

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

NEW YORK WOMEN IN FILM & TELEVISION AND THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE CO-PRESENT “REPRESENTATION MATTERS FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE”

**The panel of political and media thought leaders will convene as part of the United
Nations Commission on the Status of Women**

NEW YORK, NY – March, 9, 2022 – New York Women in Film & Television (NYWIFT) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) are proud to co-present “Representation Matters for Climate Justice” on Tuesday, March 22 at 10 AM EST as part of the 66th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The 90-minute panel will take place virtually via Zoom.

The voices of women and girls in politics and the media have been stifled and excluded from the decision-making conversations around climate justice. This globally representative panel of climate activists will focus on the rights of women and girls to engage with and be represented in both politics and the media on the issue of climate justice. They will discuss why representation matters for successful climate justice and provide examples of initiatives across the media and politics which promote a more diverse and intersectional approach to finding solutions to the existential threat we all face.

Panelists will include film producer **Lydia Dean Pilcher**, co-founder of PGA Green, the Producers Guild of America’s sustainability initiative; filmmaker **Rachel Lears**, whose latest documentary *To the End* follows four young women engaged in the climate justice movement and premiered at the 2022 Sundance Film Festival; and impact producer **Emily Wanja**, who produced the campaign “We Can Fight Climate Change” for the international feature documentary *Thank you for the Rain*. Journalist **Natasha Del Toro** will moderate the conversation.

“Climate change is an increasingly dire threat facing society, and it has a particular and unique impact on women and communities of color. But there is hope, and as media makers we have the power to drive positive change and shine a light on resources and initiatives crucial to success in the climate justice space. We are thrilled to partner with NDI for this important conversation, and grateful to UN CSW for providing a platform for us,” said **NYWIFT Executive Director Cynthia Lopez**.

“Someone once told me that of the 10 most impactful actions to mitigate climate change, six of them would be led by women and girls. Yet the exclusion of the voices of women and girls from setting the priorities for action on climate change persists - to all our detriment. Women and girls across the globe and in all sectors are leading for change. We must support them,” said **Sandra Pepera, Director of Gender, Women and Democracy at the National Democratic Institute**.

The program is the second in this series produced by NYWIFT and NDI at the UN CSW. The first, “Representation Matters: Ensuring Inclusive Leadership in Politics and the Media,” was

presented in March 2021. It can be viewed in its entirety at <https://www.nywift.org/event/ndi-nywift-presents-representation-matters/>.

The virtual panel is free to attend and open to the public. Register at <https://bit.ly/3tEtOpQ>

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Images of Program, Panelists, and Logos:
[LINK TO DOWNLOAD](#)

About New York Women in Film & Television:

New York Women in Film & Television (NYWIFT) advocates for equality in the moving image industry and supports women in every stage of their careers. As the preeminent entertainment industry association for women in New York, NYWIFT energizes women by illuminating their achievements, presenting training and professional development programs, awarding scholarships and grants, and providing access to a supportive community of peers. NYWIFT brings together more than 2,500 women and men working both above and below the line. NYWIFT is part of a network of 50 women in film chapters worldwide, representing more than 15,000 members. NYWIFT is a nonprofit 501c3 public charity.

More information can be found online at: www.NYWIFT.org.

Follow on all social media platforms @NYWIFT.

About The National Democratic Institute:

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-governmental organization that works in partnership around the world to strengthen and safeguard democratic institutions, processes, norms and values to secure a better quality of life for all. NDI envisions a world where democracy and freedom prevail, with dignity for all.

Learn more at <https://www.ndi.org/>.

About The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women:

The United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. A functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), it was established by ECOSOC resolution 11(II) of 21 June 1946. It is instrumental in promoting women's rights, documenting the reality of women's lives throughout the world, and shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women. During the Commission's annual two-week session, representatives of UN Member States, civil society organizations and UN entities gather at UN headquarters in New York. They discuss progress and gaps in the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the key global policy document on gender equality, and the 23rd special session of the General Assembly held in 2000 (Beijing+5), as well as emerging issues that affect gender equality and the empowerment of women. Member States agree on further actions to accelerate progress and promote women's enjoyment of their rights in political, economic, and social fields. The outcomes and recommendations of each session are forwarded to ECOSOC for follow-up.

Learn more at <https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw>.

Panelist Bios:

Lydia Dean Pilcher is a two-time Emmy Award winner and Oscar nominated producer of over 40 feature films with auteur directors including Gina Prince-Bythewood, Wes Anderson, Barry Levinson, Ritesh Batra, Kathryn Bigelow, George Wolfe, and eleven films in a longstanding collaboration with internationally acclaimed director Mira Nair. Their recent work includes the feature *Queen of Katwe* for Disney and the six-hour mini-series set in India, *A Suitable Boy*, based on the novel by Vikram Seth, for BBC/Netflix. Pilcher has worked extensively in the international realm and is inspired by themes of cultural perception, climate change activism, and social justice. She began her career directing documentaries and she co-directed the dramatic feature, *Radium Girls* (Netflix), accompanied by a social impact campaign in 2021 with The Sierra Club to ban “forever” toxic chemicals, past and present. She also recently directed the feature, *A Call to Spy*, a female-driven World War II spy thriller based on the true stories of Noor Inayat Khan, Vera Atkins, and Virginia Hall, released in 2020 by IFC Films. She is Co-Founder of PGA Green and GreenProductionGuide.com, a collaboration with eleven studio partners – Netflix, Disney, NBC-Universal, Sony, Warner Media, Fox, Amazon, Paramount, Viacom CBS, and Participant Media – seeking to reduce the environmental impact of film/tv productions by carbon calculation, best practices, and climate messaging through storytelling; and she is Co-Chair of the Director’s Guild of America Sustainable Future (Eco) Committee. Pilcher co-authored *The Ms. Factor: The Power of Female Driven Content* and is an adjunct faculty at Tisch NYU Graduate Film & TV.

Rachel Lears is a documentary director, producer and cinematographer based in Brooklyn, NY. Her most recent feature documentary, *To the End*, which premiered at Sundance 2022, follows four young women of color who fight for a Green New Deal and ignite a historic shift in U.S. climate politics. Her last feature, *Knock Down the House* (2019, Netflix), won the US Documentary Audience Award and the Festival Favorite award at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival, was shortlisted for an Oscar, and nominated for an Emmy in 2020. Rachel received the IDA Emerging Filmmaker Award in 2019, holds a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from NYU, and is the mother of a six-year-old.

Emily Wanja uses storytelling to drive social change. She is an award-winning Impact producer for the campaign ‘We Can Fight Climate Change’ for the international feature documentary, *Thank you for the Rain*. In conjunction with Docubox, she has worked with policymakers across national and county governments, private stakeholders, funders, civil society, and communities, using film as a tool for advocacy. She ran impact screenings for the film *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by Participant Media, in Kenya. She’s on the Climate Justice Resilience Fund Advisory Council and on the Global Impact Producers Assembly Steering Committee. She works with the Storyboard collective on Impact and regional partnerships and is on the Kenya Oscars selection committee. Emily Wanja works at Doc Society as the global community manager at the Climate Story Unit.

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