

## **Ending Violence Against Women, UN Women India – New Delhi**

### **HRLA Bursary Report 2016**

#### **Zahra Wynne**

The Human Rights Lawyers Association bursary enabled me to undertake an internship with the Ending Violence Against Women department of UN Women India, based in New Delhi. I lived and worked in Delhi for six months, and was afforded all the responsibilities of a UN employee.

Throughout my six months there, I gained incredibly valuable work experience and insight into both legal protections and human rights abuses in India. I conducted research into the effects of the Criminal Law (Amendments) Act 2013 on rates of sexual violence, used National Crime Record Bureau statistics to establish the effectiveness of the groundbreaking Protection from Domestic Violence Act 2005, and helped organise international conferences on human trafficking. As well as this, I researched domestic violence on tea estates in Assam, and wrote reports on UN activities for high profile donors such as the Government of Japan.

I was able to meet and work with many experts in the field of sexual violence in India, both from a legal and social standpoint, and attend conferences on legal, political and social tools to end violence against women in India and across Asia.

Without the HRLA bursary, I would not have been able to fund my travel to India and living costs over the 6 months in order to undertake the internship, thus the bursary was an immeasurable help.

Alongside the incredible experience, I had in the realm of human rights law and efforts of curb sexual violence, I was able to live abroad for six months and experience all that India has to offer, which was priceless.

Due to the bursary, I was able to work in a field of human rights that I am particularly passionate about, which is the right of women to live lives free from violence based on their gender. The internship experience has served as a great entry point for my career in this field.

Since the internship, I have been offered the opportunity to return to New Delhi to work for the Human Rights Law Network, which is run by Supreme Court advocate Colin Gonsalves. I will be placed in the Women's Justice Initiative, where my work will involve drafting cases to the Supreme Court of India and writing comprehensive reports on legal issues affecting women in India, specifically regarding issues such as trafficking, domestic violence, acid attacks and sexual violence. I truly believe that without my experience with the UN in India, which the HRLA bursary made possible, I would not have been able to get such a position.