

VIDEO NEWS RELEASE:

Yesterday the Commonwealth Youth Gender and Equality Network (CYGEN) helped launch a global campaign to end gender discrimination in the law. The #LeveltheLaw campaign focuses on urging governments to change or repeal national laws that disadvantage women in any area from socio-economic status to health, legal standing or protection from gender-based violence.

CYGEN is the foremost youth-led gender advocacy network in the Commonwealth, drawing its membership of young professionals working in this area from all five regions of the Commonwealth.

Addressing a Global Poverty Project event on the sidelines of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York, CYGEN member Faith Wafula from Kenya said: “Change starts at the ground, the conversation should begin there. Laws should lead to behavioural change. People should know the law and accept the law. Laws that are only on paper may look nice but are completely valueless.”

Australian Ambassador for Women and Girls, Natasha Stott Despoja also launching the campaign said: “In no country has gender equality been achieved. There is much that remains to be done. Gender equality is not only about what is right and fair. It is also of great economic value.”

CYGEN’s involvement in the #Levelthelaw campaign comes just four days after UN Women’s first ever ‘Youth CSW’ bringing together young advocates and experts on gender equality ahead of the main meeting of governments, as well as two days after Commonwealth Day which this year launched the theme ‘an Inclusive Commonwealth’.

CYGEN Co-ordinator, Sri Lankan Sarah Soysa, in the UK to attend Commonwealth Day celebrations and a week-long programme held at the Commonwealth Secretariat said: “It is very important that young people of all diversities, especially young women be a part of this amazing campaign and lead it.”

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

The Commonwealth Youth Gender and Equality Network (CYGEN) is a youth-led advocacy group that works towards policy change that improves the lives of young people and promotes gender equality. First convened by the Royal Commonwealth Society, it is now the premier group of young experts on gender equality issues in the Commonwealth.

The Royal Commonwealth Society is the oldest Commonwealth civil society organisation, founded in 1868. Her Majesty The Queen is its Patron. The Royal Commonwealth Society organises the Commonwealth Service each year on Commonwealth Day, which has been attended by Her Majesty since 1966. It is the largest annual multi-faith service in the UK. www.thercs.org

The Youth CSW

The inaugural Youth Forum at Commission on Status of Women 60 (CSW60) brought together young women and young men working on gender equality along with international organisations and UN agencies to amplify their common concerns and advocacy efforts in advance of the starting of the official session.

BROADCASTERS, AGENCIES AND ONLINE VIDEO SITES - A free-to-use Video News Release is available for download below:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B_yd9PWqhnmlVEhUMERZSF IPTVE/view?usp=sharing

Video format: Quicktime H.264 1080i HD.

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-Sarah Soysa, CYGEN

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