



2018/2019 Report of the Activities of the

# Women Heads of Diplomatic Mission in Ottawa

LES FEMMES CHEFS DE  
MISSION DIPLOMATIQUE  
D'OTTAWA



WOMEN HEADS OF  
DIPLOMATIC MISSION  
IN OTTAWA



## Executive Committee of the Women Heads of Diplomatic Mission



### **Chair**

H. C. Dlamini-Mntambo,  
South Africa



### **Deputy Chair**

H. C. Shery Tross,  
St. Kitts and Nevis



### **Committee Member**

Ambassador Rima  
Alaadeen, Jordan



### **Committee member**

Ambassador Anne Kari H.  
Ovind, Norway



### **Committee member**

H. C. Natasha Smith,  
Australia



### **Committee member**

Chargé d'affaires Shakila  
Umutoni, Rwanda

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## Executive Summary

2018/2019 has been a busy and yet fruitful year for Women Heads of Diplomatic Mission (WHDMO). The Executive Committee of the WHDMO has compiled the following 2018/2019 Annual Report on the activities which the group embarked on during this term in office. The 2018/2019 Annual Report provides an overview of Women Heads of Mission who resumed their tour of duty in Canada and those who completed theirs.

Further, the report gives a summary of WHDMO activities in line with its objectives to:

- Foster communication, understanding and interaction within the group of Women Heads of Diplomatic Mission accredited to Ottawa (WHDMO);
- Facilitate and strengthen linkages between members of WHDMO and leaders in all sectors of the Canadian Society; and
- Promote collaboration on issues of common concern, especially those affecting women

It summarizes other ongoing initiatives some of which will be carried out later in this year and those which will be long term.

The 2018/2019 Executive Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of WHDMO for putting their trust in us and for all the support we received during this term. Sincere gratitude to Ms Tanya Sefolo, South Africa's Deputy Head of Mission who provided the Executive Committee with the much needed logistical support during this period.

In the week leading to our Annual General Meeting (AGM) the Executive Committee requested regions to confirm continuity of

their current representative members in the Executive Committee or to forward new names to be in the committee. We welcome the new members of the Executive Committee for the 2019/2020 term and we are confident they will also enjoy the warm support from all Women Heads of the Diplomatic Mission in Ottawa.

### Welcome new members

The Women Heads of Diplomatic Mission in Ottawa welcomes the following Excellencies who joined us during this reporting period:

- H.E Souriya Otmani, Morocco
- H.E Svetlana Sashova Stoycheva-Etropolski, Bulgaria
- H.E Melita Gabric, Slovenia
- H.E Salome Meyer, Switzerland
- H.E Nasise Challi Jira, Ethiopia

### Members who finished their tour of duty

During the 2018/2019 we bid farewell to the following Excellencies:

- H.E. Florence Zano Chideya, Zimbabwe
- H.E. Shankai Karokhail, Afganistan
- H.E. Yvonne Walkes, Barbados
- H.E. Tania Molina Ávalos, El Salvador
- H.E Aminahatun Karim Shaharudin, Malaysia;

We wish them the best as they continue with their journey in life.





## Summary of 2018- 2019 Activities

### 2018

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#### **Draft WHDMO Constitution**

The Draft Constitution of the WHDMO has been amended as per the suggested inputs in the last Annual General Meeting of 2017/2018. The Constitution will be adopted at the AGM on 9 July 2019. It will be available in both English and French.

#### **November 16 Days of Activism against Women and Child abuse**

Represented by the High Commissioner of St Kitts and Nevis the Women Heads of Diplomatic Mission presented a paper at a roundtable discussion in November on Parliament Hill - as part of the UN's 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign, which has been observed annually as a global campaign from November 25 to December 10, since 1991. The event was organised by the South African High Commission in partnership with Senator Marilou McPhedran, Senator Mary Coyle, and Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard and their Senate colleagues. The keynote address

for the Roundtable was given by Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, who is the Executive Director of UN Women with the rank of Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations.



## **January: Women's Network and Visible Minorities Speed Mentoring**

In January, Global Affairs Women's network and visible minorities invited members of WHDMO to take part in the Speed Mentoring program. The one-on-one speed mentoring sessions saw six of our members with up to six individual meetings, each lasting between eight to twelve minutes.

The Women Heads of Mission who represented the group were Excellencies from Bulgaria, Cuba, Germany, Norway, Paraguay and South Africa.

The Excellencies shared their valuable experiences with the Global Affairs Canada junior and middle management staff, and provided advice where necessary to them. This opportunity has provided some Women Heads of Mission with an opportunity to mentor the junior employees outside that structure.

## **March: International Women's day**

On International Women's day, the Executive Committee reached out to Lisgar Collegiate and formed a panel discussion, presenting to pupils from Grade 11 and 12 at the school. The focus was on overcoming obstacles as you journey through life and building a successful career.

Representing the WHDMO at this session were Excellencies from Australia; Jordan; Norway at the panel and South Africa co-ordinated the event.

The panel had robust and inspiring engagements with grade 11 and 12 from Lisgar Collegiate.







### **March: Luncheon with the Governor – General**

The Women Heads of Diplomatic Mission met for a luncheon with Her Excellency, The Right Honourable Julie Payette, and Governor – General of Canada. The luncheon was also attended by the Heads of Mission accredited to Canada but residing in Washington.

The WHDMO got to interact with the Governor-General and highlighted the group's activities, plans, successes and challenges.

It was observed that while Women Heads of Mission are still outnumbered by their male counterparts on a ratio of 1:4. in Canada, looking at the full room with 27 Women Heads of Mission, Canada could be one of the countries with a large number of women Heads of Missions.

### **March: Women's Day Celebration in partnership with the Fairmont Château Laurier hotel**

The WHDMO celebrated 10 years in partnership with the Fairmont Château Laurier in recognition of Women's day. The event was hosted by the Fairmont Château Laurier, Sales Manager, Government and Protocol Relations, Ms Laurence Schaller. WHDMO also got to inform the newly appointed Chief of Protocol, Mr Wheeler about the activities of the group. The guest speaker at this event, Ms Nada Semaan, Director and Chief Executive Officer: Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada (FINTRAC) gave an address on Women leadership in careers dominated by men.



## June: Run for Women

The Ambassador of Germany, Her Excellency Sparwasser's arranged for Women Heads of Mission to take part in the "Run for Women" event whose aim is to raise awareness on women's mental health and to let "women living with mental illness know they are not alone and that it is ok to ask for help".

Regardless of the rain some Women Heads of Mission braved the weather and participated in this noble course. We encourage members who may have missed this year opportunity to be on the lookout for the same event next year.

## June: Panel Discussion on "Women's political participation and leadership in fragile and conflict settings

The Women Heads of Diplomatic Mission in Ottawa in conjunction with the Women Peace and Security Branch, Global Affairs Canada (GAC) organised a roundtable panel discussion on Women's political participation and leadership in fragile and conflict settings.

## July: Luncheon with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

This activity will be reported on at the 2019/2020 AGM.

## Meetings with stakeholders during the reporting period

- **Marc-Andre Fredette**  
Director-General East and Southern Africa, Global Affairs Canada
- **Professor Shireen Hassim**  
150 Research Chair , Carleton University
- **School of International Development and Global Studies, University of Ottawa**
- **Prof Rebecca Tiessen**  
School of International Development and Global Studies, , University of Ottawa
- **Beatrice Keleher-Raffoul**  
Chair, Famous 5 Ottawa  
Canada Famous Five, or The Valiant Five



## Activities to be carried over to 2019/2020

### November 2019: Take a child to work - Shadow project

In November 2019 Women Heads of Mission are encouraged to take a child to work from Lisgar Collegiate or any other school. The date and logistics will be confirmed in September 2019.

### University of Ottawa

The Executive Committee is in discussion with the School of International Development and Global Studies at Ottawa University and the following are some of the recommendations for consideration:

1. Participation of female Ambassadors/ High Commissioners in panel discussions and other public events as well as guest lectures. In order to pinpoint thematic areas of interest and expertise, uOttawa has requested that the WHDMO members submit one-paragraph bios of Ambassadors/High Commissioners who may be interested in participating in these types of speaking opportunities.
2. Placement of undergraduate or graduate students with Embassies/ High Commissions as part of a “global and community engagement” type of internship through the Michaëlle Jean Centre for Global and Community Engagement. There are three modalities for this program. Students could participate through community service learning, extracurricular volunteering and community engagement scholarships.
3. Participation of pertinent uOttawa faculty in activities organized by/in partnership with the WHDMO.
4. 2019-2020 Strategic Areas of Focus
  - Lunch with Her Excellency, The Right Honourable Julie Payette, and Governor – General of Canada
  - Women’s Day celebration in partnership with Fairmont Château Laurier
  - Sport and Community involvement: Run for Women
  - Round table discussion in Partnership with Global Affairs.
  - Lecture series with uOttawa







We knowledge with thanks!



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