

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



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

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

IAW Newsletter, September 2012, no. 8

Equal Rights

Dear members,

Building the Future WE want, the UN campaign that will bring us to 2015, is in full swing. It is being promoted on line, supported by all the social media. In an important meeting of UN Women with civil society organisations, women are preparing the future in a strategic way, built on experiences of the MDGs and Rio+20. To 2015 with gender sensitivity indicators included!

Human Rights Commissioner Navi Pillay is reminding us of the important role of Treaty Bodies. There are ten treaty-based bodies, including CEDAW. They are instruments of international law.

Lahkmi Puri from UN Women spoke well in World Water Week in Stockholm on women's empowerment, water, and food security. There are new WHO guidelines on safe abortion and a new UN-Habitat's Advisory Group on Gender Issues has been installed, the first of its kind in the UN system; in the UK Mary Miller believes there is a real risk that "football will dominate again and the names of our female Olympic and Paralympic stars fade into the background"; Nadira Naipaul finds Pakistan 'horror' now stalking UK.

And last but not least: we wish our IAW sisters a good and successful meeting in Melbourne!

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

Preparations for the International Meeting in Melbourne, Australia, are well underway. The IAW 'booklet' has been sent by e-mail to participants to read the reports in advance. A printed version will be available in Melbourne. The final agenda will reach the participants soon. Our Australian hostesses have prepared an inspiring programme and all participants are looking forward to meet them in the wonderful city of Melbourne. Website on: <http://iawmelbourne.wordpress.com/>

UNITED NATIONS

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, on Treaty Bodies

"I am pleased to note the recent discussion on racist hate speech organized by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 28 August. The discussion, well attended by States and civil society, yielded a rich exchange of views on an issue that has been of great importance to me as High Commissioner.

The discussion demonstrates the important role of treaty bodies to contribute to debates on key globally-relevant issues. In this context, I am happy to announce the final wrap-up seminar on incitement to hatred that my Office is organizing in Rabat from 4 to 5 October".

There are ten human rights treaty bodies that monitor implementation of the [core international human rights treaties](#) :

- ▲ [Human Rights Committee](#) (CCPR)
- ▲ [Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) (CESCR)
- ▲ [Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#) (CERD)
- ▲ [Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women](#) (CEDAW)
- ▲ [Committee against Torture](#) (CAT)
- ▲ [Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture](#) (SPT)
- ▲ [Committee on the Rights of the Child](#) (CRC)

- ▲ [Committee on Migrant Workers](#) (CMW)
- ▲ [Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (CRPD)
- ▲ [Committee on Enforced Disappearances](#) (CED)

Proposals

"My report - Navi Pillay continues - contains a wide range of proposals all based on input from member States, treaty body experts, NHRIs and NGOs, which makes this report a model of transparent and inclusive collaboration among all stakeholders.

In addition I spared no effort in collating all facts and figures on the system so that States and treaty bodies can make informed decisions.

One of the main proposals is a Comprehensive Reporting Calendar which seeks to achieve compliance, predictability, better planning and pacing of efforts at the national level, rationalization and simplification of reporting requirements and resourcing. I am pleased that the report has been well received by all stakeholders.

Since then, the inter-governmental process focusing on strengthening treaty bodies has commenced in New York: I participated in the first session in this process and this has led me to several conclusions.

Conclusions

Most importantly, Member States do recognize the importance of the treaty body system and are more aware than ever of the challenges it faces. They also understand the risks to the whole human rights system if the status quo of under-resourcing remains.

I commend the excellent work achieved so far by the co-facilitators appointed by the President of the General Assembly, the Ambassadors from Iceland and Indonesia. I also acknowledge the important input and support of Geneva delegations to the process in New York. (...)"

More on : <http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/Pages/HumanRightsBodies.aspx> Mailed to us by *Convenor of the IAW Commission on Human Rights, Justice and Good Governance, Marion Boeker, Chief IAW Representative to the UN in Geneva: Hélène Sackstein*

Dialogue with NGOs - "Passing the Torch"

September 2012 - *A dialogue between the President of the UN General Assembly and civil society.*

In the first meeting at the beginning of the 66th Session of the General Assembly, President Vuk Jeremić shared the four key priorities that would set the main themes of his Presidency.

NGOs participation is an essential instrument for pursuing the core priorities of the General Assembly and of the wider UN Agenda.

Inclusive: 1) *social development*, 2) *environmental sustainability*, 3) *inclusive economic development and* 4) *peace and security call for more effective and stronger partnerships.*

It has been his firm commitment to work closely with the NGO community, to further our common goals towards a safer and more sustainable world.

More on: <http://csonet.org/index.php?page=view&nr=154&type=230&menu=14>

Building The Future WE Want

12-24 September 2012 - Online Forum: Following up on the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) which took place in June, the United Nations is continuing its efforts to promote sustainable development and to prepare a new development agenda that will take us beyond 2015.

The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and the Department of Public Information (DPI) invite you to participate in an online global forum, "Building the Future We Want" from 12 to 24 September. The campaign will close with a special ECOSOC meeting at the ministerial level on 24 September. It takes only five simple steps to support this campaign:

1. Get the word out to your friends and followers.
2. Visit <http://bit.ly/ecosocWE> on Facebook and/or use hashtags #futureWEwant and #beyond2015 on Twitter.
3. Participate in the online forum, and ask your friends, and family members to post their questions on what, why, and how countries should deal with sustainable development challenges (rising unemployment, food security, biodiversity, climate change, sustainable consumption and production, land degradation, water, energy, sustainable cities, financing and

technology transfer). Selected questions will be answered live on 24 September.

4. Bring an impact to the campaign by posting the graphic “Building the Future *We* Want” on Facebook (Profile and cover pictures) and on Twitter with a hyperlink to www.un.org/en/ecosoc/we. Downloadable visuals (images and promo video) are available on <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/we/resources.shtml>

5. On 24 September, watch live responses to your questions on www.un.org/en/ecosoc/we ; www.un.org/webcast ; www.livestream.com/ecosoc

Details

Website on: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/> (*IAW editor: this website is highly recommended*)

Visit the campaign page on [Facebook](#).

You can also post questions on Twitter using the hash tags [#futureWEwant](#) or [#beyond2015](#).

Downloadable visuals are available <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/we/resources.shtml>

On 24 September, watch live responses to your questions on [UN Webcast](#).

More information: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/we/>

UN Women/Gear - meeting with Civil Society

September 12 - This important meeting was convened by UN Women to address UN preparation for the post 2012 period and to discuss how to bring civil society into the process right from the start.

Lack of civil society participation was considered a major flaw when drafting the MDGs.

Lakshmi Puri, Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director of UN Women, spoke of the need for creating entry points to the discussion for global, regional, national and grassroots women’s voices so that gender equality and women’s empowerment issues are given importance.

Gender sensivity indicators must be included

Utilizing the Women’s Major Group prototype from Rio + 20 was an excellent format for amplifying women’s voices. We have learned many important lessons from the MDG process and the Rio+20 format. Now we women must determine what we want to advocate for to transform the MDGs to the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals).

Finally, there must be a main SDG on women + the needs of women must be included in all the other social, economic, environmental and human rights goals! She reviewed collaboration areas and the need for partnerships to develop an action plan.

Building the Future WE want

John Hendra, Assistant Secretary-General and DepIncluding: “Building the Future *We* Want” from 12 to 24 September 2012 (<http://bit.ly/ecosocWE>).

John talked about the country consultations that will take place to gather information from government, business, experts and civil society. A timeline on the process was handed out and discussed. Ultimately member states will make the final decisions but there is a fervent effort being made to include all parties in the information-gathering. They will use the web and social media to consult on thematic issues and there are plans to do civil society outreach and mobilization through onsite discussions. The MDGs were designed by men and that cannot happen again!

Strategic alliance-building

The GEAR Campaign, Bani Dugel and Charlotte Bunch, moderated a discussion of good practices on various types of alliance-building and advocacy: successful strategies of CSO engagement with Member States and the UN.

They stressed that women’s groups constitute a powerhouse to influence governments and if we are organized strategically, they cannot ignore us. We must do information sharing at the grassroots and the formation of regional NGO CSWs should greatly facilitate this process.

Women's major group structure

WEDO talked about the Rio experience suggesting that using the women’s major group structure allowed for strong collaboration provided a successful prototype for the future. Civil society and women were welcome to all meetings and received all the documents. It is true that the agenda covered too much and didn’t focus enough so choices must be made for Post 2015 re: universal themes vs. targeting.

This was a transparent, successful preliminary meeting

Charlotte Bunch from the GEAR Campaign made the closing remarks. This was a transparent, successful preliminary meeting. We all committed to ongoing monthly briefings on the 2015 process

though many will be smaller sessions of various formats. CSOs will work with governments and we will look to UN Women to keep us well-informed.

One page information sheets are critical to keep the information process flowing. The participants were very excited about this excellent, informative meeting.

*Reported by Madeleine Brecher, Communications Secretary & Membership Chair, NGO CSW/NY
Mailed to us by IAW President Lyda Versteegen and Soon-Young Yoon, IAW Chief Representative to the UN in New York (Editors comment: this is a summary)*

Human Rights Council

On September 14 the Council concludes its general debate on the thematic reports of the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

In the general debate, delegations expressed concern about and cited examples of intimidation and reprisals against human rights defenders. Because **violence against women**, including sexual violence, continued to be one of the most entrenched forms of discrimination worldwide, States should take measures to increase the representation of women in the administration, and particularly in the justice administration, as an effective means to combat violence against women.

Speakers of international organisations drew the attention of the Council to human rights violations in several countries across the world. It can all be read on:

Website <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=12525&LangID=E>
UN Human Rights, follow us on social media:

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YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/UNOHCHR>

More on: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrc/elections32nd.htm>

Chief IAW Representative to the UN in Geneva: H el ene Sackstein

UN World Water Week

remarks by Lakshmi Puri, Deputy Executive Director of UN Women at the Closing Plenary Session of the 2012 in Stockholm, Sweden, 31 August 2012.

Women, girls and water

Women and girls are at the centre of this connection. In many countries, women carry out most tasks related to water – they walk long hours to fetch water, they cook, they clean, they care for the sick and the elderly, and they grow food for their families and communities.

Yet, women’s participation in decision-making on water and food management is low and they are not sufficiently prioritised in water policies, programmes and infrastructure.

Women hold less than six percent of all ministerial positions in the field of environment, natural resources and energy and they are under-represented at lower levels as well.

Entitlement systems

While women dominate subsistence agriculture and unpaid water collection tasks, men dominate cash crops. Current estimates show that 70 percent of the world’s water is needed for agriculture, 20 percent for industry, and 10 percent for household use.

Entitlement systems constitute another barrier with women and girls having unequal access to productive resources, such as water, land, fertiliser, finance and credit, and technology, often due to gender norms and stereotypes. If women were to have equal access to agricultural services, including irrigation services, agricultural yields would increase by an estimated 15 to 20 percent, reducing the number of hungry people by 100 to 150 million.

Rio+20

The Rio+20 Conference set the basis for a strong international normative framework in this area.

Gender equality and women’s empowerment, water security and sustainable water management, and food security and agricultural development were all identified as priorities for a sustainable future.

The connection between these priorities, so clearly made in the Rio+20 outcome, must be carried forward.

Sustainable Development Goals - SDGs

As we approach the deadline for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, a new set of

goals will be launched – the Sustainable Development Goals. The three priorities of gender equality and women’s empowerment, water, and food security must be strongly interlinked in the goals.
More on: <http://www.ipsnews.net/2012/09/op-ed-women-and-girls-at-heart-of-the-blue-revolution/>
and on: <http://www.unwomen.org/2012/08/gender-perspectives-on-water-and-food-security/>
Webcast on: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dIO_s5dUlv4&feature=related

AROUND THE WORLD

BBC needs to stop 'burying' women's sport after Olympics

September 15 - In a letter to broadcasters, Maria Miller will order them to stop burying coverage of women's football, rugby, cricket and tennis in their schedules.

She wants television channels to carry on the mainstream coverage the BBC gave to women in the Olympics when 16 million people tuned in to watch Jessica Ennis take gold in the heptathlon. One of her biggest worries is that broadcasters will fail to capitalise on the public appetite for watching women’s sport that grew over the summer. She believes there is a real risk that “football will dominate again and the names of our female Olympic and Paralympic stars fade into the background”. In her letter to Lord Patten, the BBC chairman, Mrs Miller thanks the broadcaster for its “fantastic” support for female athletes during London 2012.

By Rowena Mason, political correspondent, on:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/9543975/Maria-Miller-BBC-needs-to-stop-burying-womens-sport-after-Olympics>

Mailed to us by IAW member Raymond Lloyd..

Comment: Apparently there are fewer medals available to women at the Olympics than to men.

There's a campaign starting to get the number of medals made equal by the time of Rio.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, on Migration in Australia

Navi Pillay welcomed recent efforts in Australia to institute more comprehensive regional cooperation on migration, but is concerned that some aspects of the proposed changes could place at risk the human rights of migrants and asylum seekers.

The High Commissioner reiterates her call for a rethink of Australia’s asylum and migration policy, urging political leaders to take a principled and courageous stand on migration and to break an ingrained political habit of demonising migrants and asylum-seekers.

More on: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=12>

Mailed to us by the Convenor of the IAW Commission on Human Rights, Justice and Good Governance, Marion Boeker

UN Award for Hawa Aden Mohamed for her humanitarian work

18 September 2012 – The United Nations refugee agency today announced it is awarding the prestigious 2012 [Nansen Refugee Award](#) to Hawa Aden Mohamed for her humanitarian work helping Somalia’s refugee girls and women under extremely challenging circumstances in a country battered by decades of violence, conflict and human rights abuses.

Ms. Aden Mohamed is a former refugee herself, who chose to return to her war-torn homeland in 1995 and launched an education programme to assist those uprooted by conflict and recurring droughts.

“Her visionary work has transformed the lives of thousands of displaced women and girls, who are among the most vulnerable members of Somali society and in many cases are grappling with the trauma of marginalization, abuse and sexual violence, including rape,” UNHCR said.

More on: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42920&Cr=somali&Cr1=#.UFiZZ65SFic>

New WHO guidelines on safe abortion

June 1 2012 - The Dutch Permanent Representation in Geneva and the WHO Department of Reproductive Health and Research (HRP) hosted a World Health Assembly side-event to accelerate the attainment of Millennium Development Goal 5 on Maternal Health. The high-level event also celebrated HRP’s 40th anniversary and the launch of new WHO guidelines: Safe abortion: technical and policy guidance for health systems.

In his welcoming remarks, the Dutch permanent representative H.E. Mr Roderick van Schreven noted that in addition to the detrimental effects on women's health and human rights, unsafe abortion has negative economic consequences as well. The economic burden of unsafe abortion is estimated at 838 million dollars annually for the health system, with an additional 600 million dollars of out of pocket expenses for families and women.

More on: <http://geneva.nlmission.org/news/2012/05/the-netherlands-welcomes-new-who-guidelines-on-safe-abortion.html>

Sent to us by Gudrun Haupter, Convenor of the IAW Commission on Health

UN-Habitat's Advisory Group on Gender Issues

September 2 2012 - Naples, Italy - Huairou Commission is happy to announce the successful launch of the UN-HABITAT Advisory Group on Gender Issues (AGGI).

The AGGI was mandated in a resolution passed during the twenty-third session of the UN-Habitat Governing Council in April 2011, with the objective of strengthening the agency's attention to gender. It is the first advisory group on gender of its kind within the entire United Nations system, and engages a range of stakeholders in advising the Agency on women's empowerment and gender equality inhuman settlements, including grassroots women.

On a larger scale, the AGGI serves as a reminder that gender equality and women's empowerment are critical in achieving positive results in urban development.

More on: www.huairou.org

Mailed to us by IAW member Irimi Nike Sarlis, New York

Nadira Naipaul finds Pakistan 'horror' now stalking UK

August 20, London - Disturbed by cases of honour killing in Britain, Nadira Naipaul, wife of celebrated Indian-origin writer VS Naipaul, says that she sees in London the same "horror" that made her flee Pakistan.

Writing in the Daily Mail, Nadira, says, "I can still see the horror that made me flee Pakistan in the haunted eyes of girls raised here... When I married V S Naipaul and moved to England in 1996, I thought I had left the horror behind."

She adds, "Pakistan had drained my resolve, and I was tired of fighting a losing battle. To me, England, for all its ills, was the promised land. Instead, I have found the horror I fled has followed me here. It is all around, eroding the very core of everything Britain believes in.

"I see it everywhere. In the haunted eyes of young Pakistani girls, brought up in Britain, who know nothing but a Westernised life: young women who work happily behind beauty counters in our department stores, yet must return home to parents who refuse to emerge from their cultural ghettos." Cases of honour killings and forced marriages are reported from communities with origins in the Indian subcontinent.

British authorities have taken several measures to prevent forced marriages. However, such cases continue to be reported, including the recent widely followed case of Shafiea Ahmed, who was killed by her parents for having a westernised lifestyle.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/uk/Naipauls-wife-finds-Pak-horror-now-stalking-UK/articleshow/15564590.cms>

Mailed to us by IAW member Anjana Basu

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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