



2019/2020 Report of the Activities of the

Women Heads of Diplomatic Mission in Ottawa

LES FEMMES CHEFS DE
MISSION DIPLOMATIQUE
D'OTTAWA



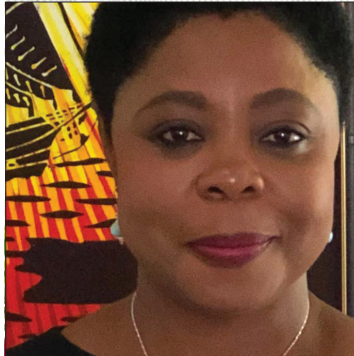
WOMEN HEADS OF
DIPLOMATIC MISSION
IN OTTAWA

Executive Committee of the Women Heads of Diplomatic Mission



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South Africa



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H. C. Natasha Smith,
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Committee member

Ambassador Anne Kari H.
Ovind, Norway



Committee Member

Ambassador Souriya
Otmani, Morocco



Committee member

Ambassador Josefina De La
Caridad Vidal Ferreiro, Cuba

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Executive Summary

Since the initial outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Hubei, the world has been in a tail-spin. The world as we know it will be totally different on the other side of COVID-19. Understandably, the outbreak will have significant ramifications on the global economy and how the world responds today will define tomorrow. This is not about poor or rich economies; surely people cannot be left to die because they are poor and their countries cannot afford responsive health systems. Regrettably given that this global transmittable challenge respects no boundaries, the richest country in the world is as weak as the poorest.

We therefore hope that rich countries will reach out where possible and realize that by assisting poor countries they are actually investing in their own economies. As Women Heads of Diplomatic Mission in Ottawa (WHDMO) we are keenly aware that women are the majority of the world's poor and therefore less able to afford health care than men. We hope there will be no gender discrimination when these women need to access health care facilities as it has also been observed that COVID-19 cares less about gender.

The Executive Committee of WHDMO takes this opportunity to wish all its members, their staff and families well during this period. We also urge our members to adhere to the health and security advisories issued by our host country, Canada. We are encouraged to learn that Madame' Sophie Grégoire Trudeau and Deputy Minister Marta Morgan both of whom had tested positive for the corona virus are now on the mend and we pray for their full recovery.

Our deepest condolences to the government and the people of Canada on the sad occasions in which the Canada Military helicopter crashed killing those onboard; and the senseless shooting whereby 22 Nova Scotia people lost their lives. As you mourn the loss of lives, know that our thoughts are with you especially the families and friends of the victims. This is not a welcome turn of events as the country is also mourning the lives which continue being lost due to the pandemic.

The ensuing report gives a summary of WHDMO activities during the 2019/2020 period. Indeed it has been a very busy and fruitful period for our group. The development around the world has meant that we could not hold our AGM the conventional way. Our constitution was silent on this and the Executive Committee took it upon itself to introduce an interim clause to ensure that our work continues and that a new Executive Committee is elected.

Excellencies, the Executive Committee sincerely appreciates your support and contributions during the 2019/2020 period. Without hesitation you advised and took part in different projects and delivered sterling work. We received very positive feedback on all our activities and engagements.

Owing to the lockdown and in complying with emergency regulations we either had to cancel or indefinitely postpone some activities. We appreciate the collaborations we had with different stakeholders during this reporting period. Our special appreciation goes to:

- GAC: Deputy Minister Marta Morgan; Women's Network and the Visible Minorities Network;

- DG West and Central Africa Tarik Khan; Chief of Protocol, Mr Stewart Wheeler
- Canadian Ambassador for Women, Peace and Security: Jacqueline O'Neill.
- Chair, The Famous Five Ottawa, Beatrice Keleher-Raffoul
- CEO of Elevate Women, Solange Tuyishime
- UBC Women in House, Senator Martins
- The office of the Governor –General
- Sales Manager, Government & Protocol, Laurence Schaller Fairmont Château Laurier
- Editor of the Diplomat Magazine, Jennifer Campbell.
- uOttawa

Congratulations to our members who won the Ambassador of the year awards. Your win is well deserved.

In conclusion, we thank you for affording us the opportunity to work with you during the 2019/2020 period in pursuit of WHDMO objectives. We take this opportunity to wish the incoming Executive Committee well and we are positive that they will take our forum to the next level.

Welcome New Members

The Executive Committee of the WHDMO welcomes the following Women Heads of Mission who have recently started their tour of duty

- Ambassador Anahit Harutyunyan, Armenia
- Ambassador Hanne Fugl Eskjær, Denmark
- Ambassador Reem Mkh Z Alkhaled, Kuwait

- High Commissioner Noraini Binti Abd Hamid, Malaysia
- Ambassador Baroule Fatima Meta, Mali
- Ambassador Hala Abou-Hassi, Palestine
- Ambassador Romy Vasquez Morales, Panama
- High Commissioner Ruth Chikwira, Zimbabwe

Members who completed their tour of duty

- Ambassador Marica Matkovič, Croatia
- High Commissioner Clarisa Riehl, Guyana
- High Commissioner Janice Avonne Miller, Jamaica
- Chargé d'affaires Shakila Umutoni, Rwanda

As at the end of this term the total number of Women Heads of Mission in Canada stands at 33.

Ambassador of the year Awards

Congratulations to the following Heads of Mission who won the 2019 Ambassador of the year Awards

- Ambassador Josefina De La Caridad Vidal Ferreiro, Cuba
- Ambassador Sofia Cerrato Rodrigues, Honduras
- Ambassador Ala Beleavschi, Moldova
- Ambassador Inés Martínez Valinotti, Paraguay



Summary of 2019-2020 Activities

Conversation with Deputy Minister Marta Morgan

The Executive Committee had invited Deputy Minister (DM) Marta Morgan for a conversation with WHDMO prior to the Annual General Meeting on July 2019. DM Marta Morgan who had assumed her duties at GAC in May of the same year, reflected on running the day-to-day operations; budget and programs of Global Affairs Canada; the impact of female leadership on Canada's feminist foreign policy and challenges ahead in Foreign Services. During this time Canada was preparing for the federal election and the Deputy Minister pointed out that business at GAC was affected by the "care taker period" and that all will normalize after the cabinet appointment. The conversation, which was held in a fireside chat style, was hosted at the Norwegian residence and led by Ambassador Anne Kari H. Ovind, Norway.

Conversation with Ambassador for Women, Peace and Security, Jacqueline O'Neill.

In October 2019, the Executive Committee held a meeting with Ms Jacqueline O'Neill, Canadian Ambassador for Women, Peace and Security. Ambassador O'Neill briefed the meeting on her portfolio and mandate. At this stage, the Ambassador's mandate is very broad and will become more stream-lined as she works within her portfolio. However, a key issue and deliverable is to provide confidential advice to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence with regards to the National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security. In addition, the Ambassador provides recommendations to a further seven (7) other Ministers who are also involved in the implementation of the NAP. The Plan includes 93 targets across development assistance, humanitarian action and peace and stabilization efforts.

Regarding the WHDMO, Ambassador O'Neill indicated that she is looking forward to working with the women Heads of Mission (HoM) and to raise the profile of certain aspects and issues around the empowerment of women and the role of women in peace and security. She reiterated that no one country has the monopoly on certain issues and that it is important for each of us to learn from the different countries.

“Take our kids to Work”

This project took place on 6 November 2019 and was done in conjunction with Global Affairs Canada. The programme commenced at GAC and was followed by various Heads of Mission taking up to three (3) children to their respective Embassies and High Commissions. Thank you to the following Ambassadors and High Commissioners who participated in the event to make it a success.

- Ambassador Anahit Harutyunyan, Armenia
- Ambassador Svetlana Sashova Stoycheva –Etropolski, Bulgaria
- Ambassador Josefina De La Caridad Vidal Ferreiro, Cuba
- Ambassador Nasise Challi Jira, Ethiopia
- High Commissioner Noraini Binti Abd Hamid, Malaysia
- Ambassador SOURIYA Otmani, Morocco
- Ambassador Inés Martínez Valinotti, Paraguay
- Minister Plenipotentiary (Deputy & Chargé d'affaires at the time)Tanya Sefolo, South Africa
- Chargé d'affaires Shakila Umutoni, Rwanda



This was another successful project and the executive committee has been approached by another school for inclusion on a similar project for 2020/2021. Since there is agreement that this project should continue, the next executive committee is encouraged to look into this proposal. Thank you to Ms Tanya Sefolo, Minister Plenipotentiary at the South African High Commission for pulling this event together.

The Famous Five 90th Anniversary celebrations

In 2019 the Famous Five celebrated its 90th anniversary of the Person's Case. On 14 November 2019 this milestone was observed through a panel discussion in partnership with the WHDMO. The panelists were the Ambassador of Women Peace and Security, Jacqueline O'Neill and the Women Heads of Mission were represented by Excellencies Janice Avonne Miller -Jamaica, Ala Beleavski- Moldova and Sibongiseni Dlamini-Mntambo- South Africa. The panel discussion focused on how they as women in their countries dealt with a particular challenge or obstacle in their rise to positions of leadership. Thank you to the Ambassadors and High Commissioners who participated in and attended the event.

GAC 6th edition: Speed Mentoring

For the second time in 2019 GAC partnered with the WHDMO on the speed mentoring project, a professional development networking event co-organized by the Women's Network and the Visible Minorities Network at GAC.

This event is a highlight in GAC's calendar, and the 6th edition took place on 6 December 2019. This is a continuation of the tradition of matching up to 60 mentees with six to eight

experienced senior managers for one-on-one discussions for a period of eight minutes each. Mentees asked questions and sought career guidance, and in turn, mentors had the opportunity to share their experiences and provide advice to support the professional development of the participants.

The Executive Committee would like to thank the following members of WHDMO who participated in the project:

- High Commissioner Natasha Smith, Australia
- Ambassador Svetlana Stoycheva-Etropolski, Bulgaria
- Chargé d'affaires Xochitl Zelaya, El Salvador
- Ambassador Dato' Nor'Aini Binti Abd Hamid, Malaysia
- Ambassador Ala Beleavski, Moldova
- Ambassador Inés Martinez Valinotti, Paraguay
- Ambassador Viviane Laure Elisabeth Bampassy, Sénégal
- Ambassador Melita Gabrič, Slovenia
- High Commissioner Sherry Tross, St Kitts and Nevis
- High Commissioner Sibongiseni Dlamini-Mntambo, South Africa
- Ambassador Salome Meyer, Switzerland
- Deputy Head of Mission Margaret Kyogire, Uganda

Elevate Women Conference

Elevate international is an organisation which unites leaders for constructive dialogues on the challenges women in leadership face today. It aims at promoting cross-sector partnerships to facilitate sharing of diversity and inclusion best practices so as to accelerate progress.



In March 2020 WHDMO was invited to take part at this annual conference, now in its sixth edition. The theme for the conference was elevate women- lead equality and the WHDMO spoke on the global on diplomacy and the impact, giving perspectives from the different regions. The closing key note address was also by the WHDMO.

Representing the WHDMO were:

- Ambassador Sofia Cerrato Rodrigues , Honduras
- High Commissioner Dato' Nor'Aini Binti Abd Hamid, Malaysia
- Ambassador Nasise Challi Jira, Ethiopia
- Ambassador Melita Gabric, Slovenia
- High Commissioner Sibongiseni Dlamini-Mntambo, South Africa

UBC Women in House

On March 09, Senator Martins invited WHDMO to take part in the “UBC Women in the House” programme organised for ten students some in their Master’s, or other senior degree programme at the University of British Columbia. The UBC Women in House is part of the School of Public Policy and Global Affairs program aimed at promoting greater level of female representation in the Canadian government. The selected students are interested in pursuing a career in politics, international relations and diplomacy. Part of the programme included shadowing Parliamentarians to observe political procedures, learn about gender equity and engage in mentorship and networking with Canadian political leaders.

The students were accompanied by their lecturers and the vice president of UBC. Representatives of the Women Heads of Mission were invited to have discussions with the students giving overviews of their careers, what measures their individual countries have taken to accelerate their progress, challenges and success along the way etc.

The WHDMO who took part in the program were:

- High Commissioner Dato' Nor'Aini Binti Abd Hamid, Malaysia
- Ambassador Hanne Fugl Eskjær, Denmark
- Ambassador Petronila Garcia, Philippines
- High Commissioner Sibongiseni Dlamini-Mntambo, South Africa

Lunch with the Governor – General

Lunch with the Governor – General took place on 11 March 2020. Other guests invited to join the WHDMO were senior government officials, leaders in State owned entities and also the private sector.

Robust engagement took place whereby women shared information on the support systems in place or to be sought in advancing gender inclusion. It was agreed that we should explore inviting some men to the next lunch with the GG in 2021.





2020/2021 Projects

Women's Day celebration

Given the health and safety advisories and the current emergencies on COVID-19 this project which was scheduled to take place on 26 March 2020 in partnership with Fairmont Château Laurier had to be postponed indefinitely.

Round Table discussion in partnership with the Diplomat online

The Executive Committee has finalised discussions with Ms Jennifer Campbell the editor of the Diplomat Magazine. The round table conversation will not take place but a

set of questions will be sent to the outgoing Executive Committee and the output of the discussion will be a double page spread in the diplomat publication for the December / January issue in advance of 2021 International Women's Day.

uOttawa

This is another project that has been affected by COVID-19 emergency closures. Thank you to all the Heads of Mission who submitted their profiles for this project last year. The new Executive Committee is encouraged to continue with the university as soon as everything normalises.



We knowledge with thanks!



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

