

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

Equal Rights—Equal Opportunities
Droits égaux—responsabilités égales



Newsletter April 15

no. 2

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Dear members and subscribers

The International Meeting in Kuwait will be a new and interesting experience for IAW.

The main focus of this Newsletter is the outcome of CSW59 and some more subjective and emotional impressions from the colourful and multi faceted event that CSW always is.

We have reports from our representatives to the EWL and the Human Rights Council—and finally we mention and refer to useful reports.

Finally we ask for your assistance in making IAW a well-known organization within social media

Deadline for contributions to the next issue is May 1

International Meeting

Kuwait November 9—14

IAW International Meeting 2015

Union of Kuwaiti Women has generously invited IAW to hold the International Meeting in Kuwait. The meeting will take place November 5 to 14. The meeting will include Board Meeting, International Meeting, Regional Meeting and a Conference. Planning is in progress, and soon official invitations will be sent out.

Participants in the meeting will be Presidents of IAW member organizations, Board, international representatives, office bearers and for part of the week, guests invited by Union of Kuwaiti Women.

During CSW President Joanna Manganara had a meeting with the Regional Director of UN Women to the Arab States, Mohammad Naciri, UN Women will contribute to the planning.



Commission on the Status of Women 59

New York March 9—20 2015

This year's CSW was a celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA), which was adopted at the World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. A review of what had been achieved and what still needs to be done was the main focus of the session.

There was a strong presence of NGOs—between 8000 and 9000 individuals

and more than 1100 organizations.

Outcome

Political Declaration

Political Declaration

Much to the dissatisfaction of women's NGOs and networks a Political Declaration was adopted on the very first day of the session of the Commission. This meant that there was no space for NGOs to influence the negotiations. Numerous efforts were made to change the procedure, but in vain.

The [Political Declaration](#) was a great disappointment. IAW President Joanna Manganara [comments](#) on the Declaration on the IAW website. Her views are shared by a large number of women's organizations all over the world, as appears from the list of signatories to the statement of the [European Women's Lobby](#)

Working Methods

Working Methods

The Commission also reviewed its working methods. The document that was the result of the Commission's negotiations was another disappointment. Read [Joanna Manganara's evaluation](#) of the document on the IAW website.



Celebrating Beijing+20

Under the slogan of *Planet 50—50 by 2030 STEP IT UP*, and on the occasion of [International Women's Day](#), March 8, UN Women and the City of New York organised a march going from Dag Hammarskjold Plaza to Times Square. Thousands of women participated.



The youngest and the oldest

UN Women also hosted celebrations at Manhattan Center with the presence of and speeches by Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon, Executive Director of UN Women Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Melinda Gates of the Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation, President of Liberia Ellen Johnson Sirleaf—and several others.

Dr. Gertrude Mongella speaking on Consultation Day



On **Consultation Day** organised by NGO CSW/NY Dr. Gertrude Mongella, Secretary General of the Beijing World Conference was among the many inspiring speakers, and at the NGO CSW/ NY reception, the Women of Distinction Award was officially given to **Ruchira Gupta** from India, founder of [Apne Aap Women Worldwide](#).





Torild Skard &
Joanna Manganara

IAW at CSW

As mentioned in the February Newsletter, IAW was present at CSW with a large delegation and no less than **5 side events**:

1. **Lessons Learnt from Women Presidents and Prime Ministers Worldwide**

Torild Skard:

To obtain gender equality among the leaders of the world

- there must be competent women
- politics must be democratic
- and there must be a strong women's movement

UNDP Gender Team Leader Randi Davis:

“Beyond its historical value, “Women of Power” provides an often missing feminist analysis of leadership. It also provides an extremely concise but thorough chronology of the last fifty years of the global feminist movement and the accompanying international normative instruments and frameworks that are in use around the world.”

“One of the strongest findings of the book is the linkage between democracy or democratic development and the opportunity for women leaders to come to power. Where there is space for people to organize, where there is a more level playing field, when a country is more open to accepting or meeting regional or global norms and standards, the likelihood for women to acquire positions of leadership is greater.”

“As we think about a future agenda we must absolutely underscore that sustaining women's political leadership requires investing in strong and diverse national women's movements.”

“In her research, Torild Skard found that many women leaders came to power in turbulent times of social or political distress. While we know that crises provide opportunities to break patriarchal political structures, redraft constitutions and electoral laws and introduce quotas and other measures for women's participation in politics, this is the first time I have seen any study link women's political leadership as Heads of State to crisis contexts. As a UN advisor advocating for more women in leadership position in crisis contexts, I applaud this important finding which we can use in our advocacy for women's inclusion in peacemaking.”

2. **Deeds—no words—co-sponsored by El Kamara, Cairo**

- Implementing CEDAW and UN SC resolution



Deeds—no words

3. [Why the future of economics and economic development must be feminist](#)



Lyna Castillo-Javier
Houry Geudelekian
Victoria Edmonds.

4. **Social media, technology and activism beyond 2015—co-sponsored by The Armenian Relief Center and Salvation Army**

The panel discussed the use of films, technology and the different social media platforms as ways to show support for different causes, and it covered how through the use of technology people can bring up issues on a local and global scale.

Social media and films are often used as tools to share views on social and political issues. They are instruments for activism, and social media is becoming its most powerful form.

However, social media platforms also have disadvantages and are still subject to a certain level of bias. Needless to say, it is a new and emerging structure of how we learn about the goings on of the world. Social media activism is a movement; people are connecting and working together to advance shared political and social ideas, and the use of these means has the power to further causes. It is definitely a catalyst for change.

We heard from very accomplished speakers:

[Maro Chermayeff Chermayeff](#) – A principal of Show of Force, the production entity for the [Half the Sky Movement](#). She is the Director and an Executive Producer of [A Path Appears](#), the follow-up series to the landmark four-hour PBS documentary series. A Path Appears “provides a unique and essential narrative about making a difference in the world — and a roadmap to becoming a conscientious global citizen. The PBS documentary series premiered in January 2015. It examines the struggles women face in the United States and abroad, and the inspiring individuals working with them to create effective solutions.”



[Ghada Saba](#) - Jordan’s first female cinema director. She is a pioneer filmmaker well known for tackling social problems and taboos.

Saba tries to feature the situation of the Jordanian families thus contributing as a media professional in the social, political and economic reform in the country.

[Ishita Srivastava](#) – A digital producer, filmmaker, and culture change enthusiast. She led [Breakthrough’s](#) Restore Fairness video campaign, and headed up their multimedia campaigns about immigrant women’s rights.

[Emilie Clark](#) - As one of the writers and actors in [Girl Be Heard's](#) most recent Main Stage production, *Displaced*. Emilie helped lead the online action that connected stories from girls living as refugees abroad to the stories from the cast members in NYC, creating a collaborative performance that puts a face on displacement, homelessness, and the consequences of conflict in the USA and abroad.

5. **[Women, peace and security](#). Implementing UNSC Resolution 1325 and following resolutions—co-sponsored by El Kamara and Austria**



Professor Pam Rajput



The Beijing Platform for Action
Turns 20

The Working Group on Girls -
<http://girlsrights.org/>
NGO Committee Working at
the UN

All India Women's Conference (AIWC) side event: Women's economic empowerment.

[President Veena Kohli's speech](#) at the AIWC side event had a number of concrete suggestions for actions to empower women. This very lively and successful side event was moderated by Professor Pam Rajput

UN Women has published a summary of the report by the Secretary General on the [20-year review and appraisal](#) of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Violence against women continues to be one of the most serious problems for women

The Working Group of Girls' Statement, CSW 59

The Beijing Platform for Action outlined eleven comprehensive sections about the problems women face but only one section about the girl child. Twenty years later, it is time girls are further addressed, and empowerment put at the forefront. We the girl delegates of the 59th session of the Commission on the Status of Women demand that steps be taken to ensure that all girls, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identification, ability, socio-economic status, and ethnicity, feel empowered.

While Beijing addressed the issue of girls' education, more action must be taken. A high global standard for education is vital to the advancement of society in the fight for gender equality. With a high quality primary, secondary, and tertiary education accessible to all, gaps in education around the globe will be closed. It is imperative that all girls have a secure and productive learning environment, as well as a safe journey to school. All schools must adopt a diverse and substantial curriculum that equips all teachers and meets the needs of all students.

We demand an accurate and comprehensive sexual education in all learning environments to ensure that no girl's sexual health is put at risk. We demand an education that will prepare us for life after our schooling career, in areas such as STEM, economics, and politics. When girls are educated, we have the power to share our knowledge, making a qualitative difference in our communities and in the world.

Access to comprehensive, non-discriminatory health care is a human right. Although progress has been made in global health infrastructure, medical care and facilities still remain inaccessible for many girls, particularly girls in poverty, with disabilities, and in the LGBTQIA+ community. Regardless of cultural and religious stigma, reproductive and mental health must be treated as a right, not a privilege.

We demand that girls no longer die unnecessarily in childbirth, are no longer at a heightened risk of contracting STIs, and no longer suffer from lack of menstrual supplies. Ignoring girls' health issues prevents them from engaging in the public sector.

Gender based violence is still widely practiced through degrading cultural traditions such as honor killings, female genital mutilation, breast ironing, and female infanticide. These must be combatted through active leaders and supportive programs. We demand programs to prevent violence through education, awareness, and the breakdown of harmful stereotypes and societal norms, especially in the media.

We demand services and support for girls who have suffered any and all forms of violence, as well as an end to victim shaming. No girl should fear being assaulted; empowerment rather than fear should be the force that unites all.

It is imperative that girls are fully aware of their rights and their implications. We call on all men and boys to be our partners in this endeavor. We demand all girls have the opportunity, tools, and support to reach their full potential.

Impressions from CSW

— by members of the IAW delegation

'No country has yet achieved gender equality'

I was very impressed by the mobilisation of the NGOs of the world, the mass of energy and imagination they displayed, and the fact that many solutions of grassroots populations all over the world could be drawn from their experiences and exchanges.

On the other hand, being an old timer in these meetings I was sadly impressed to see that during CSW59 there was little communication between Member States' high representation and civil society, even less than last year as far as I could see

It felt sometimes that UNWOMEN was attentive to please Member States leaving the NGOs to their own activities. NGOs are paying a high price financially, intellectually and technically, and so many of their reports would deserve to be widely disseminated. For the NGOs another World Women Conference made sense. For the UN and Member States another analysis prevailed? Why?.

'We want gender equality now!'

[HeForshe](#)



Alice Betty Were, AFRICA

Women's Forum:

The women in Congo are tired!

Everybody knows what is going on in Congo. Every woman between 3 and 85 is a victim

Fantastic how many interesting women you can meet at CSW and the Forum especially from the Global South.



At the last morning briefing a South American woman distributed hundreds of pink whistles saying: This whistle is the instrument of denunciation and protection of violence against women, that takes place every day everywhere...whistle for you and denunciate for her!

*'Planet 50-50 by 2030
Step it up!'*

A great meeting place for dialogue between women's organizations and politicians.

For women in South Africa, it is not Beijing+20, but Beijing-20 when it comes to violence against women.

'We have the legal framework—we don't have the implementation'

I attended a side event organized by the Government of Iran expecting to learn about the development of the status of women during the last few years. We heard lectures from the minister and high-level women officials regarding government programmes on health, education, access to work and political representation. The minister and the other women speakers were wearing a very formal Islamic garb, and the moderator was a man. This was a remarkable event as it was one of the first of its kind at this exceptional CSW celebrating Beijing+ 20. But no Iranian NGO was present amongst the speakers and no time was allowed for discussion with the audience. The whole situation seemed to present an illustration of the distance that could have been felt at many places between government representatives and NGOs.

Quote Geena Davis: "There are profoundly fewer female characters in movies and television programs aimed specifically at young children. And a tremendous amount of hyper sexualisation and stereotyping of the female characters in these entertainments that were made for kids."



Partying at the NGO CSW Reception



Arina Angerman, IAW representative to the European Women's Lobby reports:

World Wide Women in power and decision-making 08.03.15:

The (inter)national communities celebrated worldwide the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, a fundamental human rights instrument for women and girls adopted in 1995. My contribution was a blog [‘Do World Wide Women connect and share at social media?’](#).

The European Women's Lobby (EWL) members launched a VIDEO Message to all UN member states for the new post-2015 agenda. In this ‘From words to action’ message for a feminist Europe [IAW is demanding ‘parity democracy’](#).

Beijing '95 strategic objective was among other things to ‘Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision making’. EWL demands [‘Parity at all levels of political and economic decision-making’](#). Parity democracy is also about breaking stereotypes about sectors considered ‘female’ or ‘male’: we want women in power in all spheres of society and on all issues, from finance to health.

Lyda Verstegen has sent the following from the recent session of the Human Rights Council:



On Thursday 5 March there was a side event to Launch the Guidelines on Freedom of Association. These Guidelines were written in close cooperation between the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe.

The Freedom of Association is threatened, not only in new democracies in Eastern Europe, but also in the old ones due to security reasons. This is a finding of Mr. Maina Kiai, Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, who gave a keynote speech.

“It is a 150 page book, yet there are only 11 guiding principles and a definition of ‘association’.”

The authors were very proud. It was the first time they had cooperated, and it had been a very open process. They had consulted experts in two round tables and ILO (International Labour Organization) on trade unions. They had done a lot of research of international law and practice, and they believe that the result is very useful for legislators everywhere.

It is readable also for NGOs as well as for the general public. It is always useful to know what an association is: "an association is an organized, independent, not-for-profit body based on the voluntary grouping of persons with a common interest, activity or purpose. An association does not have to have legal personality, but does need some institutional form or structure".

The guiding principles are:

1. Presumption in favour of the lawful formation, objectives and activities of associations

2. The State's duty to respect, protect and facilitate the exercise of the right to freedom of association.
3. Freedom of establishment and membership
4. Freedom to determine objectives and activities, including the scope of operations
5. Equal treatment and non- discrimination
6. Freedom of expression and opinion
7. Freedom to seek, receive and use resources
8. Good administration of legislation, policies and practices concerning associations
9. Legality and legitimacy of restrictions
10. Proportionality of restrictions
11. Right to an effective remedy for the violation of rights

Mr. Kiai has found that there are different rules for business and for associations. In his country governments tell him proudly how easy it is to set up a business. When he asks how easy it is to form an association the answer is that that is much more complicated. On his question 'why?' there is a smiling silence. This is contrary to principle 5.

Many countries treat associations which receive foreign funding as foreign agents, even spies! This is the case of some of the countries IAW has members in. It is contrary to principle 7.

I do think it is important to know about these Guidelines.
If you want to read more, the ISBN is 978-92-9234-906-6.



THE WOMANSTATS PROJECT:

<http://www.womanstats.org/WomanStatsOverview2015.pdf>

The WomanStats Project is the most comprehensive compilation of information on the status of women in the world. The Project facilitates understanding the linkage between the situation of women and the security of nation-states; please see this [overview](#). We comb the extant literature and conduct expert interviews to find qualitative and quantitative information on over 350 indicators of women's status in 175 countries. Our [Database](#) expands daily, and access to it is free of charge; sign up for [RSS notifications](#) when we add information on variables or countries you are interested in.

The Project began in 2001, and today includes thirteen principal investigators at nine universities in four countries, as well as a team of up to twenty graduate and undergraduate data extractors. Please learn more by clicking [First Time Users](#) and watching our [Video Tutorials](#). Or visit our [Blog](#), where we discuss what we are finding, view our [Maps](#) and [Infographics](#), or read our [Research](#) reports.

Girls' education

Attacks Against Girls' Education Occurring with "Increasing Regularity"
– [UN Human Rights Report](#)

Child Marriage

Top 10 Myths about Child Marriage
– [UN population Fund](#)

Violence against women in Asia

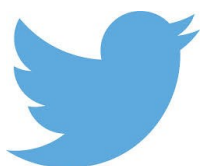
Sexuality, gender roles and violence against women in South Asia
– [Population Council](#)

IAW around the World

IAW Around the World

[The Josefine Butler Society](#) has sent an update on their activities.

[The Women's Rights Movement of the Philippines](#) published a strong statement on the occasion of Beijing+20.



Help share IAW messages on social media

If you have a twitter account—go to @womenalliance on Twitter, follow us and retweet our messages.



If you have a facebook account—go to <https://www.facebook.com/womenalliance> , 'like' our page and share our messages.

If you know of women—or men—who have accounts and who may be interested, invite them *to follow, retweet, like and share*.

Note

Please be so kind as to notify Membership Officer Pat Richardson if you know of any members, affiliate or associate societies with an email address, so that we can mail them this Newsletter

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