

INTERNATIONAL HELVI SIPILÄ SEMINAR SERIES

Helvi Sipilä (1915–2009) was a Finnish lawyer, diplomat and the first female Assistant Secretary-General of the UN.

Sipilä received numerous national and international awards including twelve honorary doctorates, and she was granted the honorary title of State Minister in 2001. She held leadership position in several associations, including the International Federation of Women Lawyers and the International Council of Women.

Helvi Sipilä's profession in law was exceptional at the time. When she announced the opening of her own law firm in 1943, she became the second woman in the Finnish history to practice as a lawyer. She ran her own law firm for 30 years. Private entrepreneurship enabled her to engage in extensive social activities, including service as a member of governmental missions.

While Assistant Secretary-General, she was appointed Secretary-General for the UN World Conference on Women in Mexico 1975. She continued to work as a consultant for the UN until 1981, co-creating the UN Fund for the Advancement of Women in 1976, later known as UNIFEM (now part of UN Women), during the UN Decade for Women 1976–1985.

Helvi Sipilä was a well-known and respected advocate for equality and women's rights. Her important legacy will live on.

The International Helvi Sipilä Seminar Series was inspired by a keynote speech held by Sipilä at the Special Session of the UN Assistant Secretary-Generals held at the CSW49 in 2005.

The first international Helvi Sipilä Seminar was organized at the CSW50 in 2006 to honor the work of Minister Helvi Sipilä. The Seminar Series addresses challenging issues that affect women and their lives locally and globally in the 21st century. This year's event is the 17th seminar in this series.

The seminar is organized jointly by the Finnish Federation of Graduate Women, the National Council of Women of Finland, the Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations – NYTKIS, UN Women Finland, and the Young Women's Christian Association of Finland YWCA.

For more information, contact: merja.kahkonen@naisjarjestot.fi.

17th International Helvi Sipilä Seminar

MY BODY IS MINE – Women's Human Rights and Technological Innovations

Thursday 9th March 2023
at 9.00–10.15 am EST (New York), 16–17.15 pm EET (Helsinki)
@the Permanent Mission of Finland to the UN,
605 Third Avenue, 35 Floor, NY

Breakfast served at 8.45

Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/HelviSipila>
or watch the stream online: <https://tinyurl.com/HelviSipilaStream>



17th International Helvi Sipilä Seminar

MY BODY IS MINE

Women's Human Rights and
Technological Innovations

Naisjärjestöjen
Keskusliitto

akateemiset
naiset
KVINNLIJIA AKADEMIKKER
GRADUATE WOMEN

NNKY-KFUK-YWCA

NYTKIS
NAISJÄRJESTÖT YHTEISTYÖSSÄ

UN WOMEN
FINLAND

CONCEPT NOTE



Pia-Lisa Sundell

is the Chair of the Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations NYTKIS and a women's and children's rights champion by profession.

Thomas Blomqvist is the Minister for Nordic Cooperation and Equality of Finland and a Member of Parliament since 2007.

Mona Sinha is the Global Executive Director of Equality Now and a globally recognized advocate for gender equality with over 25 years of experience.

Bhishtah Mohammadi is a journalist, an investigative reporter and political producer residing in Kabul, Afghanistan

Sumi Clara Dcosta is a RiseUp! Youth Lead in Young Women's Christian Association YWCA Bangladesh and a student of interior architecture

Speaker from UN Women (TBC)

Elina Kalkku is the Ambassador and the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations. She has served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1983.

Saara-Sofia Sirén is the President of the National Council of Women of Finland, a second term Member of the Parliament and a long-term women's rights champion.

Katri Viinikka is the Ambassador for Gender Equality of Finland and a former Director of the Unit for UN and General Global Affairs and Chief of Cabinet in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

PROGRAM

17th International Helvi Sipilä Seminar: My Body is Mine – Women's Human Rights and Technological Innovations

Many countries limit or even deny their citizens' access to internet, preventing women from enjoying their full human rights. This seminar focuses on two themes regarding girls' and women's rights online. Firstly, it will discuss girls' and women's equal and safe access to internet and technological innovations all over the world. Secondly, it brings forth insights across the globe on factors supporting women's empowerment and generational equality, such as free platforms to learn IT skills and coding, which may ensure that internet is harnessed in support of women's human rights.

Program

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| 9.00 am | Welcoming words
Pia-Lisa Sundell , Chair, the Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations NYTKIS |
| 9.05 am | Opening remarks
Thomas Blomqvist , Minister for Nordic Cooperation and Equality of Finland |
| 9.15 am | Keynote speech
Mona Sinha , Global Executive Director, Equality Now |
| 9.25 am | Video: Women and the internet in Afghanistan
Bhishtah Mohammadi , journalist |
| 9.30 am | Comments
Sumi Clara Dcosta , RiseUp! Youth Lead, Young Women's Christian Association
TBC
UN Women |
| 9.45 am | Discussion
Elina Kalkku , Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations
Saara-Sofia Sirén , Member of Parliament, President, the National Council of Women of Finland |
| 10.00 am | Questions |
| 10.10 am | Closing remarks
Katri Viinikka , Ambassador for Gender Equality of Finland |
| 10.15 am | End of event |
| Moderator | Jutta Hartikainen , the Finnish Federation of Graduate Women |