

GQUAL: NINE YEARS SHAPING GENDER PARITY IN INTERNATIONAL DECISION-MAKING

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS | 2023-2024

GQUAL





Nine Years Shaping Gender Parity in International Decision-Making

As 2024 comes to a close, we reflect on a remarkable year for GQUAL, highlighted by the celebration of [our 9th anniversary](#)—a milestone that marks nearly a decade of transformative advocacy for gender parity in international decision-making spaces. Since our founding in [2015](#), we have been dedicated to achieving and consolidating gender parity across international institutions, including tribunals, monitoring bodies, and various other international spaces critical to the advancement of international justice, human rights, governance, and law.

International bodies play a pivotal role in shaping decisions that impact the lives of individuals, nations, and institutions worldwide. Given the intricate nature of the problems these bodies address, it is essential to have a diverse composition that brings a wide array of perspectives to the table, facilitating more nuanced and effective problem-solving.

Moreover, considering that over half of the world's population is comprised by women, it is logical and imperative for them to be equally represented in decision-making spaces. Achieving gender parity promotes the protection of women's right to equality, and strengthens the legitimacy and impact of international bodies and organizations. It also helps ensure that the decisions made in these forums accurately reflect the diverse needs and experiences of the global population, contributing to more inclusive and comprehensive outcomes.

Over the past nine years, we have spearheaded numerous discussions and initiatives to promote gender parity in international spaces, successfully placing this issue at the forefront of the global agenda. This achievement is shared by all the activists, state officials, international experts, diplomats, civil society organizations, academics, and advocates who have stood with us, united in the mission to build a more inclusive and equitable international justice system.

To mark our journey, we are excited to share this special year-end report. This publication highlights key victories from the past two years, while also providing insights into our ongoing efforts and the challenges that lie ahead.

*As we continue to push the boundaries of what's possible, **GQUAL** remains dedicated to building a future where gender parity is not only an aspiration but a reality across all international decision-making bodies.*

Let's #ChangeThePicture



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I. About GQUAL

The Case for Women's Equal Representation



International bodies shape key global issues

Like peace, climate change, trade, development, and human rights, impacting individuals, nations, and institutions worldwide.



Better balance makes better Justice

Equal and inclusive participation of women in decision-making is crucial for crafting nuanced and effective solutions to complex problems.



Equality builds legitimacy

When decision-making bodies are diverse and inclusive, their legitimacy is strengthened, leading to more impactful and equitable outcomes.

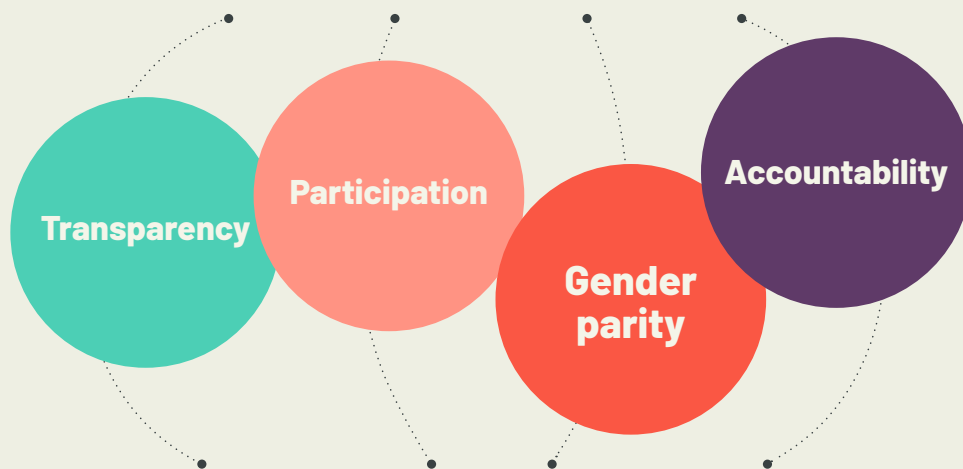


Equal representation is a human right

Women, making up over half the global population, have a fundamental right to participate in decisions affecting them. Institutions prioritizing gender equality are better equipped to ensure fairness and equity.

A Global Multi-Stakeholder Campaign for Structural Change

GQUAL is a global campaign that aims to **transform the appointment procedures for international positions** by enhancing



These are achievable reforms that can level the playing field, **encouraging more women to pursue and attain international roles.**

GQUAL's Successful Blueprint for Impact

01



Foster a Data-Driven, Multi-Stakeholder Global Dialogue on the Challenges, Impacts, and Solutions for Achieving Equal Representation.

02



Enhance Accessibility to International Positions for Women by Providing Timely Vacancy Information and a Strong Support Network.

03



Reform national and international selection practices and procedures to include gender parity as a key criterion.

04



Develop international laws and accountability mechanisms to create clear, mandatory standards that guarantee women's equal and inclusive participation in decision-making at all levels.

[Learn more about our Theory of Change here](#)

II. Our impact at a glance

Through data gathering, network building, research, and advocacy, GQUAL has significantly impacted international justice, reducing the gender gap in monitored spaces by 65%. As a result of our efforts and those of our partners and allies, women's representation at UN Special Procedures has increased from 39.4% to 62%, and the number of Special Rapporteurships never held by women dropped from 19 to 8. Regionally, the Inter-American Court and Commission of Human Rights achieved gender parity for the first time in 2022, maintaining it since.

These changes are more than just numbers—they signify institutional shifts towards gender parity in international decision-making spaces. They are supported by more women than ever aspiring to these roles and by concrete legal and policy developments championed alongside our network of allies, spanning from civil society to diplomatic circles.

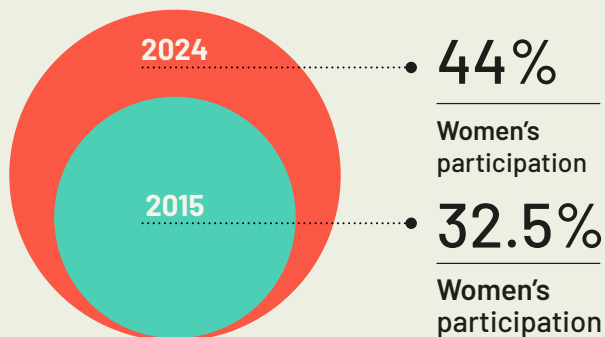
We **reduced** the gender gap by

65%

Monitoring and campaigning in

102

International Justice Bodies and mechanisms



During these 9 years, we have played a key role in promoting and achieving gender parity in key international spaces that have a role in developing international law and human rights.

	2015 <small>The picture when GQUAL started</small>	2024 <small>The picture today</small>
Total International bodies	32.5%	44%
International Tribunals	17%	27.78%
UN Treaty Bodies	40%	52%
UN Special Procedures	39.4% <small>19 out of 52 SPs have not been held by a woman</small>	66% <small>7 out of 59 SPs have not been held by a woman</small>
Inter American Court of Human Rights	0%	50% <small>Represents parity in a bench of 7</small>
Inter American Commission on Human Rights	42.8% <small>Represents parity in a bench of 7</small>	50%
Women candidates to the UN Special Procedures <small>Data from 2018 to 2023</small>	30.77% <small>(2018)</small>	56% <small>(2023)</small>
Women nominated to the UN Treaty Bodies <small>Data from 2018 to 2023</small>	50.4% <small>(2018)</small>	59.18% <small>(2022)</small>

While progress has been made, significant challenges persist. In many areas, advances remain insecure because insufficient institutional measures are in place to ensure sustainability and prevent backsliding—a trend that frequently emerges. Moreover, critical decision-making spaces continue to suffer from the serious underrepresentation of women. As highlighted by our Ranking, States still predominantly nominate and elect men over women through processes that lack transparency, equality, and opportunities for civil society to participate.

As 2024 draws to a close, it is an important moment to highlight the extraordinary progress we have made together and to reaffirm our commitment to dismantling the structural barriers that hinder women's equal participation in international decision-making spaces.

See more on our impact and strategies [here](#)

Highlighting the Progress We've Made Together.

III. Raising awareness and support for women candidates, specially those from the Global South, and generating a global academic and political debate about the obstacles, consequences, and solutions to women's underrepresentation. ◆

Institutional change is never the work of a single voice but the result of a collective effort. It requires a diverse range of actors contributing in various ways, and over time, through research, advocacy, policy discussions and proposals, political commitment, and more.

A central focus for us is becoming a platform that brings together all relevant stakeholders to exchange ideas and foster collaborations that can transform proposals into real institutional change. We actively encourage partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders, including state authorities, diplomats, international organizations, civil society, judges, lawyers, academe, journalists, and more.

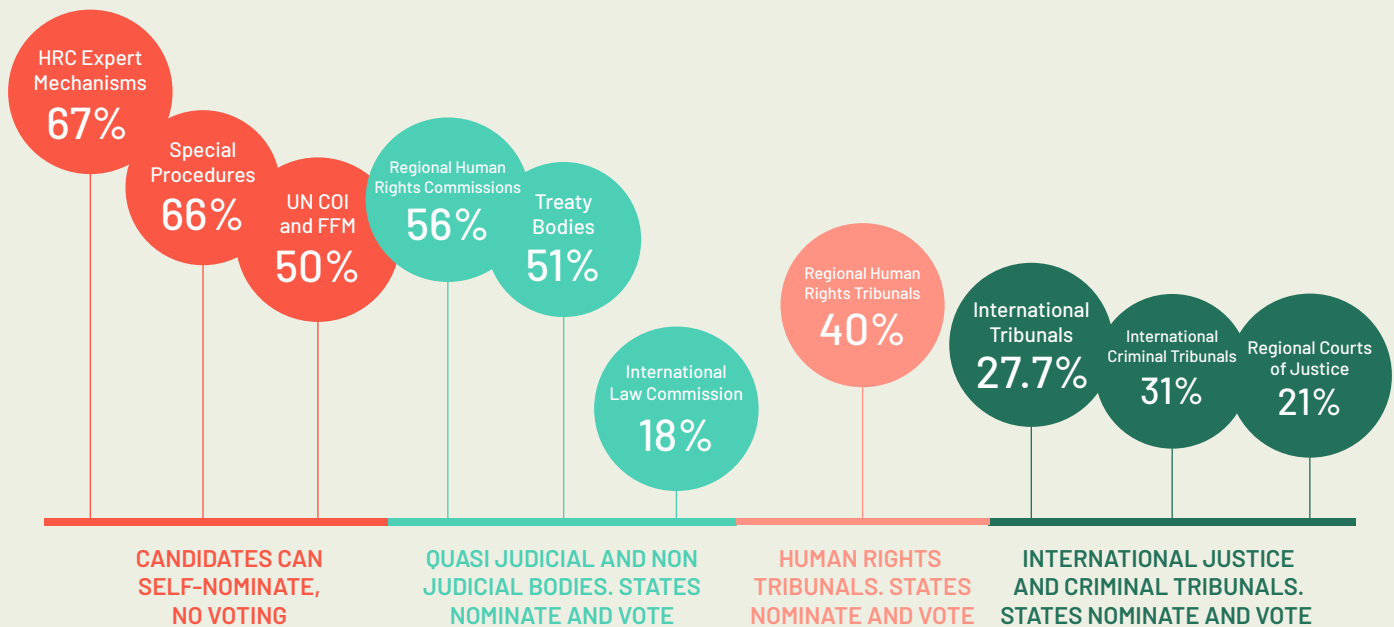
We drive these collaborations through data-driven insights, high-level policy debates, and targeted advocacy initiatives that unite stakeholders around common goals and amplify collective influence. These strategies help build a broad and diverse network of women poised to take on international roles, support one another, and ensure the network continues to grow, reaching and including women from all backgrounds.

A. Data-driven advocacy: turning numbers into action

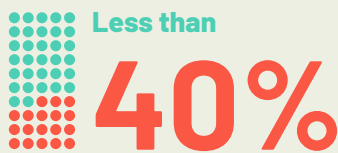
Data is at the core of our strategies: it raises awareness, highlights obstacles, tracks progress, fosters alignment with other agendas, identifies areas for further study, and strengthens our advocacy and accountability efforts.

► The Picture We Are Working to Change, in Numbers.

Despite all our progress, important gaps remain. While women represent 44% of international positions monitored by GQUAL, many spaces have still never been occupied by women and their participation is often higher in bodies with mandates associated with women's or children's rights. Additionally, we have seen how representation changes drastically depending on the kind of body and the role States play in the election process.



A Closer Look



Representation of women outside of bodies focused on women's and children's rights with some as low as 9%.



Women judges in the history of the International Court of Justice.



UN Human Rights Treat Bodies have reached **gender parity**.



International bodies/mechanisms monitored by GQUAL have **mandatory gender balance criteria**.

Root Causes include

- Opaque selection processes
- Gender parity is not a priority in selection criteria
- Insufficient data
- Structural discrimination

Our latest data uncovers three key trends that provide a deeper understanding of the landscape of gender parity in international decision-making spaces related to international justice:

- Women's participation has risen more rapidly in spaces where State nominations and voting aren't required**, such as the Special Procedures. While political support is still important and States play an important role in all appointments, the absence of a requirement for State's nomination and vote makes the process more open for women's parti-

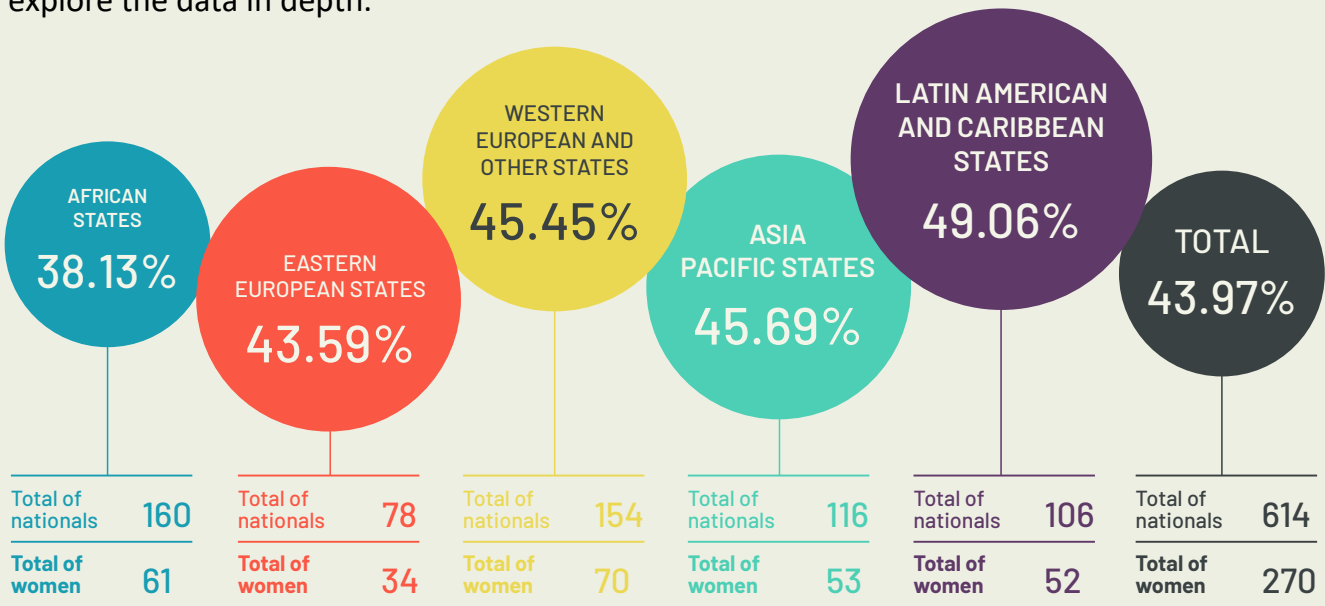
icipation and to gender considerations. In fact, it’s in these bodies where we have tracked a notable increase in the number of women candidates.

2. **Women’s representation has grown faster in bodies with human rights mandates than in those tied to international law.** The gap between human rights bodies' mandates to promote equality and the lack of equality in their composition presents a compelling argument that has fueled efforts for change.
3. **The participation of women in international tribunals has seen the least growth,** with State-controlled nomination and voting processes typically favoring male candidates. These prestigious and politically influential positions, often well-paid, continue to elude gender parity. GQUAL’s work to address these gaps remains a priority.

► **Our GQUAL Ranking: A Tool for Change**

The GQUAL Ranking, released annually, is one of our most powerful advocacy tools. It tracks data from over 116 countries that have nationals serving in international positions monitored by the Campaign and disaggregates them by gender and geographical representation. The three rankings we produce —Global, Regional, and OAS— offer valuable insights into trends in both the nomination practices of States and Regional Groups, as well as their representation records.

The newly released 2024 GQUAL Ranking offers an updated picture of women’s representation in international leadership roles. Curious to learn more? Dive into our infographics to explore the data in depth.



► **A New Website focused on alerting and tracking elections**

A major highlight of 2024 was the launch of our new website—a dynamic platform designed

to make it easier for women to find opportunities and resources. A key component is our database of upcoming elections and data on gender and geographical balance in all bodies we monitor.

B. Targeted Advocacy Campaigns to drive change and hold States and Institutions Accountable.

► UN Treaty Bodies

Throughout 2022, 2023 and 2024, we have adopted targeted strategies in elections where we saw the greatest opportunities and needs. These efforts included calls to action, open letters, campaigns, and events with key stakeholders, focusing on elections for:

- The UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
- The Human Rights Committee
- The UN Committee against Torture
- The UN Committee on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights

Notably, in the first three elections, advocacy efforts were instrumental in maintaining gender balance. Additionally, in collaboration with the Geneva Academy and other organizations, GQUAL organized public events where candidates had the opportunity to introduce themselves in an informal setting and discuss how their qualifications aligned with Treaty Body requirements. These events played a crucial role in promoting a transparent and inclusive election process, encouraging direct engagement between candidates, state representatives, and civil society¹.

► Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)

In the last election of members of the IACHR, we launched a campaign to ensure that gender parity was maintained. The campaign came at a pivotal moment, as the 53rd OAS General Assembly prepared to elect 4 out of 7 new members to the Commission. With 3 of the outgoing members being women, the stakes were high to preserve the historic parity the IACHR had recently achieved.

Our efforts focused on mobilizing States across the region, calling on them to nominate qualified women candidates and prioritize gender parity during the voting process. As a result, gender parity was sustained within the IACHR, underscoring the region's commitment to equality.

¹ Learn more about these events: [Human Rights Committee](#), [CEDAW](#) & [CRPD](#)

► UN Special Procedures

In 2022, GQUAL celebrated a major milestone as women filled **59% of positions** across the **UN Special Procedures** for the first time. Out of 83 positions, women held 49, breaking long-standing barriers in three new mandates that had never been led by women before (Special Rapporteur on the Palestinian Territories, North Korea, and Torture). During this cycle, the Human Rights Council appointed 16 women for 23 positions (69.56%).

Since then, our work has helped sustain and increase female representation within the UN Special Procedures to 60% in 2023 and 62% in 2024. Targeted focus on **climate and environmental roles**—traditionally male-dominated areas— helped support the appointment of two expert women from the **Global South** in early 2024, further **reducing the number of mandates never held by women from 10 to 8**.

Learn more about how these milestones were achieved in this interview with Ambassador Federico Villegas, then President of the Human Rights Council [here](#)

► Breaking the Glass Ceiling: The First Female UN Special Rapporteur on Torture

An important milestone was achieved in 2022 with the election of the first woman to ever serve as UN Special Rapporteur on Torture—a mandate that had been exclusively held by men for over 30 years.

Recognizing the need for gender balance in this critical role, GQUAL launched a campaign to encourage women from around the world to apply. Through sustained advocacy, including a coordinated [public statement](#) with organizations focused on torture prevention, we called on the Human Rights Council to prioritize women for the position. Despite an initial shortlist led by a male candidate, GQUAL pushed back, [urging](#) the Human Rights Council President to prioritize gender parity among equally qualified candidates. This appointment was celebrated by GQUAL and its partners including the HRC President in an [event](#).

► Appointments of UN and OAS Secretaries General

The leadership transitions at the Organization of American States and the United Nations present a historic opportunity for change. For nearly 80 years, these institutions—champions of human rights and equality—have shaped global and regional governance, yet not a single woman has ever held their top leadership roles. This stark omission highlights the systemic

barriers that continue to exclude women from the highest levels of leadership. At the 54th OAS General Assembly in Paraguay in June 2024, GQUAL brought this issue to the forefront with a panel discussion on **“Gender Equality in International and Multilateral Decision-Making Spaces”**. The message was clear: gender equality must move beyond principle and into practice. States must take immediate action to ensure that the selection processes for these crucial leadership roles genuinely reflect the equality they have long championed.

It is time for the OAS and the UN to better reflect the diversity and values of the world they serve.

The election of the **OAS Secretary General** is set for March 2025. The Organization needs a leader who is steadfast in upholding its core values—democracy, peace and security, equality, and human rights. It is imperative that this leader be a woman.



Representatives from Spain, Canada, United States, Guatemala and Chile, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the Inter-American Commission of Women and civil society joined GQUAL during a panel discussion on the upcoming election of the OAS SG. Asunción, Paraguay, June 2024

To seize this historic opportunity, GQUAL issued an [Open Letter](#), endorsed by over 400 organizations and prominent individuals, urging OAS Member States to elect a woman as Secretary General. The letter calls on States to:

- Publicly commit to the appointment of a woman Secretary General by nominating and voting exclusively for female candidates.
- Ensure a transparent selection process, with a clear timeline, minimum criteria, and

- opportunities for open dialogue.
- Guarantee that the next Secretary General upholds the highest standards of personal integrity, professional competence, and a proven commitment to democracy, Inter-American institutions, human rights, and equality for all, including women.

The election of the **UN Secretary General** will take place in 2026, with a significant part of the process taking place throughout 2025. **GQUAL has joined the #1for8Billion** campaign in urging states to nominate and elect a woman strongly qualified for the role.

Read the open [letter](#).



C. Convening and amplifying discussions on women's equal and inclusive participation in international decision-making.

► Women and Diplomacy

As GQUAL advances its mission for gender parity in international decision-making, it is essential to align this effort with broader discussions on Feminist Foreign Policies (FFPs) and women's equal participation in diplomatic roles. With women representing just one-fifth of ambassadors and leading only 20% of UN diplomatic missions, achieving gender parity in foreign policy is critical².

² See: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures>

Regardless of whether States label their foreign policies as feminist, it is crucial to engage in a necessary dialogue on how these policies can—and should—integrate feminist perspectives and fulfill international human rights obligations. The goal is clear: women must play a central role in shaping, implementing, and representing foreign policy at both national and international levels.

We are proud to have amplified and deepened these discussions through various activities. Here are some highlights:

- **Panel on Feminist Foreign Policies and Gender Equality in International Justice:** During CSW67, in partnership with IDLO and Co-Impact, we hosted a high-level discussion that highlighted the importance of women’s equal representation and the promotion of access to justice – at both the national and international levels – as a core feature of any Feminist Foreign Policy.
- **Feminist Foreign Policies and Geneva-based Diplomacy:** Alongside the Permanent Mission of Chile, UN Women, and the Geneva Academy, we organized a closed-door discussion with Ambassadors and other key stakeholders to explore the implementation of FFPs in multilateral spaces.
- **FFPs in Security & Rule of Law:** We partnered with the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law to discuss how FFPs and women’s equal participation is critical for democracy and global governance.

We believe Global South countries must lead FFP discussions, ensuring issues like diversity, collective rights, economic development, equality, and anti-colonial approaches are central to global FFP. In this [interview](#), Ambassador Claudia Fuentes, Permanent Representative of Chile to the UN in Geneva, shares her vision for feminist foreign policies from the Global South and Latin America.



GQUAL's Director, María Noel Leoni interviews Ambassador Claudia Fuentes, Permanent Representative of Chile before the United Nations in Geneva

► Women's Equal Participation in Trade and Arbitration

Spaces linked to international development, trade, and arbitration, such as the WTO and investment arbitration panels, remain male-dominated, reinforcing structural inequalities and power imbalances. In 2023, only 36% of WTO Ambassadors were women, and just 12% of leadership and management roles in the WTO Secretariat were held by women. These alarming statistics, shared by Anoush der Boghossian in an exclusive interview with GQUAL, underscore the urgent need for change. **Watch the full interview [here](#).**



GQUAL's Director, Maria Noel Leoni interviews Anoush Der Boghossian, Founder and Chair of the WTO Gender Research Hub and Head of the WTO Trade and Gender Unit



Members of the CEDAW Committee, representative of States and international organizations, experts on trade and international relations, and representatives of Civil Society during the expert consultation convened by GQUAL, the WTI and the Institute of International Relations Prague at the University of Bern in Switzerland.

To address these challenges, GQUAL partnered with key organizations like the WTO's Gender Research Hub, the World Trade Institute (WTI), and ICSID to advocate for including economic spaces in CEDAW's General Recommendation 40 and promote gender equality. Through events such as the Expert Consultation in Washington, DC, dialogues in Bern, and feminist economy discussions in Argentina, GQUAL sparked collective action and built strong partnerships. These efforts led to significant milestones, including ICSID and World Bank engagement with the CEDAW Committee and the WTO's gender focal point joining the discussions, marking a shift towards greater gender equality in these male-dominated spaces.

The Permanent Court of Arbitration's 125th Anniversary Marks a Milestone with Resolution on Gender Equality and Inclusion



Members of the PCA, ICJ, International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, ILC, ICC, and representatives of Civil Society during the panel "Equal and Inclusive Representation of Women in the Membership of the PCA and the ICJ" organized by GQUAL during the PCA's 125th anniversary celebration at the Peace Palace in The Hague.

The Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) recently hosted its 125th anniversary celebration at the Peace Palace in The Hague. This milestone event not only honored the Court's rich history but also served as a call to action for a more inclusive future for the Court. The panel discussion titled "Equal and Inclusive Representation of Women in the PCA and ICJ", organized by GQUAL and sponsored by the embassies of Portugal, Latvia, Chile, and Thailand, served as a crucial platform for exploring strategies to achieve gender parity in both the PCA and the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

A key achievement that followed the discussion was the adoption of **Operational Paragraph 18** of the Resolution of the Congress, which urges the PCA and Parties to promote the representation of women in decision-making roles, increase the appointment of female arbitrators, and promote gender parity across the institution.

► Women in Leadership in Law

Achieving true gender parity in leadership requires more than just representation—it demands systemic transformation, storytelling, and collaboration. Women's equal participation in all aspects related to the study, the development and the implementation of laws is central to our mission.

In 2023, during our first ever participation at the **Reykjavik Global Forum**, we highlighted this issue in a panel organized jointly with Co-Impact and the Gates Foundation where we explored the importance of women's leadership across law, economics, and public health.



Representatives of GQUAL, Co-Impact and Coalition Partners meet at the Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Center

In 2024, we built on this work by joining partners to create a Coalition focused on advancing

women's leadership in law. In July 2025, with Co-Impact's support, we met in the Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Center to explore actionable steps for advancing efforts and strengthening global commitments to gender equality in law. A first initiative as a Coalition was to participate in the 2024 Reykjavik Global Forum with a co-created session on "Leadership Reimagined: Strategic Interventions for Women in Law."

D. Mentorship and learning opportunities

A core mission of ours is to raise awareness and support for women candidates, particularly from the Global South. We share information on vacancies and appointment processes through our platforms and network of talented candidates. Over the years, we've identified the limited access to information about these roles and their selection processes. By analyzing these procedures, we've pinpointed areas for improvement and ways to ensure gender parity is prioritized in decision-making. Our work focuses on creating practical resources to simplify these procedures and support candidates from the Global South.

Throughout 2023 and 2024 we partnered with the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ) to host a series of webinars and events. Our first series of webinars featured the participation of women judges across the globe and focused on the challenges of achieving equal representation in the international arena and strategies to overcome these obstacles. These sessions attracted nearly 150 participants, primarily from the Global South:

Session 1: Focused on data on women's underrepresentation in international justice and explored solutions to address it.

Session 2: Focused on the requirements and appointment processes of key international institutions, such as the International Criminal Court and UN Special Procedures.

Session 3: Focused on the representation of African women in international law institutions, emphasizing the importance of both gender and geographical representation in global selection processes.

In 2024, in partnership with IAWJ and the International Law Student Association (ILSA), we organized a networking event that convened 85 female law students from across the globe and 26 distinguished women judges and professionals from 16 international courts, tribunals, and bodies, including the ICC, ITLOS, ICSID, SIAC, IOM, CJEU, WTO, and STL. These trailblazing leaders shared their expertise and experiences, inspiring the next generation of women in international law. Divided into six specialized fields—including International Criminal Law, Arbitration, and Human Rights—the sessions provided students with an invaluable opportunity to engage directly with experts. Participants received personalized career advice, gained unique insights into the realities of working in international law, and explored practical strategies for navigating challenges in the field.

IV. Changing practices and rules within nomination and election processes nationally and internationally to include gender parity as criterion. ◆

Inadequate selection processes for international positions are a major barrier to women's equal access to international courts and bodies. States often lack formal, publicly defined procedures at the national level, and gender parity is rarely considered when selecting nominees or trading votes. At the international level, the appointment process also needs reform to prioritize gender equality and diversity. To address this, we advocate for the development of guidelines and recommendations that establish gender equality as a key criterion in the voting and election process, grounded in the right to equality.

Making these processes more transparent, participatory, and based on gender parity and non-discrimination can increase the number of women and the diversity of candidates.

► National selection procedures and state's voting practices

GQUAL has strategically leveraged international bodies and organizations to push States to develop national processes and voting practices. By advocating for the development of clear, gender-focused guidelines, we've helped lay the groundwork for more transparent and inclusive selection processes. Our efforts have been instrumental in shaping key resolutions from the Human Rights Council and the Organization of American States General Assembly, which emphasize the importance of gender parity in national nomination and international elections.

In 2021 our work helped promote the first international report on gender balance in UN Human Rights Bodies. This report, presented by the HRC Advisory Committee to the Human Rights Council marked a breakthrough by offering the first-ever set of concrete guidelines on how national selection processes and voting policies should incorporate gender parity. Since then, we've built on these developments with several key achievements:

- **New Human Rights Council Resolution** which highlights the findings of the Advisory Committee's report and encourages Member States to take steps to implement the recommendations and report on them, including on national selection processes.
- **New OAS General Assembly Resolution**, approved in June 2024, which specifically includes a call for States to move forward in developing national selection processes that are transparent and include gender balance and representation of underrepresented population groups as selection criteria.
- **OAS Report on Gender Parity:** Prepared by the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), this report shares best practices and recommendations to advance national processes across the region.

While international recommendations are crucial, we understand that meaningful change requires local efforts and civil society's engagement. To this end, GQUAL has worked closely with local actors to disseminate and implement international recommendations. By partnering with institutions such as the Instituto Matias Romero in Mexico, the Human Rights Institute of the Catholic University of Peru, the Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas de la UNAM, the Centro de Derechos Humanos de la Facultad de Derecho de la Universidad de Buenos Aires (UBA), and many more, we have made strides in integrating these global guidelines into national discussions on selection processes.

► The first national selection procedure regulated in the region

In 2023, Argentina made progress in improving women's representation in international positions. The country not only increased the number of women nominated for international roles but also pioneered innovative selection practices.

In 2021, GQUAL's advocacy helped secure the first-ever nomination of an Argentine woman to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, thanks to a transparent, participatory, and competitive selection process. Building on this success, two more women were nominated for key international roles in 2022 through similar open processes, advancing gender parity in Argentina. These efforts, alongside GQUAL's advocacy with local partners, led to the adoption of Argentina's first national selection mechanism in January 2023.

This represents **the first nomination procedure to be regulated in the region**, and one that includes **equality, gender balance, and diversity** as criteria for selecting candidates. It is absolutely critical that Argentina's new administration protects this achievement and the country's historic commitment with equality and human rights.

► Appointment procedures at the international level

UN Guidelines

At the UN level, our focus has been on promoting further implementation of the recommendations contained in the HRC Advisory Committee report, which since its approval in 2021 has been a key roadmap for promoting gender parity in UN Bodies.

In 2022 and 2023, GQUAL collaborated with Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, and other States to support the adoption of resolutions by the Human Rights Council that recognized the importance of the Advisory Committee's report and called on States and the Office of the

High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to take further action in implementing its recommendations and report on their progress. The Resolutions are available [here](#) and [here](#). These efforts led to a partnership between **GQUAL and the OHCHR, to launch a study on the challenges women face in accessing and implementing international UN mandates, which will be published in 2025.**

Our advocacy has helped turn the Advisory Committee's 2021 report into an impactful roadmap, directly contributing to gender parity in the UN and sparking discussions beyond the UN. [Read this letter](#) addressed to the Advisory Committee highlighting the Report's impact.

► OAS Guidelines

CIM's Report

In October 2022, following similar successful efforts from previous years, GQUAL collaborated with OAS Member States to support the adoption of a [General Assembly Resolution](#) establishing gender parity, alongside geographical and legal system diversity, as key criteria for the composition of the Inter-American Commission and Court of Human Rights. This time, however, we also led efforts to encourage OAS Member States to task the Inter American Commission of Women (CIM) with preparing a comprehensive report on best practices and recommendations to achieve and sustain gender parity. When this was approved, we partnered with the CIM to lead consultations with civil society, states, and experts, culminating in a groundbreaking report presented at the OAS General Assembly in June 2023.

This report is the first to address the relationship between gender parity, geographical balance, and legal system in international spaces. It provides key data on OAS gender balance and outlines a roadmap for achieving parity in the Inter-American Human Rights System.

Read the report [here](#) and the data annex [here](#).



Since the adoption of the report, we have partnered with the CIM on different efforts to share its findings and advocate for its implementation. This includes our interview with the CIM's Executive Secretary, Alejandra Mora Mora, and an infographic highlighting data and finding

Our advocacy continued in June 2023, when we successfully pushed for a new OAS General Assembly resolution, tasking the CIM with a follow-up report to assess progress, set to be presented in 2025. This report has sparked institutional discussions among Member States and OAS bodies, as seen in the [February 2024](#) and [December 2024](#) meetings convened by the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs, where GQUAL was invited to participate as an expert.

Building on this momentum, the CIM is now leading a regional process to draft a Model Law on Gender Parity, aiming to establish gender parity across all governmental spaces at both the national and international levels. GQUAL has joined the advisory committee, focusing on the chapter addressing international representation. This model law is expected to become a powerful tool in promoting national policies and institutional reforms, particularly in addressing the development of national selection procedures for international positions. Our involvement has already included participation in several discussions with the [advisory group](#), a [public presentation of the proposal](#), and an [expert meeting in Guatemala](#) and in [Washington DC](#). The Model Law is expected to be published in 2025.

► Key Resolutions from the 54th OAS General Assembly

Since 2016, the OAS General Assembly has emphasized the importance of gender balance, geographical representation and representation of different legal systems through the Resolutions it adopts. This year, the OAS General Assembly furthered these efforts with key resolutions during its **54th session in Paraguay**. GQUAL advocated for and celebrates these

resolutions as milestones toward achieving gender parity and equal representation for women in the region:

- Resolution on Human Rights – Calls for gender parity and balanced representation within the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. It urges States to create national procedures promoting gender equality and diversity.
- Promotion of Parity in OAS Elections – Calls for gender parity in OAS elections, amending regulations to include a 10-day extension for candidacies to address gender imbalances.
- Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General Roles – Highlights the historic absence of women in these key roles and urges member states to prioritize gender equality in the 2025 elections.
- Substantive Equality and Full Participation of Women – Encourages member states to adopt gender-responsive public and foreign policies, integrating gender and human rights perspectives for women and girls.

The full texts of the resolutions can be downloaded [here](#).

V. Promoting women’s right to equal and inclusive participation in international decision-making spaces ◆

Achieving gender parity in international representation requires upholding the right to gender equality, particularly in leadership, participation, representation, and decision-making. To drive this change, we actively work to advance this fundamental human right through the efforts of both international and national actors.

► A historic milestone: adoption of CEDAW General Recommendation No. 40

On October 25, 2024, the **CEDAW Committee adopted General Recommendation 40 (GR40)**, marking a historic breakthrough in advancing women’s equal representation in decision-making systems. GR40 is a new legal framework – rooted in the binding standards of one of the widest ratified treaties- that mandates equal participation and power through 50:50 gender parity permanent measures at both national and international levels.

GR40’s Seven Pillars for Equal and Inclusive Representation

- **50:50 Parity** between women and men as a starting point and universal norm.
- **Youth Leadership** conditioned by gender parity.
- **Intersectionality and Inclusion** of women in their diversity.
- **A Comprehensive Approach** across all spheres of decision-making.
- **Equal Power and Influence** for women.
- **Structural Transformation** for inclusive systems.
- **Civil Society Representation** in decision-making systems.

We are proud to have actively contributed to this transformative process, providing expert feedback and research, and hosting consultations to shape recommendations that tackle the barriers to women's participation in international justice and other key decision-making spaces.

Discover why GR40 is a paradigm shift in advancing gender equality in decision-making spaces in our interview with Nicole Ameline, CEDAW Committee member and Chair of GR40's Working Group. [Watch here.](#)

► **Our Role in Shaping General Recommendation No. 40 and its implementation:**

In December 2022 the CEDAW Committee announced that it would work on a **new General Recommendation addressing the equal right of women to participate in decision making systems, including international ones.** This development, which GQUAL had called for since launching the Campaign, provided an unprecedented opportunity to better define the measures that States should take to ensure equal representation and parity, particularly within international institutions.

During **CEDAW's 84th session** in February 2023, GQUAL submitted written and oral statements to emphasize the importance of including international representation in the analysis, as well as a clearer definition of what parity and diversity mean in the context of equal representation. Following the presentation of the draft, we submitted written suggestions aimed at strengthening the final version of GR40.

► **Key events that helped shape GR40**

Launching GR40 to a broader audience. Following the announcement of GR40, we partnered with the **Geneva Academy and the World Trade Institute** to co-host a high-level side-event featuring experts like **Nada Al-Nashif** (Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights) and **Nicole Ameline** (CEDAW Vice-Chair), to explore the implications of CEDAW's new General Recommendation. You can watch the event [here](#).

Expert Consultation on the right to equal and inclusive participation in international decision-making spaces and its incorporation into GR 40' framework. In September 2023, GQUAL partnered with the **Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law** of American University to host an expert consultation on developing General Recommendation 40. More than 40 global experts gathered in Washington, D.C., to discuss how to ensure meaningful women's participation in key international decision-making spaces.



"GQUAL and this meeting in American University is probably one of the best supports that we can have for this General Recommendation. We do think that if we succeed to create new shifts -parity by 2030- it will be the best way to demonstrate that we can not only rebuild better, but rebuild differently, and we need it because all the challenges we are facing today: migration, climate change, peace and security (...) show that we need to create something new in terms of governance."

Ms. Nicole Ameline summarized the importance of these efforts. To hear more, we invite you to watch the full [interview](#).

Expert Consultation: Promoting Equal and Inclusive Representation of Women in Decision-Making Systems: A Holistic Approach to Economic Empowerment.

Recognizing the need for deeper discussions on women's participation in international economic decision-making, we hosted a consultation in partnership with the World Trade Institute (WTI) and other allies in Bern in February 2024. The event focused on gender representation in key areas such as international trade, arbitration, financial institutions, and emerging fields like artificial intelligence. It brought together a diverse group of experts, diplomats, and CEDAW members from Asia and Africa.



Members of the CEDAW Committee with GQUAL representatives and other experts during our briefing to the Committee.

Latin American and Feminist Economic Perspectives to GR40. In April 2024, in partnership with the University of Buenos Aires (UBA), we organized a two-day expert meeting that focused on integrating the perspectives of the Global South, particularly from Latin America, into GR 40. Discussions centered around key issues such as the links between parity and democracy, the right to care, equal access to justice, and participation in the design of economic and fiscal policies with a gender perspective.

Briefing at CEDAW's 88th Session On May 17th, 2024, GQUAL delivered a briefing to the CEDAW Committee in Geneva, highlighting the critical need for equal representation of women in international decision-making.

► Celebrating GR40's adoption and preparing its implementation

On October 25th, **GQUAL proudly delivered a statement at the historic launch of General Recommendation 40 (GR40) by the CEDAW Committee**, setting a new standard for gender equality in decision-making worldwide. In our statement, we highlighted three transformative pillars of GR40: Parity as a Core Principle, Global Representation, and Binding Commitments for States.



Mapping opportunities to advance women's equal participation in decision-making systems: In October 2024, we hosted a strategic meeting in Geneva to explore opportunities for advancing women's participation in decision-making following GR40's landmark adoption. The discussions centered on strategic pathways to implement GR40 effectively.



Full video summary available [here](#).

VI. A Collective Victory: A Call to Action

The incredible progress we've achieved at GQUAL over the past nine years would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our global network of activists, diplomats, civil society organizations, and advocates like you. Together, we've brought the world closer to realizing gender parity in international decision-making bodies—not as a distant goal, but as a growing reality.

This year, as we marked GQUAL's ninth anniversary, we reflect on the strides we've made and acknowledge the work still ahead. The victories we are so proud of belong to everyone who has been part of this movement, but they are not just moments to celebrate—it's a call to action. Our mission is far from complete. Now, more than ever, we must push the boundaries, ensuring women's voices are heard, respected, and empowered in every international decision-making body.

*Here's to nine years of advocacy—and to the many victories that lie ahead.
The future of gender parity is one we will build together!*



**We invite you to stay engaged,
support our efforts,
and continue this journey with us!**

Subscribe to our [newsletter](#) and follow us on our [website](#), [X \(Twitter\)](#), and [LinkedIn](#) for the latest updates, campaigns, and opportunities to take action.

Let's make the next nine years even more impactful—join us today and consider making a [donation](#) to fuel the ongoing fight for gender equality!

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#ChangeThePicture

