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Soroptimist International



South East Asia Pacific

ACN 147 990 627



# SPAN

## Soroptimist Programme Action News

**Welcome** to the March 2023 edition of the Programme Action News

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To access all links and stories, [please log in to the website with your member details](#).

## FROM OUR PROGRAMME CONVENOR



I hope you celebrated International Women's Day in the best way for your network wherever you are. The UN Secretary General message [HERE](#).

Hello from New York where the Commission for the status of women 67 is continuing this week. Our representatives from our Federation of Soroptimist include President Christine Johnstone, Judy Toll from West

Australia, Leigh Ellwood Brown who is International Director for Advocacy and Chair Global Impact Committee, Siew Yong who is International President Elect from Malaysia, while Sineat Som from Cambodia did not attain her visa in time. There are many Soroptimists from other federations with SI UN representatives participating too. Most events are online or recorded on UNTV as well as presented in person here in UN buildings. The CSWNGO recordings and supporting publications will be available for 2 weeks online, can be found [HERE](#). Please see blogs from our own SISEAP and Programme team members, who have participated online in special events.

Apart from the benefits of the digital age for education, global business, banking, entrepreneurship, science for the people, remote medical systems, geographical monitoring from satellites, and disaster responses, we had **dire concerns**. Last week we learned new language and ways to address cyberbullying; stalking; trafficking; biased algorithms (40% surveyed are severely skewed towards men's decision-making); medical, emergency and safety systems designed for men not women or families; and artificial intelligence that continues to be developed by males - perpetuating bias. It is called 'Misogyny in Technology'. Only 2% of research funding was invested to women's projects. Without female perspectives into design and implementation, we may never design for half the world population. We also learned from countries where laws and systems are being introduced. Today we attended a '**town hall**' down on the General Assembly floor, where the Executive Director for UN women, Sima Sami Bahous, and Secretary-General Antonio Guterres set the scene and asked for ideas, suggestions, concerns to be raised from the floor. He called on women to 'push back' and 'push forward'. A draft **Global Digital Compact** for free internet for all everywhere, free from interference, will be circulated in coming months.

Our parallel event Digital Democracy for Disasters is on at your time 17<sup>th</sup> March early morning and will be recorded. We will practice digital democracy as we engage the audience in real time input into our final report for innovative improvement for resilience for our vulnerable people. Ramona Miranda will join us from UN Disaster Risk Reduction on gender lens on the Sendai Framework – the rules on how to save people from disasters.

In other news, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Penny Wong and MP Helen Haines received McKinnon awards for leadership, while Malaysian Senator Datuk Ras Adiba Radzi was awarded as an **International Women of Courage** at the White House by First Lady Jill Biden, this can be viewed [HERE](#). The Ruth Bader Ginsberg medal was awarded from the World Jurist Association to Ambiga Sreenevasan also from Malaysia working in Human Rights, can be read [HERE](#). We would like to acknowledge women who received IWD awards, but we need to hear from our members with photos of our local heroes.

In other news, at the end of March **UNESCAP is hosting roundtables** on SDG 6 water, SDG 7 energy, SDG 9 infrastructure, SDG 11 cities, SDG 17 partnerships. The focus is on Asia Pacific after covid to facilitate progress with side events showcasing achievements and innovation. I will attend as an invited ECOSOC member to 3 roundtables. More next eSPAN

**Dr Donnell Davis,**  
**Programme Convenor 2022-2024**  
[swpprogramme2020@siswp.org](mailto:swpprogramme2020@siswp.org)

### **Programme News area on the SISEAP website.**

Have you visited the new website?

If so, you will see a dedicated Members area. In this Members area are linked pages to Programme and Membership News. Over time more and more articles from eSPAN will link through to the highlights within Programme. Every week, more hot topics will be showcased, so you will be up to date quickly. We will continue eSPAN - Soroptimist Programme Action News so that you will receive a personal email monthly, until we find a way that is inclusive and efficient for the future.

## **FROM SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL**

### **Soroptimist International SI Convention Poster Project.**

If your Club was accepted to submit a poster for display at the convention, please note that one requirement states "Each of the selected posters must be accompanied at the convention by at **least one member of the submitting Club, Region, National Association or Country**". If your poster will be not accompanied by a Club or Region, please send a pdf copy of your poster and information about the poster to President Christine at [swppresident2020@siswp.org](mailto:swppresident2020@siswp.org) so that we can arrange to meet the requirement.

## **CSW 67**



### **CSW67 has officially begun!**

The opening session was Chaired by H.E. Ambassador Mathu Joyini of South Africa. Other keynote speakers included United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres, UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology, Mr. Amandeep Gill, Executive Director of UN

Women, Ms. Sima Sami Bahous, and representatives from Member States.

This year's priority theme "Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls" could not be more timely.



Ms. Bahous rightly highlighted that "the digital divide has become the new face of gender inequality". Climate change, widespread conflicts, and the global COVID-19 pandemic have magnified and widened existing inequalities facing women and girls, to the point that the human rights of thousands of women have been entirely "erased from society", and women and girls are often brutally suppressed while speaking out online.

Read the full report [HERE](#).

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### SISEAP Parallel Event - Digital Democracy for Disasters

SISEAP will be presenting an in person Parallel event at CSW67 to be held on Thursday 16th March. This is early on 17th March for our countries. The event will be live streamed via the SISEAP Facebook.

Did you know that you can still participate in CSW67? NGOCSW are hosting virtual parallel events. To register to attend these virtual events go [HERE](#).

Watch Events live or recorded on the UN Website TV Site [HERE](#).



The Programme Team and CSW67 Delegates are busy attending sessions both virtually and in person and share the information with you via their blogs, which can be read on the SISEAP website [HERE](#).

## PROJECTS & APPEALS



### SISEAP Special Disaster Appeals

The need is great your donation does make a difference!

[Turkey & Syria Earthquake](#)

[Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis](#)



Nomination are now open for Round 4!

Do you have a Club project in need of funding? Funding is open to a current project for a new stage of implementation or a new Club project.

Nominate [HERE](#).



[Click on the images above to Find Out More & Donate](#)

## ADVOCACY WORK



**What are priorities in your country?**

**What are Clubs doing in advocacy?**

Advocating on behalf of women is a core Soroptimist function. The new international statement on the rights of women and girls is [HERE](#).

The Programme team would be pleased to hear what your Club is doing.

### Advocacy Report

SI Fremantle started advocacy work on this last year with raising awareness on The Voice through understanding **The Uluru Statement from the Heart** and the deep importance of constitutional recognition for our First Nations People. This year members in Fremantle and Perth contacted our Federal Members of Parliament to partner with them in awareness raising on The Uluru Statement from the Heart, joining with Church groups, Yarning Circles and forums with eminent First Nations Elders. This helps us to understand the intent so that we are able to confidently share information at the grass-roots with our families, friends and communities to support The Yes position.

We see constitutional recognition as acknowledgement of the past and as an enabler for First Nations Peoples to build better futures in and for their communities to move from the most disadvantaged, the most under-presented, the most incarcerated group in our nation to communities that are strong and prosperous. Our Prime Minister is inviting us, the Australian people to walk with him and our First Nations

Peoples to build a better and stronger future. The Yes Vote for The 1967 Referendum was driven by Churches and Unions. Given that these groups are no longer as strong now, SI Fremantle sees this as a leadership opportunity for Soroptimist women in Australia.

Will SI Australia partner with our First Nations Peoples to lead Soroptimists to Vote Yes in The Voice to Parliament and in so doing, offer a helping hand to First Nations women and girls to a build better lives and communities? Your advice on a national advocacy campaign would be appreciated.

***Pamela Fruin***

***Advocacy and Programme Coordinator***

## BEST PRACTICE AWARDS



### SISEAP Best Practice Awards 2023

Nominations are open for Clubs to submit entries to the Best Practice Awards. A Club may nominate a project for each of the 8 Objectives. When your Club wins, status can be shared widely.

Nominations close on the **1st April 2023**.

To nominate complete this form [HERE](#).

## PROGRAMME REPORTING DATABASE

### **Having problems with the Programme Database?**

If you have any issues logging in to the SISEAP Programme Database, please contact Dr Donnell Davis, Programme Director [swpprogramme2020@siswp.org](mailto:swpprogramme2020@siswp.org).

## UN SDG WORK

# Educate, Empower, Enable

The Asia Pacific countries are under scrutiny for performance of their SDGs. This forum will focus is on:



SDG 6 Water  
SDG 7 Energy  
SDG 9 Infrastructure  
SDG 11 Cities  
SDG 17 Partnerships.

We will share results and updates since covid, economic crises, conflict, earthquakes and natural disasters shaped the last two years. This forum is 26 March to 30 March 2023.

## UN DAYS

UN Days and their links can now be found on the Members Programme Page - [UN Days](#)

## AROUND THE FEDERATION

**What Clubs in Zone 1 did for IWD Awareness - Report from Zone 1  
Coordinator Anne Allen**



It looks like many Soroptimists had a few early morning starts over the week leading up to and following the 8th of March. There have been lots of IWD Breakfasts during that time, often followed by a celebratory lunch. Each provided an opportunity to invite women from the community to talk about their personal and professional journey and to focus

on #Embrace Equity and also hear about ways these women have worked to Crack the Code to equality.

A brief snapshot can be found [HERE](#).

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## **Zone 2: SI Mornington Peninsula - High Tea for Myanmar**

SI MP held a "High Tea for Myanmar" to support SI Yangon's project to empower women to start a small business as a way to financial independence. To date four women have received funding and SI Yangon forwarded their comments which they have approved for general distribution. Because of the sensitive political context in Myanmar names and photographs are not available for publication, however it is heartening to know that our support for women in this fragile environment is making a difference.



SI Yangon reports:

Financial support for the capital investment of beneficiaries help a great deal on their struggles for daily livings, meal and house rent through setting up small businesses like selling food/meals, online shopping, photocopy shop, computer services, local shops, chips product, local knit product, private clinic and so forth etc.

Please read the interesting full report [HERE](#).

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## **SI South Perth IWD Event**



SI South Perth celebrate #IWD2023. Guest speaker, Suzy Urbaniak was a powerhouse of passion and common sense. Suzy an ANU Earth Sciences alumna who has won the 2016 Prime Minister's Prize for Excellence in Science Teaching in Secondary Schools. Suzy was a dynamic speaker, she even did the splits for us, at the request of a former student! (Context? - you had to be there!) 10 girls from local secondary schools attended, sponsored by member The Hon. Kate Doust, MLC. We heard from Rosemary Cant, President of SIWA, and the Hon. Mia Davies, MLA was inducted as our newest member. We honoured Jean, who has ministered to our culinary needs at the Royal Perth Golf Club for many years, and finally we heard some wonderful acapella singing from some of the ladies from Perth Harmony Chorus.

*Anne Allen*

*Zone 1 Coordinator*

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## DID YOU KNOW?

A reminder to send in your work as soon as you have completed it. The Programme team love hearing and promoting Club's advocacy and project work. It also helps provide ideas to other Clubs in the Federation.

### Downloading and printing eSPAN

If you would like to download copies of eSPAN to print, go to the [SISEAP website](#) and log in using your member login. Go to the **'Members Area'** in yellow at the top left of screen. Or if you are already logged in, [click this link](#). Here you can access all previous copies of archived eSPAN Newsletters.

Copy for the April 2023 eSPAN edition is required by Tuesday 28 March 2023. Please email your submissions to [swpprogramme2020@siswp.org](mailto:swpprogramme2020@siswp.org). Thank you.



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