

<http://www.womenalliance.org>

IAW website:



Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities
Droits Égaux - Responsabilités Égales

IAW NEWSLETTER May 2007, no. 6

Dear IAW members,

The General Assembly at the UN - the news can be followed directly from the source. It's amazing, really! In this newsletter the change of the Presidency and the following-up of the fight against HIV/AIDS.

The women's movement is already preparing CSW 2008, but the girlchild still keeps us focussed on the implementation of CSW 2007. The violence of the honour killing of a 17-year old girl in Iraq has shocked us all. On the other side of the balance: the UNICEF Calendar, with girls as role models, all achievers in their own way.

We ask for your special attention to the issue of climate change, with women the most vulnerable and the most invisible! For EU citizens, please sign the Darfur Europetition!

Last but not least: IAW will held her Triennial Congress in New Delhi, India. More in IWNNews.

UNITED NATIONS

A new president for the General Assembly

The United Nations General Assembly has elected Srgjan Kerim of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as the President of its upcoming session.

Mr. Kerim, who will assume his new role at the start of the Assembly's sixty-second session in September, served as his country's Ambassador to the UN from 2001 to 2003 as well as in several positions within his national Government. He has a doctorate in economic science and is currently the General Manager of the South-East European arm of the WAZ Media Group.

Transcendental borders

"The major challenges of our times transcend borders," Mr. Kerim stated in his acceptance speech. "Globalization, climate change, terrorism, immigration and sustainable development cannot be entirely solved within national borders, or at the regional level."

Failures the world body has experienced, he noted, are not rooted in deficiencies within the UN system, but rather "in the lack of political will of individual Member States to cooperate within the multilateral framework".

Tackling global warming and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), eight targets for tackling poverty, hunger and other social ills by 2015, are among his top priorities.

Sheikha Haya

Both the incoming Assembly President and the Secretary-General paid tribute to Sheikha Haya, a legal expert whose long career included championing women's rights, and her work during her tenure as the Assembly's leader.

Noting that he was fortunate to receive Sheikha Haya's guidance upon assuming the position of Secretary-General, Mr. Ban said that Mr. Kerim will benefit greatly from her "steadfast support, wisdom and dedication of [her] leadership."

Mr. Kerim praised her for her guidance and for her numerous accomplishments, including building on the historic 2005 World Summit, which acted as a starting-point for a host of reforms, dealing with issues from human rights, terrorism and peacebuilding to economic development and management overhaul.

He also lauded her successes in strengthening Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which is mandated to coordinate the development work of the UN system.

More on: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/ga10596.doc.htm>

General Assembly and HIV/AIDS

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon promised that the pandemic – which had killed more than *25 million people in the course of the last quarter century* -- would remain a system-wide priority for the United Nations.

Addressing the Assembly on May 21st, as it met one year after last June's high-level session to review the implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, adopted by Member States in June 2001, Mr. Ban stressed that only when the international community worked together with unity of purpose -- unity among Governments, the private sector and civil society -- could it defeat AIDS. More on <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/ga10596.doc.htm>

Convenor of the IAW Health Commission: Gudrun Haupter

Note: The Malaysian Health Ministry says it cannot openly advocate condom use to fight AIDS. An official from the government's sexually transmitted disease unit told the New Straits Times that voluntary groups must be relied on to promote safe sex. Yet the government has set aside RM300 million to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS in the next three years. The money, to be spent under the Harm Reduction Programme, will involve 20,000 intravenous drug users.

www.abc.net.au/ra/asiapacific/programs/s1931487.htm 24 May 07 New Straits Times 22 May 07

Outcomes of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 2007)

On website <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/51sess.htm#outcomes> IAW members can find excellent material for quoting in introductions and articles. For example, the Opening Statement on the girlchild by Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), gives figures worldwide on "forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child".

For the Newsletter of the NGO Committee on UNICEF Working Group on Girls (WGG) and its International Network for Girls (INFG), subscribe electronically at wggs@girlsrights.org

Sent to us by IAW President Rosy Weiss

CSW 2008 - Financing for Gender Equality - February 25th - March 8th

As a preparation for CSW 2008, please have a look at the panel 'Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women'. The AWID, Association for Women's Rights in Development, with Lydia Alpizar, worked on funding trends in women's organisations and movements. They found that many funding agencies have good gender equality policies, but they don't translate them into practice on the ground.

AWID proposes four issues for CSW 2008. You will find more on:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw51/pdfs/panelpapers/Lydia%20Alpizar.pdf>

1. Full implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.
2. Effective frameworks, with clear mechanisms and significant resources within aid.
3. CSW should advance discussions and proposals to strengthen tracking and monitoring systems of funding, such as the gender marker.
4. The need to ensure sustained substantial funding for what would be then the recently-created UN Agency for Women.

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

IAW Congress 29 October - 3 November 2007

The International Alliance of Women will hold its Triennial Congress 2007 in New Delhi.

An invitation to Affiliates, Associates, and Individual Members will be announced in the next IWNNews. Congress will be in session from 29 October to 3 November 2007.

For information, contact IAW Secretary Alison Brown on iawsec@womenalliance.org

IAW Secretary Alison Brown has notified IAW Affiliates and Associates of the following invitations:
* the WFMH World Congress on the topic of "**The Impact of Culture on Mental Health**", scheduled for 19-23 August 2007 in Hong Kong. For further information, go to:

http://www.wfmh.com/documents/2007Congressleaflet_000.doc.

* A "call for papers" for the World Federation for Mental Health's conference on "**Transcultural Mental Health in a Changing World: Building a Global Response**" to be held in Minneapolis, MN, USA October 29-31, 2007.

A CD on "Recognizing and Understanding Schizophrenia in Young Adults" is especially geared for

universities and students. If you would like a copy of the CD you can download it from the website:
www.wfmh.com

EMERGENCY EUROPETITION

*From IAW President Rosy Weiss with the following message: **Please sign and send to your contacts.***

The petition is on: http://www.europetition-darfour.fr/europetition_eng/sign.php

To the Heads of Government of the European Union and the Institutions of the European Union for immediate despatch of an international protection force to Darfur.

Initiative coordinated by the Collectif Urgence Darfour/Emergency Darfur Coalition
(www.urgencedarfour.com)

To the Heads of Government of the European Union Member States,
To Mr José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission,
To Mr Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union,

We European citizens, can no longer remain indifferent and passive in the face of the true war against civilians presently taking place in Darfur, in the West of Sudan.

The army of Sudan and the Jinjaweed militias, mainly in the name of their “black African” identity, have committed massacres of entire villages, killing their Masalit, Fur, Zaghawa and other fellow-countrymen who constitute the majority of the six million inhabitants of Darfur.

Many already refer to Darfur as the first genocide of the 21st century.

Already 400 000 innocent men, women and children have been killed. Tens of thousands of people have been raped, tortured and terrorized. More than two and a half million others have been chased from their homes. Every hour, every day, the number of victims increases!

The United Nations has qualified the exactions committed against the populations as war crimes and crimes against humanity, and has referred to the International Criminal Court.

Humanitarian action is intentionally being hindered by the government of Sudan. Some NGOs have had no choice other than to suspend their programmes and leave the area. Others have been quite simply forced to leave.

Today, according to the United Nations observers, more than two and a half million refugees or displaced persons do not or no longer have access to international aid and are now exposed to death from malnutrition and disease.

This unbearable and persistent situation in Darfur creates even more instability in this region and worsens other humanitarian disasters in Chad and in the Central African Republic.

Over the last four years, ten resolutions have been voted by the United Nations without any concrete result on the government of Khartoum.

Upon leaving his position last December, Kofi Annan acknowledged that Darfur was the most serious failure the United Nations has had in recent years.

Ladies and Gentlemen, as the European Parliament requested in its resolution dated 15th February 2007, voted unanimously, you must act now!

In line with resolution 1706 of the UN Security Council, **the European states must immediately send a buffer force with a mandate to:**

- effectively protect the populations from a generalized massacre;
- set up secure humanitarian corridors allowing the humanitarian organisations to have access to all the people who need vital assistance;
- bring to the International criminal Court all individuals accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Furthermore, it is essential to:

- establish a no-fly zone over all of Darfur
- apply targeted sanctions, in compliance with the latest resolution by the European Parliament;
- encourage the conditions of a true peace agreement between all the parties, allowing the displaced or refugee populations to return to their land safely.

It is Europe's duty to intervene today and exercise its responsibility to protect!

Climate Change - Women are the most vulnerable
Even the latest UN research from the report on climate change
completely omits social or gender reform

Women are the most vulnerable, but they remain invisible. Mitigation measures to slow down global warming and adaptation measures to decrease the consequences are not yet reaching the most affected populations, particularly women.

As the majority of the world's poor, women are disproportionately affected by swift environmental changes. As climates change access to basic needs and natural resources becomes a challenge.

Rural women in developing countries are still largely responsible for securing food, water and energy for cooking and heating.

Drought, deforestation and erratic rainfall cause women to work harder to secure these resources.

Women, therefore, have less time to earn income, get an education or provide care to families. Girls regularly drop out of school to help their mothers gather fuel wood and water.

During natural disasters, often more women die than men because they are not warned, can't swim or can't leave the house alone. Women usually have fewer assets than men to recover from natural disasters. They also make up the majority of the world's agricultural laborers and rely heavily on fertile land and regular rainfall.

Climate changes fuels conflict

Shortfalls in seasonal rains have resulted in drought and economic distress that lead to a 50% increase in the likelihood of war. In the Darfur region in Sudan, where desertification has plagued the land in recent decades, homes are often destroyed, campaigns of intimidation, rape or abduction are waged and thousands of women are caught in the crossfire.

Women - untapped resources

Another sequence of gender inequality is that women are often perceived primarily as victims and not as positive agents of change.

Women must be at the heart of relief efforts and the re-building of shattered communities.

Global climate change negotiations- including the UNFCCC (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) and the Kyoto Protocol - are narrowly focused on emissions reductions, rather than social impacts. Even the latest UN research from the report on climate change completely omits social or gender reform.

Current policies and mechanisms are inadequate

- * UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Kyoto Protocol - International treaty and mechanisms to reduce greenhouse gases.
- * Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) - allows industrialised countries to invest in projects in developing countries to offset greenhouse gas emissions.
- * Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) under the UNFCCC assesses research and climate change.
- * The UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) does include gender as a cross-cutting issue, but only focussed on climate change during the 2006-2007 sessions.

What can be done ?

- * Undertaking a gender analysis of national or local climate change policies.
- * Ensuring that women participate in decisions.
- * Developing gender-sensitive indicators for governments to use in national reports to the UNFCCC.
- * Creating practical tools that allow gender equality to be incorporated in climate change initiatives.

More on <http://www.wedo.org>

Sent to us by IAW member Pat Richardson

Women continue to be subjected
to the barbaric practice of “honour” killings

Support called for a Campaign against “honour” killings

Dear friends in women's / human rights organizations, all freedom-lovers,

We have launched our international campaign against honour killings in Iraq, and specifically about the current killing of Doa in the Kurdish part of Iraq. Although these crimes are committed all over the

country and in dozens of killings every week, this particular one was committed in a public space and documented /video taped by the male-chauvinist viewers and observed cold-bloodedly by police staff. Houzan Mahmoud, one of the strong leaders of OWFI, is the campaign coordinator. She is collaborating with Amnesty International in order to gain their voices for the campaign. We are gathering signatures on our petition for the current time, in order to present them to the Kurdish regional authorities, whose top official is the president of our "democratic" Iraq.

Petition

Please circulate this petition among your members and make us stronger in our local campaign. A women's solidarity is most needed at this point in Iraq. Our lives do not need this extra danger which is rising tremendously in the chaotic times under occupation.

Visit our campaign at: <http://www.petitiononline.com/kurdish/petition.html>

In Solidarity, Yanar Mohammed

More on: <http://womennewsnetwork.net/>

Sent to us by IAW member Soon-Young Yoon

BAGHDAD, IRAQ (CNN) -- Authorities in northern Iraq have arrested four people in connection with the "honor killing" last month of a Kurdish teen -- a startling, morbid pummeling caught on a mobile phone video camera and broadcast around the world.

The case portrays the tragedy and brutality of honor killings in the Muslim world. Honor killings take place when family members kill relatives, almost always female, because they feel the relatives' actions have shamed the family.

In this case, Dua Khalil, a 17-year-old Kurdish girl whose religion is Yazidi, was dragged into a crowd in a headlock with police looking on and kicked, beaten and stoned to death last month. (Watch the attack, and what authorities are doing about it).

In October 2004 the United Nations General Assembly passed an historic Resolution on the elimination of crimes against women and girls committed in the name of honor

- Known as Crimes of Honor, the Resolution stressed the need to treat all forms of violence against women and girls, including crimes committed in the name of honor, as a criminal offence, punishable by law; emphasized such crimes are incompatible with all religious and cultural values;
- called upon all States to continue to intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate crimes against women and girls committed in the name of honor, which takes many different forms, by using legislative, administrative and programmatic measures;
- and requests the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the present resolution in his report on the question of violence against women to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session.

The importance of this General Assembly Resolution has been translated into 19 languages.

Kuwait Parliament Urges Segregation in Private Colleges

During its meeting on May the 9th, the Kuwaiti National Assembly committee on alien social phenomena urged Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Nouriya Al-Subeeh to ban mixed education in private colleges in line with law.

Praising Al-Subeeh who attended the committee meeting for her cooperation and understanding of the necessity of full implementation of segregation education law, chief of the committee Walid Al-Tabtabaei told reporters that the reality of private colleges went against the law which provided for male-female separation in all classroom, cafeterias, and sports activities.

Penalties?

The committee asked the minister to notify the private tertiary education institutions nationwide to abide by the law or face legal penalties, Al-Tabtabaei noted. The penalties could include withhold of "academic approvals," he warned. To avoid such penalties and correct their situations, the private colleges can assign the current facilities for one gender and set up separate facilities for the other gender, he suggested.

One sociologist for 50 school children?

The private colleges were founded after the issuance of the law against mixed education, so they are forced to abide by it, the senior parliamentarian asserted.

To enhance the social service and prevent some misconducts in schools the committee asked the minister to assign a sociologist for each classroom, rather than for each school. One sociologist can not

care for up to 500 school children. They can care for just 50 school children, according to Al-Tabtabaei.

More on: http://www.gulfinthemedial.com/index.php?id=308946&news_type=Top&lang=en

CEDAW

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) set up to monitor compliance with a landmark treaty on the issue opened on May the 14th its [session](#) at United Nations Headquarters in New York with plans to review reports from Mauritania, Serbia, Syria, Mozambique, Niger, Pakistan, Sierra Leone and Vanuatu.

The 23-member expert panel will also continue important work under the Convention's Optional Protocol, which enables the Committee, based on certain criteria, to undertake inquiries into possible grave or systematic violations of women's rights.

The Committee is also scheduled to meet with representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to hear information about the countries that are reporting at the current session.

A dynamic UN women entity

In opening remarks, Rachel N. Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, recalled that Ban Ki-moon has endorsed calls to consolidate and strengthen several current women's units into "one dynamic UN entity" focused on gender equality and women's empowerment, which should mobilize change at the global level and inspire enhanced results at the country level. More on: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/38sess.htm>

and on: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2007/wom1624.doc.htm>

Convenor of the (IAW Commission on Civil and Public Rights: Lene Pind

UNICEF Calendar - a good news story from India

Guess who are the new poster-girls of the Bihar Government. No, it is neither the tennis sensation Shilpi Jaiswal, nor Bollywood actress from Patna, Nitu Chandra. For a change, a dozen girls belonging to the minority community, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, are Bihar ki nai betiyian (new daughters of Bihar).

The lucky 12 were picked up from among 2,500 girls who took part in the Kishori Mahotsava held recently. Their photographs now appear on the wall calendar prepared jointly by the Bihar Education Project (BEP) and the UNICEF.

"They are the new role-models and agents of change in the state," said Anjani Kumar Singh, Director, BEP. "Two of these girls - Gudiya Khatoon and Lalita - even figure in a calendar on girls' theme prepared by the Government of India," he added.

Role-models

All the 12 girls are achievers in their own way, given the constraint and opposition they have had to face. Take the case of Abhilasha Kumari, a 10-year-old girl from Lalbagh village in Nalanda. At her age, she is a Meena Mantri and a deputy education minister of her school. "Besides excelling in painting, slogan writing, Abhilasha has been single-handedly convincing parents to send their daughters to school. To her credit, she has been able to persuade 50 children to attend schools, none of whom has dropped out as yet," said Singh.

Lalita of Khopraha village in Sitamarhi district comes from the Mushar community, the most depressed among Dalits. But, today, she is a source of inspiration not only to her own community but other caste groups as well.

The tales of other girls are no less exciting

A class Xth examinee this year, Lalita has become a master trainer in judo, thanks to the efforts of the BEP. Gudiya Khatoon of Gaya and Angoori Khatoon of Muzaffarpur have had to overcome religious dogmas and their community's opposition to acquire education.

Gudiya, was picked up by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for the 'State of the World's Children' report in London. She was invited to be a "shining example" to the world of how education empowers individuals to overcome social and economic constraints and make a difference to their personal and social lives.

While Payal, Savitri and Baby from Begusarai overcame opposition to make a mark in swimming, Sheela Kumari (Chapra) and Chandani (Vaishali), both afflicted with polio and physically disabled, have set an example of how disability cannot be a handicap for those with a positive outlook towards life.

On: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/StoryPage.aspx?id=309bd4dd-0933-4b0c-80c1->

b34d6175b1d3&&Headline=Girl+achievers+belonging+to+SC%2c+ST+and+minority+community+a
dorn+UNICEF+calendar

Sent to us by IAW member Anjana Basu

Funds available for NGOs on Women and Tobacco

A global initiative to reduce tobacco use in low- and middle-income countries was launched in 2006 with funds from Michael R. Bloomberg. A competitively awarded grants program is an important part of the Initiative. The grants program supports projects to develop and deliver high-impact tobacco control interventions. It is managed by the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (the Union) and the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

The due date for submissions for Round 2 is 13 June 2007. For further information about the grants program, including the Call for Proposals and instructions on how to apply for a grant, visit www.tobaccocontrolgrants.org

Sent to us by IAW member Soon-Young Yoon

Trade talks fail to get Doha plan

Trade and farming ministers have failed to find an agreement that would have revived World Trade Organization (WTO) talks, despite two days of meetings.

Ministers from the European Union, US, India and Brazil had tried to restart the stalled Doha round of discussions. So far, the talks have been held up by disagreements about farm subsidies.

The ministers, who met in Brussels, said the gathering was "productive", and they remained hopeful and committed that an agreement could be reached.

Ticking clock

Negotiators are hoping to reach an agreement before US President George W Bush's "fast track" authority runs out on 30 June. Under the fast track legislation, the US Congress may approve or reject trade deals but cannot amend them.

The US and EU are under pressure to reduce the subsidies they pay to their farmers as well as cutting the customs duties they charge on imports of agricultural products.

In return, developing nations are supposed to open their markets up to industrial goods and services from the rest of the world.

From the BBC on <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/6668593.stm>

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 >
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