

**INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN  
ALLIANCE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES**

**IAW website: <http://www.womenalliance.org>**

**Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities  
Droits Égaux - Responsabilités Égales**

**IAW NEWSLETTER April 2010, no. 4**



**Equal Rights**

*Dear members,*

*This time a different kind of newsletter with three long articles. There is the excellent report of IAW President Rosy Weiss on CSW, well worth reading for IAW members and also for sympathizers. IANSA is telling us how to take action by composing written and oral statements – to use for the Summit of the Millennium Development Goals. And the European Union has now a women's entity called: the European Institute for Gender Equality. It announced a new strategy.*

*There is news from our IAW affiliates in Greece and Iceland. IAW member Soon-Young Yoon has written a IAW statement against Tobacco*

*In India women are struggling with the ranking of 114 among 134 nations in the Gender Gap Index Report 2009, published by the World Economic Forum, down by one spot from its 2008 position. And in the next newsletter we will focus on the IAW Congress in Pretoria, South Africa.*

**INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN**

**Impressions of CSW54**

*IAW President Rosy Weiss has written an excellent report of CSW54, which has been mailed to the IAW Extended Board. Here a few passages of her report. You will find the whole report in IWNews or you can download it from <http://www.womenalliance.org/issues.html>  
For the many and valuable IAW activities at CSW visit also the IAW website on:  
<http://www.womenalliance.org/issues.html>*

**CSW54 – What's next?**

The spaces for influencing decision making by women's organisations at this Beijing+15 Review have been significantly reduced. This has been manifested by the agreement on the Declaration having taken place on day two of the Commission and without consultations with civil society, the absence of information on opportunities to influence the conduct and outcome of the CSW meetings and the Declaration, poor logistics and facilities preventing women from participating effectively.

**Letters of protest**

IAW co-signed four open letters to the Secretary-General, three in protest of the difficulties encountered, one in reaction to the appointment of an all-male High-Level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing. *(The letters of protest helped! A working group was established between N.Y. NGOs and the UN Secretariat to look into possible improvements for CSW55).*

**But, back to the Commission, its work and IAW presence.**

The Declaration 2010 must be considered a backward step. "It clearly overstates the progress made and underestimates the degree and types of challenges that remain for women in their multiple identities, including the persistence of violence against women.

It fails to take into account changes in the global and local contexts.

The current context of multiple crises – such as the food, energy, climate change, care, economic and financial crises – new forms of insecurity, new aid modalities, internationalization of conflicts, perpetuation of the feminization of poverty and the ongoing struggle around women's health issues, including sexual and reproductive health and rights and HIV/AIDS, have created challenges not present 15 years ago" (final statement of NGOs, March 12, 2010).

**Personal comments to the most important resolutions from an IAW viewpoint:**

As you can imagine, I was working primarily on two resolutions: maternal mortality and the new

gender entity. And, may I recall: Negotiations between governments were held without any tangible interference with NGOs as this has been prevented by logistics – see comments above.

- Maternal mortality (sponsor US): The text does not create any new rights, and does not fall behind Cairo and Copenhagen. Yet, it falls behind Beijing as it does not support Strategic objective C.1, actions to be taken (k) “consider reviewing laws containing punitive measures against women who have undergone illegal abortions”. The only part referring to reproductive rights is contained in OP 3 and only relates to the outcomes of the review conferences. Consequently it does not advance women’s cause due to the difficulties within the EU.
- The resolution on strengthening the institutional arrangements of the United Nations for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women by consolidating the four existing offices into a composite entity (sponsor Norway) had an immediate support by the G77 and China, normally ample ground for suspicion from the part of an international NGO.

### **The new entity**

The background is that the CSW is not responsible for the establishment of such an entity. This is the sole responsibility of the General Assembly to which the resolution of the CSW, in support of the establishment of such an entity, is addressed. Nothing more, nothing less.

### **The last morning at CSW - Where do we go from here?**

At the last morning briefing, IAW held a brainstorming session at 6 pm on March 11 at the Church Centre. As I told NGO representatives present March 12, this side event turned out to be extremely fruitful.

### **CSW is OUR Forum!**

a) Without any doubt, the CSW is OUR forum. We should however, make better use of it despite the fact that we have to face ongoing reconstruction work for the coming years.

b) The NGO CSW N.Y. is asked to take advantage of an NGO Forum prior to any Commission in order to get NGOs organized right from the beginning, e.g.:

- \* information on possibilities for quick interaction (blogging);
- \* distribution of documents already available; introduction of caucuses and their liaison persons (if possible, designation of one room for one topic);
- \* establishment of list serve, information on venues, etc.

The Forum should also be used to establish mentioning by experienced NGO representatives in order to help newcomers to find their way under difficult circumstances.

One representative suggested that there could be more venues around UN to be explored for side events.

- \* A number of suggestions have been put to DAW for consideration.

*Rosy Weiss, IAW President*

*We express our sincere gratitude to all those IAW members who have contributed to CSW: for being there, for organising side events and composing oral and written statements, for trying to influence the resolutions and also for their social networking within the women's movement!*

### **Best Blog**

The best blog of CSW54, with pictures of c.q. IAW President Rosy Weiss and IAW member René Gérard, is the blog of Mary Scott from Winnipeg, Canada. Thank you, Mary! Please click on: <http://csw2010.blogspot.com/2010/03/session-with-ngos-ideas-for-next-time.html>

### **Three Candidates on Short List for Human Rights Post**

*New York, April 8, 2010* – A short list of three candidates for Assistant General Secretary for Human Rights in NY has been confirmed. Karin Landgren of Sweden, Ivan Šimonović of Croatia, and Juan Méndez of Argentina have joined UN Rapporteur Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro of Brazil as the top contenders for the [newly created post](#). The UN Elections Campaign was able to verify this list. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is responsible for making the final selection.

The UN Elections Campaign urges him to consult with UN stakeholders, such as non-governmental human rights organizations, in doing so.

*IAW would like a majority of IAW members to support Swedish lawyer Karin Landgren by writing to their respective governments. A short curriculum vitae of Karin Landgren can be found on*

### **Kvenrettindafelag Islands, Iceland**

Dear colleagues!

I have to tell you about another new law in Iceland we are so proud of. On March 23rd, a Bill was passed to with amendments to the law that prohibited strip-dancing but still allowed exceptions, which a lot of strip clubs took advantage of. So now there are no possibilities for exceptions any more and the new law prohibits all strip-dancing and other kinds of nudity for commercial reasons in Iceland from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2010.

We can thank the emergence of many new *women's rights laws* in Iceland to the fact that over 40% of parliamentarians are now female and the strong advocacy from women's rights organisations in Iceland.

*Mailed to us by IAW member Halldóra Traustadóttir*

### **Greek League for Women's Rights**

The excellent journal of IAW's Affiliate in Greece contains, like always, some important national activities. We mention only a few issues here.

#### **Elections 2009**

The 30% quota participation in candidates lists was for the first time implemented. The political parties complied with the law, but the number of women in the Parliament was 17.3% compared with the former 16%. There is still a long way to go.

#### **Letter and Resolution on depleted uranium bombings**

Three Greek organisations, including the Marangopoulos Foundation for Human Rights, denounced NATO officials to the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia for depleted uranium bombings. The resolution was signed by 124 organisations!

#### **Violence against Women**

The Greek League worked on three different documents: the National Programme for the prevention and elimination of violence against women 2009-2013; President Soula Panaretou addressed a letter to the Committee for Equality, Youth and Human Rights of the Greek Parliament; and she launched a statement on the same subject on Women's Day.

### **IAW Statement against Tobacco**

June 28 - July 2, the UN Economic and Social Council will convene a high-level annual ministerial review. The theme for this year is "Gender equality and women's empowerment" linked to the Millennium Development goals. NGOs are invited to submit written statements.

Attached is the beginning and the end of the statement to be submitted jointly between the International Alliance of Women and the International Network of Women Against Tobacco.

#### **Gender, Women and Tobacco**

A new WHO report on "Gender, Women, and Tobacco" released on World No Tobacco Day this year points out that there are more than a billion smokers worldwide and that about 9% of women and 40% of men smoke. By 2015, tobacco use is expected to cause almost three times as many deaths as HIV/AIDs and will be responsible for 10% of all deaths. The International Alliance of Women and the International Network of Women Against Tobacco believe that preventing an epidemic of tobacco use among women is essential to achievement of the Millennium Development Goals related to gender equality, poverty, child and maternal health.

#### **And the statement ends:**

As noted by Article 12 and the General Recommendation on health in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and many recommendations in the Beijing Platform for Action, women's right to health is a human right. Governments represented here have signed CEDAW and endorsed the policy documents upholding these rights. At least 170 governments have also ratified the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control that outlines the international standards and legislation that would set the right course for tobacco control with gender equality.

#### **The MDGs should rapidly move forward**

Yet, to date, national legislation has yet to provide adequate protection. Despite the scientific evidence that tobacco kills, nearly 90% of the world's population remains uncovered by comprehensive smoke-free laws. Much more can be done by raising taxes to reduce tobacco use among our children. We want stronger enforcement of bans on deceptive terms such as "low tar", "light", and "mild"; and

improved health warnings that address our concerns. Take action now so that the MDGs can rapidly move forward.

*By IAW member Soon-Young Yoon, International Alliance of Women, and Vice-Chair, NGO Committee on the Status of Women/NY*

## **ECOSOC - Millennium Development Goals**

### **ECOSOC – Global Preparatory Meetings were held on 21 and 22 April 2010**

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) has been addressing issues of gender equality, empowerment of women, and international development cooperation at its High-level Segment, to be held from 28 June to 2 July 2010 in New York. In preparation for these discussions, the Council has organized three preparatory meetings on 21 and 22 April 2010 which include:

#### **Financing Climate Change**

1. A session on "Financing for Climate Change: Gender Equality" organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the NGO Committee on the Status of Women/NY.

#### **Food**

2. A session on "Who Feeds the World in 2010 and Beyond: Rural women as Agents of Change and Champions of Global Food Security" organized by DESA, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Bank, and UNIFEM in collaboration with Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (WOCAN), and The Hunger Project.

#### **MDGs**

3. A session on the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) from 3 pm to 6 pm on 22 April 2010 to discuss the role of aid in mitigating the impact of the financial and economic crises on achieving national development goals and the Millennium Development Goals.

Please click on the following links: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/gpm2010.shtml#> and <http://esango.un.org/irene/index.html>

### **ECOSOC, MDGs and how can NGOs participate?**

*By Sarah Masters, International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA)*

From 28 June - 2 July 2010 the ECOSOC High Level Segment will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York. This will include sessions on the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) and this year's theme is "Implementing the Internationally Agreed Goals and Commitments in regard to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women".

It will also include sessions on the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) with the theme of "Development Cooperation in Times of Crises: New Commitments to Reach the MDGs".

#### **What is the expected outcome of the event?**

A Ministerial Declaration to promote implementation of the gender-related goals at all levels; and consideration of recommendations and proposals for actions for ECOSOC, including new initiatives.

#### **How can NGOs participate?**

This is a unique opportunity for organisations in consultative status with ECOSOC - and for civil society at large - to be heard at ECOSOC deliberations, as well as to contribute to issues of critical concern to the global development agenda.

It will also provide a platform to specifically address the issue of gender equality and empowerment of women this year, which is a crucial cross-cutting theme for the achievement of the MDGs.

#### **Open Call For Oral And Written Statements**

Organisations in general and special consultative status are encouraged to make oral presentations to the Council.

#### **Oral Statements**

NGOs applying to be heard at the 2010 ECOSOC High Level Segment are encouraged to submit a brief summary of an oral statement. The request should be submitted online at CSO Net by using your organization's username and password. The deadline for oral statements is 26 April 2010.

More on: <http://esango.un.org/irene/?page=viewContent&nr=42&type=22&section=15>

#### **Written Statements**

NGOs in general, special, or roster consultative status are encouraged to submit written statements on the themes of AMR and DCF Segments mentioned above. NGOs submitting written statements must adhere to the following guidelines:

- \* A written statement must be submitted in either English or in French;
- \* A written statement submitted by an NGO in general consultative status should not exceed 2,000 words;
- \* A written statement submitted by an NGO in special consultative status should not exceed 500 words;
- \* A written statement submitted by an NGO in roster consultative status should not exceed 500 words.
- \* Written statements should be submitted online at CSO Net by using your organization's username and password. The deadline for written statements is 30 April 2010.

More on: <http://esango.un.org/irene/?page=login&next=viewStatementsANDnr=7462ANDtype=8ANDsection=8> and <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/amr2010.shtml>

## **European Union – Gender Gaps**

### **A new strategy**

#### **More women in top jobs key to economic growth, says EU report**

Only one in 10 board members of Europe's biggest listed companies is a woman and all central bank governors in the EU are male.

The economy would benefit by having full representation of both men and women in top positions, says a new report presented by the European Commission.

It comes ahead of a new strategy for gender equality that will be adopted by the European Commission later this year. In the corporate world, men account for nearly 89% of the board members in Europe's biggest listed companies.

The disparity is widest at the very top where only 3% of such companies have a woman in charge.

Norway stands out as the only country with anything approaching gender balance: 42% women and 58% men on the boards of the largest listed companies – a result of a legal quota.

#### **Political Decision-making**

In political decision-making, the European Parliament is now at its most gender-balanced level since its inception in 1979, with 35% women and 65% men. The proportion of women members of national parliaments (single/lower house) across Europe as a whole has risen from 16% in 1997 to 24% in 2009.

However, it is still well below the so-called critical mass of 30% deemed necessary for women to exert meaningful influence in politics. In national governments, the situation is improving steadily with the share of women senior ministers in EU governments at 27%. The European Commission counts nine women Commissioners (33%) and eighteen men (67%), the best gender balance yet – up from 5.6% in 1994/1995.”

#### **Women's Charter**

With the presentation of a "Women's Charter" on 5 March ([IP/10/237](#)), the Commission reaffirmed its commitment to stronger gender equality in all EU policies. The Charter will be implemented through a new strategy for gender equality to be adopted by the Commission later this year. One of the core priorities of this strategy will be promoting equality in decision-making.

#### **Improving the Gender Balance**

Measures to improve gender balance in decision-making can include the establishment of gender equality plans, the definition of targets and regular monitoring, better provision for work-life balance, the promotion of women role models, mentoring programmes and networking.

#### **Gender Pay Gap**

The European Commission plans to use a series of measures aimed at significantly reducing the pay gap between men and women over the next five years. The average gender pay gap in the EU currently stands at 18%. To lower this rate, the Commission plans to raise awareness among employers, encourage initiatives to promote gender equality and support the development of tools to measure the gender pay gap.

On the other hand, new legal measures are not excluded. The Commission intends to consult the European social partners and analyse the impact of a number of options: strengthening sanctions, providing pay transparency and regular reporting on the pay gap. A Eurobarometer survey released recently shows that more than **80% of Europeans support urgent action to address the gap.**

*"I am deeply concerned that the gender pay gap has barely fallen over the last 15 years and in some countries it is even increasing," said Vice-President Viviane Reding,*



*EU Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship.*

*" In these times of crisis, the gender pay gap is a cost Europe cannot afford. We need to use all the tools we have to close the gender pay gap. Together with Member States, we will seek to significantly reduce the gender pay gap in the EU by the end of this Commission's mandate."*

The gender pay gap – the average difference in gross hourly earnings between women and men across the economy as a whole – now stands at 18% for the EU, with considerable differences between countries and sectors. It reflects ongoing inequalities in the labour market, which in practice mainly affect women. Reducing the gap requires action on several levels to tackle its multiple causes.

#### **A new EU strategy for gender equality**

In the second half of 2010, the Commission will put forward a new EU strategy for gender equality for 2010-2015.

Tackling the gender pay gap will be one of the main priorities. The Commission will use all available instruments, both legislative and non-legislative, to reduce the gender pay gap.

The Commission will analyse in detail the economic and social impact of certain options, together with the European social partners, in particular:

- On reporting the gender pay gap and ensuring transparency on pay at company and individual levels or collectively through information and consultation with workers;
- On reinforcing the obligation to ensure gender neutral job classifications and pay scales;
- On improving the provisions on sanctions in case of a breach of the right to equal pay, to ensure that they are dissuasive and proportional (for instance, higher sanctions in case of repeated offence), etc. etc.

According to a study conducted under the Swedish EU Presidency in 2009, eliminating gender gaps in employment in the EU Member States could lead to a potential 15% - 45% increase in GDP (Gross Domestic Product).

#### **Pensions**

The effect of the gender pay gap on lifetime earnings means that women will also have lower pensions. As a result, women are more affected than men by persistent and extreme poverty: 22% of women aged 65 and over are at risk of poverty compared to 16% of men.

More on: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=742&furtherNews=yes>

**Note:** The European Union has now a women's entity called: the European Institute for Gender Equality. It is a European agency to support the Member States and the European institutions (in particular the Commission) in their efforts to promote gender equality, to fight discrimination based on sex and to raise awareness of gender issues.

*IAW Regional Coordinator Europe and Representative to the European Women's Lobby,  
Joanna Manganara*

## **AROUND THE WORLD**

### **Resolution 1325 – IAW Congress in Pretoria, South Africa**

In October 2010, the United Nations will commemorate the tenth anniversary of an important but inadequately recognized international development landmark: Security Council Resolution 1325, which recognized the importance of understanding the impact of armed conflict on women and girls and guaranteed their protection and full participation in peace agreements. Although late in coming, there are now signs of increased commitment and action to ensure that these goals are met.

IAW will focus on security and peace at its Congress in Pretoria, South Africa, November 23 – 2010.

*More in the next IAW newsletter. In the meantime, have a look at the website of our good sister organisation WILPF or Peacewomen: <http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/1325/1325index.html>*

### **INDIA -Gender list thumbs down**

New Delhi, April 5: Indira Gandhi's long reign and Pratibha Patil's appointment as President appear to be the only solace for India's woman, whose situation continues to be among the worst in the world in most spheres, a global study has shown. India has been ranked 114 among 134 nations in the Gender Gap Index Report, 2009, published by the World Economic Forum, down by one spot from its 2008 position.

India hugs the bottom in most categories but comes at No. 4 in the "years with female head" section,

which has raised the country to No. 24 overall in women's empowerment. This despite India ranking 100 in the "women in Parliament" category and 93 in "women in ministerial position". The report assesses countries by how well they have divided resources and opportunities between their male and female populations. It measures the gender inequality gap in four areas:

- \* Economic participation and opportunity: relating to salaries, participation and access to high-skilled employment

- \* Educational attainment: access to basic and higher education

- \* Political empowerment: representation in decision-making structures

- \* Health and survival: life expectancy and sex ratio

- \* In the index, Iceland has claimed the top spot from Norway, which has slipped to third behind Finland. Sweden completes the Nordic countries' continued dominance of the top four.

- \* South Africa and Lesotho have made great strides in closing the gender gap, as proved by their entry into the top 10, at the sixth and 10th positions respectively.

- \* At No. 9, the Philippines is the Asian leader. More on: [http://www.telegraphindia.com/1100406/jsp/nation/story\\_12307557.jsp](http://www.telegraphindia.com/1100406/jsp/nation/story_12307557.jsp)

*Sent to us by IAW member Anjana Basu*

### **Three important UN Conferences**

#### **UN General Assembly 65th Session**

The sixty-fifth session will open on Tuesday, *14 September 2010*, at 3 p.m.

The General Debate will take place from *21 September to 1 October*.

On: <http://www.un.org/ga/65/index.shtml>

**Hearings 14 – 15 June 2010, UN Headquarters** Informal Interactive Hearings of the General Assembly with Non-Governmental Organisations, Civil Society Organisations and the Private Sector.

On: <http://esango.un.org/irene/index.html?page=viewContent&nr=7222&type=8&section=8>

#### **Summit on 20-22 September 2010,**

The General Assembly will hold, in New York, a High-level Plenary Meeting, also referred to as the "MDG Summit".

#### **Note**

We are sending this Newsletter as an attachment, saved in Word 97. Please be so kind to advise Pat Richardson if you know of any IAW members or affiliate/associate organisations with an e-mail address, so we can mail them this Newsletter too.

IAW Newsletter / News Flash : Joke Sebus

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International Women's News : Priscilla Todd (English)

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