

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

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

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

IAW NEWSLETTER December 2007, no. 13



Equal Rights

Dear members,

The Editing Committee of the IAW newsletter wishes you a peaceful and productive 2008!

Good health, wisdom and a bit of humour for us all!

In this last newsletter for 2007 a variety of news. There is a request of CEDAW and please stay alert during the fight in the coming two years for climate change. The criteria of deforestation for example have still to be developed and implemented with a worldwide view in mind.

Congratulations to Prof. Dr. Ada Yonath and Prof. Dr. Agneta Nordberg, who both won important prizes. India has made good progress in the fight against tuberculosis.

In the five IAW Commissions a lot of preparatory work is being done to support the Board and the IAW representatives. Any member who believes she can contribute to one or more of the Commissions may become a resource person.

Our warmest thanks goes to all of you who have been sending us articles and interesting news during 2007. And please keep up your good work in 2008!

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

Five IAW Commissions

During the Delhi Congress 2007 IAW installed five Commissions:

1. *Elimination of Violence* - convenor Mmabatho Ramagoshi, South Africa
2. *Justice, Human Rights (and CEDAW)* - convenor: Margret Steinarsdottir, Iceland
3. *Democracy* - convenor Jessica Kehl, Switzerland
4. *Peace (and Conflict)* - convenor: Susanne Riveles, United States of America
5. *Health* - convenor Gudrun Haupter, Germany

Commissions are open and any IAW member who wants to join in the work as a resource person may do so with the agreement of the Convenor.

Information: Membership Officer Pat Richardson <iaw.membership@womenalliance.org>

United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali

And now comes the hard part

"We will have two tremendously demanding years, starting right in January," said Humberto Rosa, head of the European Union delegation, after a dramatic US U-turn on Saturday paved the way for a deal to start negotiations on a global pact.

Time is running short, even though the UN Climate Panel says warming can be beaten at a cost below 0.1 percent of world gross domestic product annually until 2030.

Negotiators left Bali speaking of a historic breakthrough and promising urgent action to fight climate change that could bring more floods, droughts, storms, heatwaves and rising seas.

In the marathon talks on the Indonesian resort island they spent more than 7 hours one night, for instance, arguing over whether the final text should urge poor countries to take "action" or make a "contribution" to combating climate change. The phrase "cut emissions" was not used.

While poor nations ended up promising only vague "action", developed nations dropped clear references, favoured by the European Union but opposed by the United States, to a need for rich nations to axe greenhouse gas emissions by 25 to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 to avert the

worst of climate change.

The talks marked a much more assertive tone by developing nations such as China and India, which won the last-minute showdown that forced the United States to give ground and promise to do more to share clean technology in a final deal.

US President

The talks will test relations between rich and poor and may be partly in limbo until a new president takes office in the White House after George W. Bush steps down in January 2009. Few want to make promises until new U.S. policies are clear.

Follow-up

A first meeting on the "Bali roadmap" is likely to be held in Ghana in early 2008, with four sessions around the world each year and culminating with a deal in late 2009 in Copenhagen.

Working out a fair share of the burden between the United States, China, Russia and India, the top four greenhouse gas emitters, and the rest of the world will be one of the most complex diplomatic puzzles in history.

Reuters, Alister Doyle. More on: <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L16510951.htm>

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, about ESCAP and before the Bali Conference

"There can be no better place than Bangkok to begin a visit to Asia. This, after all, is the United Nations' own home base in Asia. ESCAP is not only one of our most active, most diverse and most important duty stations, it is also the largest United Nations body serving the Asia-Pacific region. In fact, ESCAP's 62 member States make it the most comprehensive of all five United Nations regional commissions.

The work done here makes a difference in the lives of hundreds of millions of men, women and children, all the way from Kazakhstan to Kiribati. Whether working towards the Millennium Development Goals, combating human trafficking and managing globalization, ESCAP is central to the United Nations' work for a peaceful, more prosperous Asia-Pacific region. I am glad to be spending Human Rights Day with you today.

Climate change

Today, our work to build better lives faces an unprecedented challenge in the form of climate change. We have the evidence, thanks to the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo.

This urgent problem not only threatens to undercut many of the development gains witnessed across Asia in recent years; it calls into question plans for continued progress and prosperity here in Thailand and across the entire region".

IAW representative for ESCAP, Pat Richardson, Australia

Women make it to the top!

Prof. Dr. Ada Yonath from Israel, received the renowned Paul Ehrlich Prize Germany 2007, for her outstanding work in characterizing the three-dimensional molecular structure of ribosomes where the protein synthesis occurs. In her speech she also thanked her daughter who had to do without her for days on end that she spent in the laboratory. Her granddaughter said that if she visits so many countries to give lectures, she should also come to her kindergarten. For the granddaughter it is normal that her grandmother is a celebrated scientist.

Prof. Dr. Agneta Nordberg from Sweden received the Alois Alzheimer Prize Germany 2007, for her research on the molecular principles of neurodegenerative Dementia. This is a very important field of research since statistically women live longer than men.

Sent to us by IAW member Ida Kurth

CEDAW

The next CEDAW Committee elections will take place in June **2008**. The Committee members who will continue to serve until their terms expire on 31 December 2008 include:

Magalys Arocha Dominguez (Cuba); Mary Shanthi Dairiam (Malaysia); Françoise Gaspard (France); Tiziana Maiolo (Italy); Silvia Pimentel (Brazil); Heisoo Shin (Republic of Korea); Hanna Beate Schöpp-Schilling (Germany); Glenda P. Simms (Jamaica); Anamah Tan (Singapore); Xiaqiao Zou (China); Maria Regina Tavares da Silva (Portugal).

Timeline for the Election Process

- **Now until March 2008:** Time for women's groups to lobby their governments and suggest names of good candidates from their own country to be elected to the Committee. Lobbying to support good candidates to follow.
- **March 2008:** UN Secretary General calls for nominations from States Parties (of their own nationals only)
- **Between March-May 2008:** States propose their candidate (who must be a national) for nomination
- **May 2008:** Nomination list closes
- **June 2008:** CEDAW States Parties Meeting: Where states parties will vote through secret ballot to either re-elect committee members whose terms expire in 2008 or elect new members.

About the Election Process

Members of the CEDAW Committee are elected pursuant to article 17 of the CEDAW Convention by States parties from among nationals of that country. However, it is important to note that these members serve in their personal capacity and not as representatives of that States party. Members are elected for a term of four years.

Each CEDAW Committee member has the potential of advocating for women's rights at three levels:

- 1) *To uphold the notion that States are accountable to women;*
- 2) *To continuously further rights contained in the CEDAW Convention along feminist principles;*
- 3) *To ensure that women's NGOs are included in CEDAW-related processes.*

NGOs must lobby for candidates to CEDAW

It is very important for women's groups and women's rights advocates to continue lobbying for the inclusion of independent feminist experts in the CEDAW Committee. As you may already know, the CEDAW Convention is the only UN human rights treaty that focuses on gender issues. In this regard, it is important that the twenty-three experts of the CEDAW Committee have an understanding of the realities of women's lives.

What to do:

Before March 2008: At the national level, before the nomination period in March 2008, begin to propose names of women's activists and feminists for the election with your government. Obtain their support for your candidate by creating publicity and support for her candidacy.

Read more on: <http://lyris.spc.int/read/messages?id=56048>

Convenor of the IAW Commission Justice and Human Rights, Margret Steinsdottir

VOTING BIAS

Australian voters are strikingly biased towards men

A major study covering 17,000 candidates that have contested federal seats over the past century has found that women continue to face a "systematic penalty" at the ballot box.

For no other reason than gender, a female candidate representing a major party is likely to get an average of 1500 votes less than a male colleague — enough to shift the outcome in one out of every 10 seats.

The study, by Oxford University academic Amy King and Australian National University economist Andrew Leigh, concluded that female candidates in major parties tend to get 1.5% fewer votes than their male colleagues, all other things being equal. The average shrinks to a still-significant 0.6 percentage point gap when minor parties are included.

Hutch Hussein, the co-convenor of *Emily's List*, an organisation which pushes for more Labor women in parliaments, said the bias was in the major parties, rather than the public.

"I don't think it has been the Australian public that is responsible," Ms Hussein said. "It has more to do with parties struggling to share power. Affirmative action is very important."

More on: <http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2007/11/21/1195321865859.html>

Emily's List

The name EMILY's List is an acronym for "Early Money Is Like Yeast."

The saying is a reference to political fundraising: that receiving lots of donations early in a race is the most helpful time to get them, since they scare off challengers and help attract other, later donors.

EMILY's List was founded in 1985 in the United States, when 25 women met in the home of [Ellen Malcolm](#). Their goal was to form a [network](#) to raise money for [pro-choice Democratic](#) female candidates. The network was designed to provide its members with information about candidates and encourage them to write cheques directly to the candidates.

From: Wikipedia, on: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EMILY's_List

United States on: <http://www.emilyslist.org/about/> - *Australia on:* - <http://www.emilyslist.org.au/> -

United Kingdom on: <http://www.emilyslist.org.uk/>

Editor's note: Emily's List is active in the US, Australia and the UK, connected with Democrats and Labour. There are also the 50/50 movements, trying to get more women on the lists of all political parties and into governmental positions, based on equal representation.

HEALTH - FOOD and POVERTY - CONFLICT and CHILDREN

India - a successful and rapid expansion of TB control programme

Inaugurating the National Conference on Tuberculosis and Chest Diseases, the Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare, Dr. Anbumani Ramadoss said that India has the highest number of Tuberculosis (TB) cases in the world and significant progress has been made in controlling as well as treatment of the disease, since the beginning of the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme (RNTCP) in 1997.

The RNTCP has now completed over nine years of its implementation. The treatment success of new infectious TB cases under the RNTCP has consistently exceeded the global benchmark of 85%.

He added that the whole world is looking towards India to learn about such a successful and rapid expansion of TB control programme in the form of DOTS.

More on: <http://pib.nic.in/release/release.asp?relid=34024>

Convenor of the IAW Health Commission: Gudrun Haupter

Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

The FAO Conference, the highest governing body of the organisation, met in Rome on 17-24 November 2007 to discuss the report of the Independent External Evaluation and the process of implementing its recommendations. The 192 member countries will also approve the Agency's Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium (2008-2009).

National laws and regulations

The implementation of national laws and regulations regarding food sovereignty is a part of the food security solution.

A critical area of concern for International non-governmental organizations is the rights to land, water and food for women and rural poor farmers.

Women from Civil Society, attending a major FAO Conference in Rome, spoke up too.

Bettina Corke, International Alliance of Women (IAW) and Chair of the Women's Working Group of the Ad hoc Group of INGOs in Rome, deplors that so much remains to be done for rural women and women in general.

Links: FAO Conference documents on: http://www.fao.org/unfao/bodies/conf/c2007/index_en.htm

Interesting interviews on FAO web page: <http://www.fao.org/audiocatalogue/index.jsp?lang=EN>

Sent to us by IAW FAO representative Bettina Clarke

On Taliban Turf, Long Lines of Ailing Children

Karawaddin, [Afghanistan](#) - The Afghan boy crouched near a wall in this remote village, where the [Taliban](#)'s strength has prevented the government from providing services. His eyes were coated by an opaque yellow sheath.

Sgt. Nick Graham, an American Army medic, approached. The villagers crowded around. They said the boy's name was Hayatullah. He was 10 years old and developed the eye disease six years ago.

"Can you help him?" a man asked. Sergeant Graham examined the boy. He was blind. There was nothing the medic could do.

A second man appeared, pushing a wheelbarrow that held a hunched child with purplish lips and twisted feet, problems associated with severe congenital heart disease. Sergeant Graham listened to his heart. Without surgery, he said, this stunted boy would probably die.

A third man turned the corner from an alley, leading a girl, Baratbibi, by the arm. She was 7 years old. She turned her ruined eyes toward the afternoon sun without blinking. They were more heavily coated than Hayatullah's. Sergeant Graham sighed. "We could use an entire hospital here," he said.

Sick children

Throughout early December a company of paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division patrolled the Nawa District of Ghazni Province, an isolated region near Pakistan where the Taliban operate with confidence and the Afghan government's presence is almost nonexistent.

Once the villagers realized that the platoons were accompanied by medics, they pushed forward sick children and pleaded for help. A catalogue of paediatric suffering quickly formed into queues: children with grotesque burns and skin infections, distended scrapes and scorpion and spider bites, bleeding ears, dimmed eyes or heavy, rolling coughs. Some were bandaged in dirty rags. Others were in wheelbarrows because they lacked the strength to walk.

Aid organisations leave

The Nawa District: before late 2001, a few international aid organizations worked in the area with the Taliban's consent. They dug wells, built clinics, distributed small amounts of aid and administered vaccines. Now few outsiders venture here; the area is considered too dangerous.

Its degree of poverty is complete. The villages have no electricity. Many people use the same irrigation ditches to wash, clean their plates, butcher meat, brush their teeth and drink. The canals are lined with animal waste. Few children are seen wearing winter clothes.

The only known doctor in the district, the American officers said, is a man named Dr. Nasibullah, who, according to several intelligence reports, almost exclusively treats the Taliban's fighters.

Weak Afghan government

One villager said that the Taliban were here because the Afghan government was weak, and that the villagers were afraid. Whenever the military or the government distributed aid, he said, including blankets, children's notebooks or winter clothes, the Taliban entered the village, collected the aid and set it on fire. And indeed, afterwards there was a report that the Taliban had moved into Karawaddin after aid had been handed out, and taken the children's gloves and winter jackets and made a bonfire.

A short summary of an article by C. J. CHIVERS, New York Times, sent to us by IAW member Anjana Basu. Convenor of the IAW Commission on Peace and Conflict: Susanne Riveles. More on:

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/12/world/asia/12afghan.html?_r=1&hp=&oref=slogin&pagewanted=print

UN food agency spotlights seven global hunger hotspots

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) drew attention to seven hotspots worldwide – 1. Afghanistan, 2. Bangladesh, 3. Chad, 4. the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), 5. Somalia, 6. Sudan and 7. Zimbabwe – where conflict has led to widespread hunger.

Conflict and widespread hunger

People in these countries "don't know what tomorrow will bring and they often have to rely on [WFP](#) (World Food Program) for their next meal," the agency noted in a press release, calling for greater international support.

WFP's food distribution of high energy biscuits to the western Afghan province of Hirat resumed late last month, having been halted in June because of road insecurity. The agency said that over 80 per cent of the 22,900 megatons of pre-positioned food to the country has now been dispatched to the high elevation areas where roads are inaccessible during the harsh winter season

More on: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=25011&Cr=food&Cr1=>.

UN moratorium on death penalty

Great victory over abolitionist intolerance. Killing more life does not protect life.

New York/Rome November 15. It's going to be a historical day.

With 99 votes in favour, 52 against and 33 abstentions, the Third Committee of the United Nations has passed a resolution demanding that the 192 Member States of the UN General Assembly adopt a moratorium on capital executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty entirely.

Role of the European Union

In a press conference held the day after by radical leader Marco Pannella clearly stated: It's a very satisfactory result; also because the adoption of this resolution has been possible thanks to the joint

effort by the 27 Member States of the European Union, an element that has been lacking over the last years. In this respect, Pannella stated: For many years Europe has thwarted the achievement of this goal. He added: "Victory is now at arm's length, referring to the vote of the plenary due in December".

Satisfied and wary

Minister Emma Bonino, who was in New York in the days that preceded the vote in the Third Committee in order to gather further support for the pro-moratorium coalition, is both satisfied and wary.

In fact, in December the UN General Assembly will vote not only on the document issued by the Third Committee, but also on the amendments already rejected by the Committee and on new ones.

Minister Bonino has reaffirmed the commitment of the Italian Government, in particular of Foreign Affairs Minister Massimo D' Alema, in order to avoid attempts that may reverse the result achieved so far.

By A. Russomando. More on: . http://www.fao.org/unfao/bodies/conf/c2007/index_en.htm

Sent to us by IAW member Jessica Kehl, convenor of the IAW Democracy Commission

PUBLICATIONS - LINKS

Ad Hoc Committee Agrees on New UN Convention to protect disabled persons' rights

On: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/soc4716.doc.htm>

United Nations Human Rights Organizational Structure

<http://www.unhchr.ch/hrostr.htm>

Publication: Delivering on the Promise of Equality

UNFPA's Strategic Framework for Gender Mainstreaming and Women's Empowerment 2008-2011

On: <http://www.unfpa.org/publications/detail.cfm?ID=351&filterListType>

United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali

The report, [*Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world*](#), provides a stark account of the threat posed by global warming.

On: http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr_20072008_en_complete.pdf

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	<iaw.newsletter@inter.nl.net>
International Women's News	: Priscilla Todd (English)	<iaw.iwnews@womenalliance.org>
	: Mathilde Duval (French)	<aifnfi@womenalliance.org>
Membership Officer	: Pat Richardson	<iaw.membership@womenalliance.org>
Treasurer	: Rakesh Dawan	<iaw.treas@womenalliance.org>