

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

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

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

IAW NEWSLETTER October 2006, no. 10



Equal Rights

Dear IAW members,

Every day or so there is news from the UN General Assembly. We have collected some of the items as well as we could, but there is much more. You can look up all this information yourself. At the end of this newsletter you will find a list of human rights related websites of the UN.

There is news about two important studies on violence against children and against women, a renewal of the CEDAW Committee, microcredit and the winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace, the Peace Building Fund, and a rather sad story of the Human Rights Council, that could not come to any decision in its second session and postponed it all to the November session.

Last but not least: IAW is setting her expectations on a new Action Programme for 2007!

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

The International Alliance of Women is holding its Annual Board Meeting in Paris, November 12-13th 2006. The Meeting of the International Committee (members of the Board and the presidents of affiliates and associates) will commence on November 15th and run through the 17th.

The Programme includes:

* Reports from Affiliates and Associates on current concerns (moderated by the respective Regional Vice President or Coordinator)

Start of Action Programme Discussion

* Designation of a Rapporteur on new action programme

* WOMEN - conditions for change: health

* POWER - instruments for change: CEDAW and Covenants of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights

* POLITICS - influencing change: sustainable development, peace negotiations

MAKING THE DIFFERENCE

* Discussion and Approval of first draft of Action Programme

* Adoption of Theme of the 34th IAW Congress 2007

More information: IAW secretary Alison Brown <iawsec@womenalliance.org>

UNITED NATIONS

Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon of the Republic of Korea next Secretary General

UN, 13 October. Smiling at Kofi [on](#) her left, President Sheikha Haya Al Khalifa of Bahrain struck her gavel, bringing to a close the General Assembly's meeting on the endorsement of the appointment of Ban Ki-moon, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea as Secretary-General-designate of the United Nations.

Ban Ki-moon is the eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations and will serve for a term of five years.

He said in his statement: "My tenure will be marked by ceaseless efforts to build bridges and close divides. Leadership of harmony not division, by example not instruction, has served me well so far. I intend to stay the course as Secretary-General".

More on: <http://www.un.org/News/>

Peacebuilding Fund

11 October 2006 – United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan today launched a multi-million dollar Peacebuilding Fund to help war-ravaged countries rebuild state institutions after conflict, and act as a “kick-start” for longer term donor investment in recovery efforts.

Strict standards of accountability and transparency

Member States have already contributed and pledged around \$140 million to the Fund out of a target of \$250 million but Mr. Annan highlighted in his address to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) – the UN’s principal body for coordinating and advancing development policy – that the needs in many nations will be much greater than the Fund can satisfy.

“In such cases, the Fund is meant to act as a catalyst, paving the way for sustained investment in peace and recovery... The UN Development Programme (UNDP) will manage the Fund and adhere to the strictest standards of accountability and transparency”, Mr. Annan said.

Full text on: <http://www.un.org/apps/sg/sgstats.asp?nid=2243>

Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit website: <http://www.un.org/peacekeeping/bestpractices>

Study on violence against children

11 October 2006 – United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan today welcomed the world body’s first comprehensive study of violence against children. The study was prepared by his Independent Expert, Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, and presented to the General Assembly’s Third Committee this afternoon.

The in-depth report concludes that violence against children “exists in every country of the world, cutting across culture, class, education, income and ethnic origin.”

The report covers cruel and humiliating punishment, genital mutilation of girls, neglect, sexual abuse, homicide, and other forms of violence against children and paints a sobering picture backed up by statistics and, in many cases, children’s testimonies themselves.

Data

For example, the World Health Organization (WHO) has estimated that almost 53,000 children died worldwide in 2002 as a result of homicide. Studies from many countries across the globe suggest that 80 to 98 per cent of children suffer physical punishment in their homes, with a third or more experiencing severe physical punishment resulting from the use of implements.

The WHO estimates that 150 million girls and 73 million boys under 18 experienced forced sexual intercourse or other forms of sexual violence during 2002.

Female genital mutilation/cutting

It also estimates that between 100 and 140 million girls and women worldwide have undergone some form of female genital mutilation/cutting.

Estimates from the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), published in 2005, suggest that in sub-Saharan Africa, Egypt and the Sudan, three million girls and women are subjected to genital mutilation/cutting every year. The study is to be found on:

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N06/491/05/PDF/N0649105.pdf?OpenElement>

Study about Gender Violence

United Nations, Oct 9 - A 113-page landmark U.N. study on gender violence says women continue to be victims of sexual harassment, human trafficking and blatant discrimination worldwide, on:

<http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=35047>

The study, which is critical of U.N. member states that have failed to adopt laws criminalising violence against women, was drafted by an advisory committee of 10 high-level internationally recognised experts in the field of gender violence.

At least 102 of the 192 member states have no specific legal provisions on domestic violence, while marital rape is not a prosecutable offence in about 53 countries.

Only 93 states have some legislative provision prohibiting human trafficking. "Where legislation exists, it is often inadequate in its scope and coverage and/or not effectively implemented," the report notes.

One European study quoted in the U.N. report says that of the 1,322 marriages across six villages in Kyrgyzstan, nearly half of the marriages were the result of **kidnappings**, and that as many as two-thirds were non-consensual.

In Britain, a Forced Marriage Unit established by the government has intervened in 300 cases of **forced marriages** a year.

And according to official crime statistics in India, 6,822 women were killed in 2002 as a result of

violence related to **demands for dowry** -- the payment of cash or goods by the bride's family to the groom's family.

The U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA) has estimated that 5,000 women are murdered by family members each year worldwide in "**honour killings**" -- crimes against women in the name of safeguarding "honour" within the family or the community.

Lack of political will?

Asked if the rise in violence is due to a lack of political will or financial resources, UNFPA Executive Director Thoraya Obaid said: "It is a combination of the two. At UNFPA we strongly believe that the U.N. system and all other donors should provide increased resources for national action plans to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls. This, however, requires firm political commitment by governments at the highest level to condemn violence against women and to take action to eliminate it."

She said that some political leaders -- such as Africa's first woman head of state Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf -- are making this issue a priority and have put in place a series of impressive measures to address violence against women. "It is this kind of bold and visible leadership that is needed," Obaid said.

"One of the main factors that perpetuates violence against women is widespread impunity that not only encourages further abuses and suffering, but also sends the signal that male violence against women is, in fact, acceptable or inevitable".

By Thalif Deen. The whole story is on: <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=35047>

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL ADJOURNS SECOND SESSION

The Human Rights Council suspended 6 October its second session until 27 November when it will take action on all the draft proposals that it could not consider given their high number and the insufficient time available in order to guarantee the due and balanced consideration of all proposals.

No agreement on 44 resolutions

In short: the fledgling United Nations Human Rights Council ended its second session in disarray after failing to agree on how to address the world's worst abuses. Government delegations were unable to reach agreement on the 44 resolutions proposed during the three-week session.

A wide range of issues

Over the past three weeks, the Council addressed a wide range of issues, hearing from the thematic Special Procedures on the following topics: racism and racial discrimination, people of African descent, migrants, internally displaced persons, minorities, indigenous peoples, extrajudicial and summary executions, enforced disappearances, children in armed conflict, gender issues and the status of women, violence against women, trafficking in persons, torture, arbitrary detention, the independence of judges, freedom of religion and belief, freedom of expression, human rights defenders, the right to health, toxic and dangerous products and waste, housing, food, poverty, sale of children, economic and structural reform, mercenaries, education, transnational corporations, and human rights and counter-terrorism measures.

Rapporteurs and Experts

The Council also considered the reports of country-specific Special Rapporteurs and Experts, including Belarus, Somalia, Cuba, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Cambodia, Haiti, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar, Sudan and Liberia.

When the Council concludes taking action on the draft proposals at the end of November, it will immediately open its third session.

The website of the Human Rights Council is on: <http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/>

Praise for the Role of Women at all Levels of Government in Liberia

New York, Oct 2 2006. Speaking at a high-level forum in Liberia, which is run by Africa's only female president Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the top United Nations envoy to the country praised the role of women at all levels of Government, saying they bring a "different perspective" to development and stressing the benefits of their involvement, particularly in the health and education sectors.

Women make a difference

"Experience has shown that at all levels of governance women do and can make a difference in raising awareness and in bringing a different perspective to a nation's development agenda," Alan Doss,

Secretary-General Kofi Annan's Special Representative, told a gathering of female politicians, legislators and other officials.

"Experiences in other countries show that it makes economic, social and political sense to put the power of choice in the hands of poor women. Only then can we get significant and quick advances in improving health and education."

Rebuilding after conflict

Mr. Doss also called on development partners to place women at the centre-stage in rebuilding the country after years of conflict.

The Women in Governance Forum was organized by the Ministry of Gender and Development, in close collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women

<"http://www.unifem.org/index.php?f_page_pid=6">UNIFEM.

CEDAW

In a secret ballot 181 of 183 States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women elected 12 of the 23 experts that serve on the Committee that monitors States' compliance with the Convention, with experts from Bangladesh, Japan and Mauritius receiving the most votes.

Twelve new experts

The 12 experts to serve in their individual capacities would begin four-year terms on 1 January 2007, replacing the current 12 experts whose terms expire on 31 December 2006.

The new members were elected from a list of 23 candidates nominated on the basis of equitable geographical distribution and representation of the different forms of civilization, as well as of the principal legal systems. (Documents CEDAW/SP/2006/3 and Add.1).

IAW Convenor for CEDAW, Lene Pind, Denmark

Gender Resource Package

This gender resource package is designed to explain the concept of "gender mainstreaming" to peacekeeping personnel at Headquarters and in missions. It is a reference guide that includes background information and highlights key gender issues in each functional area of peacekeeping operations. The package provides guidance on gender issues at the planning stage as well as after the establishment of a peacekeeping operation, and includes a number of practical tools such as a gender assessment checklist for planning and guides to implementation.

Please submit comments!

This package represents a work in progress. Chapters vary in scope and level of detail. The package will be updated and refined periodically, and users are invited to submit comments or additional information and materials to the DPKO Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit (PBPS) at the following e-mail address: dpko-pbpuwebmaster@un.org

If you would like to purchase a hard copy of the Gender Resource Package, please click on the following link: <http://www.un.org/Pubs/whatsnew/e04223.htm>

Millennium Development Goals - maternal mortality in South Asia

11 October 2006 – Improving maternal health and reducing child mortality were high on the agenda as more than 100 experts from across South Asia gathered today in the Nepalese capital Katmandu for the start of a two-day forum organized by the United Nations and other groups on achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Kim Hak-Su, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific ([UNESCAP](#)), told the forum that while South Asia has made commendable progress in lifting millions out of extreme poverty, it still lags on other key measures.

"The majority of countries in South Asia are off track for more than one third of their indicators," Mr. Kim said, stressing the importance of promoting gender equality, ameliorating maternal health and cutting child mortality.

The forum was set up by UNESCAP, UNDP, the Asian Development Bank and the Nepalese Government. Delegates are expected to produce a 30-point action plan on how to achieve the MDGs by their target date of 2015. More on: <http://www.unescap.org/unis/press/2006/oct/g44.asp>

THE POOR SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH

Muhammad Yunus - Nobel Prize Winner for Peace

Novel ideas are hard to come by. What is much rarer, however, is to have the idea tested out and put into practice by the innovator. It requires a vision backed by a strong urge to succeed.

Professor Muhammad Yunus and the history of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh is an example of such an instance. What began as an academic research project with a practical testing ground in the poverty-stricken villages around Chittagong in Bangladesh grew into a successful story of social entrepreneurship which changed the way economists and policy-makers thought about the eradication of poverty.

Almost all the borrowers (around 97 per cent) are women

The success of the Grameen Bank had ripple effects in numerous developing countries, including India, and has brought micro-credit to the forefront of discussion in development finance.

The Grameen Bank has grown over the years with around 7 million borrowers in over 70,000 villages. Almost all the borrowers (around 97 per cent) are women.

The bank has over 2,000 branches and many related enterprises in the Grameen family. Recently, Grameen II was launched to increase the inclusion of marginalized people and improve the credit delivery system, having learnt lessons from the experience of twenty five years of micro-credit in Bangladesh. Greater flexibility in delivery modes is the key area of innovation in the second version.

A little bit of financial resources and a lot of trust

The core purpose of the micro-credit system innovated by Professor Yunus was to extend credit to the poorest of the poor in the villages of Bangladesh. The philosophy behind it was that there was an enormous amount of unutilized talent amongst poor people that needed a little bit of financial resources and a lot of trust.

The story of micro-credit has been one of success in most countries, certainly in Bangladesh where output created by the micro-credit sector accounts for more than 1 per cent of Bangladesh's national income. It is interesting to note that in 2002, the part of national income accruing to the poorest 20 per cent of the population was 9 per cent in Bangladesh. In India it was 8.9 per cent and only 4.7 per cent in China with its brand of market socialism.

By Anup Sinha, professor of economics, Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta (a selection).

The whole story on: http://www.telegraphindia.com/1061014/asp/opinion/story_6869110.asp

Send to us by IAW member Anjana Basu

WINE - a Network of Women's Libraries - a European project

WINE is the network of women's libraries, archives and information centres in Europe. The initiative emerged during an expert meeting that took place in Utrecht in 1995, organized by the Network WISE and the IIAV. The need for such a European network of women's libraries, documentation and information centres was recognized by the university partners and integrated into the preparations for the Socrates Thematic Network ATHENA in 1995.

The purpose of WINE is to provide a common platform for European women's libraries to participate in joint European projects in the field of education and research in gender, women's and feminist studies. More on: http://www.wunrn.com/news/10_09_06/101006_women_information.htm

The IIAV is an associate of the International Alliance of Women

Josephine Butler

An exhibition on Josephine Butler, one of the great social reformers of her time, can be seen at the Women's Library, London E - 21 September 2006 - 31 March 2007. Josephine Butler was way ahead in her campaign against the sexual exploitation of women. More on:

<http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/thewomenslibrary/aboutthecollections/collections/jos-butler.cfm>

The Josephine Butler Society is an associate of the International Alliance of Women.

WEBSITES - CONFERENCES - EVENTS - REPORTS

Request

Swat Youth Front is a not-for-profit and non-governmental organization working for Poverty Reduction, Literacy, Employment Women Empowerment & Disaster management in Malakand range,

NWFP, Pakistan, since 1999. It is seeking Organizations, Donors, Individuals and Institutions to partner its various programs. Details are available on webpage www.syfswat.org

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS RELATED WEB SITES

- * Commission on Human Rights: <http://www.ohchr.org>
- * Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice:
<http://www.ohchr.org/htm/menu2/2/crimepr.htm>
- * United Nations Crime and Justice Information Network: <http://www.uncjin.org>
- * UN Conference on Plenipotentiaries on Establishment of an International Criminal Court:
<http://www.radicalparty.org/news/150698.htm>
- * International Court of Justice - The Hague, the Netherlands (ICJ): <http://www.icj.cij.org>
- * International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia:
<http://www.ohchr.org/htm/menu2/2/yugtrib.htm>
- * International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda: <http://www.ohchr.org/htm/menu2/2/rwatrib.htm>
- * International Labour Organisation (ILO): <http://www.ilo.org>
- * International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO - Geneva, (ITC): <http://www.intracen.org>
- * Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS - (UNAIDS): <http://www.unaids.org>
- * Landmines (United Nations Demining Database): <http://www.un.org/depts/dpko/mine>
- * Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: <http://www.ohchr.org>
- * Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR): <http://www.ohchr.org>
- * Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights:
<http://www.ohchr.org/htm/menu2/2/sc.htm>
- * United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF): <http://www.unicef.org>

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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