



2021

ANNUAL REPORT

MAY 2022



**Global
Justice Center**

Human Rights Through Rule of Law

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

2021 was yet another year of remarkable—and essential—growth and change for the Global Justice Center.

Our team continued to respond to the many disruptions and challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, both internally and externally, as our advocacy adapted to a mostly-online world. From the United States to Myanmar, mounting nationalism and authoritarianism initiated widespread violence and upheaval in democratic frameworks. In the US specifically, we witnessed the development of some of the most insidious and extreme abortion restrictions in recent history. These constant threats to human rights only fueled our resolve. With international law as a powerful tool, we continued our work to ensure that human rights are upheld and protected and that governments are held accountable when they do not comply with their international legal obligations.

One of GJC's greatest strengths has always been our ability to critically evaluate our approach to feminist legal advocacy and make strategic, nimble shifts to generate the greatest impact and adapt to an ever-changing world.

Despite the challenges, I am in awe of all our small but mighty team has accomplished in the past year. Significantly, in 2021 we (entirely virtually!) created a new strategic framework that will guide our work for the next five years. This process offered our team the opportunity to have deep and difficult conversations about GJC's role and value-add in the international human rights landscape—an area that must reckon with its patriarchal underpinnings, as well as with legacies of racism and colonialism.

We developed a new mission, vision, and theory of change for GJC that better align with our values and fully embrace intersectional and inclusive feminist values. We are putting these progressive principles front and center, and prioritizing flexibility to ensure that GJC remains a dynamic organization that responds quickly to unforeseen challenges.

As part of this, we wanted to make undeniably clear that our longstanding work to protect and strengthen reproductive rights and demand justice for sexual and gender-based violence ultimately cannot succeed if the very institutions meant to uphold human rights reproduce the prejudice and inequality they were designed to combat. As a result, we have made it a strategic priority to strengthen multilateral institutions and ground them in feminist principles. GJC has an ambitious new goal to not only uplift these institutions, but to fundamentally transform them based upon principles of equality and nondiscrimination.

The long road of implementation—into every facet of our organization—begins now. We know that we have a lot of hard work ahead to ensure our programs, partnerships, and strategies are grounded in equity, inclusivity, and an intersectional feminist approach. We are so excited and ready for this challenge.

Thank you for your unwavering support and for being an essential part of this bold, innovative, feminist community.

In solidarity and with immense gratitude,



Akila



LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

To the GJC Community,

I am thrilled to be writing to you following my first year as the Global Justice Center's Chair of the Board of Directors. This past year was, in short, monumental for GJC, and I am incredibly proud of all the team has accomplished.

When I joined the Board in 2016, the world—and GJC—were in a much different place. Developing a new, five-year strategic framework provided the time and space to give a necessary reflection on the organization's value-add to the current world. Everything learned throughout the process—including understanding GJC's successes and areas for improvement—has bolstered the faith in our mission and commitment to a gender-equal world.

If the last few years have shown us anything, it's that we need bold, innovative solutions to incredibly pressing human rights abuses. Feminist interpretations of international law prove to be an influential way to address patriarchal structures and systemic inequities at the root cause. GJC not only protects reproductive rights and fights for accountability for gender-based violence, but truly understands how these issues are deeply connected, and simultaneously works to support and improve the international systems that defend human rights.

It is this kind of creative and brave work that sets GJC apart, what makes them unique, and what makes their expertise so desperately needed in the international advocacy space. Their powerful, feminist, and principled approach will carry them forward into this new chapter for the organization—one that is fundamentally grounded in intersectionality, inclusivity, and nondiscrimination.

I look forward to continuing working with GJC's team and their incredible community of supporters. The greatest successes are yet to come.

In solidarity,



Gretchen



ABOUT US

Our team is made up of creative feminists who use international law. We are—and always will be—the lawyers in the room who are unafraid to speak truth to power and fight for a progressive interpretation and application of international law.

OUR VISION

A gender-equal world where every person lives free from violence, has full bodily autonomy, and has the power to access justice to protect and promote their human rights.

OUR MISSION

Creative feminists using international law to achieve gender equality and dismantle systems of oppression.

OUR EXPERTISE

FIGHTING FOR SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Access to safe and quality abortion to all pregnant people is a fundamental part of the sexual and reproductive health and rights framework - and an absolute necessity for the achievement of gender equality. We fight to ensure that it is respected, protected, and fulfilled as a fundamental human right.

DEMANDING JUSTICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Sexual and gender-based violence is, at its core, an expression of discrimination, patriarchy, and inequality. We work to ensure that gender shapes the prevention of and response to violence.

ADVANCING A MULTILATERAL SYSTEM GROUNDED IN FEMINIST PRINCIPLES

A strong multilateral system is essential to advance global gender equality. However, multilateral systems, including the UN, continue to operate with an inherently patriarchal understanding of diplomacy, law, and power. With privileged access to high-level institutions, including the UN Security Council, we aim to rebuild the multilateral system based on principles of feminism, inclusivity, and nondiscrimination.



2021 IN NUMBERS

83
SUPPORTERS
MADE GIFTS TO GJC

Our expertise was featured over **40** times in publications such as the New York Times, Al Jazeera, and CNN and we published **18** op-eds in outlets such as the Washington Post, Foreign Policy, and Just Security

GJC STAFF
PARTICIPATED IN

24
PANELS &
WEBINARS

9
FULL TIME
STAFF MEMBERS

\$1.4
MILLION
BUDGET

SOCIAL MEDIA METRICS



1,654 new followers
24,333 impressions

@Global_Justice_Center



22% increase in followers
16,469 impressions

@GlobalJusticeC



268 new followers
109% increase in engagement

/Global-Justice-Center

IMPACT:

FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN MYANMAR

The last year was pivotal in the fight for justice and accountability in Myanmar, and in turn, for GJC's work to demand justice for crimes of sexual and gender-based violence.

We continued to engage in advocacy around the case against the government of Myanmar at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), including fighting for the case to include gender perspectives and expertise and pay special attention to crimes of sexual and gender-based violence. We push forward in our advocacy at the UN and other international institutions to ensure that peace and justice in Myanmar remain a priority, and that the full, equal and meaningful participation of women is at the center of all efforts.

JUSTICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN MYANMAR SPOTLIGHT

Our team conducted UN Security Council education and advocacy on the broader context of military impunity and systemic discrimination in Myanmar. We drafted and disseminated factsheets and talking points with diplomatic staff, UN actors, and partner civil society organizations.

We highlighted the discrimination and patriarchy embedded in Myanmar's laws and policies, as well as provided input on avenues for structural reform and accountability by leveraging opportunities such as the Universal Periodic Review of Myanmar, the UN Secretary-General's annual report on the Responsibility to Protect, and the International Criminal Court Assembly of States Parties.

Following the military coup in February, we joined our partners in pressuring the international community to issue a global arms embargo on Myanmar to help prevent further atrocities against peaceful protesters as well as supporting the coordination of a [joint letter](#) to the UN Security Council signed by over 200 civil society organizations calling for the restriction of arms sales to the military.

We simultaneously published and widely circulated a [factsheet](#) answering questions regarding Myanmar's Preliminary Objections at the International Court of Justice. In partnership with the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (GCR2P) we explained the concept of Responsibility to Protect and its importance for Myanmar.

Throughout the year, we participated in 14 global discussions on Myanmar accountability efforts and prioritized uplifting our grassroots partners' demands in high-level spaces, including through hosting a [press conference](#) with our partners at the Women's League of Burma to brief the media on how the international community can best support Myanmar

We will continue to demand action from the international community to protect the people of Myanmar, ensure gender equality, and work with our partners to fight for justice and human rights for all.

10,526

people have been arrested, charged, or sentenced in Myanmar since the coup (as of April 18, 2022 - [Assistance Association of Political Prisoners, Burma](#))

"Atrocities will never end until the military is under civilian control and there is a new constitution giving ethnic people control over their homes."

Moon Nay Li during 11/11 panel discussion
"Preventing Atrocities with a WPS
Perspective: A Myanmar Case Study"

IMPACT:

PUSHING THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

The monumental US election in November brought an end to four long years of the Trump administration's vicious attacks on human rights—and sexual and reproductive rights in particular—and a promise of human rights champions in the White House. Our team quickly began strategizing on how to put forward progressive policies on sexual and reproductive rights and make proactive strides to protect abortion access in the next four years.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT

We continued advocacy around our joint lawsuit against the Trump administration and the then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's dangerous and illegal "Commission on Unalienable Rights" – arguing that the international human rights law framework already adequately defines human rights, and within that framework access to safe abortion is a protected right. Although disappointed to learn that our case was dismissed on mootness grounds, the Commission's dangerous agenda still reverberates on a global scale, and we continued to call on the great need for strengthening the international human rights framework to protect against future threats.

Leveraging the momentum of President Biden repealing the Global Gag Rule in January, we continued to push the administration to eliminate all abortion restrictions—including the Helms and Siljander amendments, the latter a lesser-known and often undiscussed restriction that severely impacts global healthcare and services. As part of our efforts, we published a [factsheet](#) on the Siljander amendment and published a [joint article](#) in Foreign Policy on clear steps beyond the Gag Rule that Biden and his administration can take to protect abortion access.

We also leveraged the UN Universal Periodic Review of the US as an opportunity to highlight and challenge US abortion restrictions, including the Siljander and Helms amendments, as violations of international law. We coordinated a [letter](#) to the Biden administration—with signatories from over 140 peer organizations—emphasizing the need for the US to implement the recommendations on sexual and reproductive health and rights made in the Review, including an executive order on Helms exceptions and supporting congressional repeal of the Helms and Siljander amendments.

In September, we filed a joint [amicus brief](#) with Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch in the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health* case at the US Supreme Court—a dangerous bill from Mississippi that could potentially restrict abortion as little as fifteen weeks into pregnancy. Our brief argues that the proposed law violates the US' international human rights obligations. We are actively seeking out further opportunities to support US abortion advocates by contributing our unique international legal expertise and understanding of international human rights mechanisms.

"Despite a change in leadership, the current climate in the US is more hostile towards abortion than ever. And as the year progressed, we witnessed the tipping point towards some of the most extreme US abortion bans in history, a sad yet unsurprising shift for those of us who have worked in this space for decades. The harsh reality is that the US Supreme Court will likely overturn *Roe v. Wade* and uphold multiple state laws banning abortion. As a result, our team is thinking bigger to construct an understanding and appreciation for international human rights law and its protections for abortion rights within the US."

Our fight doesn't stop here. We will continue to push for ambitious and proactive plans to ensure that all individuals have control over their own bodies and reproductive futures.

IMPACT: ENSURING ABORTION ACCESS IN CONFLICT ZONES

GJC continued our work to protect and expand abortion access in areas of conflict, including through advocacy with the European Commission, and at the UN Security Council, where we used the 20th anniversary of the Women, Peace and Security agenda to drive home the importance of comprehensive abortion care in conflict responses.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS IN HUMANITARIAN CONTEXTS SPOTLIGHT

With our partners Médecins Sans Frontières, Amnesty International, and the International Rescue Committee, we participated in a parliamentary briefing in coordination with Members of the European Parliament to brief the European Commissioner for Crisis Management on the legal obligations to provide abortion access and the importance of donor clarity for providers on the ground.

We launched a letter-writing campaign responding to European Union humanitarian funding announcements to keep pressure on the EU Commission to allocate funding for abortion care. Following this, the EU Commissioner for Crisis Management reaffirmed the Commission's position that international humanitarian law is the governing legal framework protecting survivors of conflict-related sexual violence and that, as a matter of law, displaces restrictive national laws and regulations. **This important confirmation resulted, in part, from our consistent advocacy to push the EU to fully implement its 2015 policy on abortion in conflict settings.**

With our partners, we pushed for the EU Commission to promote both needs-based and rights-based approaches to abortion access as complementary rather than opposite arguments. This collaboration has been invaluable for our work, and we continue to look for opportunities to strengthen these partnerships.

At the UN, we worked in coalition with partners to protect sexual and reproductive rights within the Women, Peace, and Security framework in the run-up to the April 2021 UN Open Debate on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence. Our advocacy included tactics to address potential threats to the existing sexual and reproductive rights framework.

We continued our participation in the Inter-agency Working Group on Reproductive Health in Crises and supported the group's rapidly changing policy frameworks in response to COVID-19. We also submitted a [report](#) to the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to health regarding abortion restrictions and COVID-19—stating that abortion is necessary medical care and must be protected as a human right.

“The stories of women, of sexual violence, are often used to sensationalize the narrative. But they rarely inform responses.”

- GJC President Akila Radhakrishnan

Safe abortion is a fundamental part of the sexual and reproductive health and rights framework, and state and international funding must protect universal access. GJC is working to ensure this is a lived reality for all.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

17



YALDA AFSHAR

Obstetrics and Gynecology Clinical Instructor, and Fellow in Maternal Fetal Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles David Geffen School of Medicine



GRETCHEN FREEMAN-CAPPIO

Partner at Keller Rohrback Law Offices, LLC



TRACY HIGGINS

Professor of Law at Fordham Law School and Co-Director of the Leitner Center for International Law and Justice



SHANNON RAJ SINGH

Human Rights Counsel at Twitter



SHEFALI SALWAN

Co-Founder and Head of Value Coaching at CEO.works



PAYAL SHAH

Sexual Violence in Conflict Zones Program Director at Physicians for Human Rights



JAMIE SHANDRO

Emergency Physician and Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine at the University of Washington School of Medicine, Harborview Medical Center



VIREN MASCARENHAS

Partner at King & Spalding LLP



JELENA PIA-COMELLA

Managing Coordinator for the Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes (GAAMAC)



ELISABETH WICKERI

Executive Director of the Leitner Center for International Law and Justice

OUR FINANCIALS

19

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 637,334
Unconditional promises to give	
Without donor restrictions	\$ 29,999
With donor restrictions	\$ 1,138,355
Prepaid expenses and other assets	\$ 37,265
Security deposits	\$ 21,366
Investments	\$ 441,210
Property and equipment, at cost, net of accumulated depreciation	\$ 11,774

Total Assets: \$2,317,303

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Liabilities	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 36,030
Loans payable	\$ 155,732
Total Liabilities	\$ 191,762

Commitments and Contingency

Net Assets	
Without Donor Restrictions	
Operating	\$ 85,725
Board designated	\$ 891,683
Total Without Donor Restrictions	\$ 977,408
With Donor Restrictions	\$ 1,148,133
Total Net Assets	\$ 2,125,541

Total Liabilities and Net Assets: \$2,317,303

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

CHANGES IN NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Revenue and Other Support	
Grants and contributions	\$ 736,037
Special event revenue	-
Donated services	\$ 8,845
Forgiveness of loan payable - Paycheck Protection	
Program	\$ 161,187
Net investment income (loss)	\$ 90,054
Program income	-
Gain on foreign exchange	-
	\$ 996,123
Net assets released from restrictions	
Satisfaction of time and program restrictions	\$ 334,360

Total Revenue and Other Support \$ 1,330,483

Expenses	
Program Services	\$ 837,680
Supporting Services	
Management and general	\$ 188,199
Fundraising	\$ 180,145

Total Expenses \$ 1,206,024

Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions \$ 124,459

CHANGES IN NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Contributions	\$ 829,478
Net assets released from restrictions	(\$ 334,360)

Increase in Net Assets With Donor Restrictions \$ 495,118

Increase in net assets	\$ 619,577
Net assets, beginning of year	\$ 1,505,964

Net Assets, End of Year: \$2,125,541

MESSAGE OF THANKS

The highlights shared here reflect what you have made possible during this period of hardship. It is emblematic of our combined strength and shared determination to achieve gender equality.

Thank you for being an integral part of our community.

LIST OF DONORS

Our work would not be possible without the generous support of our donors. We are proud to recognize members of our community who made gifts between **October 1, 2020 and September 30, 2021.**

TRAILBLAZERS (\$300,000+)

Anonymous

GAME CHANGER (\$100,000+)

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Mary McGowan Davis and Fred Davis
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Toby Golick

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Brett Fromson
Susan and Martin Lipton
Alfred Meyer
Jelena Pia-Comella
Ann Rothschild

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Amazon Smile
Fiserv

If we inadvertently left off your name, please contact Benil Mostafa at bmostafa@globaljusticecenter.net