

MEDICAL WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

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# MWIA



# Update

No. 69 March 2017

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**MEDICAL WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION**

**THEME OF THE 2016-2019 TRIENNIUM**

**“MEDICAL WOMEN: AMBASSADORS OF CHANGE”**

## I. MEDICAL WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

### 1. PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**Professor Dr. Dr. Bettina Pfeleiderer, Germany**

**March is the month with a focus on women!** The International Women's Day is at the 8<sup>th</sup>, the Equal Pay Day is at 18<sup>th</sup> and the 61<sup>st</sup> Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was this year in New York from the 13-24<sup>th</sup> of March. The theme of this year's CSW was "*Women's Economic Empowerment in the changing global world of work.*" MWIA had a side event at the 61<sup>st</sup> CSW entitled "*Women Doctors: Economic Empowerment and Social Determinants of Health.*" The side event was well received and had many attendants and was very well organized by MWIA's UN representatives Dr. Satty Gill Keswani and Prof. Padmini Murthy. MWIA highly appreciates the important work they are doing at the UN on behalf of MWIA.

However, when looking at the current living conditions of many women, it is obvious that putting women at the spotlight for one month is not sufficient at all to instill sustainable change. In their Global Gender Gap Report, the World Economic Forum, who assesses the gender disparities in the areas of health, education, economy and politics, estimated that the gender gap between men and women won't close entirely until 2186. The report states: "**170 years to close the economic gap is too slow!**"

Of note, the World Economic Forum is not only assessing economic factors, but also presents ideas how to shape the future of health and health care in 2050. I recommend highly visiting their website (<https://www.weforum.org/system-initiatives/health-and-healthcare>).

Most stakeholders agree that raising awareness is of importance, but that bold action is needed for change. Very timely, the International Women's Day theme 2017 was **#BeBoldForChange**. They asked the following question: "What if the world truly stepped up to take bold action?" Some ideas and inspirations regarding bold actions are summarized here: <https://www.internationalwomensday.com/BeBold>

One bold action mentioned is **to campaign against violence** and MWIA is part of this campaign, as well. The MWIA working group "online training module on violence" (<https://mwiaviolencemanual.wordpress.com/>) has almost completed the draft of teaching materials to be used in a workshop.

The chair of the **centennial publication subcommittee**, Dr. Helen Goodyear, had sent a template to all national associations asking for information about their association last year. This information will be included in our planned book "*100 years on 100 pages*". This is a reminder to those who have not done so to please send the template back as soon as possible to Helen Goodyear to make our book an inspiring document as a showcase of our member associations. Thank you!

Last, but not least: the **MWIA member survey is online now!** MWIA, with significant input from the MWIA Special Interest Group for Medical Students and Young Doctors (yMWIA), has developed an online survey for medical students, junior doctors, and practicing and retired women doctors of all ages. Our aim is to better understand the demographics of our members, and to hear about the issues that you feel MWIA should be concentrating on. Names are not required in the survey and all information provided will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. Thank you for completing the survey which should take only five to ten minutes.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/9LTCJMB>

## **2. REQUESTS FROM THE SECRETARY- GENERAL**

**Dr. Shelley Ross, Canada**

MWIA is always interested in feedback from its membership as to where you feel MWIA should be directing its efforts. The Strategy and Membership Committee in conjunction with yMWIA has developed a questionnaire to get your feedback. It can be accessed at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/9LTCJMB>

I hope to see many of you at the **Centennial Celebration of the Medical Women's Federation** of the United Kingdom, taking place May 10-13, 2017 in London. There is still time to register at:

<https://www.regonline.co.uk/builder/site/default.aspx?EventID=1857489>

The **Commission on the Status of Women** was held at the United Nations in New York City March 12-24, 2017. The theme was "Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work." The sudden blizzard that hit New York cancelled many flights, but MWIA still had a good contingent for its parallel event, entitled *Women Doctors: Economic Empowerment and Social Determinants of Health.* We were pleased to have the European Women's Lobby represented on our panel by Mary Collins.

The time for registration for the **World Health Assembly** in Geneva will soon be upon us. The dates are the week of May 21<sup>st</sup>. Please let the Secretariat know if you wish to attend at [secretariat@mwia.net](mailto:secretariat@mwia.net).

MWIA was quoted in **UK Medical News Today** in an article highlighting Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell. The link is <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/316439.php>.

As many members are interested in the topic of **Gender and Medicine**, please be reminded that the link GenderMed-Wiki keeps you up to date on upcoming meetings related to the topic: [https://gendermedwiki.uni-muenster.de/mediawiki\\_en/index.php?title=Events\\_and\\_Projects](https://gendermedwiki.uni-muenster.de/mediawiki_en/index.php?title=Events_and_Projects)

Please see the **calendar of events** later in the Update to see dates of various MWIA regional meetings and other meetings of interest upcoming.

MWIA is saddened to report the **passing of two of its past officers** since the last Update. Dr. Hiroko Yamamoto, immediate past Vice President for the Western Pacific from Japan, in January and Dr. Il Ok Choo, President of MWIA from 1989 to 1992 from Korea, in February.

As a reminder to National Coordinators, it is anticipated that you will circulate this newsletter to your membership. In addition, if you have not accessed the secure site for NCs please let the Secretariat know.

Contact information for MWIA:

Website is [www.mwia.net](http://www.mwia.net)

Email is [secretariat@mwia.net](mailto:secretariat@mwia.net)

Phone is [1-604-522-1960](tel:1-604-522-1960)

### 3. 2016-2019 EXECUTIVE with email addresses:

President	Prof Bettina Pfleiderer, Germany	president@mwia.net
Past President	Prof Kyung Ah Park, Korea	past_president@mwia.net
President Elect	Dr. Clarissa Fabre, UK	president_elect@mwia.net
Secretary-General	Dr. Shelley Ross, Canada	secretariat@mwia.net
Treasurer	Dr. Gail Beck, Canada	treasurer@mwia.net
VP Northern Europe	Dr. Tuula Saarela, Finland	VP_northerneurope@mwia.net
VP Central Europe	Prof Khatuna Kaladze, Georgia	VP_centraleurope@mwia.net
VP Southern Europe	Dr. Antonella Vezzani, Italy	VP_southerneurope@mwia.net
VP North America	Dr. Padmini Murthy, USA	VP_northamerica@mwia.net
VP Latin America	Dr. Maite Sevillano, Brazil	VP_latinamerica@mwia.net
VP Near East/Africa	Dr. Mabel Aboah, Ghana	VP_africa@mwia.net
VP Central Asia	Dr. Piyanetr Sukhu, Thailand	VP_centralasia@mwia.net
VP Western Pacific	Dr. Cissy Yu, Hong Kong	VP_westernpacific@mwia.net

#### The Medical Women's International Association Executive 2016-2019

Front row left to right Kyung Ah Park, Clarissa Fabre, Bettina Pfleiderer, Shelley Ross

Back row left to right: Piyanetr Sikhu, Mabel Aboah, Padmini Murthy, Maite Sevillano, Cissy Yu, Khatuna Kaladze, Tuula Saarela, Antonella Vezzani (absent: Gail Beck)



### 4. MWIA SURVEY

#### Dr. Clarissa Fabre, Chair Strategy and Membership Committee, UK

The MWIA Strategy and Membership Committee, with input from yMWIA, the Scientific and Research, and Executive Committees has developed an online survey for medical students, junior doctors, and practicing and retired women doctors of all ages in order to better serve our members. Names are not required in the survey and all information provided will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. All data is completely anonymous and cannot be traced to any particular person.

We are interested in gathering the demographics of those responding, and the issues that you feel MWIA should be concentrating on.

Results of the survey may be published in the future. The final report may be sent to organizations interested in the subjects raised.

We would be very grateful if you could complete the survey which should take no more than five to ten minutes. Your input will be much appreciated.

The link to the survey is: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/9LTCJMB>

## **5. NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGIONS**

### **Brazil**

Drs Franci Patricio and Marilene Melo sent the history of ABMM to Dr. Helen Goodyear of the Publications Subcommittee for the 2019 MWIA Centennial Committee.

Dr Fátima Alves, President of ABMM and a professor of Otorhinolaryngology, was invited to the office taking of Prof Wilma Lima as first woman president of the Brazilian Society of Otorhinolaryngology and Cervical and Facial Surgery. Dr Fátima Alves made a brilliant speech where she made references to the nice congratulatory message of Prof Bettina Pfeleiderer, MWIA's president, to Prof Wilma and spoke also about the importance of gender medicine in Otorhinolaryngology, being one important subject the science of sleep and sleep apnea correlated to the length of oropharynx.

In January, ABMM executive sent condolences on the sad occasion of the passing of Prof Hiroko Yamamoto, immediate MWIA VP for Western Pacific.

Dra Marilene Melo and Dra Fátima Alves, invited Prof Albertina Takiuti, who has a brilliant curriculum linked to women health and violence against women, to be the official representative of ABMM on the important theme of Violence Against Woman and Girls. I already sent Prof Albertina's brilliant curriculum to Dr Bettina, who very kindly explained the steps to contribute to MWIA's Manual on Violence. (The manual can be found at <http://mwia.net/mwia-training-module-violence/>)

Drs Elizabeth Alexandre, Marilene Melo and Anna Maria Martits are planning to go to Montreal in May, for the OSSD 2017 Annual Meeting.

In Feb. Dr Fátima Alves represented ABMM at a meeting at Regional Council of Medicine of the State of São Paulo, about "New means of payment for medical doctors and hospitals."

This year, the ABMM was invited by the Regional Council of Medicine of São Paulo for the graduation ceremony of the new graduates in medicine of the state of São Paulo. Dr Marilene Melo made a very nice speech to the new medical doctors, and spoke about important issues of interest for the young doctors, including the important issue of Gender /Sex Specific Medicine. For some of the new doctors it was the first time they had heard about this important subject.

At the end of January, there was a very joyful lunch for the opening of the activities of 2017, for all the executive of ABMM and relatives at the elegant Museum of Brazilian Home, organized by Dr Helena Stivanin, our social director.

Representatives of Women's Mental Health Program, University of São Paulo, and the Latin American Psychiatric Association, invited Prof Alexandrina Meleiro, psychiatrist, considering her great expertise on the subject, to write the chapter on: "Suicide and suicidality in women" in the book "Women's Psychiatry and Mental Health – a Clinical and Evidence based Guide" to be published by Springer.

### **Canada**

The Federation of Medical Women of Canada sent out a reminder to their membership that their daily goals are:

- be a unified public voice for women physicians by better representing you;
- promote your interests within medical organizations and the government;
- influence health care policies pertaining to women and the general population;
- aide and encourage ongoing education and career advancement of female medical students, residents and physicians by sharing opportunities

The Federation has stepped up its advocacy role with statements on a variety of topics such as women's reproductive health as a human right and the recent federal budget addressing women's health. The link is <https://fmwc.ca/advocacy/>.

FMWC has endorsed a joint public statement prepared by Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights, calling on the Government of Canada and other sexual and reproductive rights allies to step up their efforts to safeguard and advance sexual and reproductive health and rights by increasing development financing in this area and by championing these issues within diplomatic efforts.

### **Finland**

Thirty members attended The Finnish Medical Women Association annual business meeting and dinner on March 14th, 2017. The most important discussion was the decision to open the membership to female medical students. The rules of the association need to be changed since only licenced physicians are eligible for membership at present. The decision about the extension of membership was unanimous.

The main event of this year will be the 70th anniversary celebration in October. More information will be available later.

### **Georgia**

The Georgian Medical Women's Association has appointed Dr. Yvonne Buowari of the Medical Women's Association of Nigeria to the editorial board of their official journal, Actual Topics on Women's Health. She is to focus on African countries.



## **Hong Kong**

In October 2016, Hong Kong Women Doctors Association (HKWDA) Hong Kong celebrated its 10th anniversary. A gala dinner was held on 22 October 2016 in which over 100 members attended. A booklet consisting the association's 10-year milestones was published and distributed to all its members. We also organized a Chinese Opera charity concert to raise fund for the HKWDA Charitable Foundation.

In November 2016, our Youth Committee had organized a "Microsurgical Skills Workshop" for the medical students. They were introduced how to operate microscopes. Demonstration of basic microsurgical techniques, and hands-on experience on microsurgery were performed. We are also running a mentorship program where experienced women doctors would serve as mentors and share their experience with medical students.

Our Community Service Committee held regular HPV vaccination events in various districts in Hong Kong for underprivileged teenage girls. We also organized tour of Hong Kong University campus by these underprivileged families.

We will be hosting the Western Pacific Regional Conference of Medical Women's International Association (MWIA 2017) in Hong Kong this year on 25-27 August 2017. Online registration to attend this conference is now open. Our organizing committee is working hard to ensure a great learning experience for all our participants. The speakers, topics and hospital visit are interesting. Please check in to our website at: [www.hkwda.com](http://www.hkwda.com) for further details.

## **The Netherlands**

Lilianne Ploumen, the Dutch minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, decided to launch the **She Decides - Global Fundraising Initiative**. Knowing that 225 million women would like to avoid pregnancy and everyday over 800 women and girls die of pregnancy complications and 100 due to unsafe abortions, this initiative aims to ensure that millions of women and girls are in charge of their own bodies.

## **Nigeria**

The Medical Women's Association of Nigeria (MWAN) during the 2015-2017 biennium has continued to touch lives of people at the grass root all over Nigeria. State branches of MWAN has continued to partner with relevant stakeholders to change the health of the citizenry for the better in areas of cancer awareness, screening and detection and treatment, advocacy and enlightenment on violence against persons especially gender based violence (GBV), hypertension and diabetes amongst other health challenges.

### **National Executive Council Meeting:**

The Association has continued to meet regularly at branch and National levels in line with its mandate. The 5<sup>th</sup> quarter NEC/Scientific conference took place in Ibadan Oyo State. 'MWAN ROOT' on 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2017 with the theme: Violence against Persons: A call for Multidisciplinary Action.

### **News from MWAN:**

- Prof Ifeoma Egbonu, Prof of Paediatrics became the First Female President of West African College of Physicians



- Sokoto State branch was inaugurated as a new state branch in this biennium by the National President, Assoc. Prof Echendu Adinma in a colorful ceremony.

**Upcoming event:**

- The Biennial conference of MWAN has been scheduled to hold from 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2017 at Abuja, Nigeria with the investiture of Dr Joyce Barber as the next President of MWAN.

**Grants and Partnerships:**

- World Diabetes Foundation is sponsoring a 3-year project in Rivers State, Nigeria aimed at improving outcomes of gestational diabetes mellitus in the state.
- IHVN partners with MWAN in celebration of World TB day,

**Philippines**



The Philippine Medical Women’s Association recently celebrated the 68<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their organization. Congratulations!

On June 10<sup>th</sup> PMWA is holding a Leadership and Management Seminar entitled CHANGE—Climate, Health, Association Needs Goals Expectations—in Pasig City.

## **Switzerland**

In 1916 the first Swiss woman doctor Marie Heim-Vögtlin (born 1845) died. She was the first woman to earn a medical degree from the University of Zurich, became a gynecologist (the first in Europe) and co-founder of the first Swiss women's hospital in Zurich. She was married, mother of two children and in addition committed herself to the matter of women's rights. To commemorate the centenary of her death various events took place, likewise it was the theme of our annual meeting – especially in celebration of the fact, that the Swiss Post dedicated a stamp to the physician, which is a particular deference.

Additionally, our professional mentoring-consultation-program (by doctors for doctors) worked out well and showed a rising number of requests. Furthermore, we are participating in the project “Steigbügel,” which is supposed to facilitate the re-entry for career break returners into professional life with financial support by the Swiss Federation, private businesses and health insurance companies. Student coordinators of the MWS welcomed young medical students at the “Erstsemestrigentag” (first day of studies) and introduced them to the activities of our organization – resulting in about 20 new registrations of students.



## **United States of America**

In January, 2017 American Medical Women’s Association (AMWA) members participated in the women’s march which was organized across the country.

In January, 2017 AMWA received the 2016 iGiant Champion Award in recognition of the support and dedication to the mission of iGiant in accelerating the translation of gender into gender/sex specific design elements.

AMWA co-sponsored the screening of a movie, *The Girl in White*, which was based on the life of Dr. Emily Dunning-Barringer, who was New York's first ambulance surgeon and later President of AMWA.

AMWA designed and distributed a survey on endometriosis as an initiative to address women's health in Feb 2017.

AMWA was represented by Dr. Eliza Chin, Executive Director of AMWA, during a meeting with the Dean of the Harvard School of Public Health to discuss key issues and challenges in Public Health in February, 2017.

AMWA members Drs. Roberta Gebhard and Eliza Chin participated in the Commission on the Status of Women held at the United Nations in March, 2017.

Dr Padmini Murthy was invited to give a talk at the New York Medical College about Gender Based Violence and the role of women physicians to commemorate the exhibit about GBV from the US National Library of Medicine in March, 2017.

## **6. REPORT FROM MWIA'S REPRESENTATIVES TO THE UN**

**Dr. Satty Gill Keswani and Dr. Padmini Murthy, USA**

For a brief history of the Commission on the Status of Women, visit <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/brief-history> and if you wish more information <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/CSW60YRS/CSWbriefhistory.pdf>

The CSW61 agreed conclusions were approved March 24<sup>th</sup> and can be found at <http://us1.campaign-archive1.com/?u=eb520eecfe82a5bf0d814ea1f&id=9822e201b8&e=07f5d20caf>

Drs. Satty Gill Keswani and Padmini Murthy have been representing MWIA at various events at the United Nations since January. They attended briefings and NGO CSW NY preparatory meetings. Youth representative, Aishu Narasimhadevara, has been representing MWIA as a member of the DPINGO Youth steering committee. Dr. Murthy and Aishu were invited to be members of the DPI NGO task force to raise awareness about the plight of migrants and refugees among the general public. Aishu has represented MWIA as one of the organizers of the Youth CSW which was held on March 11 and 12<sup>th</sup>. She was a moderator on a Climate Smart Agriculture youth panel.

MWIA was well represented at the 61<sup>st</sup> CSW session and members attended a number of events in the United Nations and in the various venues. The MWIA organized a parallel event that was held on March 15<sup>th</sup> in the Hardin Room at the Church Center entitled *Women Doctors: Economic Empowerment and Social Determinants of Health*, which was co sponsored by the American Medical Women's Association, the European Women's Lobby and African Views. Juan Chebly, lead from the UN Environmental Program, was the keynote speaker. Other speakers were Drs. Gail Beck, Roberta Gebhard, Vivien Brown, Eleanor Nwadinobi, Pamela Liao, Pretty

Verma, Padmini Murthy and Ms. Aishu Narasimhadevara and Ms. Mary Collins. MC for the event was Dr Satty Keswani. The event was well attended with positive feedback from the audience.

On March 15<sup>th</sup> Dr. Murthy and Aishu were invited to represent MWIA at a high level event at The Sri Lanka Mission.

On March 17<sup>th</sup> Dr. Murthy represented MWIA and moderated an event where the e-launch of the book “100 Peaceful Solutions” took place. On March 23<sup>rd</sup> Dr. Murthy was invited as a NGO rep to attend a program on addressing health needs of adolescents at the United Nations organized by the World Health Organization, Missions of Canada, Italy and Mozambique. On March 21<sup>st</sup> and March 23<sup>rd</sup> Aishu Narasimhadevara was a speaker and moderator representing MWIA at DPI NGO led briefings titled “Youth Economic Empowerment of Women : Partnership and SDGs Young Women’s Leadership and Voices at the UN.”



Participants in MWIA Parallel Event at CSW61

## **7. REPORT FROM WHO REPRESENTATIVE**

### **Dr. Clarissa Fabre, UK**

As MWIA representative to the WHO I attend the World Health Assembly in Geneva every year.

Dr Margaret Chan, director-general of the WHO has warned that the harm caused by **air pollution** is a new epidemic (3 million deaths per year). China tops a global tally of annual deaths from outdoor air pollution, according to a new analysis by the WHO. More than a million people died from air pollution in China, at least 600,000 in India, and more than 140,000 in Russia. Most of the air pollution comes from cars, coal-fired power plants and waste burning, but desert dust storms also contribute. Air pollution raises the risk of pneumonia, a major cause of death in the under 5s, and of life-long conditions such as asthma.

More than 160 million of the world's under 5s fail to grow as expected or are '**stunted**'. Brain growth and cognitive function are also affected. In India 39% of children are stunted, and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo the figure is 70%. The **World Bank's president, Dr Jim Yong Kim** set up a sponsored programme in Peru from 2005 to 2015, targeting poor families from pregnancy onwards. By giving conditional cash transfers to mothers (US \$30 every month), chronic malnutrition was nearly halved from 47.9% in 2009 to 25% in 2015. Mothers were educated to give their children nutritious food, and to stimulate them through play. Regular health and growth checks for under threes, and school attendance for older children almost doubled. The scheme operated in 22 of Peru's rural regions, where poverty was more than 50%.

I am delighted to report that Dr Natalie Yap, a young doctor from Australia is about to start a 3 month internship at the WHO in the Department of Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent

Health. Natalie attended the World Health Assembly in Geneva with Dr Shelley Ross, Professor Shafika Nasser and myself in May last year, and through our meetings with WHO staff working in our areas of interest, was able to make valuable contacts.

The WHO has regional offices in Colombo, Copenhagen, Washington DC, Cairo, Manila and Brazzaville. If any of you are interested in representing MWIA at one of the annual regional committee meetings in these areas, please let Dr Shelley Ross know ([secretariat@mwia.net](mailto:secretariat@mwia.net)).

## **8. CIOMS**

### **Dr. Christine Wieland, CIOMS Representative**

Dr. Lembit R go, Secretary-General of CIOMS, was one of 21 commissioners asked by The Lancet to report on an Essential Medicines Policy, following 30 years after the Nairobi Conference on the Rational Use of Drugs. The report can be found

at: <http://www.thelancet.com/commissions/essential-medicines>.

CIOMS is glad to announce that CIOMS publications can now be purchased online with a credit card from our website at the following link [cioms.ch/shop](http://cioms.ch/shop).

## **9. EUROPEAN WOMEN’S LOBBY**

### **Dr. Edith Schratzberger Vecsei**

At the Conference in Malta on EU responses to gender based violence, member states were called on to ratify and implement the Istanbul Convention and commit themselves to zero tolerance to violence against women and girls. The Press Release from the European Parliament can be found at

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/20170206IPR61393/malta-joint-statement-european-institutions%E2%80%99-call-for-action>

The EWL was active at CSW, including accepting an invitation from MWIA to speak at the parallel event.

<http://www.womenlobby.org/EWL-at-CSW61>

## **10. RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE of the WHITE RIBBON ALLIANCE**

### **Dr. Shelley Ross**

MWIA is proud to sit on the Global RMC Council as it works toward improving respectful maternity care worldwide and has signed onto the commitment for Every Woman Every Child since 2015. The two main commitments are:

#### **Policy Commitment (Political Mobilization):**

Over next five years, the RMC Global Council commits to advocating with UN Agencies, regional bodies, and country governments to build policy support for, investment in, and implementation of participatory accountability mechanisms to ensure that women’s rights to respectful maternity care are respected, protected, and fulfilled.



### **Service and Delivery Commitment (Research):**

Over the next five years, the RMC Global Council commits to contributing to a robust body of evidence around best and scalable practices that effectively improve respectful maternity care, and to support adaptation of these practices by maternal and child health implementers and public health systems globally.

## **11. CALENDAR OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS MWIA AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS - CONGRESSES AND MEETINGS**

### **2017**

1. **March 30-April 2, 2017**, San Francisco, USA  
American Medical Women's Association annual meeting  
[www.amwa-doc.org](http://www.amwa-doc.org)
2. **May 10-13, 2017**, London, UK  
Northern European Regional Meeting and Centennial Meeting of MWF  
**Theme:** 100 years of Medical Women: Past, Present and Future.  
In Celebration of 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Medical Women's Federation  
[www.medicalwomensfederation.org.uk](http://www.medicalwomensfederation.org.uk)
3. **May 15, 2017**, Montreal, Canada  
Annual meeting of the Organization for the Study of Sex Differences AGM and Conference on Sex Differences Across the Lifespan  
<http://www.ossdweb.org/>
4. **May 17-20, 2017**, Panama City, Panama  
Latin American Regional Meeting of MWIA/Pan American Medical Women's Association Meeting  
[gy.moreno@yahoo.es](mailto:gy.moreno@yahoo.es)
5. **May 21-26, 2017**, Geneva, Switzerland  
World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization  
Please contact [secretariat@mwia.net](mailto:secretariat@mwia.net) if you wish to be registered
6. **May 26-28, 2017**, Trieste, Italy  
Annual meeting of the Italian Medical Women's Association  
Contact [vp\\_southerneurope@mwia.net](mailto:vp_southerneurope@mwia.net)

7. **August 25-27, 2017**, Hong Kong  
Western Pacific Regional Meeting  
Women Health Empowerment  
<http://www.hkwda.com>
8. **October 11-14, 2017**, Chicago, USA  
World Medical Association General Assembly  
[www.wma.net](http://www.wma.net)

## 2018

1. **September 6-8, 2018**, Bangkok, Thailand  
8<sup>th</sup> Central Asia Regional Meeting of MWIA  
Theme is “Women’s wellbeing-a global perspective”  
Montien Hotel, Bangkok  
[www.carc2018.com](http://www.carc2018.com) (active website as of April 2017)  
[www.tmwa.or.th](http://www.tmwa.or.th)  
[2018carc@gmail.com](mailto:2018carc@gmail.com)
  2. October 1-6, 2018, Geneva, Switzerland  
Eighth Session of the conference of the parties to the  
**WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control**  
Rue de Varembe 17, 1211 Geneva  
[www.who.int/fctc](http://www.who.int/fctc)
  3. **October 3-6, 2018**, Reykjavik, Iceland  
World Medical Association General Assembly  
[www.wma.net](http://www.wma.net)
12. **NAMES IN THE NEWS**

**Dr. Mabel Bianco**, from Argentina, was announced as the 2017 Woman of Distinction Awardee by the NGO Committee on the Status of Women. Dr. Bianco has been an activist in the areas of breast cancer, gender-based violence, HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive rights.

**Dr. Amanda Howe** from the Medical Women’s Federation of the UK is currently the President of WONCA, the first woman to hold this position.

**Antonio Guterres** from Portugal begins his term as Secretary-General of the United Nations, replacing Korean SG Ban-ki Moon. Acknowledging the need for gender parity in the UN, he named three women to senior posts:  
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/dec/15/next-un-chief-names-three-women-to-senior-posts>

**Dr. Jane Philpott**, Canada’s Minister of Health wrote about losing her two-year-old to meningococcal meningitis while working in Niger. [janephilpott.ca/grace-in-the-face-of-grief](http://janephilpott.ca/grace-in-the-face-of-grief)



**Lilianne Ploumen**, the Dutch minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, has Launched the **She Decides - Global Fundraising Initiative**

**Dr. Rajiv J. Shah** is the incoming President of the Rockefeller Foundation.

**Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau** announced on International Women's Day that Canada would pledge \$650 million over three years towards women's empowerment, including Sexual and Reproductive Rights.

**Dr Natalie Yap**, a young doctor from Australian Medical Women's Federation is about to start a three month internship at the WHO in the Department of Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health.

### 13. OBITUARIES

**Dr. Il Ok Choo**, 22<sup>nd</sup> President of MWIA from 1989-1992, on February 21<sup>st</sup> in Seoul, Korea

**Dr. Halfdan T. Mahler**, previous Director General of the World Health Organization

**Dr. Margaret Mungherera** of the Ugandan Medical Women's Association in February in India where she was receiving cancer treatment. Dr. Mungherera gave the keynote address in the opening ceremony of the MWIA Korean Congress in 2013. She was a past president of the World Medical Association.

**Dr. Hiroko Yamamoto**, immediate past MWIA Vice President for the Western Pacific, on January 12<sup>th</sup> in Nagoya, Japan

### 14. IN THE CATEGORY OF BACKWARD STEPS IN GENDER EQUALITY

a. In various countries like Bahrain, Iraq, Philippines, Tajikistan and Tunisia, if **rapists** marry their victim they can avoid punishment:

[http://news.trust.org/item/20170306000805-xghut/?utm\\_source=Girls+Not+Brides+Newsletters+Mailing+List&utm\\_campaign=7af46bc490-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2017\\_03\\_08&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_a83e20c2e1-7af46bc490-397969741](http://news.trust.org/item/20170306000805-xghut/?utm_source=Girls+Not+Brides+Newsletters+Mailing+List&utm_campaign=7af46bc490-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_03_08&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a83e20c2e1-7af46bc490-397969741)

b. **Janusz Korwin-Mikke**, a Polish independent member of the European Parliament (EP), stated in the EP recently that "women must earn less than men, because they are weaker, they are smaller, they are less intelligent" during a debate this week on the gender pay gap. EP President, Tajani subsequently announced sanctions against Mikke:

- no daily subsistence allowance for thirty days,
- suspended from parliamentary activities for ten days
- prohibited from representing Parliament for one year

## **II. OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

### **1. World Health Organization (WHO)**

a. The World Health Assembly in May will vote for the **new Director General** to succeed Dr. Margaret Chan. There are 3 candidates:

-Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus from Ethiopia who has held government positions in Ethiopia including Minister of Health and has chaired the board of the Global Fund and the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health. His education includes PhD in Community Health and Masters of Science in Immunology

-Dr. David Nabarro from United Kingdom who has worked on Sustainable Development and Climate Change, Food Security and Nutrition, and Special Envoy on Ebola. His education is Masters in Public Health and medical degree (BM BCh).

-Dr. Sania Nishtar from Pakistan who was Minister of Health, Science and Technology, Information Technology and Higher Education and on the accountability panel for the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescent's Health. Her education is PhD in Medicine and Medical Degree (MBBS).

b. The World Health Organization (WHO) has published its first ever **list of antibiotic-resistant "priority pathogens"**, a catalogue of 12 families of bacteria that urgently need research and development of new antibiotics.

c. WHO has launched its **Quality Equity and Dignity Network** for improving quality of Maternal Newborn Child Health

d. The global implementation guidance for Accelerated Action for the Health of Adolescents (**AA-HA! Guidance**) has been developed. MWIA has the opportunity to comment on the document

### **2. United Nations**

#### **a. Access to Medicines**

Following the publication of the UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on Access to Medicines Report in 2016, the availability of medicines is becoming an increasingly important topic and will be discussed at the next WHA in May 2017. The report contained a long list of recommendations, such as a binding treaty on funding and prioritising research and development for neglected diseases, convening a special open-ended meeting on access to medicines, and various approaches to delinking the cost of research and development from the price of medicines in order to improve the lives of millions around the world.

b. January 31<sup>st</sup> at UN Headquarters saw the launch of the [One for All Campaign](#) to promote the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

- c. The UN in Geneva has established a **Sustainable Development Goals Lab** to connect stakeholders. The team can be contacted at [SDG-lab@un.org](mailto:SDG-lab@un.org).
- d. **UNICEF** has spoken out against a company selling breast milk from "vulnerable and poor" Cambodian mothers to Americans. UNICEF states that any excess that in being one of Southeast Asia's poorest countries, babies often lack good nutrients and the excess breast milk should sustain their own.
- e. **UN Women** has a Training Centre Community of Practice for training in gender equity. Please contact [tc.cop@unwomen.org](mailto:tc.cop@unwomen.org) or read the [promotional flyer on the CoP](#).

3. **WONCA's Working Party for Women in Family Medicine** in affiliation with the University of East Anglia is conducting a survey on worklife balance. If you would like to participate, email [WPPWFM.lifecycle@uea.ac.uk](mailto:WPPWFM.lifecycle@uea.ac.uk). Cambodian mothers to Americans. WPPWFM has developed a guidebook for gender equity standards that can be found at [www.gesguidebook.com](http://www.gesguidebook.com)

4. **Together for Girls** with several partners has developed a set of resources around the topic of rape. The campaign is called Every Hour Matters and the resources can be accessed at <http://www.togetherforgirls.org/every-hour-matters-campaign-resources>

5. **The Foundation for the History of Women in Medicine** is pleased to provide one \$5,000 grant to support travel, lodging, and incidental expenses for a flexible research period between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018. Foundation Fellowships are offered for research related to the history of women to be conducted at the **Center for the History of Medicine** at the **Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine**. Electronic submissions of applications and supporting materials and any questions may be directed to [chm@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:chm@hms.harvard.edu) or (617) 432-2170.

6. **The Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada** have made available an online medical abortion training program which can be accessed at: <https://sogc.org/online-courses/courses.html>

7. The **Swedish Women's Lobby** made a statement about the economical man at CSW which can be found at <http://www.womenlobby.org/Women-s-economic-liberation-oral-statement-of-the-Swedish-Women-s-Lobby-at>

8. The **Guttmacher Institute** is calling for nomination for the Darroch Award for Excellence in Sexual and Reproductive Health Research, with a deadline of May 19, 2017. Nominators should [complete the form](#) (PDF format), which also contains instructions for submission. For more information about the Darroch Award, please contact [darrochaward@guttmacher.org](mailto:darrochaward@guttmacher.org).

### **III. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The next Update will be published in June, 2017, the fourth in the new triennium. Please send us your reports, comments or any other interesting information by May 31, 2017, at the latest. We are always interested to put your name and your accomplishments in the Update. We are pleased to post the meeting information for your national association's annual meeting.