

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN  
ALLIANCE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES

Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities  
Droits Égaux - Responsabilités Égales

IAW NEWSLETTER - December 2002, nr. 8



### Equal Rights

*Dear IAW members,*

*In this last newsletter of 2002 we are sending you the greetings of the season, with our best wishes for a good, healthy, happy and above all, peaceful 2003 all over the world!*

*This newsletter has as an attachment - the IAW Action Programme, which clearly states the aims we, as IAW members, will be working on in the coming two years. As usual IAW will send a delegation to the Commission on the Status of Women, to focus on two important issues: Violence against Women and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). We will keep you informed! At the end of the newsletter you will find a selection of news from around the world and some much appreciated news sent to us by IAW members.*

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*Vale Padmini Casinader Christiansen who succumbed to cancer in early December. Paddy was a true friend and a dedicated worker for the Alliance. Our thoughts have been with her husband Erik and their family at this sad time. IAW's ongoing work for CEDAW will keep her memory with us always.*

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### Preparing for CSW 2003 - Electronic Opportunities for Women

#### **Opportunities Rising for Women in E-commerce, but Glass Ceiling remains to be broken**

UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), 18 November

E-commerce is a potential goldmine for women in developing countries, but to seize those opportunities, women will first have to overcome obstacles of education, infrastructure and finance, says a new UNCTAD report, released today. And, while they are already tapping into the growing demand for outsourcing in services, they tend to be clustered at the low end of the skills and salary spectrum and risk being left behind by new technologies if they, and their governments, do not prepare now.

Self-employed women in the developing world, be they micro-entrepreneurs or women working from home, are increasingly turning to E-commerce and the Internet as a way to earn income and save time and costs while also meeting their family responsibilities. The growing business-to-consumer (B2C) or retail sector in their countries offers many possibilities for small businesses with access to information technologies (IT). Such businesses have the advantage of low capital and skills requirements, and many of them are owned by women.

*Note: read more on: Hafkin N and Taggart N (2001). "Gender, Information Technology, and Developing Countries: An Analytic Study", USAID <http://www.usaid.gov/wid/pubs/hafnoph.pdf> Tables on Women's Internet Usage in USA, Philippines, South Africa, Brazil, Croatia, Mexico, Estonia, Zambia, Uganda, China, India, Poland, Ethiopia, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Senegal, Lithuania, Jordan.*

#### **Online discussion in preparation for the World Summit on the Information Society**

Representatives of non-governmental organisations and civil society decided, at the UNESCO meeting of the 27-28 November 2002, to organise an online discussion in preparation for the World Summit on the Information Society. The aim of this discussion is to formulate proposals for the Draft Action Plan of the Summit to be discussed at the second meeting of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom2 17-28 February 2003).

Monique Fouilloux, President of the NGO-UNESCO liaison committee, will chair the discussion. The following themes will be discussed: Access, Development and Empowerment, Content Issues, Education, Training and Research, Rights, Future Developments of Information Technologies, Civil Society in WSIS and Beyond. The discussion forum will last from the 9th December 2002

until the 15th January 2003 and will result in a document containing elements for the Draft Action Plan to be submitted as a contribution to the PrepCom2. The forum is open to all members of non-governmental organisations and civil society. The discussion will be held on UNESCO's website at <http://www.unesco.org/wsis>

#### **UN, Access of Women to the Media, Beirut**

The United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), in co-operation with the UN Department of Public Information (DPI) and the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), has convened an expert group meeting on "Participation and access of women to the media, and its impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women". The meeting took place at the headquarters of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in Beirut, Lebanon, from 12 to 15 November.

The experts, in the light of their deliberations, will formulate recommendations directed towards governments, the United Nations system, intergovernmental and regional bodies and civil society. See also <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/media2002/>

#### **UN, Impact of Information and Communication Technologies on Women, Korea**

The United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, in co-operation with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Task Force Secretariat, has convened an expert group meeting on "Information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women". The meeting took place in the Republic of Korea from 11 to 14 November. See also <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/ict2002/index.html>.

### **Preparing for CSW 2003 - Violence Against Women**

#### **Trafficking in Women and Girls, New York**

United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) has organised an Expert Group Meeting on "Trafficking in women and girls" with the participation of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP). The meeting took place at Harrison Conference Center in Glen Cove, New York, USA, from 18 to 22 November 2002. The Expert Group Meeting (EGM) will form part of the Division's preparation for the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) which, at its forty-seventh session in March 2003 will address as one of its thematic issues, "Women's human rights and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls as defined in the Beijing Platform for Action and twenty-third special session of the General Assembly". The results of the EGM will also be relevant to the twelfth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in May 2003, which will address, among other issues, trafficking in persons, particularly women and children.

#### **South Africa – the 16 days of No Violence against Women and Children**

President Thabo Mbeki has pledged his support for the forthcoming 16 Days of Activism of No Violence Against Women and Children.

'I pledge to expose, oppose and combat all violence directed at women and children in whatever form I encounter it, be it in my home, my workplace or in my community,' he said. Also present was the Speaker of Parliament, Frene Ginwale, Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi and Justice and Constitutional Development Deputy Minister Cheryl Gillwald.

South Africa has been promoting the 16 Days of Activism campaign of No Violence against Women and Children for the past four years. South Africa: Mbeki Pledges Support for Non-Violence Against Women, Children November 18, 2002

To view this article, go to: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200211180800.html>

### **NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD**

#### **CEDAW, 28th session, 13 – 31 January, New York, USA**

*Reports of: Canada, Republic of Congo, (not confirmed), Costa Rica, El Salvador, Kenya,*

*Luxembourg, Norway, Switzerland.*

### **European Women's Lobby on the European Convention**

Reading the first preliminary draft Constitutional Treaty (CONV 369/02) presented by the Presidium of the Convention on the Future of Europe, we notice **it does not include a single reference to equality of women and men in Europe.**

Please circulate our comment as widely as possible and use it as a basis to lobby Convention members over the next weeks. A new draft should be presented by the Presidium before Christmas leave. The text of the preliminary draft Constitutional Treaty can be found in all languages on the Convention's website: <http://european-convention.eu.int/>

### **Did you know ? Out of 160 signatories of the UN Charter, only four were women.**

They are: Minerva Bernardino – Dominican Republic, Virginia Gildersleeves – United States – Bertha Luzel – Brazil, Wu Yi-Fang – China.

### **African Charter, FEMNET**

The e-mail discussion in the past months enabled women to come up with concrete suggestions on language/content on the Draft Additional Protocol on Rights of Women in Africa to the African Charter. The Experts/Ministerial meeting that was scheduled to take place in December 2002 has been confirmed for January 6-9 2003.

FEMNET aims to strengthen the role and contribution of African NGOs focussing on women's development, equality and other human rights, through communications, networking, training and advocacy. E-mail: [femnet@africaonline.co.ke](mailto:femnet@africaonline.co.ke)

### **Afghan Women and the Burqua**

The struggle of Afghan women has been reduced here in the United States to a simplistic discussion about the burqua. Don the burqua and you're oppressed, take it off and, lo and behold, you're free. But what does this really mean? It means that to constantly portray Afghan women as weak, covered up, defenceless, and needing our help, makes us feel good about helping Afghan women, about saving them. To express solidarity with Afghan women, we need to understand what affects them, starting with what we are responsible for and have the power to change - the use of bombs and warlords - as tools of U.S. policy. We need to begin treating Afghan women with dignity and not reduce them to a piece of clothing.

Afghan women's rights are a crucial part of the equation of Afghanistan. One year later, it is clear that Afghan women are not "free" - they are simply enduring American freedom.

(Sonalı Kolhatkar <[sonali@afghanwomensmission.org](mailto:sonali@afghanwomensmission.org)> is vice president of the Afghan Women's Mission. She hosts and co-produces The Morning Show on KPFK radio in Los Angeles, part of the Pacifica Network, and offers her expertise to FPIF (<http://www.fpif.org>).)

See new Global Affairs Commentary online at:

<http://www.fpif.org/commentary/2002/0211afwomen.html>

With a printer-friendly pdf version at: <http://www.fpif.org/pdf/gac/0211afwomen.pdf>

### **Intellectual Property, Beijing**

The World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) has announced that the Government of the People's Republic of China will host the WIPO Summit on Intellectual Property and the Knowledge Economy in Beijing, from April 24 to 26, 2003. The Summit will culminate on April 26 with the closing ceremony and celebration of World Intellectual Property Day.

Tentative dates for the PrepCom3 have been set, 15-30 November 2003.

More detailed information and updates regarding the Summit and its Forum for Industry and the Private Sector will be posted on the WIPO site <http://www.wipo.org/summit-china/en/index.html>

### **Report of the 55th DPI/NGO Conference available**

The Final Report of the 55th DPI/NGO Conference (advanced unedited version) and Midday NGO Workshops Summaries (advanced unedited version) are now available on the NGO Section web site respectively at <http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/finalreport.pdf> and

<http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/workshops.pdf>

*Note: this report is heavy to download but it contains inspiring statements and good pictures of strong women.*

### **Debate on possible Fifth World Conference on Women in 2005**

The women of WIDE in Europe have now set up a website to encourage an expanded discourse on the pros and cons of holding a Fifth World Conference on Women in 2005. Go to <http://www.eurosur.org/wide/UN/WCW.htm> and read through the letters and comments already posted. Add your thoughts by writing to: Barbara Specht, email: [bs.wide@xs4all](mailto:bs.wide@xs4all). Website: <http://www.eurosur.org/wide>.

### **UNICEF launches new push to help educate girls in 25 priority countries**

*3 December* – The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) today announced the launch of a new campaign to get girls into school in 25 priority countries, mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

Speaking to a meeting of African education ministers in Dar-es-Salaam, UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy announced the "25 by 2005" drive to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education, pledging that her agency will do whatever is necessary to help the countries meet the goal of gender equality in education by 2005.

The new initiative targets countries based on such factors as low enrolment rates for girls, more than one million girls out of school, and prevailing crises that affect schooling opportunities for girls, such as HIV/AIDS and conflict. In each country, UNICEF will work with the government to mobilise new resources, build broad national consensus about the need to get girls in school, and help improve schools themselves to make them more welcoming to girls.

The campaign will cover Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, India, Malawi, Mali, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Sudan, Tanzania, Turkey, Yemen and Zambia.

### **Bangkok, UN Population Conference Grapples with Poverty, HIV-AIDS, Family Planning**

Co-organised by UNESCAP and the UNFPA, the Conference is the only ministerial-level UNESCAP meeting of the year 2002. It is the fifth in a series of decennial conferences, convened to promote regional co-operation in the field of population and to consider a wide range of population issues and their impact on social and economic development and poverty. The Ministerial Conference has adopted a Plan of Action emphasising the need to address population issues - including reproductive health, gender equality, HIV/AIDS and migration - as a key contribution to reducing poverty in the region and meeting the United Nations Millennium Development Goal of halving by 2015 the number of people living on less than US\$1 day.

#### **Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, giving a clear statement in Bangkok**

Emphasising the importance of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action (adopted in Cairo in 1994), Ms. Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, Executive Director of UNFPA said: "The ICPD Programme of Action and the Key Actions of ICPD's five-year review are beautifully balanced documents, giving space to everything from voluntary abstinence to meeting unmet needs for family planning, and include carefully crafted language on abortion and adolescents, which articulates the common agreement among the participants in all their diverse cultures, religions, values and practices".

"The language of the ICPD Programme of Action is extremely clear. There is no hidden agenda, nor any secret codes. The ICPD Programme of Action states, and I quote: 'In no case should abortion be promoted as a method of family planning. All Governments and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations are urged to strengthen their commitment to women's health, to deal with the impact of unsafe abortion as a major public health concern and to reduce the recourse to abortion through expanded and improved family planning services....' Unquote (para.8.25). This paragraph means exactly what it says, no more, no less", Ms. Obaid stressed. She continued: "Let me also state once more, since it has been called into question: the meaning of the phrases 'reproductive health' and 'reproductive rights' are not in doubt. The components of reproductive health are safe motherhood; voluntary family planning; protection from and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and protection from gender-based violence", she said. "The phrase 'reproductive health services' is not code for the promotion or support for 'abortion services'. Nothing in the proceedings at Cairo, or the five-year review, justifies describing them as such."

## NEWS FROM IAW MEMBERS

### Websites of IAW Affiliates and Associates

The list of websites in an IAW News Flash has been screened and corrected by Pat Richardson. This is the result, including the interesting websites of Sweden and Switzerland, which were left out by mistake.

**Please also note correct email address for IAW Secretary Alison Brown**

<mab.liwest.at>

International Alliance of Women -		www.womenalliance.com
Austria:	Austria Autonomous Women's Centre	www.frauenzentrum.at
Australia:	Women's Electoral Lobby	www.wel.org.au
Denmark:	Dansk Kvinnesamfund	www.kvindesamfund.dk/
Finland:	The League of Finnish Feminists	www.naisunioni.fi
Germany:	Deutsche Frauenring	www.frauenring-dfr.de
Iceland:	Icelandic Women's Rights	www.krfi.is
Netherlands:	Vrouwenbelangen	www.vrouwenbelangen.nl
Netherlands:	Vrouwen Alliantie	www.vrouwenalliantie.nl
Norway:	Norwegian Ass. for Women's Rights	www.kvinnesak.no
Sweden:	Frederika-Bremer Forbundet	www.fredrikabremer.se
Switzerland:	Swiss Ass. for the Rights of Women	www.feminism.ch

### Bill on domestic violence and the recently debated death penalty for rapists

Will boys physically abused at home turn wife-beaters? Is domestic violence limited to habitual wife battering only? These are two of the questions on gender issues raised at a University Grants Commission sponsored refresher course on women's studies at Jadavpur University in Kolkata, India. Timed with the international fortnight protesting violence against women and girls, the course acquires more significance. The issues were examined by Professor Malini Bhattacharya of the women's studies department who felt that religion perpetuated inequalities. "Feminist movements have to confront gender inequalities in all personal laws because it is this which subjugates women most," Prof. Bhattacharya said.

The definition of domestic violence in the bill was found to be flawed. Exclusion of other vulnerable sections such as the elderly and domestic servants was questioned by state women's commission member Bharati Mutsuddi. The provision in the bill that states using violence for self defence or for defending property is not committing a crime, dilutes the issue. Besides, creating the post of a protection officer, through whom women can go to court, simply creates another level of bureaucracy, experts opined. The bill further states that only a habitual offender would be brought to book, but does not define how often constitutes habitual.

"Even one act of violence can scar a woman for life," said Swayam founder-director Anuradha Kapoor. "There is urgent need to convince the women who are victims that what is happening is not their fault," Kapoor felt. The focus would be on educating young boys so as to address the mindset. The battle against woman battering begins with training young boys.

Kolkata, Times News Network, Friday 29, 2002.

*From IAW member Anjana Basu, India*

### ICC - Gender Balance on the Court must be Achieved

Nomination process closes: 10 women nominated – elections will be held 3-7 February.

The nomination period for the election of judges to the International Criminal Court officially closed on Saturday, November 30, 2002. In the final count, 10 women were nominated out of 45 candidates in total. (On Friday, 13 December 2002, the government of Paraguay withdrew the nomination of its candidate. Now, there are 44 official candidates.) While women make up less than a fourth of the entire pool of candidates, there is still an opportunity to get a gender balance on the 18-member Court. The women candidates include: Maureen Harding Clark (Ireland) - Fatoumata Dembele Dairra (Mali) - Hajnalka Karpati (Hungary) - Akua Kuenyehia (Ghana) - Elizabeth Odio Benito (Costa Rica) - Barbara Ott (Switzerland) - Navanethem Pillay (South Africa) - Sylvia H. Steiner (Brazil) - Anita Usacka (Latvia) - Eleanora Zielinska (Poland).

### ICC Elections

The ICC elections will be subject to minimum voting requirements for gender, region and field of expertise. This is the first time that elections to an international judicial institution will be subject to such requirements. The Women's Caucus and other NGOs are researching and compiling information about the candidates to distribute to the States Parties who will be voting in February. In particular, they are attempting to gather key articles or judgements the candidates have written and analyse them to see how or whether they have dealt with issues of sexual and gender violence and women's human rights. Your assistance in compiling this information is sought in order to arrive at as full and fair an assessment as possible. **IN PARTICULAR, YOU ARE URGED TO ...** read the website of the Women's Caucus for Gender Justice <http://www.iccwomen.org>  
All of the candidates are posted on the Women's Caucus for Gender Justice website: <http://www.iccwomen.org/Elections/ELECTIONSindex.htm> with links to their CVs and other background information on the UN's website.  
*This call for action comes from Pat Giles, IAW President*

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

Attachments: IAW Action Programme 2002-2004 / Geneva Team second part

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**Priscilla Todd is urgently calling for articles and news for the next edition of IWN** -  
email as above FAX: 61 3 9629 2904 Mail: 10 Queen Street, Melbourne Vic 3000, Australia