



14 February 2024

Ms. Dorothy Estrada-Tanck (Mexico)
Ms. Ivana Krstić (Serbia)
Ms. Haina Lu (China)
Ms. Claudia Flores (United States of America)
Ms. Laura Nyirinkindi (Uganda)

Esteemed Members of the UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls,

We are pleased to address you on behalf of [GQUAL](#), a global Campaign working to achieve gender parity in international decision-making spaces, and particularly in international tribunals and monitoring bodies. The Campaign, which launched in 2015, is founded on the conviction that women, in all their diversity, cannot be absent from decision-making spaces, and that their equal representation is key to upholding the fundamental international rights to non-discrimination and equality. We are mobilized by the understanding that women's equal and meaningful participation in international justice is critical to ensuring the legitimacy of, and improving the decisions of such bodies, which have a direct impact on the lives and rights of individuals and on the functioning of nations—including on the pursuit of sustainable development and peace for future generations.

In practice, the GQUAL Campaign aims to ensure the consideration of gender parity in national and international selection procedures, to disseminate timely information on [vacancies](#), and to conduct [research](#) on the impact and role of women in international justice. To these ends, we have identified priority strategies to improve gender representation in the international arena, as established in the [GQUAL Declaration](#) and [Action Plan](#). For further information about and an analysis of our key areas of focus and our working strategies, we encourage you to refer to this [background paper](#) about the Campaign.

In this context, we are delighted to take this opportunity to congratulate you, as new and veteran members of the Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls (Working Group) in light of the importance of this mandate for the promotion and advancement of women's and girls' rights globally. We have participated recently in the Regional Consultation for Latin America that the Working Group organized on 17 January 2023 and are motivated by the opportunity to continue engaging with the WG as it continues to play a vital role in the development of standards and strategies that can help ensure women's rights.

EQUAL

In that context, we wanted to bring to your attention a research study that we developed last year. We are grateful for the opportunity we had to present this research study to, and engage in a fruitful dialogue on its conclusions with [the previous Working Group members in a closed session](#) last May; and we would be pleased for a future opportunity to provide you with an updated presentation, and to engage in a discussion with you as new members of the Working Group, on this study, as part of your programme of work in the coming year(s).

This study, which was led by our Secretariat member Professor Claudia Martin, is entitled "[*Trends, Obstacles, Good Practices and Recommendations Regarding Women's Participation in Political and Public Life: Summary of the Work of the Working Group on the Issue of Discrimination Against Women and Girls*](#)", and summarizes the obstacles, trends, and good practices identified by the Working Group in its thematic and country reports regarding women's participation in political and public life. Since the Working Group understands public participation broadly, including participation at the global level, the conclusions reached in its reports are relevant in respect of identifying and reflecting upon the reasons that prevent women from being nominated and elected in international tribunals, adjudicating, and monitoring bodies.

Additionally, the study includes a section on recommendations issued by the Working Group in its reports. The recommendations target specific areas that are identified as obstacles to the achievement of women's equal representation in political and public life.

The GQUAL Campaign believes that the trends, obstacles, and good practices gathered in this report, which are based on twelve years of work by the Working Group, can significantly assist this mechanism in monitoring women's representation on international and regional tribunals and other mechanisms.

We would also like to draw your attention to the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee's 2021 [report](#), which acknowledges the underrepresentation of women in international tribunals and other mechanisms, and specifically recommends that the Working Group should monitor this issue¹. We firmly believe that incorporating this important information, including good or promising practices and recommendations, in its future reporting, the Working Group will advance women's equal representation in decision-making bodies both at the national and international level.

¹ See also: <https://gqualcampaign.org/a-roadmap-for-gender-balance/>



Furthermore, we believe that the Working Group is ideally placed to offer key contributions to the CEDAW Committee's key ongoing development of its [future General Recommendation No. 40 "Equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems"](#).

We thank you for your attention and commitment to this issue, and we remain at your disposal for any further information we might be able to provide.

Sincerely,

The GQUAL Secretariat

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