

Further to the announcement from the GWI President, Geeta Desai, about forming an Ad Hoc Committee, we have received the following update on the objectives and the members of the Committee.

Greetings to the President and CIR of the National Federations and Associations (NFAs) of the Graduate Women International (GWI),

We are writing to tell you that the GWI Board has established an Ad Hoc Committee of 16 members from NFAs around the world. Terry Oudraad of the Netherlands and Kathleen Laurila of the USA are the co-chairs of this short-term committee. They both served on the IFUW Board together in past years.

The objective of this GWI Ad Hoc Committee is to:

1. learn from all of the NFAs their concerns about the value they place on their membership of GWI, and the financial obligations that entails, and
2. review the replies from the NFAs and make a recommendation to the GWI Board as to the next step they should take to bring solvency to GWI, assuring its existence for not only for the next two and a half years when we celebrate our 100th anniversary, but beyond.

The current GWI Board recognized that before the votes in regard to finances were taken by the General Assembly in Cape Town in 2016, there was no moderated discussion about the pros and cons, nor was there an accounting of the financial situation before arriving at Cape Town. Even though the delegates felt compelled to vote for an increase in dues once they learned of the dire financial situation, most then objected to paying the increase once they returned home.

This resulted in a crisis situation, and the Board voted to not proceed with collecting the dues amount with the increase until further discussions could take place. However, the vote from Cape Town still stands, but the General Assembly, through an electronic vote, could determine a different outcome. But before that happens, the current Board wants to have advise from each and every NFA about what the change should be.

Thus, the task of the 16 Committee members will be to contact each NFA President or CIR to have a phone or Skype conversation with them within the next 3 weeks, asking some structured questions to be able to learn what the NFAs are thinking about their membership in GWI. You will be contacted by one of the Ad Hoc Committee members as listed below:

Terry Oudraad (Netherlands): The Netherlands, Scotland, Lebanon

Kathleen Laurila (USA): USA, Ghana, Zambia

Glenda Hecksher-Ramsden & Maria Elena Flores (Mexico): Mexico, El Salvador,

Panama, Cyprus

Ann Holden- Ronning (NOR): Norway, DR Congo, Russia

Hazel Bowen (SA): South Africa, Sierra Leone, Senegal

Garbine Larrazaal (Spain): Spain, Israel, Kenya

Jaya Dantas (Australia): Australia, Fiji, Hong Kong, Nepal

Joy Hurst (Canada): Canada, Switzerland, Ireland

Eser Alkin (Turkey): Turkey, France, Bulgaria

Swati Bedekar (India): India, Uganda, Somalia

Jennifer Landsberg (GB): Britain, Slovenia, Austria

Shaimaa Saleh (Egypt): Egypt, Greece, Niger,

Anne Walker (New Zealand): New Zealand, Korea, Singapore

Chizuko Suzuki (Japan): Japan

Nkem Menkiti (Nigeria): Nigeria, Rwanda, Zimbabwe

Please be prepared to have an honest conversation with the Ad Hoc Committee member who will call you. We are looking for constructive ideas that can preserve the integrity and longevity of GWI, and all NFA representatives need to contribute to preserving the global mechanism that was created 98 years ago to achieve peace in the world by using the skills and knowledge of educated graduate women.

If you have questions, please contact us via email terry.oudraad@online.nl or klaurila@mac.com.

Kathleen Laurila and Terry Oudraad,
Co-Chairs of the GWI Ad Hoc Committee