INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN
ALLIANCE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES

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

Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities
Droits Égaux - Responsibilités Égales

IAW Newsletter August 2013, no 8

Dear members,

IAW is steadily preparing for the IAW Congress in London. In the meantime IAW representatives like Irini Nike Sarlis are attending conferences of the Social Development Committees on ‘The World We Want Beyond 2015’.

We seek your attention to a Glossary of Terms for UN Treaty Actions. It explains terms like ‘Reservations’ and is very handy to consult during CEDAW and CSW. And read an invitation from Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon to attend a Treaty Event at the UN in September 2013.

Also in this newsletter: a new Executive Director for UN Women (from South-Africa); Navy Pillay comments on human rights in Egypt; the ILO is taking action against trafficking in human beings who are deceived into forced labour; there seems to be a change of abortion laws in Latin America; laws for the wombs-for-rent industry in India (this is no science fiction); the trial of the gang rape in December in Delhi - when thousands of women walked the streets in protest - the verdict is expected at the end of August; and last but not least, a study of eminent historians, tracing the early history of gender reforms in India.

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

About Congress
The booklet is now available on www.iawomen.ning.com. It will be distributed to the participants at Congress in a printed form, and it will be published on the website.

The panels could be mentioned (see attached programme). The APWA panel is still in the planning process, but the others are finalized.

There is still time for members to register and there is still time for members to nominate candidates for the board. Send email to iawsec@womenalliance.org

Secretary General Lene Pind

Irini at the UN Third Committee
IAW member and representative to the UN in New York, Irini Nike Sarlis, attended the UN Third Committee on draft proposals on Social Development:
(a) Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly
(b) Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family.

Irini writes: Some NGOs discussed the rights of older women, informally, at the UN Third Committee Open-ended Working Group on Ageing we are attending today, as most government delegates were neither 'older', nor female. Similarly, as this week's mailing from the Peace and Development Network shows us, all consulting and other job applications for the UN, including for UN Women, insist on demanding birth dates and marital status information, which is illegal in the host country, the United States.

Is this increasing the potential for discrimination?

Let us hope that the new Executive Director of UN-Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, of South Africa, and the Global Leaders Council, will be able to address this.

Irini Nike Sarlis
UNITED NATIONS

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka new Executive Director of UN Women
On 10 July 2013 UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced the appointment of Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka from South Africa as the new Executive Director of UN Women.

Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka was Young Women’s Coordinator for the World Young Women’s Christian Association in Geneva (1984-1986) and served as the first President of the Natal Organization of Women, an affiliate of the United Democratic Front, when it was formed in December 1983.

Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka established Umlambo Foundation in 2008 to provide support to schools in impoverished areas in South Africa through mentorship and coaching for teachers and in Malawi through school improvements with local partners.

She holds a Master’s degree in Philosophy in Educational Planning and Policy from the University of Cape Town (2003) and a BA in Education from the University of Lesotho (1980).

In 2003, she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Western Cape.

She was the first woman to hold the position of Deputy President of South Africa from 2005 to 2008.

Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka initially became a Member of Parliament in 1994 chairing the Public Service Portfolio Committee. She was Deputy Minister in the Department of Trade and Industry (1996-1999), Minister of Minerals and Energy (1999-2005) and briefly served as acting Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology in 2004.

More at: http://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/directorate/executive-director#sthash.e0uIaOow.dpuf

Commission on the Status of Women 2014
The fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 10 - 21 March 2014 (tentative date).

Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all regions of the world attend the session.

Themes
Priority theme: Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls
Review theme: Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work (agreed conclusions from the fifty-fifth session)
Emerging issue: To be determined

Treaty Event 2013: Towards Universal Participation and Implementation
Excellency,
As the depository of more than 550 multilateral treaties, I have the honour to refer to the United Nations Treaty Event. The 2013 Treaty Event will be held from 24 to 26 September and from 30 September to 1 October 2013 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

The opening of the Treaty Event will coincide with the General Debate of the 68th session of the General Assembly, which opens on 24 September 2013.

The Treaty Event has proven to be an effective means for promoting wider participation of States in the multilateral treaty framework and thereby fostering the rule of law at the international level.

550 Multilateral treaties and 1,765 treaty actions
Since 2000, annual Treaty Events have attracted a total of 1,765 treaty actions.

Today, many treaties enjoy broad participation, but most fall short of the goal of universal participation. (…)

Treaties covering the areas of human rights, rights of the child, refugees and stateless persons, international trade, terrorism, criminal matters, law of the sea, outer space, disarmament and privileges and immunities and the safety of United Nations personnel will be highlighted at this year’s Event.
A list of the highlighted treaties is enclosed with this letter; a general list of the treaties deposited with me is available on the website of the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs http://treaties.un.org
If you wish to join me at the 2013 Treaty Event, kindly inform me by 6 September 2013 of your intention to sign, ratify or accede to any of the treaties of which I am the depositary, so that the necessary arrangements can be made.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration, BAN Ki-Moon

Glossary of Terms for United Nations Treaty Actions
This glossary is intended as a general guide and is not presumed to be exhaustive. To be found on: http://treaties.un.org/Pages/TreatyEvents.aspx?path=treaty=Focus/Page1_en.xml

CEDAW and Reservations to CEDAW
A Glossary Term of high interest to women is: Reservations. Declarations and Reservations are usually made upon state ratification, accession or succession to a specific Treaty (see the example below). On: http://treaties.un.org/Pages/Overview.aspx?path=overview/glossary/page1_en.xml#reservation

20. Reservation
A reservation is a declaration made by a state by which it purports to exclude or alter the legal effect of certain provisions of the treaty in their application to that state. A reservation enables a state to accept a multilateral treaty as a whole by giving it the possibility not to apply certain provisions with which it does not want to comply. Reservations can be made when the treaty is signed, ratified, accepted, approved or acceded to. Reservations must not be incompatible with the object and the purpose of the treaty. Furthermore, a treaty might prohibit reservations or only allow for certain reservations to be made. [Arts.2 (1) (d) and 19-23, Vienna Convention of the Law of Treaties 1969]

Reservations to CEDAW are to be found on: http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-8&chapter=4&lang=en
The text is also available in French and Spanish. Scroll down to see the individual State Reservations. For example the Reservation of Pakistan.

Pakistan 31, 51, 57
Declaraton:
Reservation:
"The Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan declares that it does not consider itself bound by paragraph 1 of article 29 of the Convention."

Editor's note: It is interesting to look up the reservations of your own country on CEDAW. Also: countries can object to reservations of other countries. See for example the Government of Germany, with a long list of objections to reservations from other countries, which Germany considers to be incompatible with (the meaning of) CEDAW.

AROUND THE WORLD

UN Human Rights chief Navy Pillay urges talks to save Egypt from further disastrous violence
15 August 2013 – The United Nations human rights chief today appealed to all parties in Egypt to act with restraint and initiate talks, following a day of bloody violence that left hundreds dead and many more injured. “I deplore the loss of life and call on all in Egypt to seek a way out of the violence. I urge the Egyptian authorities and security forces to act with the utmost restraint,” said Navi Pillay, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. “What is needed is genuinely inclusive reconciliation. I therefore appeal again to all sides to engage in urgent dialogue to avoid further violence and hate speech, with the aim of restoring constitutional order through free and democratic elections.”
Montevideo Consensus Urges Countries to Change Abortion Laws
Montevideo, August 16 2013 - Representatives of 38 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean meeting this week in the Uruguayan capital urged governments in the region to consider modifying their laws on abortion, which are among the most restrictive in the world.
The Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development calls on “States to consider amending their laws, regulations, strategies and public policies relating to the voluntary termination of pregnancy in order to protect the lives and health of women and adolescent girls, to improve their quality of life and to reduce the number of abortions”.
The document was adopted at the end of the first session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

ILO action against trafficking in human beings
In its many projects and advocacy activities, the ILO addresses trafficking from a labour market perspective. It thereby seeks to eliminate the root causes, such as poverty, lack of employment and inefficient labour migration systems.
ILO led responses involve labour market institutions, such as public employment services, labour inspectors and labour ministries. Moreover, as a tripartite organisation, the ILO consults and involves workers’ and employers’ organisations in its work.

Victims of forced labour
This paper serves to outline ILO’s major areas of intervention, some lessons learned and further references. The ILO has addressed trafficking in human beings early on in its history. All over the world, and in increasing numbers, people move in search of a better life. Some of them are coerced into work they have not chosen voluntarily.

Deceived
They have been deceived about the nature of their work or conditions of their employment contract, they work under threat, are subjected to violence, confined to their workplace or do not receive the wage that was promised to them. They are victims of forced labour, and they have been trafficked into a situation from which they find it difficult to escape.
Women, men and children are trafficked into a wide range of economic sectors and for different purposes. The trafficking of women and girls (and sometimes also boys) to countries where demand for sexual services is high has long been recognized as a serious problem.

A global enterprise
 Trafficking in persons has become a truly global enterprise. It can involve legal as well as illegal activities. It is fuelled by criminal networks or individuals seeking to exploit loopholes of national migration and labour market regimes.
According to ILO estimates there are at least 2.4 million trafficked persons at any given point in time. Yet there are only a few thousand convictions of traffickers every year. Despite growing awareness and more effective law enforcement responses trafficking remains a low-risk criminal enterprise with high returns. Read more on:

Curbs on surrogate births on table
New Delhi, Aug. 4 - Indian women cannot act as surrogate mothers for more than three births, including those of their own children, a draft bill to regulate the country’s burgeoning wombs-for-rent industry has proposed.
The Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART) bill also proposes that surrogate mothers should have a mandatory two-year interval between deliveries, whether of surrogate babies or their own children. After the health ministry receives comments on the draft from other key ministries, the bill would be sent to the law ministry before being placed before the cabinet.

More provisions for the wombs-for-rent industry
Under the draft bill’s provisions, no woman younger than 21 or older than 35 can act as a surrogate mother. It proposes that all her expenses, including her insurance, be borne by the infertile couple. A surrogate mother, before being hired, must be medically tested for sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS.
The bill comes at a time of increasing popularity for surrogacy, with film stars like Aamir Khan and Shah Rukh Khan opting for the method. The draft bill says a surrogate mother has the right to terminate her pregnancy at any time but if she does so without medical reasons, she will have to reimburse the cost to the infertile couple that hired her. Also, a surrogate mother must relinquish all parental rights over the child. Foreign couples seeking to hire surrogates in India must first give a certificate from their foreign ministry stating the child would be allowed to enter their country of origin and be considered the couple's biological child, the draft says. More on: http://www.telegraphindia.com/1130805/jsp/frontpage/story_17196502.jsp#.Uf8p9tI3B4k
Send to us by IAW member Anjana Basu

Rape Trial Galvanizes India
The horrific gang rape that killed Indian physical therapy student Jyoti Singh Pandey last December created an international uproar. Now, the trial is approaching a verdict amid heightened emotions and accusations that one of the defendants was murdered. Courtroom 304 at the district court in the southern part of Delhi is an austere place, with its wood-paneled walls and fluorescent lights on the ceiling. The judge may look surprisingly modern as he sits between two large computer screens, but this is still India -- which helps explain why this case, which triggered worldwide outrage, seems to be hitting a few snags. By Wieland Wagner and translated into English from German. The verdict will probably be at the end of September. More on: http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/jyoti-singh-pandey-nirbhaya-rape-trial-brings-india-together-a-917401.html

Disinherited Daughters

EVENTS - CONFERENCES - LINKS
Advancing Regional Recommendations on Post-2015: A Dialogue between Civil Society, Governments and UN Representatives
On 22 September, a dialogue between civil society, governments, and UN representatives on regional recommendations towards the post-2015 development agenda will be convened by UN-NGLS. With introductory remarks by the PGA, DSG, and ministers from Ireland and South Africa. More information & registration [deadline 10 September]: http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?art...

High Level Meetings of the 68th Session (2013)
- **23 September** – Disability and development : "The way forward: a disability inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond"
- **24 September to 4 October** – General Debate
- **26 September** – High-level meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament
- **3-4 October** – High-level dialogue on international migration and development

Note
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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