



Graduate Women  
International (GWI)

# Press Release



**24 October 2017** - On the 72nd anniversary of the United Nations (UN), Graduate Women International (GWI) and Women Graduates Union Bombay, (Mumbai) (WGU) celebrate their relationship with the UN and the progress the UN has made towards improving girls' access to education. GWI is in special consultative status with ECOSOC since 1947 and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO and ILO.

Affiliated to GWI, Women Graduates Union Bombay, (Mumbai) (WGU) celebrated 100 years of its existence as a non-governmental organisation (NGO), empowering women in education. GWI is a membership-based international NGO based in Geneva, Switzerland, with presence in over 60 countries. Founded in 1919, GWI is the leading girls' and women's global organisation advocating for women's rights, equality and empowerment **through access to quality education and training up to the highest levels.**

**The International Federation of University Women (IFUW)**, what is now GWI, began in 1918 after Dean Virginia Gildersleeve of Barnard College, Professor Caroline Spurgeon of the University of London and Rose Sidgwick of the University of Birmingham decided to create an international federation of university women to help prevent another catastrophe such as that of WWI. Gildersleeve then became the only female delegate sent by the United States to assist the League of Nations drafting of the United Nations Charter. She continued to be the only United States delegate to the United Nations when the organisation came into effect. In 1947, **IFUW was granted special consultative status with Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Since, GWI has operated under this capacity to promote the potential and vitality of girls and to influence policy regarding girls' and women's access education.**

"Respecting the origins of our relationship with the United Nations, GWI continues to mark the advancements made by the United Nations and its agencies. **GWI and WGU** believe that the promotion of international cooperation and world peace is best achieved by the protection of the right to an education, especially for women and girls.