

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN
ALLIANCE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES

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

Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities
Droits Égaux - Responsabilités Égales

IAW NEWSLETTER - August, nr. 7



Equal Rights

Dear IAW members,

Our world seems to have become even more vulnerable after the attack on the UN in Baghdad. Can women influence and change courses of extreme violence? Maybe! We have to keep trying. After centuries of male dominance in politics, the experience of women in that field is less than one hundred years. The Alliance has been trying with many other organisations, for at least a century, to get more women involved in politics and decision making. Although it is very important, it is not enough. Women need political courage, alertness, drive and ... being supported in solidarity by others. Like in the case of EU Commissioner Anna Diamantopoulou. Or the support by NGOs, in the case of the EU Constitution, to give women the position they rightfully earn with 'equality' as one of the principal 'moral values'. In this newsletter also news about IAW meetings in the Dominican Republic and the Netherlands, news from IAW members from India and Greece, news about WTO, WHO and IANSA, about the new Rapporteur against Violence and about coming Conferences, books etc. etc.

**A BITTER BLOW FOR THE UNITED NATIONS
AMIDST THE GOOD WORK**

UN Staff mourn the death of Iraq colleagues

Bangkok, Wednesday, 20 August 2003

"Today is a sad day for the United Nations. This savage act of violence, a bomb explosion at the UN Office at Baghdad yesterday killed several of our colleagues including Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, the UN Special Representative in Iraq. At last report, at least 100 staff and other civilians were injured," said Mr. Kim Hak-Su, Executive Secretary of UNESCAP who led Heads of UN Agencies in Bangkok and staffers in observing a minute's silence. "As the Secretary-General Kofi Annan noted this is indeed ... a bitter blow for the United Nations."

"I had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Vieira de Mello personally and found him to be a most engaging, conscientious and dedicated UN civil servant. We mourn his passing as well as those of our colleagues. We can only express the hope that our dear friends and colleagues who perished in Baghdad did not die in vain and that stability will soon return to the Iraqi nation and its people," he said.

UN, Day of Indigenous Peoples, Colombia, Chile

8 August – As the United Nations celebrated today the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, Secretary-General Kofi Annan warned that indigenous peoples still faced threats to their lives and destruction of their "belief systems, cultures, languages and ways of life. "We pay tribute to those who, without relinquishing their identity, move comfortably between the traditions of their ancestors and the wider, rapidly changing modern world. ... "We honour their struggles to preserve their cultures, protect their lands and combat discrimination."

Colombia / Chile

Underscoring these threats, the UN refugee agency reported that virtually all of the 84 indigenous groups in **Colombia** face forced displacement or are threatened by it because of internal strife, while the UN Development Programme (UNDP) issued a new survey showing that **Chile's** Mapuche people, the country's largest indigenous group, suffer many social and economic disparities.

On Colombia, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said a new report by the National Indigenous Organisation of Colombia (ONIC) painted "a grim picture". It shows that nearly 13,000 indigenous people fled their original homelands in 2001 and 2002.

During the first half of this year, over 50 indigenous persons had been murdered and as many as 3,000 had to flee their homes in fear for their lives. On the inferior conditions of Chile's 600,000 Mapuche people, who account for about 4 per cent of the population, UNDP reported that their human development index (HDI), based on income, life expectancy and education levels, is 0.642, compared with 0.736 for other Chileans. The Commission would, in its official opinion in September, make proposals with a view to updating policies.

UN human rights body approves guidelines for multinational corporations

13 August – In an important step forward in developing human rights standards for corporations, an expert subsidiary panel of the top United Nations human rights body today approved a set of ethics guidelines, bringing together a range of legal obligations for companies drawn from existing human rights, labour and environmental standards.

The Geneva-based UN Sub-commission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights today unanimously adopted a resolution that included "draft Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with Regard to Human Rights." The text sets out, among other things, the responsibilities of companies for human rights and labour rights, and provides guidelines for companies operating in conflict zones.

The Sub-Commission, the main subsidiary body of the Commission on Human Rights, was established in 1947 under the authority of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

The panel's 26 experts are charged with undertaking studies, mainly in light of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and making recommendations to the Commission on ways to prevent discrimination of any kind relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms and the protection of racial, national, religious and linguistic minorities.

NGOs and the new Constitution of the European Union

At the last session on part III of the Constitution (July 9th) at the Tessoniki's Summit, it became clear that the Presidium would not be able to ignore all amendments requested, though it is astonishing how many they ignored nevertheless.

The Presidium amended the draft of the Article on fighting discrimination (with measures to encourage action from the Member States) but did not put it under QMV. The huge support for this issue in the Convention was an astonishing event in itself even if unsuccessful.

The protocol and Article 2 of part IV of the draft treaty have also been amended, in order to keep the Euratom mechanism outside the legal framework of the constitutional treaty, which is a huge lobby success of the environmental NGOs.

The revision procedure of the future Constitution now includes the approval of the EP in allowing the Council to begin revision without a formal Convention. Before wishing the Constitution a 'good journey', Michel Barnier (European Commission) stressed that the game was not over yet and that the Commission would, in its official opinion in September /October, make proposals with a view to updating policies.

Quotes from an article in Agence Europe July 2003, by Lea Slokar and Nico Beger. See for the whole article <http://www.act4europe.org>

Women and the EU Constitution

On April 2nd 2003 a European Conference, organised by several women's NGOs, including IAW Affiliate The Greek League for Women's Rights, took place in Athens on "Social Rights: a Lever for Equality".

Over 200 international and national women's NGOs supported the outcome of that Conference, proposing to give peace and gender equality a prominent place in the EU Constitution. NGOs supported also, with great enthusiasm, the wish of the informal meeting of ministers of equality on the 6th of May, saying that:

gender equality, an essential feature of the European cultural identity, should be included in the Constitutional Treaty among the values of the Union.

The result of the proposals by women's NGOs on that 2nd of April were at first not very successful. Only a few small amendments were accepted by the Presidium. 'We cannot accept any regression', wrote IAW member Sophia Spiliotopoulos in the Journal of the Greek League of

Women's Rights. 'We cannot accept that the social, indeed the human face of Europe, be altered'.

In July, women NGOs, together with the big European Women's Lobby, joined forces with other social NGOs to bundle mutual efforts for language on "equality" and also on "non-discrimination". We are happy to tell you that at the last moment "equality" has indeed become one of the values of the European Union.

Part I - Article 2

*The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, **equality**, the rule of law and respect for human rights. These values are common to the Member States in a society of pluralism, tolerance, justice, solidarity and non-discrimination*

Website <http://european-convention.eu.int>

Editor's comment: thank you for all your efforts, IAW Affiliate Greek League of Women's Rights!

Members of European Parliament - Solidarity after Media Reaction

Members of European Parliament (MEPs) and co-ordinators from different political groups involved in the work of the Women's Rights Committee, as well its Chairperson Anna Karamanou, signed on the 10th of July a declaration of solidarity with Anna Diamantopoulou, Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs. This position was triggered by recent news in the media in response to a Commission consultation paper on sex discrimination, eventually leading to a draft directive under Article 13 of the Treaty (on discrimination).

The EP declaration states that special interests lie behind sexist attacks by the media on the Commissioner, "mainly from insurance companies and media industries. This puts in great danger the adoption of a new proposal for a directive aiming to eliminate sex discrimination". Anna Diamantopoulou "represents, at the highest possible level of the European Union, women's struggle to achieve their full rights and gender equality", say MEPs.

Press articles were published in a great number of newspapers, around 25 and 26 June, with titles such as: "Big sister is watching you - Feminist Eurocrat who wants to ban 'sexist' TV shows and adverts". The Commissioner reacted immediately, publishing her own article on the Financial Times: "Europe is a long way from a sexist directive".

Anna Diamantopoulou raises different issues: how business sectors such as insurance and pensions calculate risk and set prices; how tax systems make distinctions on the basis of gender; and how the media and advertising sectors view men and women. On 25 June, Anna Karamanou, Women's Rights Committee Chairperson, had already responded to a "press campaign which seems to have been orchestrated against the upcoming directive".

The main issues are sex-neutral old age and health insurance policies and, in general, a ban on sex discrimination in fields beyond the labour market, with implications for the media, advertising and insurance and pension policies that use gender as a basis for setting premiums on the assumption that women live longer. But, says Anna Diamantopoulou, the consultation paper "does not, alas, mean that the end is nigh for sex discrimination".

European Parliament, Brussels, 10 July 2003.

Press enquiries: Eva Bacelar - tel. (32-2) 28 43535 or e-mail: <femm-press@europarl.eu.int>

Sent to us by IAW Vice President Rosy Weiss

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

Meeting of IAW Individual Members - 12th, 13th and 14th of September 2003

The meeting will take place at the Hotel De Biltse Hoeke, de Bilt, the Netherlands.

Friday 12th 19.00 - 22.00:

Introduction and welcome.

Discussion and decision on the formation of a Committee of individual members.

Discussion and decision on the formation of a 'Talent Bank' of individual members.

Showing of a film by Bettina Corke.

Saturday 13th 10.00 - 18.00.

The Organisational Structures of IAW.

The Constitution: Speaker: Lyda Versteegen.

IAW and the EU. Council of Europe, European Women's Lobby: Speaker: Anje Wiersinga.

IAW and the UN Agencies: speaker to be confirmed

The IAW Centenary Celebrations Berlin/Freiburg Congress: speaker to be confirmed.

Sunday 14th 10.00 - 12.30.

Any Leftovers !

Recommendations to the Board and/or Congress

Headings/Outline for the Report of the meeting.

The address of the Hotel is: de Holle Bilt 1, 3732 HM de Bilt. Tel: + 030 2205811. Fax: + 030 2521369, e-mail 'reception' FRONTDSK@biltschehoek.valk.nl The Hotel is on the N237, a northwards turn off the A27. There is a bus service to the hotel from both Utrecht and Amersfoort train stations.

All are welcome - please circulate to as many individual members as possible. I am unable to access them directly. Mary Noonan, <email mkincol@eircom.net>

IAW BOARD MEETING and SEMINAR – 28 September – 3 October 2003

An interesting programme awaits all IAW members who travel to the Dominican Republic next month. IAW Associate member organisation, Alianza por los Derechos y el Desarrollo de la Mujer y la Familia (ADDEM), has planned a Welcome Dinner on 28 September and there are functions every evening through to 2 October. The Board is scheduled to meet on 30 September and 1 October.

A Seminar with the theme “Violence in the World” will be held on 2 October and is attracting delegates from neighbouring countries.

As well, some extensive sightseeing tours of places of historical interest are part of the itinerary as well as a chance to visit a local arts & craft market.

Afterwards, members are offered the opportunity to relax at a beach resort; some members are planning a short trip to Cuba; others may want to explore the region more thoroughly.

The Alliance has always had members in the Caribbean and West Indies and it is hoped that its presence in the region will stimulate membership and interest in its Action Program.

It has been Alliance policy for some years to welcome IAW members as observers to all meetings so it is hoped that many of our members as well as those elected and appointed Board members will be able to travel to the Dominican Republic.

Please advise Alison Brown, IAW Hon. Secretary <mab@liwest.at> as soon as possible. She will send you a Registration Form and itinerary

Greece - Women in the Police Force

Although it is very satisfying that laws forbidding the access of women to the Police Force have been reversed, the criteria of admission which have been recently set create the suspicion that indirect exclusion of women is attempted on the part of the Police Chiefs. Common criteria of admissibility for both sexes have been set including body height and trials of physical strength, dexterity etc., which may be acceptable for athletic contests but not for attracting able policemen and policewomen. We must express our concern over the setting of criteria of admissibility of such exacting nature as running a distance of one kilometre in 4 minutes 20 seconds or less, being able to jump 3.6 metres in length and having a height of at least 1.70 metres.

We do not wish to return to separate criteria determined according to gender although we accept that police officers have to meet certain criteria of physical ability and dexterity because of the nature of certain aspects of their jobs. We are therefore, not in favour of setting different criteria of admission according to gender. This would run counter to the gender equality article of the Constitution (art. 116.2). But it would also be a counter-productive move in women's struggle to eliminate discrimination based on biologically determined criteria of ability. Once we open this door again, it may be used to exclude women from other jobs as well. We believe that the admission requirements on physical ability must be lowered in general because after all it is training that makes the difference for an effective police officer.

By Prof. Alice Yotopoulos-Marangopoulo, former President of IAW

Divorced Muslim women lost in common code din

July 26: The judges have spoken their mind, but the country's most neglected are still where they were.

The Supreme Court's advice to the government on Wednesday to explore possibilities of enforcing a uniform civil code has rekindled a debate on the continuation of personal laws in civil matters like marriage, divorce and inheritance. But in the din, the focus on one of the most neglected sections of society - divorced Muslim women - has been lost somewhat. It has been 17 years since the Rajiv Gandhi government passed the controversial Muslim Woman Protection Bill in 1986 to overturn the apex court's judgement in the Shah Bano case, in which the court granted her maintenance.

The act was passed after Muslim leaders, mainly the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, convinced Rajiv that Islamic laws did not permit former husbands to pay maintenance beyond iddat, the three-month period after divorce.

Implementation of the act?

The act said cash-rich state Waqf boards would provide maintenance if Muslim divorced women were unable to sustain themselves. But to date, not a single woman has succeeded in getting Rs 500 a month as maintenance as envisaged by the act. The destitute women failed to get monetary support because successive regimes at the Centre never got time to amend the Waqf act to make the new law operational. The Union ministry of social justice and empowerment, which has a supervisory role over the Central Waqf Council and state Waqf boards, somehow never got time or the political will to direct the state boards to ensure implementation of the law. The Muslim leadership is as much to blame. The law board, which advocates "reforms from within", kept discussing and debating islahi moishra (community reforms) but failed to even agree on a model nikaah nama (marriage contract) to make it legally tenable.

Most Waqf boards in the country are cash rich. They make huge profits but the benefits hardly ever reach the community. For instance, the annual turnover of the Haryana and Punjab Waqf board is about Rs 75 crore. The Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal and Orissa Waqf boards have more than 120,000 Waqf properties, but rampant corruption and political interference have made them defunct.

Agony continues

The law board, never short of raising issues like Ayodhya, privately admitted that women were in a legal limbo since the Shah Bano case but sought to blame the "social conditions" by saying that even the so-called liberal sections were indifferent. "That is our argument for the reforms from within. Mere enactment of laws would not change things. The society per se must be ready for reforms," a board member said. Meanwhile, the agony of the likes of Shah Bano continues.

RASHEED KIDWAI , http://www.telegraphindia.com/1030727/asp/nation/story_2204591.asp
Sent to us by IAW member Arjana Basu

AROUND THE WORLD

CONFERENCES - EVENTS - WEBSITES - INTERESTING BOOKS - POSTERS

Report on Trafficking

For those interested, the U.S. Department of State's Annual Trafficking in Persons Report was released in June 2003 and is available on: <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2003/>

Special Rapporteur Violence against Women

Ms. Yakin Ertürk (Turkey) has been appointed as Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. Ms. Ertürk is Chair of the Gender and Women's Study Programme at the Department of Sociology, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.

Previously Ms. Ertürk was Director of the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), New York, 1999 - 2001 and Director of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), Santo Domingo, 1997-1999.

For a Press Release please see <http://www.unhchr.ch/women/focus-violence.html>

The Fifth WTO Ministerial Conference, 10-14 September 2003

The Fifth WTO Ministerial Conference will be held in Cancún, Mexico from 10 to 14 September 2003. The main task will be to take stock of progress in negotiations and other work under the Doha Development Agenda.

The Ministerial Conference is the organization's highest level decision-making body. It meets "at least once every two years", as required by the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization — the WTO's founding charter. Website <http://www.wto.org/>

On 18 August 2003 the Dispute Settlement Body discussed among others the request from: US, Canada and Argentina to examine EU moratorium on biotech products.

Senior African trade representatives have been meeting at WTO from 21 to 24 July with ITC, UNCTAD and WTO officials to prepare for the 5th WTO Ministerial Conference, to be held in Cancún this September. The participants include 32 trade officials from 16 countries participating in the Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programme to Selected Least Developed and Other African Countries (JITAP), which is jointly run by ITC, UNCTAD and WTO. The trade officials attending the meeting are from Benin, Burkina Faso, Botswana, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Senegal, United Republic of Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda and Zambia, along with ambassadors and representatives from the permanent missions of these countries. Agriculture, services, industrial tariffs and other issues on the Doha agenda are being discussed. Participants will share the information with others in their country preparing for Cancún.

Small Arms Controls, Liberia - Same guns circulating over and over

Despite a UN embargo and a West African moratorium, arms are still being shipped illegally to the region. Last week, it was reported that Nigerian peacekeepers intercepted a shipment of 10 tonnes of AK-47 ammunition and rocket-propelled grenades en route to Liberia. The shipment had been purchased by former President Charles Taylor's son and illegally diverted.

The millions of small arms in the region have arrived in contravention of both UN embargos and the ECOWAS Moratorium on the import, export, manufacture and sale of small arms and light weapons in West Africa; the same guns have circulated freely between neighbouring countries, including Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone and Guinea, contributing to the extensive destabilisation and conflict there.

The recent developments in Liberia come one month after the close of the UN Biennial Meeting of States on the Implementation of the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UNPoA).

A recent IANSA report on the implementation of the UNPoA found that many nations have not taken even the most basic steps toward implementation. In addition, recent meetings of signatories to the ECOWAS Moratorium have revealed **a lack of commitment to implementing the measures**, and the moratorium has been largely ineffective in preventing arms shipments to the region.

With this in mind, the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), calls for: Specific Measures Addressing Guns Must Be Included in the Peace Agreement.

For more information contact Awa Ceesay, e-mail communications@iansa.org or www.iansa.org

WHO Global Campaign for Violence Prevention

Within the WHO Global Campaign for Violence Prevention 2 series of posters in English are available free. If you plan an event for example for 25th November - the International Day of No Violence Against Women - numbers 3,4,5 of the <Violence in Red> series and of the <Explaining Away Violence> series deal with that domain. For Information on WHO's work on Violence Prevention and for a look at the posters check www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/en/ The posters can be ordered from WHO Ms. Sabine van Tuyl, Communications Officer, Injuries and Violence Prevention, e-mail vantuylls@who.int

Please refer to Gudrun Haupter, Convenor of the IAW Health Commission.

Coming events

International Feminist Conference "Myths and Realities" Feminist Perspectives on Globalisation will be held on September 11-14, 2003 in Graz, Austria, at the Karl-Franzens University, Resowi

Center...

<http://www.neww.org.pl/#/Whats new in EU>

New Publications

<http://www.neww.org.pl/#Something to read>

Prostitution, Women and Misuse of the Law

The Fallen Daughters of Eve, by IAW member Helen J. Self

Helen's book was published in June. It can be purchased at the Frank Cass website, www.frankcass.com, hardback £40:50 and paperback £15:75. When you order at a bookshop, the ISBN is 0-7146-5481-7 for hard back and ISBN 0 7146 8371 X for paperback.

DPI/NGO Conference

The 56th Annual DPI/NGO Conference will be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from Monday to Wednesday, 8-10 September 2003. For information on how to register and to see a draft programme, please go to the following website:

<http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/56conf.htm>

Note: to avoid misunderstanding, we always send the IAW Newsletter:

1) in the body of the e-mail, and 2) as an attachment, saved in Word 6.0/95. Both have exactly the same content. The only difference is, that the attachment has a better lay-out, so it will be easy for Affiliates to copy it and send it by post to IAW members without e-mail. Also, please advise Pat Richardson if you know of any IAW members or affiliate/associate organisations with an e-mail address.

You can find the IAW newsletter also on the IAW website: <http://www.womenalliance.com>

Contacts

IAW Newsletter / News Flash :	Joke Sebus	<joke.sebus@inter.nl.net>
International Women's News :	Priscilla Todd	<toddsec@netlink.com.au>
Membership Officer :	Pat Richardson	<iaw.membership@tsn.cc>