



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***Zoroastrian delegation to participate at the United Nations
As part of the 68th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68)***

NEW YORK, January 4, 2024 – FEZANA will be participating at the 68th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) Conference to be held at the UN Headquarters in New York, USA.

This year the CSW68 priority theme is, **“Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective”**. FEZANA had a record number of applications for this year’s CSW conference. A very large team of delegates will be attending the conference in March 2024.

Participants:



Amy Vatcha

Amy is based in the San Francisco Bay Area and has five years of experience in the technology industry. She is currently a Senior Analyst at Salesforce, a Fortune 500 cloud software company. Amy holds a dual BA in Economics and BS in Business Administration from UC Berkeley and an MSc in Management of Information Systems & Digital Innovation from The London School of Economics (LSE). At the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68), Amy will speak about women's representation in the workplace.



Anushe Irani

Anushe is a sophomore at California Polytechnic University studying Environmental Management and Protection with a minor in Photography and Videography. She holds a position on board for the Persian club at California Polytechnic University and is an avid member of the Persian Zoroastrian community located in the Bay Area. She also holds a position as a photographer for Associated Students Incorporated at California Polytechnic University. In her free time she volunteers for various organizations based around environmental management and protection and plans to pursue a profession that aligns with her volunteering efforts.

**Katayun Kapadia**

Katayun enjoys working with local, national, and global Zoroastrian communities and is happy to hold leadership positions in the community so that she can provide support, guidance and direction to various communal activities and events. She is a proponent of promoting youth leadership and inspires them to become future leaders. As a dynamic communal leader, she aspires to help channel the community in an affirmative direction by focusing on meeting its social, cultural, and religious needs. Katayun has conscientiously served with dedication, dignity, and respect for all as President of FEZANA; President of ZAPANJ, Global Treasurer of WZCC and on boards of several global organizations. Katayun is a Chartered Accountant, Certified Internal Auditor and a Certified Fraud Examiner with over

40+ years of demonstrated domestic and international accounting and auditing experience.

**Marina Batliwalla**

Marina has over 20 years' experience as an Institutional Investment Consultant with Mercer Investments LLC. She is also producer and host of the Banking On Girls Podcast which highlights the importance of raising ALL girls with financial literacy, through real-life stories and interviews. The views on the podcast are her own. Marina holds a BEc in Actuarial Studies from Macquarie University, Sydney and is a Fellow of the Society of Actuaries and a CFA Charterholder. She is a graduate mentor from the gold-accredited Cherie Blair Foundation for Women, Mentoring Women in Business Programme. Marina was named as the 2023 Honoree by Women In Institutional Investments Networking (WIIIN), Los Angeles.

**Natasha Dungor**

Natasha Dungor is a 17-year-old, 11th grade high schooler from Houston, Texas. Inspired by her parents, she has volunteered and been an active member of the Houston Zarathushti community from a young age. Her involvement spans from serving numerous years on the Middle and Youth Officer Boards to organizing annual events and fundraisers and more. Natasha is an avid learner with a goal to pursue a career in healthcare and passionately enjoys performing and teaching dance and spending time with family, friends, and her Houston community. She is a part of the FEZANA Ava Project and is the Youth and Young Adults Program Co-Lead on the NAZC2024 Program Committee.

**Nazneen Engineer**

Nazneen was the first Postdoctoral Researcher at the Shapoorji Pallonji Institute of Zoroastrian Studies at SOAS, University of London. For her doctorate, she produced an annotated translation of a Parsi Gujarati text written in 1883 by a prominent Parsi Zoroastrian priest. After her PhD, Nazneen returned to India where she worked for a children's charitable trust. She undertook her first post-doctoral research project assessing the pathways to an ethnic and religious identity for the offspring of mixed marriage.

Nazneen was Project Manager of Gen Z and Beyond: A Survey for Every Generation, a survey that collected and analyzed data on the global Zoroastrian community.

**Sabrina Bilimoria**

Sabrina is currently pursuing her Master of Social Work at Columbia University, with a special focus on working with youth and families. Sabrina has five years of experience in elementary education as a homeroom teacher and special education manager. Sabrina received her B.A. in International Studies and Psychology from the University of Michigan. Her undergraduate studies focused on human rights, international law, and social psychology. Sabrina's honors thesis analyzed U.S. military intervention in Afghanistan and the impact of democratic reconstruction on women's rights and civic engagement. Sabrina has volunteered as an English as a second language tutor and as a Selection Board Member for Atlas Service Corps. Sabrina has attended the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations on behalf of FEZANA and has served as FEZANA's United Nations Youth Representative.

**Parinaz Dastur**

Parinaz is a 15 year old student at Stratford Preparatory High School in San Jose, California. She started Tech Together, an initiative to promote Computer Science education and has been successful in receiving support and collaboration from UC Berkeley. She currently volunteers her time on the FEZANA Ava Project where she led a Family Paint Event and created the Perpetual Haftseen Garden Brochure. Parinaz won third place in the Biomimicry Youth Challenge, where there were 125 submissions across 25 countries. She won the Naval Science award for creating a device to help people with aphasia communicate and won the Access Braille Award for creating a device for the blind.

**Peenaz Irani**

Originally from Mumbai, India, Peenaz is now based in Montreal, Quebec, Canada as a yoga and mindfulness practitioner. Over 11 years of global experience in stakeholder management, project management, business consulting, and building and implementing integrated communication strategies, having worked for businesses in India and Canada. She has expertise in working with start-up teams, projects and organizations and initiating new projects. One of her proudest accolades is being Awarded the title of Environmental Professional in-training EPT by ECO Canada. Her specialization is Communications and Public Awareness Sustainability.

**Yassna Khosravi**

Yassna is a second-year undergraduate student at UCLA, majoring in political science and psychology with a minor in global studies. She hopes to pursue a career in law to advocate for underserved and underrepresented communities. Her involvement in UCLA organizations includes leadership roles in the Middle Eastern Student Association, the Iranian Student Group, and the Pre-Law Society. Additionally, she is an avid violinist, performing in the UCLA Symphony Orchestra along with numerous Persian cultural celebrations.

**Zynah Kharoliwalla**

Zynah, age 15 is from Verona, Wisconsin. She's a Sophomore at the Verona Area High School. Zynah is an active participant at the Model UN club in school and is an avid volleyball player and gymnast. Currently, she works as a gymnastics coach and a teller at a local bank. She likes spending time with her family, hanging out with her friends, reading, writing and painting. Zynah is a creative, fun loving person and a respectful team player.

**Behram Pastakia MD, FACR**

Behram is from Metropolitan Washington DC, USA and is the Co-Chair of the FEZANA UN NGO Committee. He is also the North American Regional Director of the World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce.

**Afreed Mistry**

Afreed is from Toronto, Canada and has been an active member of FEZANA since 2002. She co-chairs the FEZANA UN-NGO Committee along with Dr. Behram Pastakia. Afreed is also the main representative for FEZANA at the United Nations. She has attended and presented at nine United Nations' CSW Conferences and also been a part of the UN DGC Conferences, Parliament of World's Religions and attended numerous UN meetings.

About United Nations

The United Nations is central to global efforts to solve problems that challenge humanity. Cooperating in this effort are more than 30 affiliated organizations, known together as the UN system. For more information visit www.un.org

About the Commission on the Status of Women

The CSW is a global governmental body that is dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. This commission was established by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1946. Every year the CSW holds a conference in the winter for a two-week period where UN entities, Member States and Civil Society discuss issues pertaining to women, girls and gender equality.

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