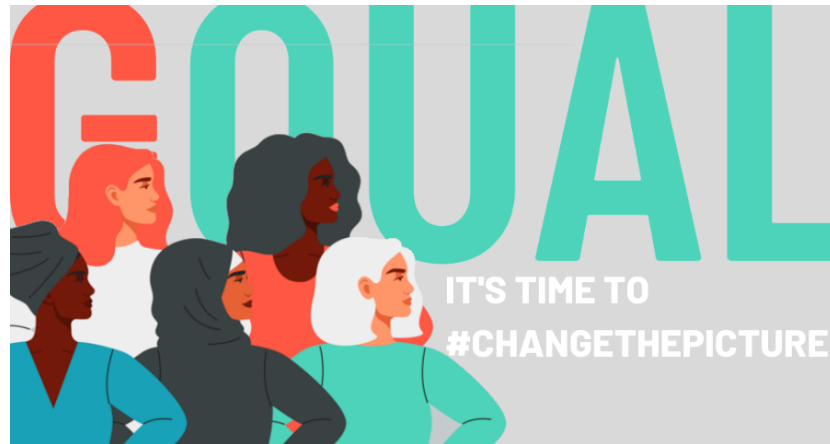




International Women’s Month gives us the chance to pause, assess, and celebrate the many achievements of the GQUAL Campaign in the fight for gender equality in the last year. Despite the challenges that the pandemic posed to all of us, 2020 represented a year of opportunities for GQUAL to impact in a fundamental space of leadership and decision-making that is affected by the lack of women’s equal participation: international justice.



We have worked tirelessly to raise awareness on the importance of having women at the table at the highest decision-making spaces. In our globalized world, decisions made at an international level have a high impact in our communities, the relations between nations, the future of the environment, the protection of rights, the handling of migration and refugee situations, and many other key issues. Women, who make up more than half of the world’s population, should not be absent from these decisions.

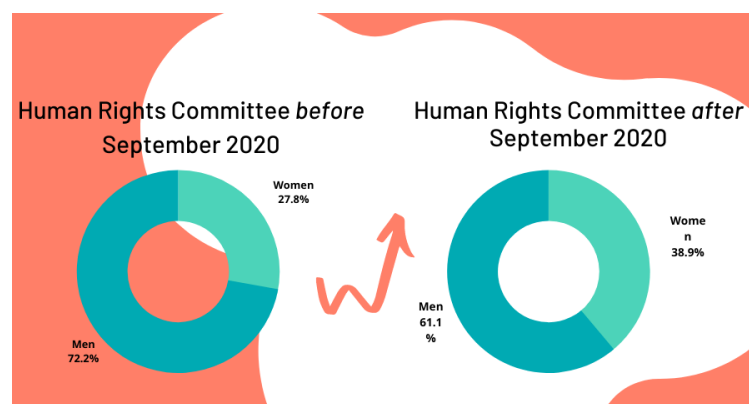
With the goal of achieving gender parity in international bodies, GQUAL actively promotes global debate through events and social media; engages with women’s groups, academics, States and international institutions; makes policy submissions and promotes research; publishes data on current and past levels of gender representation in international bodies; disseminates information on available international positions; and combines synergies with other groups fighting for gender equality.

In the last year, our actions involved working with a wide and diverse constituency to address women underrepresentation at the universal and regional levels through a set of actions that involved advocacy, participation in international and national fora, and dissemination. Among others, GQUAL was involved in the following:

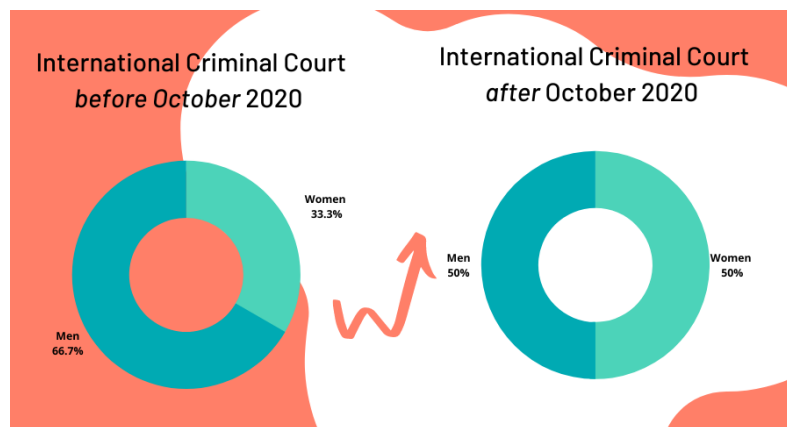
- *As every year since 2016, we submitted a letter to the incoming Human Rights Council Consultative Group urging it to adopt and implement Gender Parity Guidelines in the selection of Special Procedure mandate holders as done by the Consultative Group that served in 2015. While these Guidelines have yet to be adopted, GQUAL’s calls have*

successfully contributed to them being considered by every Consultative Group since then, improving gender balance in the list of selected candidates (June 9, 2020);

- We submitted a written contribution in response to the call made by the Co-Facilitators for the Review of the United Nations Human Rights Treaty Body System as part of the UN Treaty Bodies Strengthening Process. We stressed that this process is a unique opportunity to achieve gender parity in the treaty bodies and presented recommendations to achieve this objective (July 7, 2020);
- We submitted a written response to the Questionnaire issued by the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee in anticipation of its report on “Current Levels of Representation of Women in Human Rights Organs and Mechanisms,” as provided by HRC Resolution 41/6 of 11, July 2019. The public draft of the report has since become available and includes several of the recommendations put forward by the Campaign (October 2020);
- Together with the Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, the Center for Justice and International Law, and the OACNUDH we organized a virtual Regional Consultation Meeting with experts from Latin America to receive inputs on the drafting of the report of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee on “Current Levels of Representation of Women in Human Rights Organs and Mechanisms,” as provided by HRC Resolution 41/6 of 11 July 2019 (July 15, 2020);
- We partnered with the African Institute for African Women in Law to organize a virtual Regional Consultation Meeting with experts from Africa to receive inputs on the drafting of the report of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee on “Current Levels of Representation of Women in Human Rights Organs and Mechanisms,” as provided by HRC Resolution 41/6 of 11 July 2019 (October 21, 2020);
- We joined forces with the International Service for Human Rights and other organizations members of the UNTB-Net to issue a public Letter urging State Parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to factor gender balance, candidate competency and independence when electing new members to the Human Rights Committee (July 23, 2020). The elections that took place on September 2020 improved the Committee’s gender balance since 4 women were elected taking women’s representation to 39%;

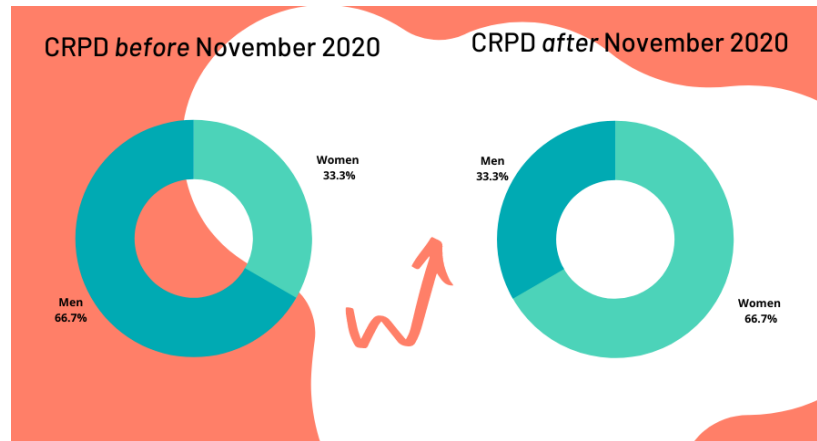


- *Viviana Krsticevic, Executive Director of CEJIL and member of the GQUAL Secretariat, participated in an interview with CIVICUS and discussed how the GQUAL Campaign is working for equal gender representation in international spaces, as part of the 25 years of the adoption of the Beijing Platform;*
- *We urged the Assembly of State Parties to the International Criminal Court to elect at least 4 women judges to achieve gender parity at this Court. The elections that took place on December 2020 resulted in the election of 4 women, ensuring gender parity in the ICC bench (October 29, 2020);*



- *We joined forces with the Institute for African Women in Law to issue a statement calling on the UN General Assembly and the Security Council to take gender representation into account during the elections of new judges to the International Court of Justice in accordance with fundamental principles of international law, such as the principle of non-discrimination, the right to equality and the right of access to decision-making. The elections that took place on November 2020 maintained the Court's composition since 2 women were elected out of 5 available seats, keeping women's representation at 20% (October 30, 2020);*
- *We launched a new GQUAL website to reflect the work of the Campaign and disseminate current data on women underrepresentation in international organs and tribunals (November 2020);*
- *We kept an updated record of available international positions and current levels of gender representation in international bodies;*
- *We launched an updated version of our GQUAL Ranking, showing where each country stands regarding gender balance in international bodies;*

- *We joined forces with IDA and IDDC to issue a joint statement and campaign urging State Parties of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to ensure gender parity, diversity and disabilities representation in the election process in 2020 in accordance with Article 34(4) of the CRPD. The elections that took place on 2020 improved the CRPD's gender balance since 6 women were elected taking women's representation to 67% (November 3, 2020);*



- *Along with CEJIL and Amnesty International we issued a public statement and letter calling Argentina to set up a nomination and selection process to appoint candidates to international positions and take gender as one of the considerations for appointment (November 30, 2020). This letter and other actions contributed to Argentina's nomination of a female candidate to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.*
- *We campaigned to promote the nomination of women by State Parties to the American Convention on Human Rights as candidates to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (December 16-17, 2020);*
- *We made a submission to the Human Rights Council with regards to the Methods of Work of the Consultative Group of the Human Rights Council, emphasizing the need to include gender balance as a criteria for the selection process of mandate holders in the Special Procedures (December 14, 2020);*
- *We participated and presented our recommendations before the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States to promote gender parity in the human bodies of the Inter-American System (January 26, 2021);*
- *We participated and made a Public Statement during the 25th Session of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee during which it considered a draft report on Current Levels of Representation of Women in Human Rights Organs and Mechanisms (February 16, 2021).*

In 2021, gender parity in spaces of decision making and relevance for all, such as international justice, should not be an aspiration but a reality. On this **International Women's Month**, the GQUAL Campaign renews its commitment to continue its work with States, International Organizations, civil society, and other relevant stakeholders to achieve this goal.

You can collaborate and support the GQUAL Campaign by writing and publishing on gender equality issues; participating in our events; following us on social media; visiting our website and sharing our data and donating to the Campaign.



Join us to #ChangeThePicture of international justice.

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