

UN Representatives in general

By VP UN Dr. Catherine Bosshart-Pflugger

New York: During CSW 62 (Spring 2018) I met with all UN Reps and discussed their functioning and workplan in New York. Main Rep. Dr. Susan O'Malley, due to her heavy engagement as Chair of NGO CSW, hardly had time to talk with the UN Reps. During my stay in September 2019 in New York, I discussed the situation with her and asked her to please continue as UN Rep and spend more time at UNICEF. She resigned as UN Main Rep. I would like to specifically thank her for all she has done also as chair of NGO CSW, in which function she increased the visibility of BPW International greatly. Dr. Helena Finn, former under-secretary of State of the USA had handed in her candidacy for this post. I asked her to take over.

Following an interview session in New York in summer 2018 with Lynn, Francesca, Susan and me, we have two new UN Reps: Dr. Helena K. Finn and Nehrmin Achmad who replaced Liz Irwin. In 2019, Mary Brophy and Lyn Hensle-Hirsch asked to be replaced at the end of 2019 resp. in March 2020. During my stay at the UN General Assembly in New York in September 2019, Dr. Helena Finn and I interviewed Sheila Stamps together and decided to accept her as UN Rep to replace Lyn Hensle-Hirsch. Judy Kilachand replaces Mary Brophy and Alison Smile is another new UN Rep. We have now a fairly new team which works very well together.

Vienna: In Vienna there are still the same three representatives: Christa Kirchmair. Marlene Parenzan (UN Main Rep, UNOV) and Rita Assogna. Marlene during the Crime Prevention Conference in June 2018 organized a side event together with Soroptimists and Zonta on cyber bullying where I was a speaker. This fruitful collaboration was continued in 2020 when a Webinar on the ILO Convention 190 was put together where I acted as a moderator and co-organizer.

Geneva: Lesha Witmer who was for many years UN Rep in Geneva, but hardly ever could attend meetings, is now working with Marie-Claude Machon Honoré at UNESCO in Paris. She was replaced by Rodica Rosu Fridez, the Chair of BPW Lausanne. In Geneva the following UN Reps are now active: Elisabeth Clément, Françoise van Leeuwen, Doris Gerber, Rodica Rosu Fridez and I as UN Main Rep. In all three offices IP Amany and I are represented due to our functions.

UNESCO, Paris: Marie-Claude Machon Honoré was elected in 2018 as Chair of the NGO Liaison Committee. She presents the other BPW Reps in her list with UNESCO. For the General Assembly of UNESCO in 2019 I prepared an oral statement which was read by one of the BPW International Representatives as I could make it only on Sunday night to Paris due other obligations in Nicosia (Cyprus).

At FAO in Rome and ESCAP in Bangkok there were no changes

Background: All my activities were carried out with the purpose of strengthening our position at the UN, to inform our membership better regarding what we are doing and to engage them with the UN projects, call for prices by UNESCO and to strengthen the connection between BPW International, the federations and affiliates. At the beginning of the triennium, with the great support of Ursula Schmid I created a new

webpage on the UN and accordingly several Facebook groups to promote events at the UN. There is a huge lack of information and knowledge in this regard. BPW International needs a whole communication campaign to close the gap between BPW International and the membership worldwide.

Key points, achievements to date and issues to be addressed:

The existing representatives in the UN Headquarters, in the office in Geneva and Vienna, in the specialized agencies like FAO and UNESCO work very well. The regional Economic Commission of North America and Europe and Asia-Pacific are recognized and work well. It would be great if we could extend our presence to the Economic Commission of Latin America in Santiago de Chile, the Economic Commission of Africa in Addis Ababa and the Economic Commission of West Asia. The selection of the delegates for CSW and the choice of the UN Reps are transparent and clear.

What is still being processed is the accreditation at UNON in Nairobi.

Recommendations:

Continuation of the communication strategy, workshops about the UN on a regular basis at the Leaders' Summit and the Regional Conferences, an additional Leaders' Summit in Europe once a year, increased collaboration with Global Compact and the International Trade Center. The cooperation with the International Organization of Employers was strengthened in the collaboration on the ILO Convention 190. Presence in all regional Economic Commissions.