

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

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

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

IAW NEWSLETTER April 2012, no. 4



Equal Rights

Dear members,

In this newsletter we compare three elements of armament: the rights and the needs of women in conflict areas brought to the Security Council, the continuous fight of IANSA against small arms, and on the other hand, Military Spending worldwide.

With Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon we also express our gratitude to Swedish Margo Wallström, who has brought “exceptional leadership” to channelling the voices of survivors and victims of conflict areas into the Security Council, demanding greater accountability and justice at national and international levels. We wish her success in the near future.

Also in this newsletter: information for NGOs at the Human Rights Council; a moving story of mending fistula in Pakistan; the women's movement on their way to RIO+20; a partnership between the EU and UN Women to enhance gender equality; also a partnership inside the EU to obsolete the enormous amount of pesticides; Honduras and the 'morning-after' pill, and last but not least, recent activities of the International Alliance of Women.

Events and interesting websites are as usual at the end of this newsletter.

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

Recent updates on the IAW website

April 13 - Five IAW Commissions:

1. Human Rights, Justice, Good Governance
2. Peace
3. Elimination of Violence
4. Health
5. Environment and Sustainable Development Council of

April 12 - Europe's formal relations with Non-Governmental Organisations

International Meeting at Melbourne, October 8-12 2012

IAW Secretary General Lene Pind writes about Ning:

"You may follow and contribute to the work of IAW on www.iawomen.ning.com. This is the social network for members of IAW. Sign up, if you are not already a member. You do that by clicking on the link. You will then be asked to give your email and to write a password.

If you have questions about this or about the International Meeting, just ask.

It would be a service to the organisers if at this stage you are able indicate your plans for attending the meeting. You would still have to send the registration form by August 20.

I look forward to seeing you in Melbourne".

What to find on the circuit of Ning:

- * the invitation for the International Meeting in Melbourne with the following documents, still in the planning process: a description of the programme, agendas, venue and accommodation;
- * an interesting video - Melinda Gates: Let's put birth control back on the agenda;
- * an inspiring video - Soon Young Yoon, UN Representative of the International Alliance of Women on Gender, on climate change and human rights;
- * an analysis of CSW negotiations for Women's Human Rights by Bashan Rafique.

Travelling in the footsteps of suffragettes one hundred years later

April 2012 - A group of enthusiastic Dutch travellers (ten women, one man) will be going this month to Java, Indonesia, travelling in the footsteps of two well known suffragettes, Carrie Chapman Catt (the first President of the Alliance) and Dr Aletta Jacobs who founded the Netherlands society. During their suffrage tour they promoted education for women and women's voting rights, giving lectures from South Africa to China.

Now, in 2012, the women's movement is also campaigning for implementing 30+ years of CEDAW and 15+ years of Beijing's Platform for Action.

IAW member Arina Angerman is one of the travellers. They will meet women's organisations in Indonesia and talk about women's rights.

Gender equality and political leadership

Women's participation in national parliaments is increasing, but it still has to grow in order to reach a real gender balance, M/F 50/50. What are the international figures for women in politics in Indonesia compared with those in the Netherlands?

In 1997 Indonesia was no. 40 with 11% women; the Netherlands was no. 5 with 31% women.

In 2011 Indonesia was **no. 73** with 18% women, with 120 women out of 560, the Netherlands, the country of Aletta Jacobs, was **no. 8** with 41%, with 61 women out of 150, and the USA, the country of Carrie Chapman Catt, was **no. 78**, with 17% women.

World classification on Women in Parliament: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn/-e/classif.htm>

Arina will write on Ning and on: <http://www.vrouwenbelangen.nl/english/index.htm>

UNITED NATIONS

RIO+20 20-22 June 2012

Second round of 'informal-informal' negotiations on the zero draft of outcome document, 23 April 2012 - 4 May 2012, New York

Two reports are to be found on the website and several briefs:

1. Report on Objectives and Themes of the United Nations Conference, by: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)
2. Transition to a Green Economy Benefits, Challenges and Risks, by UNDESA DSD, UNEP, UNCTAD and
3. Interesting briefs, for example on Trade and Green Economy; Oceans, Sustainable Cities; Water, etc. All on: <http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/objectiveandthemes.html>

NGO Participation in the Human Rights Council

Only NGOs in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) can be accredited to participate in the Human Rights Council's sessions as Observers.

How to participate in a session of the Council?

As Observers, NGOs are able, amongst other things, to:

- ⤴ Attend and observe all proceedings of the Council with the exception of the Council deliberations under the Complaints Procedure;
- ⤴ Submit written statements to the Human Rights Council;
- ⤴ Make oral interventions to the Human Rights Council's;
- ⤴ Participate in debates, interactive dialogues, panel discussions and informal meetings; and
- ⤴ Organize "parallel events" on issues relevant to the work of the Human Rights Council.

Quick links

1. A practical guide for NGO participants, general, etc.) [[Arabic](#) - [English](#) - [French](#) - [Spanish](#)].
2. NGO Written Statement Submission Form [[Download](#)]. **Deadline** 4 June 2012.
3. [Link to Oral Statement Request Form](#) [Opens 2pm, Friday, 15 June 2012].
4. Co-sponsor Form – Oral Statement [[Download](#)].
5. [Link to NGO Side-Event Room Request Form](#). **Deadline** 4 June 2012.
6. Documentation
7. [Working with the United Nations Human Rights Programme: Handbook for Civil Society](#).

More information on: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NgoParticipation.aspx>
Chief IAW Representative to the UN in Geneva: *Hélène Sackstein*

AROUND THE WORLD

New partnership between the EU and UN Women to enhance gender equality worldwide

Brussels, 16 April 2012 — A new partnership between the EU and UN Women was signed and set up to strengthen cooperation between the two organizations on their work on empowering women and gender equality.

Cooperation will primarily focus on ensuring women's representation in decision-making in the fields of economics, politics and justice worldwide, as well as better access for women to work and social opportunities.

Crucially, the partnership will see the two organisations coming together to take action on combating sexual and gender-based violence. This will include a commitment to provide more support and protection to survivors of violence and increasing access to support and services for those women affected.

EU's work on gender

As the world's second largest donor, the Commission has a crucial role to play in furthering the development of women and girls.

Since 2004, for example, thanks to EU support: more than 85,000 new female students have been enrolled in secondary education, more than 4 million births attended by health personnel and 10.8 million consultations on reproductive health carried out.

For further details about the EU's work with women, go to:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/news/documents/factsheet_womensday_en.pdf

*IAW Regional Vice President Europe and IAW Representative to the European Women's Lobby,
Joanna Manganara*

A law for the morning-after emergency contraceptive pill ?

The online organizing website Avaaz.org alerts readers that the Honduras authorities are considering a law that would mandate imprisonment of teenage women for using the so-called "morning-after" emergency contraceptive pill - as well as doctors who provide the medicine.

An Avaaz petition said:

Honduras is just days away from approving an extremist law that would put teenagers in prison for using the morning-after pill, even if they've just been raped. ...
Some Congress members agree that this law - which would also jail doctors or anyone who sells the pill - is excessive, but they are bowing to the powerful religious lobby that wrongly claims the morning-after pill constitutes an abortion. Only the head of the Congress, who wants to run for the Presidency and cares about his reputation abroad, can stop this.

Avaaz is asking Congress President Juan Orlando Hernández to "not to criminalize contraception: "Your proposed law 54 would make Honduras the only country in the world to punish the use or sale of the morning-after pill with jail sentences of 3-10 years. We urge you to reject this extremist law and respect women's rights, or risk condemnation both in Latin America and across the world".

On Avaaz's website, 601,710 people have signed the petition, as at publication. On:

<http://www.escapistmagazine.com/forums/read/528.370840-Honduras-to-ban-morning-after-pill>
Mailed to us by IAW member Helen Self.

Obsolete Pesticides - a partnership to protect human health and the environment

12 April 2012, Rome - Twelve countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia will start working with the European Union (EU) and FAO to manage their vast stocks of obsolete pesticides in a partnership that was launched at FAO's headquarters in Rome.

200 000 tons of obsolete pesticides worldwide

It is estimated that around 200,000 tons of obsolete pesticides, nearly half the world's stockpiles, can be found in twelve former Soviet Union republics.

Kept in tens of thousands of unprotected sites, they pose a serious threat to the health of the people around them and to the environment.

For the next four years, the EU and FAO will invest €7 million to assist these countries — Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan — in managing obsolete pesticides and reducing the risks of current stocks.

At the same time, the project will build capacity to reduce risks from pesticides used in agriculture and avoid build-up of additional stockpiles in future.

Working with International NGOs

In this initiative, FAO and the EU are working with partners such as WHO, UNEP, the Secretariats of the Convention of Rotterdam, Stockholm and Basel, international NGOs, including the Green Cross and the International HCH and Pesticide Association and the private sector, among others.

More on: <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/134629/icode/>

Convenor of the IAW Commission on Health, Gudrun Haupter

Fistula - Another Blight on the Child Bride

KARACHI, Pakistan, Apr 13, 2012 - It was personal experience that turned Gul Bano and her cleric husband, Ahmed Khan, into ambassadors against early marriage and its worst corollary – obstetric fistula which allows excretory matter to flow out through the birth canal.

As is the custom in the remote mountain village of Kohadast in the Khuzdar district of Balochistan province, Bano was married off as soon as she reached adolescence, at 15, and was pregnant the following year. There being no healthcare facility near Kohadast, Bano did not receive antenatal care and no one thought there would be complications. But, events were to prove different.

After an extended labour lasting three days, Bano delivered a dead baby. Her troubles had only begun. A week later, Bano realised she was always wet with urine and reeking of faecal matter.

"I was passing urine and stools together."

Unable to handle the prolonged labour, Bano's young body had developed a fistula caused by the baby's head pressing hard against the lining of the birth canal and tearing into the walls of her rectum and the bladder. Bano's family attributed her condition to fate.

However, through those trying times, Khan stood by his young wife and sought medical help.

Koohi Goth Women's Hospital, where fistula victims are treated free, was started by Dr. Shershah Syed, one of Pakistan's first gynaecologists to train in repairing a painful and socially embarrassing condition.

In 2006, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) launched a four-year fistula repair project as part of a programme to improve maternal health.

According to UNFPA, at least two million women in the world live as Bano did – in shame and misery. Most are not even aware that fistula can be repaired. With only 500 - 600 women undergoing corrective surgery annually, Pakistan needs to put more resources into addressing fistula – which falls under the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of reducing maternal mortality by three-quarters by 2015.

Pakistan's Child Marriages Restraint Act passed in 1929 permits girls to be married at 16, but poverty, illiteracy and socio-cultural practices result in girls being married off as soon as they reach puberty.

Getting Bano to Karachi was not easy. Khan gathered a group of able-bodied men who took turns carrying her on a rope bed for three days just to reach a motorable road.

"It's been almost three years and she has gone through six operations," says Dr. Sajjad Ahmed, who worked at Koohi Goth as manager of UNFPA's fistula project from June 2006 to February 2010.

Today Bano and Khan travel across Pakistan, spreading the word about how to prevent the injury and what to do about it. "Khan is a cleric and yet he does not conform to the stereotype of a religious person," said Syed. "He tells parents that fistula can be avoided if they stop marrying off their daughters at a very early age."

Bano shares her story and tells married women about the importance of birth spacing, antenatal check-ups and timely access to emergency obstetric care.

"I smell nice now and it's all because my husband wanted me to get well," said Bano, who may have spent many more years in a miserable state if not for the treatment at Koohi Goth.

More on: <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=107421>

SMALL ARMS, MILITARY SPENDING WORLDWIDE AND THE RIGHTS AND NEEDS OF WOMEN BROUGHT TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Margot Walström, UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, who has been spearheading United Nations efforts to tackle sexual violence in conflict, will step down from her post at the end of May 2012 due to family considerations.

Ms. Wallström, a Swedish national who has been a long-time advocate of the rights and needs of women, has served as Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's first Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict since February 2010.

"The Secretary-General has accepted Ms. Wallström's decision with regret," his spokesperson said.

Mr. Ban voiced his gratitude to Ms. Wallström, who has brought **"exceptional leadership" to this issue, channelling the voices of survivors and victims into the Security Council, and demanding greater accountability and justice at national and international levels.**

It was during her tenure that the landmark Security Council resolution 1960 was adopted in 2010, putting in place the tools for more systematic monitoring and reporting of sexual violence, and for the identification of perpetrators.

The Secretary-General will review possible replacements for Ms. Wallström in due course.

Written by Rebecca and Sarah from the International Action Network on Small Arms

International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA),

Women and Gender at the PoA PrepCom: 19-23 March 201. Following years of advocacy and effort by IANSA women around the world, we are beginning to see some tangible results in the UN small arms process. After the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) on the UN Programme of Action on small arms (PoA), [the Chair's summary of elements for discussion at the Review Conference](#) is now available. The summary can support our work through the inclusion of the following text:

Paragraph 6. States underlined the continuing negative impact of the illicit small arms trade on civilians, including women, children and the elderly. They emphasised the need to integrate a gender perspective into relevant aspects of Programme of Action implementation.

Paragraph 8. *Member States mentioned, inter alia, the following as suggested themes for the Second Review Conference:* (i) Increasing the participation of women in small arms policy making;

The Chair's summary provides us with a good starting point for our participation in the 2012 Review Conference (RevCon) on the PoA, which will take place from 27 August - 7 September 2012. For more information about our presence and participation at the PoA PrepCom see:

<http://www.iansa-women.org/node/785>

Mainstreaming gender in the UN Programme of Action on small arms (PoA)

<http://www.iansa-women.org/node/784>

IANSA women at the Preparatory Committee - UN Programme of Action on small arms

<http://www.iansa-women.org/node/779>

The IANSA Women's Network is the only international network focused on the connections between gender, women's rights, small arms and armed violence.

World Military spending level **out cuts after 13 years of increases, says SIPRI**

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament.

Established in 1966, SIPRI provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open source to policy-makers, researchers, media and the interested public.

April 17 2012 - Six of the world's top military spenders—Brazil, France, Germany, India, the United Kingdom and the United States—made cuts in their military budgets in 2011, in most cases as part of

attempts to reduce budget deficits. Meanwhile other states, notably China and Russia, increased their military spending markedly.

'The after-effects of the global economic crisis, especially deficit-reduction measures in the USA and Europe, have finally brought the decade-long rise in military spending to a halt—at least for now', stated Dr Sam Perlo-Freeman, head of the SIPRI Military Expenditure Project.

Budgetary pressures in the United States and Europe lead to austerity cuts

Military expenditure by the USA, the world's top military spender, fell by 1.2 per cent in real terms (or \$8.7 billion in 2010 prices).

This is partly the result of the long delay by the US Congress in agreeing to a budget for fiscal year 2011, as the Obama Administration clashed with Republicans over how to reduce the US budget deficit.

This trend is likely to continue as deficit-reduction measures approved by the Congress in 2011 will restrict the future growth of the 'base' military budget. In addition, it is expected that the withdrawal from Iraq and the draw down in Afghanistan will lead to falls in additional war spending.

France, Germany and the UK reducing

The three top spenders in Western Europe—France, Germany and the UK—have begun to reduce spending as part of austerity measures imposed to reduce budget deficits.

France's military budget has fallen 4 per cent since 2008, and while reductions over the same period in Germany (1.4 per cent) and the UK (0.6 per cent) have been more modest, both states plan further cuts in the coming years.

Far larger cuts have been made in Greece, Spain, Italy and Ireland as a result of their sovereign debt crises, and most central European countries have also made severe cuts.

Russia and China are spending over 9 per cent

Russia, in contrast, increased its military spending by 9.3 per cent in 2011, reaching a total of \$71.9 billion, which now makes the country the third largest military spender worldwide, overtaking the UK and France. Further increases in military spending are planned, notably in equipment, research and development (R&D) and support for the arms and military services industry over the period 2011–20, with plans to replace the majority of Russia's mostly Soviet-era military equipment with modern weaponry by 2020.

More information on: <http://www.sipri.org/media/pressreleases/17-april-2012-world-military-spending-levels-out-after-13-years-of-increases-says-sipri>

Convenor of the IAW Commission on Peace, Rosy Weiss

INTERESTING WEBSITES - EVENTS

UNWOMEN Worldwide on http://www.unifem.org/worldwide/asia_pacific/

I Know Politics on: <http://www.iknowpolitics.org/>

The role of ICTs in sustainable development

From 14-18 May, the 2012 Forum of the World Summit on the Information Society ([WSIS Forum 2012](#)) will be held in Geneva, bringing together key global players in the field of information and communication technologies (ICTs).

More information on: <http://groups.itu.int/Default.aspx?alias=groups.itu.int/wsis-forum2012>

Note

We are sending this Newsletter as an attachment, saved in .pdf. An attachment saved in Word 97 is available, if you cannot open it.

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 also can mail them this Newsletter.

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