

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

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

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

**IAW NEWSLETTER SPECIAL EDITION
BOARD AND INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS - PARIS
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Equal Rights

Dear IAW members,

Compliments to IAW president Rosy Weiss, who had immediately swung into action to find a new venue (PARIS !) after the proposed venue suddenly collapsed. Appreciation and thanks to the IAW members of AFEM and CILAF, in particular Monique Bouaziz, who made both the meetings such enjoyable ones!

One of the most charming points of the Agenda is always the Roll Call. Board members were asked to stand up, followed by IAW convenors and representatives. After that the countries were named (with those members present standing) of all IAW affiliates and associates.

Another charming moment was the unveiling of the antique IAW banner ... followed by a minute of silence for our dear IAW friends, Irmgard Rimondini and Margaret Wieser, who had passed away this year.

A lot of good work has been done in 2006. Due to lack of space we can give you in this Special Edition only a short selection and record appreciation for all the reports presented.

Due to the abhorrence in the Dafur region, with rape of women and girls systematically used as a weapon of war, IAW president Rosy Weiss has sent urgent messages to the presidents of the UN Human Rights Council and the Security Council. You will find the text on the IAW website.

**IAW MEETINGS – Paris – November 2006
A BRIEF OVERVIEW**

Report from IAW Secretary Alison Brown

- Alison was sorry she could not attend the Paris meeting. She had a busy year:
- Communicating names and data of the IAW representatives to the UN, including a complete set of data for their the teams.
- Sending reports from the EWL and UNESCO to the UN - in 2007 also to the DEDANGO.
- Filtering information from the UN Report Program & Network.
- Handling mail from IAW members, NGOs, International Organisations and Institutions.
- Wish: a laptop for the IAW secretariat.

IAW Representative at the United Nations, Kay Fraleigh

- The UN team is following closely the ideas and proposals about UN reform. Women's organisations have to be vigilant and should not give away what has been gained.
- CEDAW will move to Geneva and there is talk of UNIFEM and INSTRAW becoming one body.
- Irina Sarlis Morphopolus attended the World Urban Forum, Women and Habitat in Canada. Next year it will be held in Nanking.

IAW Representative at Human Rights Council, Hélène Sackstein

- In an outstanding report Hélène gave an overview of the first and second session of the newly installed Human Rights Council (HRC), with its new features. We are sorry we can not mail it all but will quote a part of the Interactive Dialogues (ID) with mandate-holders in the second session of the HRC. (See the supplement.)

**IAW Representative in Vienna, Alison Brown,
on Crime Prevention, Women and Justice**

- Alison is following the work of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.
- She is attending each spring the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CTOC) with its protocols, incl. the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, and the Convention on Corruption.
- Wish: the need for more feedback from IAW Affiliates and Associates.

**Food and Agricultural Commission in Rome,
IAW Representative, Bettina Corke**

- The International Alliance Against Hunger within the UN system consists of FAO, the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).
- Throughout 2006 the ad hoc group of International NGOs continued to meet every month.
- The group set up 4 special working groups. IAW has worked upon: peoples participation; the status of International NGOs within the FAO and ECOSOC; the role of Civil Society organisations and foundations.
- Two special: in June 2006 Rosy Weiss addressed the ad hoc group of NGOs;
- in September 2006 a Special Forum was held in Rome to assess progress towards the 'Alleviation of Hunger'.

**IAW Representative at the World Health Commission,
and convener of the IAW Commission on Health, Gudrun Haupter**

- The World Health Assembly 2006 was attended by H el ene Sackstein, Mala Pal and Gudrun Haupter. An excellent report was given of the many activities of this important commission.
- H el ene continued as convener of the subgroup on the Child's Right to Health.
- Resource member Soon-Young Yoon has been shadow-reporting for 3 CEDAW sessions and was active during the WHO Frame Convention on Tobacco Control.
- Resource member Anindita Mukherji, from the Country Women's Association of India, reported on polio; HIV/AIDS; family planning; Reproductive Child Health; dengue, malaria, chickengunia, encephalitis (all caused by mosquitoes), and alzheimer in her country.
- Many NGOs in India are working on these health issues, often helped by the Government, for instance by making people aware of the strength of vaccination against polio.
- Or to create mass consciousness, warning people to keep away from getting HIV/AIDS and not torment women and children who are affected by this disease, for no fault of theirs.

IAW Commission on Education, Convenor Meena Pimpalpure

- There are more than 800 million illiterate youth and adults. More than 100 million children are still out of school, with 60% of them female.
- Illiteracy is greater than social, gender and ethnic inequalities and violence.
- Governments should be lobbied to establish universal, compulsory education for all; to ensure funding of women's education at all levels, to promote legal education and human rights programs for all, and educate women and men in legal, environmental and sustainable growth issues. And:
- to foster NGO and community initiative in promoting the above goals.

IAW Project Officer - Women and Natural Disasters, Rakesh Dawan

- The All India Women's Conference (AIWC) reacted immediately when the Tsunami waves hit the coastal area in Southern India; an action plan was formulated to provide immediate relief.
- Education: a sum was donated for orphan children; cr eches and primary schools were started.
- Health/education: programs and health camps, health check-ups and vaccination facilities were provided.
- AIWC came out with the project 'Income generation for poor women through solar dryers in in Andra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Delhi. This yearlong action cum experiment was implemented in four states.
- Based on AIWC's performance, the Asian Development is promoting Solar Dryers for fish drying in Tsunami affected areas of Kerala.

IAW Commission on Women, Peace & Security, convenor Susanne Riveles

- Cordial thanks for Heide Schutz, who is stepping back as convenor for Susanne Riveles, but will stay on as a resource member of the IAW commission.
- Susanne attended a conference on the 'Prohibition of Small Arms sales' and presented an outstanding report. (Mail for a copy <iaw.newsletter@inter.nl.net>).
- A motion was proposed and carried, that
 - 1) IAW join IANSA's Women's Network in London and
 - 2) that IAW join the NGO Working group on Resolution 1325 at the UN in NY (*see the supplement*).

IAW Representative at the Council of Europe, Anje Wiersinga

- Violence against Women was discussed extensively in the Council. A campaign will be running from November the 25th 2006, till the 8th of March 2007.
- Interesting is the discussion in the Council about the role of women and men in intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, for the prevention of conflict and for peace building and democratisation.
- Anje asked IAW Affiliates and Associates to lobby their governments to ratify the UN Palermo Protocol against Trafficking. European countries should ratify too the European Convention on Action against Trafficking on Human Beings.
- In Europe a few countries, like the Netherlands and Sweden, have a national 'Rapporteur against Trafficking'. This can be lobbied too.

IAW AFFILIATES AND ASSOCIATES

There were excellent reports from the Regional Vice-Presidents: Mmabatho Ramagoshi for South & East Africa; Clémentine Ouedraogo for West Africa; Mona Korashy for the Arab Countries; Hessa M. Al-Shaleen for the Gulf States; Joanna Manganara for Europe and Meena Pimalapure for South Asia.

The regional co-ordinators followed with: Thorbjörg Inga Jónsdóttir for the Nordic & Baltic Countries; Bettina Corke for the Mediterranean Region and Pat Goble for the Pacific.

Interesting reports, with sometimes surprisingly creative actions in fighting for women's rights were received from countries like: Australia, Burkina Faso, Egypt, France, Germany, Iceland, India; Italy, Israel, Kuwait, Netherlands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, UK, USA and Zimbabwe.

It is a pity we cannot publish the reports of all the organisations. We would like to write more about the variety of their activities and also about the joyful events organised by French IAW members in Paris, but in this Special Edition we can only give a short impression of these successful meetings.

After a brainstorming session on the topics of the next IAW Action Programme the Paris meetings came to an end.

We have put four contributions in a supplement: IAW convenor H elene Sackstein tells about the Human Rights Council and convenor Susanne Riveles about the IAW Peace Commission. And the IAW presidents of the All India Women's Conference and of Iceland are describing the activities of their organisations in their countries.

Pictures of the Paris Board meeting will be on: <<http://www.vrouwenbelangen.nl/english/index.htm>> after the 20th of December.

On the IAW website <<http://www.womenalliance.com/>> you will find a short report by IAW president Rosy Weiss in English and French. She is sending - with us - best wishes to all of you for the coming festive season and for a healthy, happy and successful New Year 2007.

SUPPLEMENT

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Convenor of the IAW Commission on Economics, Social & Cultural Rights - H elene Sackstein

* The HRC 'inherited' all the reports submitted to the 62nd session of the Commission on Human Rights for consideration at its second session, including those by special procedures. The HRC has held an interactive dialogue with almost all thematic and country procedures. The speaking limit for comments and questions was 2 minutes without distinction between members and observers, including NGOs and National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs). This was a significant new element in the Council's working method as NGOs and NHRIs had never been permitted to participate directly in interactive dialogues in the former Commission.

* The Interactive Dialogues with mandate-holders were generally constructive and addressed substantive issues on various aspects, such as: internally displaced persons; minorities; freedom of expression; enforced disappearances; racism; violence against women; terrorism; right to food; health; sale of children and the joint report on Guantanamo Bay. Country-specific situations were also addressed and attention was given to the situation in Sri Lanka, the Sudan, and the joint report on Lebanon/Israel.

Participation of NGOs

* NGOs delivered a total of 152 oral statements and spoke for 8.5% of the session total speaking time.
* The participation of NGOs in Interactive Dialogues with mandate-holders, was a welcome innovation compared with the former Human Rights Commission. The distinction made between country-specific and thematic reports proved problematic. During several of the general debates held, NGOs' statements referring to specific country situations were subjected to interruptions and points of order by concerned countries.

(Third HRC session at <http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/3session/index.htm>)

Human Rights Council and the International Alliance of Women

IAW is a member of: 1) the Board of Special NGO Committee for Human Rights; 2) the editorial board of the NGO CSW info-sheet (Geneva Advocacy Notes - GAN) and 3) the Management Committee of the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

IAW endorsed 5 joint statements regarding:

- * NGOs role in the new HRC
- * violence against women
- * NGO input into the New Universal Periodic review
- * the need to ensure full coverage of thematic issues by the HRC, in particular gender mainstreaming
- * the importance of according equal importance to Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Regarding gender issues and children/adolescents, as convenor of a working group on the child's right to health, the IAW representative has obtained funding to carry out a project identifying under reported issues to the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

The first phase has been successfully completed and, in its final phase, the project will explore possibilities of undertaking NGO capacity building to improve their reporting to the Committee.

Emerging Issues - Trade and Human Rights

IAW also participated in panels dealing with transnational corporations and human rights (the need to hold them accountable) and UNCTAD meetings dealing with the impact of globalisation on development and human rights, where the representative brought up the particular concern of women in these issues.

Health

The IAW representative participated and presented a statement during a meeting of the French Organisation AIDE. The paper dealt with the impact of privatisation on health systems and its

consequent impact on access and quality of services for women, unless a human rights approach was ensured at all levels. See above regarding a health project dealing with gender and children's rights. Finally, as a member of the Steering Committee of the BGO Forum for Health (FFH), the IAW representative has opportunities to ensure that a gender perspective is maintained in FFH activities and plans of action.

IAW COMMISSION ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

Convenor: Susanne Riveles

In order to enable the IAW commission to contribute in a meaningful and effective way towards advancing women's participation in peace building and security I propose to narrow down its focus to key priorities. After two years the commission should be evaluated.

While some of the global conflicts are repeatedly exposed by the media, many receive little attention. Among those are the conflict and post conflict areas of Sub Sahara Africa such as Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Rwanda, Burundi and South Africa. These countries have experienced violent bloodshed that has left the communities torn with millions of displaced people in poverty and exposed to diseases of epidemic proportion. There is an urgent need for empowerment of women and for their participation in the peace and reconciliation processes in these communities.

The fact that IAW has among its current membership a strong representation of African women provides the organisation with the unique opportunity to receive information and analysis from the ground. As an international organisation with representation in most UN bodies we have a chance to influence the legislative process internationally and assist and support national women's initiatives for empowerment and participation in peace negotiations and reconciliation efforts.

Priority areas of work for the IAW Commission on 'Women, Peace and Security' for 2007 - 2008.

I. Reduction and control of illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in conflict and post conflict areas around the world with particular emphasis on Sub Saharan Africa.

The commission will monitor the developments at UN level and look for collaboration on actions be taken with other women's organisations. The aim is to advance the implementation of the Plan of Action decided in 2001 in Nairobi, Kenya.

Other issues closely related to the presence of small arms in developing countries and also the millennium development goals, the issue of child soldiers and survivors of gun violence, will be followed by the commission.

Activities planned in the area of Sub Saharan Africa:

- a) Promoting efforts that aim at the incorporation of women in peace negotiations processes internationally and in specific countries.
- b) Emphasising women's role in the gender sensitization and human rights training of peace keeping forces.
- c) Working towards women's inclusion in all aspects of work and legislation surrounding 'child soldiers'. The chairperson is currently member of the Working Group on the International Criminal Court in Washington DC.
- d) Working towards prevention of and treatment for victims of gender based violence.

I. It is proposed that the IAW Peace and Security Commission *join IANSA's Women's Network*, a working group closely connected through the internet.

II. Implementation of the Security Council Resolution 1325.

This resolution from the year 2000 is a landmark decision and represents the most important document which makes women's participation and empowerment in peace building and security a postulate. I propose for the IAW Commission to join the NGO working group on Women, Peace and Security at

the UN. This working group comprises a number of NGO's which meet regularly at the UN in New York. Through networking and monitoring of the development we will be part of the monitoring mechanism for 1325.

COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Anindita Mukherji, National Secretary Country Women's Association of India.

The common problems in India are poverty, illiteracy, enormous population growth, health, child labour, safe drinking water, trafficking of the girl child, violence towards women and so on. Though according to the law of the country there is no sex discrimination and women occupy the highest seats in many places, still the percentage of such cases is not very perceptible.

The Government has taken keen interest in fighting these problems in India, through its own machinerie as well as through NGOs. CWAI has also taken up these causes and with its scanty resources is trying hard to remove the problems in its own sphere.

The member societies are running creches, preschool classes, primary schools, family counseling centres, old age homes, orphanages, homes for handicapped children, are giving courses in vocational training, dress making, batik wearing, computer training. Some are working for the eradication of HIV/AIDS or polio disease.

Co-ordinators are closely monitoring the different units, they visit them and submit reports. National Executive Committee (NEC) meetings are held every month. The members of the NEC are elected every third year and the AGM is held in Kolkata every year.

Two seminars are arranged every year on different issues regarding women's and children's problems. In all seminars the conclusion is that education, financial independence and physical fitness are required to combat any type of social malady.

To spread the message of CWAI and to have interaction with its members, Annual Conferences and Annual General Meetings are held in different States of India where there are member societies. This helps the CWAI grow. CWAI is going on carrying its messages throughout India with its limited resources and marches on to reach its goal.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS ASSOCIATION IN ICELAND

President: Thorbjörg Inga Jónsdóttir

Last year was a great year for the women in Iceland. Among the events celebrated were the 90th anniversary of women's right to vote in the parliamentary election and the 85th anniversary of women's unlimited right to vote. Also we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the first appointment of a female cabinet minister, the 30th anniversary of Women's day off, and the 25th anniversary of Vigdis Finnbogadóttir as the first woman in the world to be elected president in a democratic election.

Our Women's Year started with a conference titled: "Does love affect women's wages?", meaning that after women establish a family their careers seem to suffer for it, whereas men's careers stay unaffected or even blossom. There were many interesting presentations and the conference was an overall success.

Last autumn we held a seminar titled: "Bearded talks on gender equality", where prominent men in different areas in working life discussed the glass roof, and women's status in their fields of occupation. The seminar was very well received.

The biggest event took place on October 24th when we celebrated the 30th anniversary of Women's day off. The labour unions cooperated. We started campaigning a few weeks before, with several radio stations to draw attention to the events. The response exceeded our wildest expectations; 60,000 people, mostly women, celebrated the event throughout the country, and 45,000 people attended the meeting in Reykjavik's centre, which proved to be far too small for all those people. We believe this to be the largest public gathering ever in Iceland.

We participated in many other events. We sent press releases to the media on issues regarding gender equality, such as the banks appointing only men to their boards, and the media laying off only women reporters when cutting down operations. We also declared our support for the bill penalising the buying of sexual services (prostitution) and attended parliament benches when the bill was introduced. We have also been active in pressuring our government to put in motion an action plan against gender violence, and it is not least through our efforts that such a plan has now taken effect.

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>
International Women's News	: Priscilla Todd (English)	<iaw.iwnews@womenalliance.org
	: Cécile Ouédraogo (French)	<aifnfi@womenalliance.org>
Membership Officer	: Pat Richardson	<iaw.membership@womenalliance.org>
Treasurer	: Marieluise Weber	<iawtreas@womenalliance.org>