

The United Nations presents

## Driving with Selvi



**SELVI**

### **ELISA PALOSCHI**

Paloschi is a documentary director, producer, cinematographer and photographer who is drawn to stories with a human voice. She is President of Eyesfull, a Toronto-based independent production company. With more than 20 years' experience in every aspect of documentary production, all over the world, her work has been screened at festivals in Germany, Italy, Greece, and Canada, and broadcast on numerous Italian television stations.



### **JACKLINE WAWERU**

Waweru is a representative of the DSW Youth-to-Youth initiative, based in Kenya's Coast region. Since the age of 15 she has worked as an activist on sexual and reproductive health and rights, family planning and gender-based violence. With a passion for community work, Waweru is driven by her childhood experiences and encounters in her community, especially with her peers whom she lost to teenage pregnancies, unsafe abortions, drugs and substance abuse and HIV/AIDs.

### **SIETSKE STENEKER**

Steneker is the Director of the Brussels office the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). A national of the Netherlands, she has previously worked as UNFPA Representative in the Russian Federation, Honduras and El Salvador. She holds Masters Degrees in International Law and Public Health in Developing Countries. UNFPA delivers a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled.



### **CAROLINE PETIT**

Petit is the Deputy Director of the UN Regional Information Centre (UNRIC) and chairs the UN Communication Group of 26 UN agencies. She has over 25 years of international experience in communications, strategic partnerships and public information campaigns; for 12 years she was Head of the Strategic Partnerships Unit at UN Headquarters, and has also worked within the European Commission (EU Media Programme), and film institutions in London and Copenhagen.

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**TONIGHT'S EVENT USING THE HASHTAG #CINEONU and #EUGirlsWeek**

**UNRIC is the communication hub for the United Nations in Europe. Based in Brussels, the Centre covers 22 Western European countries and maintains a website in 13 languages. Visit [www.unric.org](http://www.unric.org) for more information.**



The European Week of Action for Girls 2016 is organised under the Patronage of Neven Mimica, European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development and the European Parliament.



### What is a girl child?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines child as "a human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier".

### Facts about child marriage

- India has the highest number of child brides worldwide. Almost half of India's female children are married.
- Girls in poor households are almost twice as likely to get married when they are children.
- The most effective way to reduce child marriage worldwide is to provide education and economic opportunity to young women in vulnerable regions.

Film can be a powerful catalyst for change, and Driving with Selvi is the ideal vehicle to build support for women and girls in India. **Save Her A Seat** is a three-tiered girls' advocacy program that works with Indian NGOs to shift attitudes about child marriage through grassroots film screenings, education, and vocational training for women: <http://drivingwithselvi.com/support>

# Canada

Canada is proud to support young Canadian girls in reaching their full potential and being positive influencers in their communities and internationally. The empowerment of women and girls is key to raising the voices of women everywhere and is a priority across Canadian government policy and programming.

The Government of Canada, in partnership with Plan International, led the call for an **International Day of the Girl Child** at the United Nations to raise awareness about the particular challenges that girls face, as well as their tremendous potential, and to take action. Canada, alongside Turkey and Peru and supported by the EU, sponsored a resolution which was formally adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 19, 2011. The UN then declared October 11, 2012 as the world's first International Day of the Girl Child, with UNICEF selecting ending child marriage as the first theme.

Since 2013 Canada has sponsored an annual event at the UN entitled "Girls Speak Out". This was the very first entirely girl-run and girl-led event ever held at the UN, and it continues to be a unique opportunity for girl leaders to speak directly to UN decision-makers about issues that affect them.

Canada's close ties to the **International Day of the Girl** were one of the factors that subsequently led Canada to bring forward the first ever Resolution on ending child, early and forced marriage in fall 2013 bringing international attention to this devastating harmful practice and leading to a follow-up Resolution on child marriage being passed in 2014 with 116 co-sponsors. Child marriage was also subsequently incorporated into the UN **Sustainable Development Goals**.