

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

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

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

IAW NEWSLETTER February 2012, no. 2



Dear members,

This week our IAW representatives will be travelling to New York for CSW56. In this newsletter the schedule and two examples of the side events they have organised. Please be so kind to tell us your experiences. We wish you a safe journey, good negotiations, wise judgements and all the best!

A historic gain and congratulations for women in Pakistan: an autonomic status for the Women's Commission. On the website of UN Women a charming chapter called: Women on the Field. With a story of training women in Rwanda working in a co-op. UN Women is also, with the Elders, campaigning against child marriages in South Asia.

The procedures of the Arms Trade Treaty (consensus yes or no) is still being discussed and preparing Rio+20 urgently needs more ambition. The UN asks civil society for inputs for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the European Women's Lobby is looking at Ireland to see what the government will do with the purchase of sex. Events and conferences are as usual at the end of the newsletter.

Commission on the Status of Women

Side events on UN premises at CSW 56

Additional side events, updates, and changes will be posted as they become available.

Check for updates the website of UN Women on <http://www.unwomen.org/csw/ngo/>
NGO representatives are encouraged to RSVP well in advance for side events on UN premises. NB: please note that your RSVP request needs to be confirmed by the event organizer. Seating is limited.

First week, 27 February - 2 March 2012 On: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw56/side-events.html>

Second week, 5 - 9 March 2012 <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw56/side-events2.html>

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

IAW Schedule at CSW 2012 with two examples of IAW side events

* On *Tuesday February 28* IAW will organise a side event in the morning on 'Innovative Economic Development for Rural Women'.

* In the afternoon all IAW reps are invited for a meeting in Lyda's hotel room.

* *Wednesday February 29* is a busy day. In the afternoon an IAW side event on: 'The Human Rights of Rural Women' from 16.30 - 18.00 pm.

* Almost at the same time, from 16.15 - 7.45 pm, IAW Affiliate the All India Women's Conference has a side event on 'Empowerment of rural women in South Asia'.

* At the end of that day the IAW reps will have dinner together.

Another busy day on *Monday March 5*.

* In the early afternoon an IAW side event on 'How to start a mentor programme in your own organization', from 12.30 - 14.00 pm.

* At the same time IAW Associate, the Niger Delta's Rural Women has organised a side event from 12.30 to 14.00 pm on 'Stories of Perseverance in a Land on Fire, Environmental Degradation Oil Spillages: The journey of rural Women empowerment and future prospects'.

* On *Tuesday March 6* the IAW reps are invited for lunch in the Staff Restaurant.

* *Friday March 9* will be the last day for acceptance of the CSW document.

Side event: Economic Development for Rural Women

Ms. Bina Jain: President van All India Women's Conference (India)

Ms. Elizabeth Nkwah: project co-ordinator Bali Women's Union of Farming Groups (Cameroon)

Hon. Ms. Mmabatho Ramagoshi: Convenor Violence Against Women IAW (South Africa)

Moderator: Ms. Mapula Ncanywa: Vice President IAW (South Africa)

Opening comments: Ms. Lyda Versteegen: IAW President (Netherlands)

Side event: How to start a Mentor Programme in your own Organisation

Workshop and Discussion

Mentoring is a cooperative and during relationship between two people who want to learn from each other about a particular field. They gain valuable insight into the secrets of doing good and sustainable work in that field.

Mentoring as a tool helps strengthening co-operation within an organisation. It also helps securing knowledge that would otherwise be lost when experienced members leave.

Organised by Catharina Grau (IFUW), Julia Gunther and ... IAW member Daniela Reiter!

UNITED NATIONS and UN Women

The Committee on NGOs concludes its 2012 Regular Session

The 2012 Regular Session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) was held from 30 January-8 February 2012 at UN Headquarters in New York. During the session, the Committee considered 190 new NGO applications requesting consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), examined 153 applications that were deferred from previous sessions and considered 375 quadrennial reports of NGOs with ECOSOC status.

See also <http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article3765>

First round of Rio+20 negotiations

Major Groups urge Member States to be more ambitious. The initial discussions on the "zero draft" outcome document for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, or Rio+20) were held from 25-27 January at UN Headquarters in New York.

At first sight, it seemed that delegates of the various Member States widely shared the opinion that the "zero draft" integrates many key issues of the sustainable development agenda and as such provides a good basis for the negotiations in the lead up to the Conference.

However, they also seemed to agree that more ambition is needed to make Rio+20 a real success.

More on: <http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article3768>

UN Arms Trade Treaty - Fourth Prepcom

Of critical importance for the UN Arms Trade Treaty is the use of consensus in the decision-making process. The Rules envision that representatives will make "every effort" to make all substantive decisions by consensus. If consensus cannot be achieved, however, the Rules allow for a two-thirds majority vote, except where the final treaty text is concerned. The final treaty text is to be adopted by consensus, without a voting alternative.

Procedures - procedures - procedures

In the morning on February the 15 states continued discussing the provisional rules of procedure for the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) negotiating conference.

In the evening the Chair conducted open-ended consultations on this topic, which he found had a "constructive spirit when it comes to finding formulas that accommodate to the degree possible the different schools of thought".

However, delegations continued discussing the rules in plenary, in anticipation of another round of consultations to follow. Near the end of this process, to culminate in negotiations this July, the question in this final preparatory committee (PrepCom) becomes *not what will be negotiated but how it will be negotiated.*

*By Ray Acheson of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom - WILPF.
See also: <http://attmonitor.posterous.com/day-3-rights-traps-and-balance> or go to:
<http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/legal/att/index.html> or go to: www.iansa-women.org
Convenor IAW Commission on Peace: Honorary President Rosy Weiss*

A call for inputs on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities calls for civil society inputs on the implementation of measures of accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Article 9 of the Convention requires that State Parties take appropriate measures “to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas.” *See also:* <http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article3768>

UN Women and the Futures of Women in Rural Rwanda

I never thought I would be able to pay the school fees for all five of my children and our family’s health insurance costs as well!” exclaimed Euphrasia Musabyemariya.

She was one of the many participants at a recent meeting of the agricultural cooperative Ibyiza Birimbere (which means Moving Towards a Better Future in the Kinyarwanda language) located in the south-east corner of Rwanda in the Kirehe District, two and a half hours drive from Kigali. In 2010 the co-op leadership completed a training co-hosted by UN Women and the district authorities on gender equality and agricultural services, which enabled them to think about the needs of women and men farmers and on expanding their membership, with a focus on women members.

Co-op leadership

The chairman of the co-op Evariste Tugirinshuti steered the organization towards becoming a platform to not only increase productivity but also equality between men and women. The co-op encouraged the male members to bring their wives and other women farmers from their rural community into the fold. And the change has started yielding results.

“Before, my husband would leave for the co-op meetings in the morning and would never tell me anything that was going on and I never saw the money from the sale of the crops,” says Euphrasia, one of the members who joined in 2010. With a joint bank account and training on budgeting skills, Euphrasia today has equal access to the money that they make, and an equal say in household decisions and expenditures.

Other benefits of the training

Previously, part of the fertilizers provided by the co-op through government vouchers, often ended up sold by the men farmers across the border in Tanzania instead of being used on the crops.

The cooperative instituted a policy that couples had to co-sign the fertilizer vouchers, which immediately brought the illegal sales to an end.

The cooperative also began to strictly enforce the policy of only offering loans to farmers when co-signed by couples, in order to increase accountability. Just after a year, the co-operatives loan recovery rates had increased: statistics showing that women members were returning the loans at dramatically higher rates than the men.

From the excellent website of UN Women: Stories from the Field.

See: <http://www.unwomen.org/category/stories-from-the-field/>

AROUND THE WORLD

Historic Gain for Women in Pakistan as Women's Commission gains autonomous status

On 2 February 2012, the Pakistan Senate unanimously approved the “National Commission on the Status of Women Bill 2012” to protect women’s rights against every kind of discrimination. The new bill replaces the National Commission on the Status of Women Ordinance from 2000 and strengthens the Commission by giving it financial and administrative autonomy through an independent Secretariat.

After Lobbying for Years

Women's groups have lobbied for the strengthening of the Commission for years, and the bill underwent many revisions in the National Assembly, before amendments were introduced.

While previous governments had consolidated temporary Commissions into one permanent body in 2000, the main drawback was that the Secretariat of the Commission was placed in the Ministry of Women's Development, leading to lengthy bureaucratic procedures and red-tape.

Women's rights and international commitments, including CEDAW

The Commission will investigate and gather information on issues regarding women's rights, as well as have increased responsibilities to oversee the international commitments made by the government on all women's issues.

The newly adopted bill also changes the status of the Commission's Chairperson who will now have the seniority of a State Minister, making recommendations directly to the national cabinet. The Commission will also have enhanced membership with two members from each Province and one member each from the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK), Gilgit Baltistan, Islamabad and two members from minorities.

The preamble of the bill highlights "promotion of social, economic, political and legal rights of women" as provided in the Constitution and "in accordance with international Declarations, Conventions, Treaties and Agreements relating to women including the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women."

UN Women works with the Government at the national and provincial levels on legislative review and reform.

More on: <http://www.unwomen.org/2012/02/historic-gain-for-women-in-pakistan-as-womens-commission-gains-autonomous-status/>

Mailed to us by Honorary IAW President Rosy Weiss

The IAW Affiliate in Pakistan is: All Pakistan Women's Association

Report says UK plans to support Pakistan on women's empowerment

Text of report headlined "UK pledges all out support to Pakistan for women's empowerment" published by Pakistani newspaper The News website on 5 December.

The UK will do all it can to support Pakistan to empower women and girls and stop violence against women, said Helen Appleton, Senior Development Advisor and gender expert for the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). This would include support for strengthening legislation on land rights, marriage rights, and domestic violence; and to get more girls and women involved in decision making at community and federal level so that they can demand their basic rights.

A five-year project

Gender Justice and Protection is a five-year project run by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) to help Pakistan reduce violence against women. The project has worked in local communities across Pakistan to provide women with support on and protection from honour killing, acid burning, domestic violence, and other abuses.

The third most dangerous country for girls and women?

A recent study by Thomson Reuters Foundation shows Pakistan as the third most dangerous country in the world for women, after Afghanistan and Congo, due to issues including honour killings, forced marriages, and domestic violence. Followed by 4. India and 5. Somalia, by a recent Thomson Reuters Foundation. *More on:* <http://www.thenews.com.pk/TodaysPrintDetail.aspx?ID=80923&Cat=6>

European Women's Lobby on: Purchase of sex to become illegal in Ireland

Brussels, 09 February 2012 - The Irish Prime Minister, Mr Enda Kenny announced on 8 February that Justice Minister Alan Shatter is considering new legislation to criminalise the purchase of sex in Ireland. The announcement took place after a long debate and efficient advocacy from EWL partner Turn Off the Red Light.

The European Women's Lobby is delighted to see that the Swedish and Norwegian legislative models for tackling prostitution have gained attention in Ireland. The EWL hopes that progressive legislation will be introduced soon in Ireland and that finally all women in Europe can live free from prostitution and violence.

Turn Off the Red Light (TORL) is a campaign to end prostitution and sex trafficking in Ireland, being run by a new alliance of 48 professional, political and voluntary organizations and unions. Since its establishment in 2010, the alliance works at raising public awareness about the dangers of prostitution and sex trafficking and lobbying the Government to introduce legislation to end the exploitation of women, men and children in the sex industry.

More on: <http://womenlobby.org/spip.php?article3103&lang=en>

Regional Vice President Europe, Representative to the European Women's Lobby, Joanna Manganara.

The Elders in South Asia focus against Child Marriage

New Delhi, Feb 10 Tutu, as chairman of The Elders – a group of prominent people that include former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, former Irish President Mary Robinson and former US President Jimmy Carter dedicated to addressing human rights, is trying to persuade governments and local communities to take child marriage more seriously.

The Elders

The Elders, which launched the "Girls not Brides" movement in New York last year, said 80 organisations were already part of the alliance, including 15 from India, to share knowledge and coordinate their activities.

On his four-day visit to India, Tutu was accompanied by Robinson and two other Elders – former Norwegian prime minister Gro Harlem Brundtland and Ela Bhatt, an activist who founded India's largest female trade unions.

The four Elders said they are using their collective global weight to build up an international alliance of charities dedicated to ending child marriage.

Worldwide, around 10 million girls under the age of 18 are married every year – often without their consent, before they are mentally or sexually ready for such a relationship.

A practice despite laws banning it

The practice is most prevalent in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia, despite laws in most countries banning it.

In a rapidly modernising region, tightly bound by traditional patriarchal views, South Asian women face a plethora of threats from sexual violence, dowry murders, discrimination in health, education and land rights as well as child marriage.

In India alone, 47 percent of women between the ages of 20 and 24 married before the legal age of 18, according the government's latest National Family Health Survey.

We can forget goals of MDG

Tutu linked the issue of child marriage to development. "It's been shown that where child marriage is in vogue, six of the eight millennium development goals, you can forget about," he said referring to a string of goals 192 U.N. members agreed to implement by 2015.

The goals include reducing child and maternal mortality, ending poverty and hunger, providing universal education, gender equality and combating HIV/AIDS.

"You can forget obviously gender equality. You can forget about education because a girl leaves school when she gets married and you can forget about reducing poverty as she is hardly likely to earn a great deal with no education."

Child marriage also threatens the health of a young mother, he said, adding that a girl giving birth at 15 is five times more likely to die in the process than a girl of 19 or older, while her infant is 60 percent more likely to die.

He added that girls who were married, often to older men, had little control over their sex lives and were more likely to be infected by HIV/AIDS.

Article by Nita Bhalla.

More on: <http://www.trust.org/trustlaw/news/global-activists-forge-anti-child-marriage-alliance-in-south-asia>

See also: Nearly 50% fall in brides married below 18 on: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Nearly-50-fall-in-brides-married-below-18/articleshow/11829410.cms>

Mailed to us by IAW member Anjana Basu

EVENTS - CONFERENCES - WEBSITES

IAW website on <http://www.womenalliance.org/status.html>

With an article on the Council of Europe and on INGOs working in Egypt about the crackdown on civil society on: <http://www.womenalliance.org/IWA/>

Eighth session of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, 20-24 February 2012

The eighth session of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee is scheduled to take place from 20 to 24 February 2012, in the Human Rights and Alliance of Civilisations Chamber (Room XX), at Palais des Nations.

More on: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/>

e-Discussion on “Jobs, Decent Work and Inclusive Growth:” 8 February to 14 March

The 2012 Annual Ministerial Review ([AMR](#)), to be held during the High-level Segment (HLS) of the substantive session of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in July at UN Headquarters in New York.

More on: <http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article3766>

The Committee on the **Rights of Persons with Disabilities** calls for civil society inputs on the implementation of measures of accessibility for persons with disabilities

Deadline: 15 March.

More on: <http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article3768>

World Congress for Health and Safety - The Human Factor in Risk

Saturday 8th - Sunday 9th September, 2012, University of London, UK

The Congress aims to improve and promote the science and technology of better safety in both risk and crisis management. Featuring sessions from world renowned speakers on a wide range of health and safety topics, this congress will provide essential updates to anyone involved in health and safety in healthcare.

By submitting an abstract you can be part of this influential event either through giving an oral presentation or creating a poster; by doing so you can share your experiences, research and knowledge with your fellow colleagues.

Targeted delegate: hospital director & manager, medical doctor, nurse, pharmacologist, residents, other paramedical workers, healthcare students, others. The maximum delegate number is 300 people.

The Congress is organised by the Union of Risk Management for Preventive Medicine (URMPM)

Abstract submission is now open, the last day for submissions is Sunday, 15th April 2012.

For more information or to submit an abstract visit: <https://www.eventsforce.net/urmpmworldcongress>

Homepage on: <http://www.urmpm.org/UWC2012/>

Send to us by Alison Brown, IAW Regional Coordinator North America

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@inter.nl.net>

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