperative work and exchange of ideas. The briefing beforehand and the care delegates take of one another is exceptional.

4. Intersectionality was a big buzz word this year...and although I had heard the phrase before, it’s use and application to a number of situations was extensive.

The term LBGTI was new to me ..... the reference to collectively to people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex.

5. “No rest, no end, but must be done” – one of the Italian women captains on the ships that rescue migrant on the Mediterranean seas – 300 to 400 people on rickety ships. Very heartbreaking but she certainly made the issue very real.

Also loved the quote from the Japanese artist, talking about young girls who are lured into trafficking “I could not see the dollar signs in his eyes because of the stars in mine”.

6. The CFUW session on Mentorship was timely and very well attended – standing room only. The session on Risks Canadian Indigenous Women Face Transitioning to an Urban Environment had outstanding representation from Indigenous leaders from Canada: Tammy Christensen, Margaret McKinnon, Chief Karen Batson, Chief Janice Henderson, and Grand Chief Sheila North Wilson presented. It was very well received, standing room only. The presentations were powerful and yet told of the work being done in communities. The importance of the Indigenous women at the session cannot be overstated – and it is reflected in the agreed conclusions which urge the full inclusion and development of Indigenous women.

On a very personal level the session on economic development at the local level rang true and points made about having to move beyond handicrafts for women and the importance of collective economic approaches

such as co-ops (rather than the frequent touting of entrepreneurial ones) resonated with me and the work I have done in the north.

### **Judy Pagano, CFUW Edmonton**

I was keen to repeat last year's experience at CSW60. My expectations were exceeded and I returned home armed with more knowledge & empowerment to share.

The most powerful statement for me as participant had no words, it was the symbolic empty chair on the panel or at the "the table". A symbol of those denied entry to the United Nations because of the "Travel Ban" or who decided not to travel for fear of reprisal.

Being cognizant of the "push back" that women are once again confronting "universally" the priority for the sessions; Women's empowerment through Literacy, Financial Education, Shared Best Practices.

Perhaps the best words to help expand the dialogue on equal pay, gender equality are;

- From a minimum wage to a living wage
- This leads to the discussion of elimination of discrimination against women in the workplace (at all levels) to achieve and ensure equal rights for all women so that those rights are equal to all men.

### **The outstanding session & speaker:**

Australian Ambassador Hon. Dr. Sharman Stone.

- Moving from "AID" to investment
- From Private to Public discussion

Hon. Minister Bibeau I felt underscored our purpose for being there.

A most important notation must be expressed and that is the wonderful cohesiveness and leadership of the CFUW Delegation. Thank you once again!!👁👁

### **Penny Bickerton, CFUW- Vancouver & Coquitlam**

This was my first attendance at such an event. The experience exceeded my expectations. When attending sessions it was evident the disparity that exists around the world on the gains or none at all of women in certain countries. Many still cannot own land!!! We are very lucky in Canada to have come as far as we have but we still are not completely there yet.

#### **Discussions from Sessions attended:**

- Young Women moving into Technology. Empowerment of rights, you move to a higher level of rights. Secret for Prosperity is getting women/girls into STEM. 75% of the jobs in the future will require STEM skills. “Intellectual Resource”
- Must know your rights and if not, we make ourselves victims. If a Woman has a job it can break the cycle of violence; she has right to knowledge and social justice.
- Ending the Myth of Greener Pastures. Presented by Ethiopia/Uganda/Zimbabwe. How to deal with Human Trafficking!
- 1.5 million Syrians are in Lebanon and over 250,000 in Iraq. Women and girls account for 52% in Lebanon and 44% in Iraq (Islamic Relief). There is a lack of education for the children and work for the women. 9% of the Syrian Women had suffered some form of sexual or physical abuse.

#### **Project:**

Days for Girls (DfG) an NGO advocacy group that raises awareness, education and provision of feminine hygiene. Globally, DfG has distributed over 300,000 sanitary kits to 100,000+ women and girls through 870 Volunteer Chapters. These washable sanitary pads last for approxi-

mately 3 years enabling girls to attend school and women to continue to go to work. Discussion also included the environmental impact.

### **Jo Swann, CFUW South Delta**

Words learned or new ideas to introduce to my home club:

Work is not always about income. Women do the majority of community development work, but control of land and funds is not generally in women's hands in developing countries. Government needs to be accountable to do its job in promoting gender equality without women doing it for them.

### **Quote to remember:**

Radhika Balakrishnan, Faculty Director, Center for Women's Global Leadership, Rutgers University: "What if the purpose of the economy was human rights?"

**Outstanding Session:** Addressing Gender Dimensions of Modern Day Slavery, March 13, 2017, organized by the UK Permanent Mission to the UN. Modern slavery, or human trafficking, is difficult to quantify, depending on the definition of the term as well as the fact that it is largely a hidden and underreported crime. Modern slavery can include coerced labour (including prison labour camps), sex slavery, abduction, baby machines, domestic workers, and/or forced marriage. Estimates of the magnitude of modern slavery generally vary between 20 million and 45 million people. The majority of slavery victims are between 18 and 24 years old, and 55 % are female.

Numerous treaties outlaw slavery but national legislation is patchy and enforcement is weak. Rape is rife by traffickers, enslavers, police and family alike. Police often don't listen or lack training to deal with slavery. There is a lack of cooperation across borders, and a lack of witnesses to testify, so prosecution is difficult.

Aidan McQuade, Director of Anti-Slavery International, was a particularly passionate speaker. He reinforced that slavery is a power system targeting migrants, minority groups, women, and girls.

### **Joy Hurst, CFUW Edmonton**

I wished to attend CSW 61 because it is a remarkable opportunity to gain further understanding of global issues and to be exposed to leading approaches to the economic empowerment of women. The experience exceeded my expectations with outstanding sessions, networking with women from around the world, CFUW and other Canadian NGO's.



### **Words learned or new ideas to introduce to my home club**

- un.women.org as a an fabulous repository of information
- The Nexus approach
- Push-pull of migration
- Amplification strategy

### **Quotes that moved me:**

"human rights are vertical not horizontal"

"income is not everything"

" all economies depend on unpaid work, largely provided by women"

" if you empower a woman you empower her whole community"

"anyone who has an interest in war is an enemy of women"

## **Outstanding Sessions:**

Step it Up: Rural woman to end Hunger and Poverty; This session proposed that rural women in agriculture are the heart of sustainable development and can end poverty with land ownership and other structural interventions--"everything starts with the soil"

Female Genital Mutilation: FGM Affects at least 200 million girls and women today. This practice has been documented in 30 countries. The powerful and courageous story of Jaha Dukureh was a tipping point for legislation, NGO is Safe Hands for Girls.

Women20 (W20); Promoting women's economic empowerment as an integral part of the G20 process. Meg Jones, Economist... WOW, she was fantastic. In 2017 W20 will focus on labor market inclusion, financial inclusion and digital inclusion.

YouthMobile supported by UNESCO-An exciting panel of young business women from Africa demonstrated that young Africans can be drivers of development.

Congratulations to Cheryl Hayles and Dr. Madeline Kalbach for a great presentation at CSW 61 on Mentorship---as evidenced by a full room of attendees who stayed for the duration and asked relevant and probing questions. I was also impressed by the desire of others to use materials created within CFUW's Mentorship project. This should encourage us in Canada to spread this work and get on board with a very important intervention which supports women in fulfilling their individual potential and cultivating very rewarding relationships.

Lastly, thank you so much Cheryl for the preparations you made for our delegation. I was so honoured to be a delegate. It's an opportunity that keeps on giving with learning and networking.

**Bilkies McKen, VP Prairies, CFUW Yorkton Inc.**

I wished to attend because CSW promised different perspectives that are critically important in achieving desirable outcomes and learn about the challenges at all levels in advancing social issues.

**How the Experience has met my Expectations:**

Seeing how the process works at the UN and that all levels of Civil Society can have a significant impact was very exciting and truly inspiring!

**Word (Phrases) Learned and New Ideas to Introduce to my Club:**

Repurpose, Redistribute, New Collar Jobs, He for She, Gender Responsive, Accelerated Implementation, Transforming Economy, Feminization of Poverty, Climate Justice

**Quote(s) that Resonated for Me:**

“Constructive Impatience” (Phumzile Mlambo – Ngcuka) .....

“Society has to live up to women and not women to live up to society, period” (Phumzile Mlambo – Ngcuka)

“Invest in social infrastructure instead of physical infrastructure” (Radika Balakrishnan)

“Gender Equality is the best indicator of peace in a nation” (Dr. Susan O’Malley)

**Outstanding Session(s):**

1. Welcome Messages and Conversations on Consultation Day.
2. The Barbershop Toolbox: Changing the Discourse Among Men and Boys on Gender Equality (Iceland and Suriname)

For women to create lasting change, men must take responsibility. Men must be invited to participate in the conversation and elevate their own transformative roles of what it means to protect the rights of men and women.

3. Risks - Canadian Indigenous Women Transitioning to an Urban Environment: Institute for International Women's Rights – Manitoba and Northern Ontario.

Women chiefs showcased their advances including reviews of the progress made, assessing the challenges remaining, and implementation of recommendations for stakeholders in Canadian Society.

**My Appreciation:**

Thank you CFUW for your hard work in making this a successful event. Congrats on outstanding presentations - Oral Statement and Mentorship Session! Thank you to The National Council of Women of Canada for enabling more CFUW delegates to attend. What an excellent learning experience!

**Dr. Saôde Savary, Vice-President  
Club des Femmes Universitaires de Montréal Inc.**

I wanted to attend the CSW 61 in order to better understand the CFUW-UN-GWI relationships. I was also curious to find out how the laudable UN vision of peace, human rights and justice was translated during the operationalization of a real UN meeting.

The week went by too quickly to allow me to appreciate details. Fast also was the rhythm of walk; thanks to advice received in preparation of this meeting, I was well equipped for walks to different venues on cold days. My calendar of planned events was readily swept aside by the diversity of sessions. Through the struggle between deliberate and emergent attendance strategies, I participated in 13 sessions besides the Consultation Day, the Civil Society Morning Meeting & Briefings. Among these sessions, «Learn how you can End Human Trafficking by intercepting Demand» organized by Pathway to Peace was outstanding because it addressed the problem with a focus on prevention at sources and offers measurable positive outcomes.

Throughout this race, it was refreshing to stop and share supper with CFUW members, delegates of NFAs and Canadian NGOs. Knowing that others share common views and concerns on Women's issues gave a sense of connectedness that can only strengthen one's commitment. At the end, I was still questioning why in 2017 we still gather to talk about Women's Rights? Women carry the world on their backs. We need to carry the world in our hands, to face it, to work with, to reconstruct it and carve it with a more Equal architecture. If not us, then who?

