

**Advocacy, UN, CoE Report (Area 02, 04)
District Committee Chair: Anita Schnetzer-Spranger**

1. Zonta International = A Global Voice of Civil Society

Since “Advocacy” was introduced at the Melbourne Convention in 2006 as an equally important part to Zonta’s mission as “Service”, Districts and Clubs have made respectable strides in encompassing advocacy as a mean to fight for women’s rights. While we have a strong tradition in service, we have still to learn how to use advocacy tools to make our voices heard. In the past years advocacy grew to an important part of Zonta projects and activities and has gained significance on international, national and regional level.

Our ongoing advocacy impact is built around the advocacy campaign “Zonta Says NO to Violence Against Women”, taking place during the time 25 November to 10 December each year. Launched in 2012, the Campaign has raised awareness of the global pandemic of violence against women and has united Zonta Clubs worldwide in conducting impactful advocacy actions to fight women’s human rights violations and gender inequality.

Throughout the whole year all Zonta clubs and Districts are encouraged to take advocacy to action and

- To promote the human rights of women
- To promote the Sustainable Goal No 5 of the UN Agenda 2030 “Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering all women and girls”
- To end violence against women and girls
- To fight for gender equality

Advocacy is not only to say “NO to Violence Against Women” – it is also to say “YES to Equal Rights” !

2. Zonta International Goals 2020 – 2022 that have relevance to trigger advocacy actions are:

1. Zonta International will publish **statements** on issues impacting the lives of women and girls such as human trafficking, climate change and other topics as we work for improvements for women and girls in all facets of life.
2. Advocacy work focuses on **raising awareness of women’s rights and has lasting impact when laws are changed**
3. Clubs are encouraged **to participate in at least one advocacy activity each year.**
4. **The global Zonta Says No to Violence Against Women campaign** provides an opportunity for advocacy and gives aligned visibility to Zonta in the community.

3. D.28 Goal:

“Clubs shall participate in or organize one advocacy activity each year

Clubs’ advocacy activities and achievements:

- a) **Zonta Says NO to Violence against Women-Campaign (ZsN and OTW):** Despite the pandemic and unsecure times, clubs were very active and increased their participation in ZsN and OTW compared to last year. Overall activities have reached impactful actions.

Social media gets more and more importance in highlighting and spreading the activities and achievements of the clubs and to raise awareness on advocacy issues. Some Clubs contributed to the “Share your story”-page to let the Zonta International community know about their activities.

Area 02 (Germany): 89 % of clubs (24 clubs of 27) participated in the ZsN-Campaign, all of them joined the initiative “Orange the World” with a total of 120 lighted landmarks . 9 clubs collaborated with like minded organizations. Some clubs held the ZsN-Campaign under the auspices of local politicians, one club organized a public event held remotely discussing the implementation of the Istanbul Convention with the Minister of Family, Women and Youth.

4 Clubs participated in the “Mask 19”- Activity.

Area 04 (Switzerland/Liechtenstein): 90% of clubs (10 clubs of 11) participated in the ZsN-Campaign, 8 clubs joined the initiative OTW. Many creative projects raised awareness of violence against women, one project was filmed and disseminated via social media.

Clubs in Area 04 additionally collaborated with other like minded organizations, like the cfd (Christlicher Friedensdienst).

b) Advocacy activities throughout the year

Despite the pandemic situation, it is remarkable how much the clubs were still active and creative in advocating for women’s rights via digital platforms and through remote meetings and in continuing their established club projects:

- Often using commemoration days like International Women’s Day to promote Zonta’s mission and vision
- Using YWPA-/JMK-Award ceremonies to promote Zonta’s educational programs supporting women’s academic and professional career
- Rewarding young talented women in technology and other male dominated fields to provide support in their careers and to advocate for gender equality
- Supporting young talented girls and women in second education and in starting their business
- Focussing on migration issues, like special protection for refugee women and girls
- Collaborating with like minded organizations to improve the situation of women and their wellbeing in Africa
- Advocating for parity of women in politics (campaign of the Union of German Zonta clubs)

Conclusion:

D.28 has met ZI Goal 1: “ Zonta’s voice is heard”

4. UN 65th Session of the CSW: “Women’s full and effective participation and decision making in public life”

Due to the pandemic the CSW in New York took place on a virtual base. An unprecedented opportunity for clubs and members to attend official sessions, side and parallel events, to experience high level forums and to connect with other like minded organizations.

5. CoE Webinar on the Istanbul Convention

The ZI CoE Committee invited Zonta International membership to a special webinar on the CoE Istanbul Convention, very well perceived and attended by ZI clubs.

6. D.28 Advocacy Committee

We have learned that the most effective advocacy action for clubs is being taken on the national level. Therefore the District Advocacy Committee was extended at the beginning of the biennium. An Advocacy Representative was appointed for each Area to support the clubs in their advocacy activities on the national level:

Area 02: Sonja Hartmann, ZC Damstadt

Area 03: Francesca Mastrovito, ZC Cosenza

Area 04: Suzanne Spetzler, ZC Bern Ursa

7. District Advocacy, UN and CoE Chair's Activities and Support

Key objectives:

- a) to assist the clubs to fulfil the **ZI Biennial Goal and the D 28 Goal to participate in at least one advocacy activity each year and to take part in the ZsN-Campaign**
- b) to provide information and engage members on **UN and CoE issues** pertaining to women's rights and gender equality for advocacy activities with an impact

- Clubs were provided with the ZI statement on support of the Istanbul Convention
- Clubs were provided with the ZsN-Campaign tool kit and additional information on the Istanbul Convention.
- Clubs were provided with the CoE Recommendation in support of the Istanbul Convention, adapted during the autumn session 2020 of the Conference of INGOs.
- 10 December, International Day of Human Rights: distributing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the history behind it.
- Clubs were encouraged to attend the 65th CSW virtually and were provided with guidelines and information on how to register and participate in the parallel and side events.
- Sent out information on Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention and disseminated responding statements by UN Women, CoE, CoE Conference of INGOs, Zonta International.
- Disseminated relevant topics of ZI webinars given by the ZI Advocacy Committee.
- Disseminated information on the 10th anniversary of the Istanbul Convention and the digital conference "Gender Equality and the Istanbul Convention: a decade of action", followed by the Declaration of the Council of Europe on this occasion.
- Clubs were informed that the US Women's Caucus at the UN endorses Zonta International's statement on the Istanbul Convention in their own statement on the issue of Turkey's withdrawal of the IC, sending it to President Biden while he is attending the NATO Summit.
- Represented ZI at the Conference of INGOs in Strasburg, participating in the Working Group "Gender Perspective in Political Processes" and other working groups with the goal to observe gender mainstreaming in the work and outcome of the Conference of INGOs and to make the Conference a reliable partner to the Council of Europe.

8. Outlook and perspectives 2021-2022:

- The ZsN-Campaign 2021 will focus on combating violence against women and girls and on the Istanbul Convention as a concrete advocacy tool. The German Union of Zonta Clubs is planning an online petition to urge the German Government to come up with a strong national strategic plan to set up an effective coordination initiative for integrated policies in order to implement the requirements of the Istanbul Convention adequately.
- This year Switzerland celebrates the 50th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage in Switzerland. The first event was being held on 1 August, organized by Alliance F. The second event will be a hiking-tour organized by Area 04/28 and Area 04/30 to the "Rütli".

9. Appreciation

Dear Fellow Zontians, please let me thank you for your commitment in taking action in advocacy initiatives, for your alertness in women's politics and in speaking up for those less fortunate. For pointing out setbacks and inequalities in women's rights, for being civil society's voice.

Wishing you much success in your club's advocacy activities.

Thank you all!

Anita Schnetzer-Spranger, PID
District 28 Advocacy, UN, CoE Chair