

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

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

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

**IAW NEWSLETTER February 2007, no. 2**



**Equal Rights**

*Dear IAW members,*

*It is amazing how much there is to find on the internet about the girlchild, who suffers so much from malnutrition, educational discrimination, sexual violence and barbaric customs. In this newsletter you will find a selection of worrying topics, to be discussed at the Commission on the Status of Women, February 26 - March 9.*

*This is not a happy newsletter to mail around. We know our IAW members in the CSW delegations, all supported by their organisations and all dedicated to help, will certainly be most vigilant. Many national and international women organisations have also formulated and signed the NGO statements on <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw51/OfficialDocuments.html>*

*The review of the second theme of CSW: "the Role of Men and Boys" makes us wonder where they have been, all those men and boys, those fathers, brothers, uncles and grandfathers of the girlchild? For reports, have a look at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/asp/user/list.asp?ParentID=10897>*

## **Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children**

Trafficking is a violation of fundamental rights.

Trafficking in children is a global problem affecting large numbers of children. Some estimates have as many as 1.2 million children being trafficked every year.

- \* There is a demand for trafficked children as cheap labour or for sexual exploitation.
- \* Child trafficking is lucrative and linked with criminal activity and corruption.
- \* It is often hidden and hard to address.
- \* Trafficking always violates the child's right to grow up in a family environment.
- \* In addition, children who have been trafficked face a range of dangers, including violence and sexual abuse.
- \* Trafficked children are even arrested and detained as illegal aliens.

Some facts:

UNICEF estimates that 1,000 to 1,500 Guatemalan babies and children are trafficked each year for adoption by couples in North America and Europe.

Girls as young as 13 (mainly from Asia and Eastern Europe) are trafficked as "mail-order brides". In most cases these girls and women are powerless and isolated and at great risk of violence.

Large numbers of children are being trafficked in West and Central Africa, mainly for domestic work but also for sexual exploitation and to work in shops or on farms. Nearly 90 per cent of these trafficked domestic workers are girls.

Children from Togo, Mali, Burkina Faso and Ghana are trafficked to Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Cameroon and Gabon. Children are trafficked both in and out of Benin and Nigeria. Some children are sent as far away as the Middle East and Europe.

### **Sexual exploitation**

Sexual activity is often seen as a private matter, making communities reluctant to act and intervene in cases of sexual exploitation. These attitudes make children more vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

Myths such as the belief that HIV/AIDS can be cured through sex with a virgin; technological advances such as the Internet which has facilitated child pornography, and sex tourism targeting children, all add to their vulnerability.

- ❑ Surveys indicate that 30 to 35 per cent of all sex workers in the Mekong sub-region of Southeast Asia are between 12 and 17 years of age.
- ❑ Mexico's social service agency reports that there are more than 16,000 children engaged in prostitution, with tourist destinations being among those areas with the highest number.
- ❑ In Lithuania, 20 to 50 percent of prostitutes are believed to be minors. Children as young as age 11 are known to work as prostitutes. Children from children's homes, some 10 to 12 years old, have been used to make pornographic movies.

*Sent to us by IAW member Anjana Basu*

### **Children in warfare - the Paris Principles**

8 February 2007 – Radhika Coomaraswamy, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, hailed agreements reached earlier this week in France, known as the Paris Principles, aimed at ending the unlawful recruitment and use of children in warfare, but she also highlighted increasing problems for children in strife-torn Sudan.

*"These [Paris] Principles relate to the duty of ground recruitment and release of child soldiers and also with regard to the reintegration of child soldiers... and we are very happy many of the countries that were affected were present," Radhika Coomaraswamy told reporters.*

Representatives from 58 countries committed themselves to putting an end to the unlawful recruitment and use of children in armed conflicts, as well as to ensuring that conscription and enlistment procedures for recruitment into armed forces comply with applicable international law.

#### **Political and legal efforts are not enough**

The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), a co-host of the conference along with the French Government, has welcomed the agreement but noted that political and legal efforts are not enough on their own to end child recruitment as effective social programmes are also required to tackle its root causes.

Ms. Coomaraswamy, who recently visited Sudan along with UNICEF's Deputy Executive Director, said recent agreements to end abuses of children in that country must now be implemented, while she also pointed out new concerns caused by the breakdown of the social fabric in Darfur and in Juba and other areas of southern Sudan.

"All I'm saying is that commitments are being made, implementation is another issue and we have to watch that all the time, but the commitments are being made," she told reporters, referring to pledges made last week by Sudan's Government and armed groups to reinforce child protection.

### **Commission on the Status of Women, 51st session, 26 February - 9 March 2007**

All official documents are on:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw51/OfficialDocuments.html>

### **International Decade 2001-2010 for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World**

On [http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk\\_sommaire.htm](http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk_sommaire.htm) website you will find a good overview of this decade. For those of you who like to study United Nations resolutions and other reference documents, go to [http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk\\_sum\\_refdoc.htm](http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk_sum_refdoc.htm)

## **INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN**

Several IAW members are attending CSW, in the IAW delegation or as members of other delegations. Members of the IAW Board attending are: President Rosy Weiss, vice-president Lyda Verstegen, Joanna Manganara, Inga Jonsdottir, Mmbatho Ramagoshi, Marilyn La Tona. Then there are the members of our IAW New York team, headed by Kay Fraleigh; two women from our member organisation of the Philippines; Susanne Riveles, the convenor of the IAW Peace Commission; Anje Wiersinga and Karin Diethorst from the Netherlands, Lilian Mushota from Zambia and at least three individual IAW members.

### **Three IAW Side events**

∞ Tuesday, February the 27th 2007, 4:00 pm - 5:45 pm

**The CRC and CEDAW: Legal Mechanisms for Eliminating Discrimination and Violence**

### **against Girls**

International Federation of Women in Legal Careers and co-sponsored by:  
FIDA, IAW, IAWJ Panel  
Church Center - 2nd floor. Scheduled

∞ Thursday, the first of March 2007, 2:00 pm - 3:45 pm

#### **Violence against the girlchild in work situations: challenges and responses.**

International Alliance of Women and co-sponsored by: FIDA, NYWBA Panel  
Church Center - 10th Fl. Scheduled

∞ Tuesday, March the 6th 2007, 2:00 pm - 3:45 pm

#### **The Missing Girls**

International Alliance of Women and co-sponsored by: All India Women's Conference Panel  
Church Center - DHL - 12th floor Scheduled

### **India - National Family Health Survey shows malnutrition among children under three**

Mumbai, India, Feb. 9 — Even after India's years of sustained economic growth, child malnutrition rates here are comparable to some of the poorest countries, and at times worse.

In this young nation, where 40 percent of the people are under 18, figures released by the government on Friday offered an alarming portrait of child health: among children under 3, nearly half are clinically underweight, the most reliable measure of malnutrition.

Additionally troubling, the incidence of child malnutrition declined only one percentage point, to 46 percent, in seven years, according to the latest National Family Health Survey. During that time, the economy grew at 6 to 8 percent; it is poised to swell by more than 9 percent in the current fiscal year, the government announced this week.

The child malnutrition rates put India roughly on a par with Burkina Faso and Bangladesh. Sudan posted better results, according to data compiled by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Malnutrition in China was about 8 percent, UNICEF said.

#### **A lopsided pattern of growth**

The long-awaited health report, which was quietly made public on Friday on a government Website, also showed scant progress in childhood immunization. In the survey, compiled in 2005-6, 43.5 percent of children 12 to 23 months old were fully immunized, compared with 42 percent in the previous survey, in 1998-99.

"It's partly poverty, it's partly the collapse of health services, it's a measure of a completely lopsided pattern of growth in the country," said Jean Drèze, an economist who led a study of India's child nutrition programs late last year.

#### **Poor public health and sanitation**

The nutrition figures also reflect the grinding poverty in parts of rural India, and poor public health and sanitation in general. The health survey measured how many households had access to a toilet (44 percent nationwide) and the proportion of children who suffered from diarrhoea and who were given oral rehydration salts (58 percent).

By Somini Sengupta. Read more on <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/10/world/asia/10india.html>

*Sent to us by IAW member Anjana Basu*

## **Prominent Women Speak Out**

### **The Fight against Child Pornography and Paedophilia**

Paris, Jan. 17 — Their husbands may not always agree on issues like the Iraq war and [global warming](#), but when Bernadette Chirac, [Laura Bush](#), Lyudmila Putin and Suzanne Mubarak met here on Wednesday to discuss the fight against child pornography and paedophilia, they seemed safely on the same page. Queen Silvia of Sweden, Queen Paola of Belgium and Margarida Sousa Uva-Barroso, the wife of the president of the [European Commission](#), José Manuel Barroso, also took part.

Worldwide, more than 100,000 Web sites are believed to publish child pornography and many of the children who are sexually solicited are reached online, said Mrs. Chirac, who convened the one-day gathering at Élysée Palace.

The anonymity and reach of the Internet poses an international challenge, they said, urging closer

international cooperation among police officers and prosecutors and an exchange of technology to identify illegal content online.

\* "This reality concerns us all because the threat hangs over each of our children," Mrs. Chirac said.

\* Mrs. Bush emphasized that only international cooperation could tackle the threat, saying, "The abuses of children on the Internet know no boundaries."

#### **European Union - in July 2007, you can dial 116000 to report a missing child**

On a continent where borders are easily crossed, the concern about kidnappers taking their victims to other countries prompted the [European Union](#) last month to create a single emergency number for missing children. By the end of June, parents will be able to dial 116000 anywhere in the 27-country bloc to report a missing child.

The first ladies and queens who gathered in Paris were all honorary directors of the American-based International Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

*By Katrin Bennhold, Jan. 18 2007, New York Times*

#### **Panel Discussion on the Role of Women in Building a Better World**

Prof Jody Williams, American winner of the Peace Prize in 1997 for her work on the landmines campaign, said: "It's shameful that the South African government could use their first vote at the Security Council to stifle democracy in Burma that is under military rule; where people are suffering and being degraded the way they went through the apartheid era."

Williams was referring to the South African government's recent vote – with Russia and China – against a UN resolution that condemned Burma's injustices to its people.

Iranian rights activist Sharin Ebadi, winner of the prize in 2003, said that despite human rights violations in Iran, America had no right to interfere with Iran's nuclear programme.

"The people of Iran have to arm themselves with two swords – one to fight the Americans who are trying to impose their will on them and the other to fight for their rights within Iran that are being trampled on by the government," she said. According to Ebadi, **peace in the world would only come if the world put in more money into education and health.** "If we increase the sums that we spend on education and health, rather than the enormous budgets that we have on military equipment, then the world would be a better place to live in."

Kenyan environmentalist Wangari Mathai, the winner in 2004, called on the global super powers to ensure that there is **equitable distribution of resources in the world.** "Until we see equitable distribution of resources in the world we will never know world peace," she said.

#### **UN Human Rights Council, mission to Darfur**

February the 19th, 2007. The UN High Level Mission to Sudan's Darfur region, led by Nobel Laureate [Jody Williams](#), called off its plan to visit Sudan last week as Sudanese officials failed to issue visas for the six-member team of investigators. The Mission as a group decided to continue its work to assess the situation by visiting Darfurians outside of Sudan, as the prolonged uncertainty regarding visas would jeopardize completion of its work.

*"The mission will proceed and collect all relevant information from locations outside the country," said Williams last week, while in Addis Abeba for the first-leg of the team's two-week trip.*

The High Level Mission was decreed by the UN Human Rights Council and began its work in Geneva on 5 February 2007 with briefings, interviews and discussions with many individuals and organisations involved in Darfur, including Darfurian NGOs. On 10 February, the Mission departed for Addis Ababa, where they had additional briefings with African Union and UN officials, including an AMIS military briefing.

#### **Jody Williams writes:**

Yesterday, Sunday, 18 February, I was in a refugee camp near the border with Darfur. I asked to have time alone with Darfurian women. Another woman on our team was with me, along with a female translator.

When we first entered the steamingly hot building and sat on the floor with the 30 women, there was one woman at the side, sitting in a chair. She had wrapped her shawl -- blue with black designs -- all around her face, and then over her head. She was too ashamed to show her face. She had been so traumatized by gang rape during an attack, that she would not talk.

#### **Gangrape**

About one-half hour into our ongoing discussions, she unwrapped the shawl and showed her face. In the space of the little over one hour of time we had with the women, we were told stories of eight rapes -- six of those women were in the room. All were from different villages and all had been gang raped. The ages of the women in the room who had been raped were 15-17-20-21-35 and unsure of the one whose face had been covered. The thirty-five year old woman had eight children. When her husband learned of the rape, he divorced her on the spot.

The story of the two women who had been raped but were not in the room was told by an older woman who had been with them. They were four women together when their village was attacked by the Janjaweed. The old woman in the group was thrown into the fire by the attackers and she burned to death. The woman telling the story was badly beaten, as the two younger women were repeatedly raped. One of them got pregnant and when she had the child, it "died" immediately. She has "been sick" ever since.

That was three years ago. She has four children and her husband was killed in the attack.

One woman had been raped outside of the camp. She'd gone to get firewood and was raped by a group of Chadians.

When we had met with the camp's leaders for about an hour and a half discussion before I went to speak with the women, one of the men talked about the raping of the women by the Janjaweed. He said, "Especially the raping of women -- how can they do this in the name of Islam?" All of the various tribes and ethnic groups in Darfur are Muslim, as is, of course, the Government of Sudan. Only South Sudan, which fought for over twenty years for autonomy, is a mix of Christians and animists.

From N'Djamena, Chad: Jody Williams; Liz Bernstein, Director Nobel Women's Initiative united for peace with justice and equality. More on: <http://www.nobelwomensinitiative.org/news.php>

*Sent to us by Ati Chris Blom, attending CSW*

*Editor's note: it seems that the UN refuses from now on to support resolutions on specific nations, like the one on Afghanistan. That resolution drags itself from one CSW to the other.*

*But what about a resolution on Darfur, which is a completely different situation?*

## **Untiring Work by the Greek League for Women's Rights report 2004-2006**

**Domestic violence** has been a priority issue during the last decades for the IAW Affiliate, the Greek League for Women's Rights. More than 20 years ago the League founded counselling and support services and members attended all the Fora and Conferences on this matter since. In view of the intention of the Greek government to pass a new law against violence in the family, the League has taken many initiatives. In public debates the following issues were discussed: Gender equality in employment and professional training; Family and child: contemporary problems and support frames; Harmonisation of work and family life for women and men - law and practice; Past and present problems of the justice systems.

### **A Good Practice !**

The Greek League awards each year prizes to journalists, The event takes place in January at the same time with a New Year's celebration, which attracts 200 members and guests. The award ceremony is preceded by the year's Progress report on gender equality, by the League's President, who announces who has best presented and supported gender equality in the daily press magazines and electronic media.

### **Declarations - Resolutions - Appeals**

A Declaration - Appeal against the occupation of the northern part of Cyprus by Turkish military forces since 1974 is submitted every year to the Secretary General (SG) of the UN and other competent authorities.

The League signed the following resolutions - Declarations - Appeals, issued by the Marangopoulos Foundation for Human Rights:

- \* an appeal of 12 NGOs to examine the situation of women's rights against the violations of women's fundamental rights in Turkey (August 2004)
- \* Declaration of 29 Greek NGOs regarding prerequisites for Turkey's accession to the European Union (November 2004)
- \* An appeal of 132 NGOs to the SG of the UN against the abolition of the UN Commission on Human Rights (May 2005)
- \* A petition of 10 NGOs on Child Labor to the SG of the UN (May 2005)
- \* An appeal of 50 NGOs to the SG of the UN for closing Guantanamo prison camp (May 2006)

### **Municipal and Prefectural elections**

Every four years more women were elected in the chief posts of local governments but, once more, not enough. We now have 28 women Mayors (as against 21 in 2002, out of a total of 1033) and 3 Prefects, out of a total of 54.

Most of the women were elected in small provincial Municipalities, but the most important post of the prefect of Greater Athens was gained for the second term by a woman.

However, we note that many women Mayors were re-elected for a second term, meaning that women's turn to local politics is not accidental and that on many occasions tickets headed by women gained second places. We believe that these are good signs showing that women's participation in local governments is gaining momentum.

### **CONFERENCES - EVENTS - REPORTS**

#### **CEDAW Convention on the Elimination of all forms of the Discrimination Against Women**

Countries reporting on the 38th session, 14 May to 1 June 2007, are: Mauretania, Mozambique, Niger, Pakistan, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Syrian Arabie Republic, Vanuatu

On: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/38sess.htm>

#### **International Women's Day**

In 1975, during International Women's Year, the United Nations began celebrating 8 March as International Women's Day. Two years later, in December 1977, the General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming a United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace to be observed on any day of the year by Member States, in accordance with their historical and national traditions.

For the United Nations, International Women's Day has been observed on 8 March since 1975. The Day is traditionally marked with a message from the Secretary-General.

The theme for **2007** is: **Ending Impunity for Violence against Women and Girls**

On: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/iwd/>

#### **En Route to Equality - UNDP**

Equality is the Foundation of the MDGs - A gender review of national MDGs reports 2005, on <http://www.undp.org/women/docs/en-route-to-equality.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@womenalliance.org>
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