

# 2010

## Congress South Africa - Reports



Lene Pind – Secretary General  
International Alliance of Women

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**IAW Board Meeting, Boksburg, South Africa**  
**22 November 2010**  
**Rosy Weiss, IAW President**

Vienna, October 2010

Dear Friends,

At the outset, please share with me a moment of silence for **members lost** since Delhi: Olive Bloomer, Marcelle Devaud, Pat Goble, Bothaina Mohamed, and Sachiko Okomura.

Our **thanks** go to the Mmabatho Foundation for Women's Development. I think I speak for all of us when I express our deep appreciation and our great joy to be in South Africa, for the first time in the history of our organization. Many, many thanks to Mmabatho and her team! At this moment my gratitude also goes to Manorama and her team who made the change in the congress venue to 2007 possible. There was another shift that I have to mention: the shift from Kuwait to Paris for the organization of the Board and International Meeting in 2006. Here again I am grateful for the understanding and help of the Kuwaiti Union for Women's Associations and our French friends, in particular, Monique Bouaziz.

6 years since our centennial when I was elected president – and it seems like yesterday that we departed from Freiburg to Strasbourg.

Olive Bloomer, seeing my efforts to stabilize the Alliance after Freiburg and calm down the disputes over the new constitution, told me in one of her nice letters that, “once the difficulties are overcome, you will start enjoying your work as head of the Alliance”. And as always, she was right. This work was very demanding, but also very rewarding.

Six years ago, in my first presidential letter in October 2004, I asked you for two things: your **confidence**, and your **active participation** in the work for the Alliance. Today I can say: I had both to a great extent and I am very grateful for that, as it laid the foundation upon which I could build up my own endeavours.

Six years ago I also stressed **two priorities**, if elected: a) **visits to as many member organisations** as possible, at my own cost and b) **getting IAW finances out of the red zone**.

Visits: In addition to the statutory gatherings I visited the All India Women's Conference, Bettina and her Italian group of strong women; I met our former treasurer Marieluise Weber in Gundelfingen to get her papers for auditing and went on together with Anje Wiersinga to participate in a meeting of the Council of Europe on the future of the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men. In the run up to our Board meeting in The Hague I visited London in order to clear open questions with Barclays Bank and to visit the Archives in Manchester and the Women's Library, where a great number of our original documents are preserved. In London, I also had the pleasure to meet with the President of the National Women's Commission of UK (recently disbanded) and with the Sri Lanka Women's Association in UK, as well as members of the Josephine Butler Association. In Reykjavik, I attended an important conference on prostitution of our Icelandic member organisation; in Athens, I attended the European conference on sexual harassment at the work place, organized by the Greek League for Women's Rights. Two journeys took me to Germany: one to Berlin to celebrate with the Deutsche Frauenring on its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, one to the Rhine to attend its Seminar “15 years after Beijing”. I went to Rome to attend an important FAO conference on food security and to assist Bettina in her networking and lobbying efforts. I went to Paris to attend the conference celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on behalf of the IAW; I attended UN.GIFT (United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking) in Vienna and went to Geneva for the European preparatory meeting for Beijing+15.

And, of course, I attended all session of the Commission on the Status of Women held during my tenure in office, supported by a varied number of delegates from member organizations, and, naturally, our New York team. We submitted written and oral statements on the different main and review topics of the Commission and held well-attended side events, alone and with partner organizations. In close cooperation with the NGO Committees on the Status of Women in New York, Geneva and Vienna, we joined in efforts to counteract the backlash that we feel everywhere when women's empowerment, equality and Human Rights are at stake.

My electronic correspondence during these years is impressive as I tried to respond to every single request, piece of information, and suggestion coming from our membership. I just want to tell you, that my second computer has already reached its limit and is just waiting for the job being done and returning to normality.

Finances: With the change of the IWN printer from UK to Switzerland, one third of each edition's costs could be saved. Depending on the good will of our constituents to pay their dues, we are able to reach a fairly balanced yearly budget. With plans under negotiation with the trustees to sell the stocks of the Will Trust and the transfer of the money to a proposed IAW Travel Fund, I thought finally to have reached my long-term goal of an IAW Travel Fund. Unfortunately, the financial crisis put a bitter end to these beautiful dreams. No way to sell stocks or shares at the moment without big losses.

In order to raise funds, an organisation should be registered somewhere as a non-profit organisation. As I found out after 4 years of research on two continents, the IAW is not registered at all. Last year's Board Meeting resolved to investigate this question and the conclusion was reached that the best way would be register IAW in Switzerland. Negotiations with Swiss authorities have since been initiated, and hopefully will attain a positive result next year.

Dear friends!

When I became the 12<sup>th</sup> President of the Alliance, I outlined as **my major concerns**: increasing the visibility of our organization, servicing our members, supporting our activists and officers, and good housekeeping.

I am most thankful for the excellent work done by our outreach team, Priscilla Todd for the International Women's News, assisted by Mathilde Duval for the French pages, Joke Sebus for the monthly Newsletter in English including Newsflashes as well as Talking Points, and Alison Brown, our web content manager (with Trevor Bennett as webmaster). They have considerably increased the visibility of our organization. Another strategy for increased visibility was the excellent performance of our international representatives in various global fora such as the UN or regional intergovernmental bodies such as the Arab League, the Council of Europe or the European Union. In countless interventions and statements, these reps brought our - IAW's - agreed positions to major negotiation tables. In return they informed our constituency about significant developments and important news on global and regional levels. We joined many campaigns to protest violations of women's Human Rights, for example, in Zimbabwe, Darfur or Afghanistan.

We, IAW, are most grateful to the Frederika Bremer Forbundet for the production of our beautiful new flyer. This is really a useful service to our members. We have achieved transparency of IAW Trust Funds. The case of the Bali Women's Union of Farming Groups winning the 2008 WWSF Prize for women's creativity in rural life shows that it pays to submit good projects through IAW. The agreement with the former IIAV, now Aletta Institute for Women's History, secures our archives for the time being. Scholars perceive us as a source of

important documents in the history of women's rights and apply for permission to reprint IAW materials in their books and on-line. Monitoring appointments made by intergovernmental bodies in order to achieve a gender balanced approach is yet another focus of our organisation. There are many, many other examples.

And finally: **the IAW is working! Its visibility has increased, its value as an international non-governmental organization reinforced, its voice heard! People are again motivated to work for the Alliance.**

**I am proud of the excellence of your performance, the wide range of competences, and the expertise in the practical work on the ground.**

**Our strength: Participation, competence, expertise!**

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## **Africa**

### **The Report of the Arab Region By: Dr. Horeya Megahed**

Since the meeting of IAW in June 2009, the Arab Region has been witnessing a considerable degree of dynamism with regards to women and their empowerment in all spheres with some unprecedented developments:

#### **Pioneer Arab Women in 2009-2010**

- The appointment of the first woman Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Arab world (El Naha Bent Hamdy Weld Meknass) in Mauritania (August 2009).
- A totally female crew from Jordan led the Royal Jordanian Plane in its regular trip from Amman to Athens (October 2009).
- The appointment of the first Palestinian woman governor in the largest Governorate: Ramalla and Beira, which is the center for political and economic mobilization and mobility.
- The appointment of Women as President of national universities for the first time in Alexandria University then Tanta University (Two of the biggest universities in Egypt).
- The Algerian Olympic golden athlete Nawal El Motawakel was elected President of the Coordinating Committee of the Olympic Games 2016. She is the first woman to occupy this position in the whole world in history (January 2010).
- UNESCO granted Dr. Rasheeqa El Raidy, the Professor of Immunity at Cairo University, the title of the best scientist in the African Continent and the prize of Women in Science (March 2010).
- In Algeria and Sudan, a woman competed in the presidential elections; the first (Louisa HANOUNE) got 4.2% and came second to the president (2009) and the second (Dr.Fatma Abd El Mahmoud) got 0.3% and she was ninth out of twelve candidates (2010).

#### **Political Empowerment**

- In Egypt, the institution of the quota system (Law No.149/2009) which added 32 new constituencies for women to be applied on the 2010 November elections which means that women will have at least 64 seats in addition to the existing 444 seats in the People's Assembly with the freedom to compete with men in the general constituencies, which created mobilization and encouraged hundreds of women to run in the existing electoral campaign.
- A 12% quota for women was applied to the June 2009 local elections in Morocco. Moreover, in October 2009, women got 6 seats out of 270 seats (2.2%) in the Shura Council (The Upper Council).
- In Algeria, the institution of the National Committee to widen the political participation for women with a consideration of a law that would mandate a quota of 30% to 40% for women

in all political parties, Algeria has not yet adopted a policy to integrate the gender in its national policies.

- In Sudan, forty five political parties submitted party and women proportional representation lists for the National Assembly Election (February 2010).
- In Lebanon, four women parliamentarians were elected to the Representative Council out of 128 (3.1%) in June 2009 elections.
- In Libya, 36 women gained seats out of the 468 seats of the General People's Congress in March 2009 in direct elections.
- In Mauritania, the election of 8 women out of 56 members (14.3%) in the Upper House (November 2009).
- In Jordan, 142 women candidate to parliamentary election that will be held in November 2010.
- The State Council- the highest judicial administrative authority in Egypt- rejected almost unanimously in March 2010 the appointment of women in the State Council despite the fact that two females (One of them is Dr. Horeya Megahed) were appointed among the seven public figures as Judges in the Parties Committee of the State Council since November 2009.
- In Tunisia, the number of women in judiciary increased to 537 judges (29.6%) in 2009.

### **Conventions and International Organizations**

- Palestine is the last Arab country to join CEDAW in March 2009; therefore, Sudan and Somalia are the only Arab Countries that belong to the minority of states that have not yet ratified CEDAW including USA, Nauru, Palau, and Tonga.
- The withdrawal of all reservations on CEDAW by Morocco and the move to join the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
- Egypt has withdrawn its reservation on Article 9(2) of CEDAW which gives the mother the right to pass her citizenship to her children.
- Jordan withdrew its reservation on Article 15 of CEDAW.
- Libya and Tunisia are the only two Arab countries that have joined the Optional Protocol of CEDAW.
- The institution of a permanent Committee for the Experts of Human Rights as the basic organ of the Organization of Islamic States (November 2009).
- Egypt has become the President of the Consultative Committee of UNIFEM since March 2010.

### **Violence Against Women**

Egypt issued the first comprehensive law to combat human trafficking (law 64/2010). The law states that those convicted of crimes related to human trafficking will be imprisoned (May 2010).

- In September 2010, Egypt signed a cooperation protocol with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to set up the first regional shelter in Egypt for the purpose of rehabilitating victims of human trafficking.
- In the occasion of celebrating Arab women day in February 2010, the Arab Women Organization launched the Arab Women Committee on International Human Rights Law.
- Amnesty International condemned in its Report the Israeli aggression and the use of prohibited weapons on the Palestinian civilians in Gaza in December/ January 2009 and the violation of the international law.
- The establishment of the National Committee for Combating the Violence against Women in Palestine.

### **Conferences**

- "The Role of Media in Supporting Women's Political Rights in the 2010 Elections" a



hearing session organized by the National Council for women with the cooperation of the UNICEF and UNIFEM in Cairo, October 2010.

- The regional meeting of the NGO's for the discussion of the draft of Arab women: CEDAW +30 in Cairo, December 2009.
- The conference for social security on "Towards an Effective Policy for Social Security in the Arab World, Arab Labor Organization, and Arab Women Labor Affairs", Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, December 2009.
- The launching of a report around the quantitative and qualitative indicators of CEDAW in the meeting of the Executive Council of Arab Women, which was prepared by the General Secretary of the Arab League, the Arab Woman Organization (AWO) and UNIFEM.
- The Afro-Chinese Cooperation Forum: Women Forum 2009, discussed the role of women as partner in facing the world economic crisis and strengthen the role in investment, the elimination of poverty, the role of women parliamentarians in the strengthening in the political and social dialogue between China and Africa, and the strengthening of the role of women in the NGO's. The forum came as a result of the joint Egyptian Chinese presidency of the Afro-Chinese Cooperation. A declaration of friendship between China and Africa in the Domain of Women on "Women as an effective Dynamic Force in Development" (October 2010).
- Women Parliamentarians of the Union for the Mediterranean stressed on the need for reconsidering the agenda for development in the light of the World Food Crisis, the World Financial Crisis, Climate Change, as well as the need for peace and elimination of violence, February 2010.
- "Sexual Harassment as a Social Violence on Women" organized by the Egyptian Center for Women Rights and the UN Program for Population and the Swedish Agency for Development within the national campaign: "A Safe Street for All" with the participants from 16 Arab countries and European countries in Cairo, December 2009.
- The international conference on "The Child Rights and Islamic Shariaa" took place in Cairo with the participation of 57 delegations of member states of the Organization of Islamic Conference. They agreed on that the International Convention on the Rights of the Child is compatible with the Islamic Shariaa; therefore, the member states have to consider the reservation concerning "adoption" which is reworded as "Islamic sponsoring" and "giving the right to choose his belief" to be reworded to "the freedom of practicing the belief" (February 2009).
- A seminar on: "Gender and Economic Integration of Women in the Arab Maghreb Countries" was held in Tunisia (October 2009) organized by CAWTAR: Center for Arab Women Training and Research and the Spanish Organization "Sidal"; the seminar was attended by experts from Arab countries and Spain.

Finally, Hoda Sharawi Association celebrated in December 2009 the centenary of the participation of Egyptian women under the leadership of Mrs. Hoda Sharawi in 1919 Revolution against British colonialism, which triggered the Egyptian feminist movement.

### **The Report of the Arab League** **By: Dr. Horeya Megahed**

Since the last meeting of IAW in June 2009, The Secretary General of the Arab League, its Women Committee and Arab Women Organization (AWO) have participated in several conferences and activities most important:

- The organization of the first conference of experts of CEDAW with the participation of the experts from 18 Arab states and the representatives of Arab and International Organizations (May 2009). They agreed on the plan of action of the experts' team throughout 2010-2011.

- The organization of an international seminar on: “Arab Women in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Equality from gender perspective” with the collaboration of the Italian Institute for Africa and the Orient. (IsIAO) under the auspices of the President of the Italian Republic (June 2009) in Rome. It ended with recommendations concerning education, health, economic empowerment of Arab women and the correction of their image in the western media.
- The issuing of the Arab Regional Report (Beijing +15) with the collaboration of ESCWA and the recommendation to prepare a regional strategy on “Arab Women & Security and Peace” with the cooperation of UNIFEM and AWO.
- The updating of the encyclopedia on “The Position of Women in the Arab Legislations” and the launching of its website [www.arabwomenlaw.com](http://www.arabwomenlaw.com) on the first of February 2010 on the occasion of Arab Women Day (June 2009).
- The drafting of the Arab Strategy for “Combating illiteracy of Arab Women” and its submission to the Arab States.
- A training workshop on: “The Development of Vocational and Competitive Capabilities of Arab Women”, in Syria (July 2009).
- The participation in a workshop organized by the Egyptian National Council for Women within the program of: "Towards a Distinguished Parliamentary Performance", dealing with the two experiences of Egyptian and Kuwaiti women parliamentarians in Cairo (July 2009).
- An international seminar on: “Towards a Better Participation of Women in Political Life and Decision - Taking Positions” with the collaboration of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW) and The Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR) in Tunisia (July 2009).
- The first conference on: “Arab Women in Science and Technology for Development in the Arab World” with the joint collaboration of The Arab Association for Science and Technology, the UNESCO and the IESESCO in Dubai (September 2009). It launched the website of the Arab Women in Science and Technology and the report of the UNESCO on Science, Technology, and Gender Dimension.
- International forum on “Arab Women and the Future”. With about 600 participants from 22 Arab and European States in Beirut (September 2009).
- The preparatory committee for the “Arab Italian Women Network” for strengthening the dialogue with Italy and the west and the launching of a website in English and Italian containing information on Arab Women documented by the Arab League and the AWO.
- International forum on “Gender and the Arab Media Scene” organized by Qatar with the collaboration of the Swedish Institute and UNIFEM in Alexandria, Egypt. It launched the document of the: "Arab Media from Gender Perspective", (December 2009).
- The first meeting of the Group of Experts for the preparation of the regional strategy on “The Protection of Arab Women: Security and Peace”, in the headquarter of the Arab League in Cairo with the collaboration of UNIFEM (December 2009).
- AWO launched the Arab Women Committee on International Human Rights Law in February 2010.
- The launching of the Arab Initiative for Building National Capacities to Combat Human Trafficking in Doha, Qatar (March 2010), with the objective of enhancing cooperation in taking effective measures to fight human trafficking.
- AWO hold the Arab Youth Dialogue in Tunisia (July 2010) to discuss youth vision toward women and their role in development.
- AWO hold a workshop in April 2010 to discuss the results of the survey carried by experts from member states on projects targeting women in social development.



- An Arab conference on “Fighting violence against women: A consecration of universal values” was held in Tunis. It discussed how to activate legislations and the role of civil society to combat violence against women (March 2010).
- The extraordinary Arab - African Summit that was held in Sirte, Libya (October 2010) reaffirmed commitments to promote cooperation in women empowerment and to enhance legal, economic, and social conditions of Arab women.

**Mmabatho Foundation for Women’s Development  
South Africa**

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<b>Date: 04 May 2009</b>	
<b>Highlights</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</li> <li>2. Empowerment of the girl-child</li> <li>3. Violence against women and HIV and AIDS</li> </ol>	

### **CONGRESS 2010**

The Foundation has been preoccupied with the preparations for the 2010 Congress which is going to take place in South Africa in November. This has been a very challenging period for everyone due to funding, however, the preparations are

### **YOUNG WOMEN’S ROUNDTABLE**

The Foundation organized a roundtable with young women from tertiary institutions to discuss challenges facing young women in institutions of higher learning and to equip them with skills to manage them

Furthermore, the Foundation has adopted young girls that they educate in the institution of Higher education

In addition to this, they buy groceries for these children who are orphaned and indigent.

### **Leamogetswe Children’s home**

As part of Mandela Day, the Foundation bought clothes for children at the orphanage so that they could have new clothes to complement the second hand ones that they are given annually. Furthermore, the foundation prepared lunch for the children. The children organized a thank you lunch to honour the Chairperson of the Foundation for constant support and love.

The Foundation also seeks support and donations for the orphanage from Business, government and community.

It further support the children at the orphanage by providing them with homes during school holidays and Fostering

### **To combat HIV and AIDS**

The Foundation continue to raise awareness around violence against women and its intersection with HIV and AIDS to women and girl children. It has further organized the campaigns with women and girls with disabilities.

### **Trafficking in Human Beings**

The Foundation participated in workshops and awareness raising campaigns on Human Trafficking and participated in workshops at the UN in New York and Washington DC

## **Contribution de l'Association des Femmes Juristes du Tchad (AFJT)**

### Contexte

Pendant ces deux dernières années, le Tchad vit une situation politico- militaire relativement calme. Cette situation a permis des avancées politiques notables avec l'adoption des accords du 13 Août 2008. Ce qui a amené les autorités à décréter en septembre 2009, la mise en place de la CENI, la réalisation de l'enquête démographique et préparation du recensement électoral et des législatives et locales pour 2010.

La situation relativement calme a permis à l'AFJT de réaliser ses activités tant au Nord qu'au Sud du pays.

La femme tchadienne a été longtemps très absente de la scène publique, cette situation préoccupante est à mettre souvent sous le poids de la tradition et des préjugés, de la religion et de l'état d'esprit et qui procèdent des pesanteurs socioculturelles qui perpétuent cette image.. Depuis bientôt trois décennies, les droits de la femme n'ont cessé d'alimenter les débats et échanges tant au niveau national qu'international. Des rencontres se sont tenues pour travailler la mise en œuvre et ou l'application de ces textes.

Leur importance numérique reconnu à tous les niveaux tant national que mondiale (50%) de ne les émeut outre mesure pourtant elles jouent un rôle très important dans le processus national de développement, de part leurs participations inestimables au développement socio-économique du pays. Toutefois, les statistiques nationales ont montré que malgré la place de plus en plus prépondérante des femmes dans les différents domaines d'activités du secteur rural et urbain, leur participation aux processus nationaux de prise de décision, aux niveaux local et national, et à la vie publique et politique sont très en deçà des attentes.

Pour réduire, un tant soit peu, les inégalités entre les hommes et les femmes, l'Etat tchadien a signé et ratifié plusieurs Conventions consacrées à la défense, la sauvegarde, la promotion et la protection des droits de la femme, dont la déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme, la Convention sur l'Elimination de toutes les formes de Discriminations à l'égard des Femmes (CEDEF), la convention sur les droits politiques et civils, celle relative au droit économiques, culturels, sociaux ;Il s'est aussi engagé, au Sommet du Millénaire, à réaliser les huit (8) Objectifs du Millénaires pour le Développement (OMD), dont l'Objectif N°3 vise à promouvoir l'égalité des sexes et l'autonomisation des femmes à travers l'élimination des disparités entre les sexes à tous les niveaux de l'enseignement d'ici 2015.

Cependant, la persistance des inégalités, le manque de solidarité entre les femmes et le sous estimation d'elle-même sont autant des freins à sa participation et à la visibilité de ses actions.

### I - Justification

Cependant, la persistance des relations d'inégalité, le manque d'équité entre les hommes et les femmes et l'implication limitée des hommes dans les programmes en faveur de la promotion de la femme et de ses droits dans maints domaines, constituent encore un frein au développement durable du pays. Cette situation, qui consacre la faible performance des cadres institutionnels et juridiques, ainsi que le faible impact des stratégies, programmes et projets destinés à la promotion de la femme, met en relief les défis importants à relever en termes d'actions pour pallier les faiblesses et contraintes constatées.

La tâche n'est certes pas aisée en raison de la complexité des rapports femmes/femmes, fortement influencés par les traditions, les pratiques sociales, politiques, administratives et institutionnelles. Mais il appartient à toutes celles qui aspirent à un Tchad prospère de s'engager dans la vie publique et politique nationale, afin d'avoir davantage de regards de femme et de

mère sur les politiques, les lois, les règlements et les institutions, nécessaires pour une société économiquement viable, socialement équitable et écologiquement durable

Pour améliorer la situation de la femme Tchadienne et persuader les décideurs, les leaders politiques et tous les autres acteurs de développement à agir effectivement et efficacement en faveur de la promotion de la femme, l'AFJT a mené plusieurs actions, dont la diffusion d'information, la sensibilisation, l'éducation, la formation, les enquêtes, les études, le lobbying et le plaidoyer.

La réalisation de l'objectif d'une participation égale des femmes à la prise de décisions a permis d'organiser en 2010 la formation en leadership politique des femmes pour leur permettre de se préparer aux échéances électorales à venir. Sans la participation active des femmes à tous les niveaux de prise de décisions, les objectifs d'égalité, le développement et la paix ne peuvent être atteints.

Pour lutter contre les violences basées sur le genre, l'AFJT a créé un service d'écoute pour participer à l'aide juridique et à l'assistance judiciaire des victimes, la violence faite aux femmes est récurrente dans notre pays dû à la culture et aux différents conflits que le pays a connus et qui a engendré plus de 300 000 réfugiées et déplacées tant au sud qu'au nord à ce jour nous avons totalisé à notre centre d'écoute plus de 285 cas d'écoute et d'accompagnement toutes violences fondées de janvier à juin 2009 à N'Djaména seulement



Femmes en atelier de plaidoyer

## II – Mise en œuvre et réalisation des objectifs

Les objectifs de l'AFJT ont été atteints et cela portera de fruits. Car au niveau de N'Djaména par exemple, beaucoup de femmes ont pris conscience de leurs droits et devoirs. Elles les revendiquent quand ils sont violés. De même là où existent les parajuristes, on observe une amélioration par rapport au respect des droits. C'est pourquoi il s'avère nécessaire de toucher toute l'étendue du territoire pour que les droits des femmes soient reconnus et respectés de tous

### PERSPECTIVES

L'AFJT entend poursuivre ses objectifs pour l'amélioration de la situation de la femme et de l'enfant. La sensibilisation sur les violences basées sur le genre, l'assistance juridique et judiciaire resteront toujours son cheval de bataille en vue d'amener la société tchadienne à respecter les droits humains et en particulier les droits de la femme. Il est aussi opportun de renforcer ses capacités opérationnelles du service d'écoute par la création d'un centre d'au moins 2 autres centres d'écoute multisectoriels, pour la protection des victimes de violences.

## CONCLUSION

En dépit des difficultés qui persistent notamment celle de transformer les mentalités positivement en faveur des droits des femmes et la persistance des violences ces dernières années, l'AFJT a réalisé un travail considérable dans le domaine de la lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes. A ce titre l'AFJT est de nos jours, un partenaire incontournable du Gouvernement et des partenaires au développement dans le domaine de la promotion et de la protection des droits des femmes.



**Women's Comfort Corner**

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**Date:** 15 October, 2010

1. Million Children Rise
2. Kick out the masks
3. Universal Access and Human Rights

### **Million Children Rise**

Comfort Corner Foundation Trust has partnered with the Ministry of Education, Members of Parliament, Ministry of Justice & Legal Affairs, Ministry of Labour & Social Welfare, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender & Community Development, Youth, Police and Community have come together to organise a national demonstration against child rape, after noting a dramatic increase of the abuse. Million Children Rise Campaign was created by Women's Comfort Corner Foundation Trust because we felt that it is vital that we collaborate with other partners to ensure that victims of these violent crimes, especially children receive the support they deserve and that perpetrators are put behind bars. We have to date organised 86 workshops and seminars all over the country. We have strengthened innovative child sexual abuse prevention strategies, reduced the incidence of rape by increasing awareness and encouraging reporting, especially by adults – teachers, parents, relatives, friends and neighbours who are in a position to protect a child.

A conference has been pencilled for early December 2010. Women's Comfort Corner Foundation Trust will use its community partnership to put critical information into the hands children, parents and teachers.

### **Kick out the masks**

Women's Comfort Corner Foundation Trust provides free confidential services, educates the public about sexual assault and leads national efforts to prevent sexual assault. Kick out the masks campaign aims to give voices and faces to sexual harassment and rape survivors, offering a sense of solidarity and possibility to those who have lived through abuse, while raising awareness of how this human rights and public health issue impacts victims, families and communities. We have created a national network of sexual assault survivors willing to stand up and speak out about the rape and abuse they have endured. Our goal is to put names and faces on the epidemic of sexual assault, addressing the issue in not only personal but also political



terms. The project was created and is largely staffed by survivors who have rejected the shame, invisibility and silence thrust upon them by the broader culture. One in four women and one in eight men will be victims of sexual abuse in their lifetime. By speaking out, we hope to change that. Civic and political engagement is a critical component of our project.

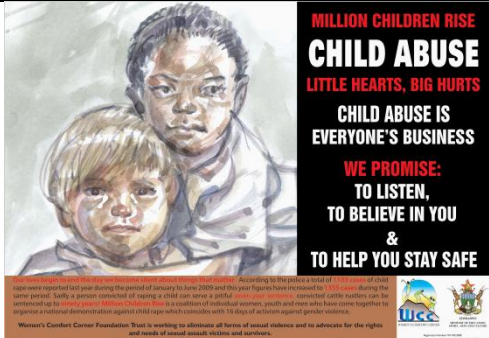

The project continues to be a source of inspiration not only for rape/sexual harassment survivors, but for those who care and work with them, including: family members and friends of rape survivors, therapists and counsellors who work with rape survivors and are seeking truthful but also hopeful stories that they can share with their clients, police, emergency workers and those in the judicial system who regularly work with rape survivors and are seeking to better serve and understand their needs, anti-violence advocates who speak to business, community and religious groups and are eager to put an end to the national epidemic of sexual violence and schools and universities that conduct anti-violence workshops and training programs.

We are in the process of printing out modules on sexual assault for distribution to Police Stations in all ten provinces of Zimbabwe.

### **Universal Access & Human Rights**

The increasing number of reports of corruption by medical personnel prompted us to make investigation in what was happening behind the scenes when people living with HIV/AIDS were denied access to medication if they were unable to pay a bribe to expedite the process and avoid being placed on the waiting list. Women's Comfort Corner Foundation Trust provides psychosocial supports projects in Harare and Bulawayo.

Other patients had opted to forgo treatment and by exposing the culprits Women's Comfort Corner Foundation Trust and the community have managed to protect and restore the hopes and dreams of people living with HIV/AIDS who have experienced inhuman treatment. Too often we have seen the faces of people living with HIV/AIDS devastated by lack of medication. We believe each of us has the power to make a difference in their lives, the ability to intervene and to protect people living with HIV/AIDS from further devastation. Although Women's Comfort Corner Foundation Trust is not funded we have been paying for antiretroviral drugs for 200 women and children for the past three years. We are proud to count the community as our partners.

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Bangladesh Mohila Samity's activities in context to IAW Action programme, CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, and the Millennium Development goals since IAW's International Meeting in June 2009.

Since its inception in 1972 Bangladesh Mohila Samity (BMS) religiously pursued its prime objective to overcome all discriminatory obstacles of women for their access to health, education and employment and play a participatory role in her family and her nation. It is a challenging task no doubt but when stock taking some achievement is visible nationally. The credit goes to all women particularly those courageous women rights activists who gave the leadership to bring us where we are today. Still more remains to be done for a safe, healthy and peaceful society.

BMS stresses on its Family planning and health centres in and outside Dhaka for marginalized women and children where mother-child nutrition awareness talks are also given. BMS also runs a Breast Screening and Awareness Project. It started its journey on October 15, 2003 with the prime objective of building awareness among people about breast cancer (since breast cancer is curable if detected at an early stage). Under this project, BMS has enrolled 5870 patients till now. Nationally also, emphasis is being given to achieve MDGs by 2015 and our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on behalf of our country received the MDG-4 award of the UN for remarkable success in reducing child and maternal mortality. Under 5 mortality reduced from 146 in 1990 to 67 in 2009. We need to reduce this further to 50 by 2015 (deaths per 1000 live births); infant mortality reduced from 92 in 1990 to 45 in 2009 (deaths per 1000 live births); 88% 1 year old children immunized against measles as against 65% in 1990. (Source: MICS 2009, BDHS & WHS) This was possible due to NGOs like us, private health service providers, monthly satellite community clinics and social activists volunteering to mobilize people to improve general health.

On 17<sup>th</sup> June this year BMS commemorated its founder President, Dr Neelima Ibrahim's 8<sup>th</sup> death anniversary through 'Neelima Ibrahim's Memorial Lecture'. The theme of this lecture was *"Bangladesh women's leadership in context to equal rights and Beijing Platform for Action."* Five leading women rights activists from different walks of life were invited to disseminate their respective findings in reference to the theme.



The outcome reflected the beginnings of a Women Directorate which gradually expanded into a Ministry of Women and Children Affairs! All speakers were unanimous that although women's issues are audible today and legislations promulgated for their protection against abuse and violence yet discrimination, harassment, unnatural deaths abound which is a matter of concern. That this too is a national concern is evident from the 7<sup>th</sup> Asian Regional Ministerial Conference on Women's Rights commemorating Beijing with the slogan 'Delivering for Women in South Asia' held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2010. The inaugural ceremony was addressed by our Prime Minister where she emphatically stated that one of the key strategies for



the overall progress of the country is to eliminate gender discrimination and establish women's equal rights.

There has been increase in women participation in economic activities, particularly in industrial sectors. Among 3.1 million workers of Readymade Garments (RMG) sector 85% are women. They are working in international labour markets as well. Participation of women increased in small and cottage industry. To encourage such participation women entrepreneurs are given priority in getting bank loans. Micro-credit programmes of Bangladesh have been recognized as the most visible anti-poverty instruments for women throughout the world. Every year Bangladesh Mahila Samity (BMS) through its Renu Ahmed Memorial Training project equips 82 young women/mothers in tailoring, embroidery, catering for income generation purpose. Six months course in computer training and six months spoken English course are also given for job placements of the trainees. Moreover such courses not only empower women economically but also build self-confidence and raise their status in families making them participants in decision making.

BMS's on-going legal aid cell extends twice a week free legal counseling and also assists to compromise and settle family matters through mediation. On occasions, as necessary, it refers cases to the central cell of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs known as **Violence against Women Prevention Cell** or to the relevant Department of Women Affairs in the six divisions of our country or to the **One Stop Crisis Centres** established by the government in each of its Medical College Hospitals at the nation's divisional level. It will not be out of place to mention that a **DNA laboratory**, the first of its kind, has been set up at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital and DNA Screening Centres are established in the five Medical Colleges at the nation's divisional level.

Despite legislations against dowry, acid throwing and cruelty against women, different types of violence against women has become alarming and so finally on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 2010 our parliament ratified "The Domestic Violence (resistance and protection) Bill 2010". The bill aimed at creating public awareness about negative impacts of domestic violence and mandates police to ensure treatment of victims and right to get legal assistance.

BMS from its beginning ran two primary and one high non-discriminatory school in Dhaka and Chittagong respectively. The 2 primary schools handle 311 children coming from low middle class families.



BMS believes in Beijing Platform for Action and the Beijing Declaration's statement that ".... education is a human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality, development and peace...." At the national level it is said that gender parity has been achieved in primary school enrolment. Although Bangladesh targets 'Education for All by 2015' we still have a long way to achieve gender equity, access to quality education, completion of basic education with acceptable competency levels and relevant life skills.

## All India Women's Conference

### ALL INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Email: [aiwctc@nda.vsnl.net.in](mailto:aiwctc@nda.vsnl.net.in);  
[aiwctc@gmail.com](mailto:aiwctc@gmail.com)

Executive- Mrs. Rakesh Dhawan, Treasurer, IAW

Dr. Manorama Bawa, Executive Vice-President, IAW

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2010.

#### Goal 1- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger-

##### Adoption of villages

In order to realize the vision of AIWC, i.e. 'Empowerment of women,' AIWC is encouraging its

branches to adopt villages and provide all the services related to Literacy, Health, Water,

Sanitation, Environment, Socio Economic

Programmes, vocational training – income generation

activities etc. at one place. This integrated approach

would help in improving the overall living conditions of the community as a whole and women in particular. **7 villages in different states are getting the benefit and few are in the pipe line.**



**Bidi Workers Vocational Training Programmes- 720 women have been given vocational training in alternate vocations, self-help groups have been formed and women have started generating income from these vocations.**

#### Goal 2 – Achieve universal primary education

i) Ten of our branches run Non-formal schools for dropout children in which **400 children were given education, 50 rural Evening Literacy classes for working women and adult literacy were conducted.**

ii) AIWC is promoting literacy among women by integrating it with skill training. **400 women were provided skill centric literacy.** The women become literate while learning the skill that ensures to help them earn money. In this programme we also provide supportive education to children to help them cope with the curriculum. To promote education, AIWC is supporting the Community College. The motto is 'earn while you learn'.



#### Goal 5 – Improve maternal health

Various health programmes are conducted throughout the country by our branches-

- Mobile Health Van providing health services in rural areas and urban slums.
- Health Camps focusing health issues - **445 camps held and benefitted 22,250 community people.**
- Awareness programmes on – Reproductive health, Family Life Education, General Health, Hygiene and Sanitation Education for mother and child, - **325 programmes were held benefitting 30,000 people.** **Projects on Eradication of Anemia** – we have intensified this programme by sanctioning this project which covers awareness, detection, management of anemia.

### **Goal 7 – Ensure Environmental sustainability**

- **295 Awareness programmes on Raising of Herbal Gardens and environment protection and Waste, Water & Sanitation Management were organised.**



- Projects ensuring Environment Sustainability comprised of - Plastic Recycling Unit, Jute Bag Unit, Promotion and Implementation of New & Renewable Energy Sources like Solar Dryer, solar cookers, solar lanterns, Smokeless Chulhas, Biogas usage, Vermicompost and organic manure.

### **Activities in support of Global Principles**

**The following important days were celebrated-**

- **Women's Day, AIDS Day, Family Education Day; Environment Day, Human Rights Day**  
**Promotion of Communal Harmony**

### **OTHERS**

- **Trafficking and migrant is common factors for the villages on the borders of the states.**
- **To support the victims of violence among women, we have 24hrs Mobile Helpline for Women, family counseling centre. Old Age Homes and short stay homes for women.**

**Country Women's Association of India**

**Country Women's Association of India . E-mail address [aninditamukherji@yahoo.co.in](mailto:aninditamukherji@yahoo.co.in)**

### **A. Health & Hygiene**

- (a) Medical camps were held by different affiliated societies of CWAI, free medicines distributed.
- (b) Blood test for thalasemia was done and one case having thalasemia minor was detected.
- (c) One hospital is run by JPMVK, an affiliated society of CWAI where tests for Tuberculosis is also done 14 cases were detected in the mentioned year, 6 cured rest under treatment.
- (d) Awareness camps for HIV / AIDS held in many centres.
- (e) Child mortality percentage had dwindled where affiliated societies of CWAI are working due to the special attention given to the pregnant mothers and infants.

**B. Domestic Violence**

It is a serious problem of both uneducated poor and educated couples. Battered women are looked after and rehabilitated. Due to nonadjustability between couples divorce cases in India are increasing and the children suffer. National Commission for women are seeking help from the corporate to come forward and prevent domestic violence, provide shelter, medical, legal aid for effective implementation of the protection of women from domestic violence and help to eradicate the gender difference.

**C. Environment**

To protect the planet from warming up most of the affiliated societies of CWAI are engaged in plantation in rural and urban areas, clean up the ponds, protect the marshy land.

**D. Seminar**

Three seminars were organised in the mentioned year

- (a) Global warming and responsibility of women.
- (b) Women through ages
- (c) Is voluntary service a myth?

The country is moving towards gender equality in most of the fields of activities --  
- social, political, cultural, economical.

**All Pakistan Women Association**

by S. Ayesha Javeri

The year 2010 has brought many unforeseen challenges to the All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA); these it has tirelessly faced while still focusing on its goals of the Beijing Millennium schedules; the promotion of gender equality, its strengthening, health, education and the rights of women, with empowerment and poverty alleviation.

Historically recounting, APWA was founded by Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan in 1948; the first, largest, non profit, non political NGO of this newly created country of Pakistan in 1947. She, as an ambassador in her own right, and as wife of the 1<sup>st</sup> Prime Minister, had land and offices in nearly every village and city of Pakistan allotted to APWA. Today it has been a difficult task to keep our areas free from the grabbing land mafia.

The last year at the IAW meeting a friendly relationship developed between the APWA delegates of UK and the Collisson Trust. They gave a scheme for the teaching of IT to low income groups and to APWA staff and donation for this purpose. It was a great success this summer; done in Karachi, the course was completed and the girls giving certificates in a public ceremony hosted by the President Laila Haroon Sarfaraz. Pictures were taken of the 100 girls.

The success of this venture and the enthusiasm of the participations encouraged APWA to create an English teaching course; a stipend was given for transport and it was well attended.

Early summer saw the UK APWA registered under the Charity acts Commission of England. An opening of its new office was done by the Lady speaker Baroness Hayman of the House of Lords, the event was attended by several dignitaries at the River Rooms in the House of Lords London ,with the APWA President as host and the UK APWA chairperson as speaker.

Together with this registration the logo of APWA was patented world wide. Only chapters, under direct appraisal of the National Headquarters, can function and use this logo on its letterhead. This helps clear the air of any unauthorized personal chapters, where transparency may not be possible even though this may not be necessarily. It's a legal undertaking.



While our on going projects continued to demand our time, we were faced with this biblical flood on August 2010 which till this October still continues.

Environment changes in the melting of glaciers together with lashing rain, created a roaring River that swept down from the Himalayas to the Arabian Sea. In the north the River Indus over reached its highest banks and swept away all civilization. There was devastation and terror in the Punjab. In its middle course it flooded century old cities, that had been founded near its bed. But in the area of South Sindh it did a unprecedented action. Due to the bend in its bed and the mismanagement and incomprehension of the officers, it was not released of its pressure at the perfect junction, so it broke dikes on the western side, jumped over the high ground and flooded low lying land, spreading like a sea to areas 60 miles from its bed. Today a second river flows parallel to its mate, coursing along, damaging crops and villages and still attempting to find its way to the sea.

We give this graphic account because its not comprehensible to the world how a flood can last two months, and what uncalled for, and unheard of, damage is done to lives and livestock in Pakistan.

The world, the government and the public helped. APWA is doing its share, in trips to the IDP with food and clothes. The Manchester England chapter went to the affected areas to do work with their foreign donations from their office abroad. Similarly Lahore, Peshawar, Islamabad and Hyderabad chapters did their voluntary work with donations collected.

APWA often cooperates with other NGOs to further help for disaster. Its philosophy is not to grandiose its name but help the work being done. In this manner it shares its donations with sincere NGOs at the centre of a cause. It gave 2000 meters of donated cloth to a small NGO. Al-Zohra for clothes for the IDP and its fund raiser in Dallas will also give monies to this NGO who has camps at the very site in Dadu and is personally supervising them. This way a small amount goes a long way and there are no overheads; and no money spent on advertising and media- a tendency of the APWA seniors- but it will have to give way to the new adamant aggressive viewpoint of the younger chapter who are more in time with the media world.

1. In this spirit a new chapter is being established in Dallas Texas, by a group of young dedicated enthusiastic American Pakistani ladies. They have orchestrated a huge fundraiser for the flood. Famous Pakistani designers have donated their clothes for a fashion show, other people had given monies for advertisement and sponsorship. The Historical Society of Dallas has been most helpful is giving the Railway venue and solving other problems. The governor of Texas Mr. Rick Perry has given his support by attending and the Mayor of Dallas [Tom Leppert](#) will also grace the occasion.

Our on-going projects are cooperation of APWA's with the Sindh Institute of Urology (SIUT) under the famous Dr. Adeeb Rizvi.

The legal Help line for women, under Justice Nasir Aslam Zahid.

The formulation of an ethnic handicraft centre to empower women financially.

The schools in far flung Goths and hamlets, their receiving help and they upgrading.

Today the new assignment for APWA, under the leadership of its President, Laila Haroon Sarfaraz, is the Summit of WRS. Women's Regional Summit for ladies of Afghanistan, India and Pakistan. APWA has already sent the data base comprising of dynamic women and dedicated volunteers. The meeting is scheduled for Islamabad October 21.

APWA has II category status with the IAW since 1951. We are proud to be linked to this body which has connected us with like-minded people through its newsletters, meetings and

encouragements. It has made us be aware of like problems that face women, most nearly; all over the world. Thank you IAW and your officers; APWA appreciates this immensely.

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## **EUROPE**

### **Report on the European Region**

**Joanna Manganara**

*Regional Coordinator for Europe*

I will briefly describe the most important actions that the Alliance has either supported or launched at the European level:

We have supported the Gear Campaign which is a network of 300 civil organizations officially launched in 2008 to follow the reform process of the gender equality bodies of the UN. This reform has been added on the agenda of the whole reform process of the UN mainly due to the pressure exerted by women and women's organizations all over the world since 2006. The gender equality bodies of the UN are the following: The UN Development Fund for Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women, the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues, and the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

The Gear Campaign has been demanding:

- The consolidation of the existing UN agencies addressing gender equality into a composite entity, the only option that formally links normative and operational functions.
- The new entity should be headed by an Undersecretary General in order to secure a higher level of authority for the new entity within the UN.
- An annual budget starting at \$1 billion and increasing over time,
- Universal field presence at the country level and strong policy and programmatic mandate.

On 2 July 2010 the General Assembly of the UN adopted a resolution establishing “UN Women” the new gender equality entity of the UN.

On 14 September 2010 The UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon appointed Michelle Backelet former Chilean President to the position of Under-Secretary General for UN Women.

The IAW continued to support the EWL 50/50 Campaign “More women in the European Parliament – What about EU top jobs”.

Since June 2009 the focus of the 50/50 campaign has been on actions to improve the representation of women in internal decision making posts, within the European Parliament: President, Vice President, (Vice) Chairs of Parliamentary Committees. In the European Commission the EWL has called for an improved system of nomination that is each member state to propose a woman and a man as nominate Commissioners. There has been also the post of the first ever President of the Council of Ministers and of the incoming EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy.

I have circulated a number of interesting texts which have been elaborated by the EWL:

- EWL contribution for an EU strategy on the eradication of all forms of male violence against women in Europe.
- EWL contribution on the European protection order.
- The Benefits of the European Union for Women.



The IAW has asked that the EWL looks into the possibility of having a European Equal Pay Day on 20 April each year.

I have become a member of the Working Group of the EWL on women's human rights in an international context Beijing+15 and I have contributed to the text of the EWL Beijing+15 report on the activities of the European Union with a number of comments. In that report I have been helped by those of you who have answered the IAW questionnaire Beijing+15 and their interesting ideas.

Marion Boeker my alternate to the EWL is member of the Working Group "Women's Economic Independence – Gender Budgeting".

- I have circulated the EWL report "From Beijing to Brussels. An unfinished journey".
- A new study "Women's poverty and social exclusion in the European Union on a time of recession. An invisible crisis" which has been published by the EWL together with Oxfam.
- An EWL statement on Women and the Financial Crisis.
- Information by the EWL Centre on violence against women concerning the first EWL update on the CAHVIO process concerning the future Council of Europe Convention on Violence Against Women.
- My report on the EWL General Assembly. Madrid, 11-13 June 2010.  
Within that report there is information concerning the emergency motion that the IAW submitted to the General Assembly of the EWL on women and the financial crisis.

### **Emergency motion**

The IAW motion has been considered very important and has been supported by Cyprus, Portugal, Sweden, Luxemburg, Belgium, Slovenia, the European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions, The Business and Professional Women Europe. The motion has been adopted unanimously. Finland submitted an idea which we took on board in a spirit of cooperation, although the wording of our text was very broad in order to take into account everything. On the basis of the motion the EWL amended the European Parliament's report on the financial, economic and social crisis drafted by Rapporteur Pervenche Beres on the 15th of June 2010.

The text of the motion has as follows:

### **Motion: WOMEN AND THE FINANCIAL CRISIS**

In light of the ongoing financial/economic/social crisis and the constant failure to address its gender impact, the European Women's Lobby calls on the European Commission and relevant EU authorities to take urgent measures in order to handle the crisis with a gender sensitive approach. The austerity measures and the privatization of public services must not result in shifting the benefits to men and the risks to women. All recovery plans must integrate a strong gender equality priority and involve women at the decision making level in financial, economic, social and other policies related to the post crisis era.

I have also circulated the monthly EWL newflash each time with very interesting information.

Finally I have circulated a document outlining civil society's views on the implementation of SCR 1325 and related women, peace and security commitments in Europe which includes 10 suggestions for further progress.

<b>Name: adf-svf Association pour les droits de la femme – Swiss Association for the rights of women – Schweizerischer Verband für Frauenrechte</b> <b>Email: <a href="http://www.feminism.ch">www.feminism.ch</a></b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Thème</b>	<b>Remarques</b>
Depuis Juin 2009	Renouveau de l'association, nouveaux statuts, contacts avec section « Frauenrechte » Bâle, avec Bureaux égalité Neuchâtel et Genève.	
7 nov. 2009	Assemblée extraordinaire et confirmation du maintien de l'association.	<u>Nouvelle présidence :ADF-SVF SUISSE</u> JOSIANE GREUB, Puits 27, CH – 2300 La Chaux <a href="mailto:Josiane.greub@bluewin.ch">Josiane.greub@bluewin.ch</a>
Mars 2010	Procédure de consultation : Avant-projet de loi fédérale sur la protection extra-procédurale des témoins (Loi sur la protection des témoins, Ltém).	
Mars 2010	Procédure de consultation : révision de la loi sur l'asile.	
13 mars 2010	Manifestation Marche mondiale, Berne	Delegation en continu
Avril 2010	Rédaction d'une pleine page pour « Le Courrier », présentation de l'ADF et prise de position contre l'initiative anti-avortement.	
<b>Représentations :</b>	Assemblée ONG Post-Pékin, Berne AD « Frauenrechte », Bâle Prix « Femmes et medias », LausanneCafé féministe, Lausanne Femmes paysannes, Morges Alliance F, Berne Réunion des présidentes des associations féminines, Berne	Par la présidence de ADF-SVF SUISSE
<b>En continu</b>	Gestion du courrier et des diverses demandes.	Par la présidence de ADF-SVF SUISSE
<b>Delégations :</b>	Commission fédérale sur les questions féminines ONG Post-Pékin, Coordination Suisse IAW-AIF à l'ONU Genève	Jessica Kehl-Lauff (élue jusqu'à la fin 2011) Rosmarie Balimann Hélène Sackstein Jessica Kehl-Lauff Christiane Layaz-Rochat
<b>Projet :</b> Novembre 2010 Novembre 2010	Journée d'études « Bilan et perspectives » à Berne Triennial World Congress of IAW-AIF in RSA	En vue de préparer l'année 2011, année de nombreux anniversaires féministes.

1. Promouvoir les droits fondamentaux
2. L'Egalité de genre
3. La Pauvreté et l'Exclusion Sociale

Depuis le dernier Congrès de l'AIF, l'AFEM ( L'Association des Femmes de l'Europe Méridionale ), très active en matière de Droits fondamentaux et à la participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes à la prise de décision, a poursuivi son travail, avec ses organisations membres, sur les droits fondamentaux, l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes et dans la sphère politique et économique

**Au Portugal** : Séminaire National « Egalité, parité, action », organisé par le Réseau portugais des jeunes pour l'égalité, membre de l'AFEM

Et à Casablanca (Maroc) séminaire “vers une égalité des genres réelle en région Euroméditerranéenne » avec aussi le soutien de la Commission Européenne

**A Paris:**, Par la plateforme Euro –Med dont elle est à la création, et par le réseau Euromed, L’AFEM cherche à sensibiliser les femmes issues de l’immigration à leurs droits fondamentaux.

L'AFEM a aussi participé au Séminaire « L'Europe au Féminin : pour une vraie parité », organisé par la Fondation Robert Schuman au Parlement européen ainsi qu'à de nombreux séminaires et conférences. Elle a organisé le séminaire Européen d'information l' « Egalité des genres dans le cadre de la nouvelle législature européenne, Enjeux d'Avenir : Regard Croisés ».

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fondatrice et Présidente d'honneur, Mme Micheline Galabert. Prix qui sera décerné officiellement pour la 1ere fois, à une doctorante, auteure de la thèse: "Les violences à l'égard des femmes en Europe, analyse socio-politique contemporaine et perspectives d'action dans l'Union Européenne", Mme la Docteure **Katia Smedslund**.

## **Danish Women's Society** **(Dansk Kvindesamfund)**

### **Women on their way**

This year The Danish Women's Society has been running a project, financed by the Ministry of Integration. The project is called "Women on Their Way" and its focus has been to help migrant women get on their way in the Danish society. It is a mentor/mentee project where all the mentees get a Danish woman as a mentor to assist them in getting an education or getting a job in Denmark. It is a project for women only, and all the mentees have been recruited from language schools in Copenhagen. The mentors are women from 25 to 65, many of them students from university. One of the objectives was also to make the mentees aware of the importance of voluntary work, both as a personal education for themselves and as a means of showing their interest in society as a whole and improving their integration and their possibilities for getting a job. Another part of the project has been meetings and executions for the mentees, focusing on topics like democracy, the culture on the Danish labour market, how to write a good CV in order to get a job and so on.

We have also had dinners together for all the mentors and mentees where each should bring a speciality from their country. The social aspect is very important in voluntary work. Many of the mentees have said in their evaluation that having a mentor and being part of the project have made them feel more at home in Denmark than they used to do.

### **No to buying sex!**

The Danish Women's Society are still part of the campaign against prostitution. Together with 23 other organizations we have encouraged people to say "No to buying sex." We find that prostitution is a dangerous way for women to make their living, and many women end up after several years of prostitution with severe damage done to their lives. Many have developed an addiction to drugs or alcohol and cannot live normal lives with close attachment to other people afterwards.

On every International Women's Day we have a demonstration through Copenhagen, appealing to everybody that sex is not something you buy, because that it discriminates all women. The campaign also focuses on trafficking which is an increasing problem in Denmark, because Norway, Sweden and Iceland have all criminalized the buyers of prostitution. We do not want Denmark to end up as the brothel of Scandinavia. The Danish Women's Society together with the 23 other organizations hope to influence the politicians at Parliament to vote for a law to criminalize all buyers of sex. Recently The Social Democratic Party has decided on of a criminalization. We hope other parties will follow.

### **The crisis centre**

The Danish Women's Society has a shelter for women with room for disabled women as well. The centre provides shelter for women who have been exposed to domestic violence or other kinds of crisis in their families. They can also bring their children to live at the centre, and it is possible to stay for several months at the centre or as long as need be. The local authorities pay for their stay.

Most of the staff are volunteers, but there is also a paid team that take care of the day-to-day running. The centre gives anonymous counseling to women by telephone and via e-mail. Around 28.000 women are victims of domestic violence every year in Denmark.

**Name: Deutscher Frauenring, DFR****Email: mail@d-fr.de****Date: 15/10/2010****Highlights**

1. Immigration Integration Participation Follow-up action to our 2007 seminar
2. Activities regarding CEDAW and Beijing + 15
3. Networking in support of Korean comfort women's rights and claims
4. Celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Deutscher Frauenring

**Report:** *Gudrun Haupter & Marion Böker, DFR International Committee*

**1. The Migration issue** has been anchored in our Committee on Civic Education. As a follow-up of our 2007 seminar requests on behalf of immigrant women and their children have been addressed to the German government. 2008 almost one fifth of the population had a migration background, with too high a percentage of both women and men not being well integrated. To improve the situation there exist various providers of government-funded integration courses. Our concept of "learning partnerships" aims at promoting the intercultural dialogue between immigrant women with some knowledge of German and German women. Among the subjects of the learning units: Different traditions; Stories from your own life; What's important to Germans and why? Self-confidence; Lead a healthy life in Germany; Coping with everyday life.

November 25, 2009 our press release *No to Violence against Women* highlighted other problems of immigrant women living in ethnic communities in German cities. It dealt a) with 2 groups of immigrants that do not receive the same assistance and protection as German citizens, and requested nation-wide binding ruling for effective protection of victims of gender based violence and for adequate and continued funding of such measures including shelters; b) with the need to empower immigrant women to discuss within their groups themes dealing with sexuality<sup>1</sup> e.g. by providing low-threshold opportunities right where these groups live. Action should go far beyond of what the German country report for Beijing+15 contains.

DFR works for the elimination of **female genital mutilation (FGM)** a) In Germany as an active member of the network INTEGRA [www.netzwerk-integra.de](http://www.netzwerk-integra.de) b) In a Mossi province of Burkina Faso by assisting a local organization's project based on GRAAP, a communication tool developed for rural West Africa. Our partners work with "le cahier de l'animateur/-trice on FGM" translated into Moré; c) by updating our exhibition on FGM which local groups are urged to present to educate our members as well as visitors from outside.

**2. a. CEDAW** The 6<sup>th</sup> Periodic Report of Germany to CEDAW was reviewed early in February 2009 in Geneva. Thanks to the head of our headquarters in Berlin and Marion Böker –now chairing the DFR International Committee– we played an important role in writing and presenting the **Alternative Report** to CEDAW with a broad NGO-Alliance. The Committee asked the government to work on the deficits described in our alternative report including on the rights of transsexual and intersexual women. The German equality policy has been only partly effective, and in some areas deficits worsened in the reporting period. The list includes: one of the highest pay gaps in Europe between women and men (23%); for too many women no other choice than to work part time leading to low old age pensions and a high poverty risk; lacking attention to needs of women and girls in the health sector; discrimination of immi-grant refugees and asylum seekers regarding access to education and labour market; persisting forms of violence against women; lack of government action towards eliminating gender stereotypes e.g.

<sup>1</sup> We referred to a pamphlet by Seyran Ates, a sociologist of Turkish origin titled "Islam needs a sexual revolution" asking i.a. for a discussion of the consequences of the rigid moral norms for emancipation and democracy.



in advertising, lack of implementation of gender mainstreaming and budgeting. DFR has since invested much work to inform its membership about CEDAW e.g. holding a seminar for multipliers of our organization, addressing 2 committees of the national parliament on the Concluding Observations of the 43rd session of CEDAW regarding Germany. In Nov. 15, 2010 a public seminar on CEDAW will be held in the Old Townhouse of Celle.

The above-mentioned shortcomings were taken up in the comments DFR prepared in response to IAW's request to describe **national Progress and Challenges**, in preparation of the 54<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women, on Beijing+15.

**2.b. Beijing+15** Following DFR's dealing with the Beijing PFA in general, and the Beijing +15 regional meeting in Geneva and the 54<sup>th</sup> CSW in particular, we identified the PFA as a tool for a follow up on the national level. The aim: strengthen our members and partner NGO networks in Germany to push the implementation process. Thus, our International Seminar in July 2010 in Königswinter aimed at building capacities and enabling women to work for the objectives of the PFA. The 52 participants –half DFR members and half members of networks, Beijing activists and newcomers, included the presidents of IAW, Rosy Weiss, and ICW, Cosima Schenk. Recommendations were drafted in 5 focus groups: Peace; ecology and sustainable consuming; alternative engendered economy; health, reproductive rights, FGM; gender equality mechanisms such as CEDAW, Gender Mainstreaming & Budgeting. The proceedings will be published soon. Our commitment to the spirit of Beijing was reaffirmed and participants were motivated to work in a more coordinated manner as a broad NGO network for the implementation of the Beijing PFA. More recent processes were included, too: the financial crises, poverty and MDGs. Room was given to a panel that introduced the audience to GEAR and **UNWomen**. That same day the name was adopted by the UN General Assembly. A DFR press release called upon the German Government to support **UNWomen** by ensuring timely and reasonable funding and requested structures for NGOs to enable them to contribute, monitor and dialogue with **UNWomen**. Expressing the unanimous opinion of the participants we also called for a strong mandate of **UNWomen** on our national level. The press release was lobbied at a "UN WSC Res. 1325 dialogue" at the Foreign Office. We also emphasized the urgent need of awareness raising and information by the Federal Government about activities, successes and challenges of the international women's NGOs.



**3.** In August 2010 a coalition of NGOs for the rights and claims of the **Korean 'comfort women'** came together in Berlin. **Ms Won Ok Gil**, survivor & activist, made a speech at the PEACE FESTIVAL. DFR held a reception to honor her and initiated a networking cooperation of the NGOs concerned on the issues.

**4.** October 9, 2009 **DFR celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary** in Berlin. Rosy Weiss and the President of the European Women's Lobby, Brigitte Triems, were among the numerous guests of honour addressing the over 200 members that had come together to remember the decades of successful development of our organization. From its onset DFR has been dedicated to the objectives of the women's movement by promoting equal participation of women and men in society. We have a long





history of representing German women in international and European organizations and continue to help funding small women's projects in West Africa. Focal areas of our present work were highlighted, too and we glimpsed into the challenges lying ahead.

## **Women's Network for Peace**

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<b>Date: 12.10.2010</b>	
<b>Highlights</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Critical review of the implementation of UN Security Council RES 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888(2009), 1889 (2009)</li> <li>2. Humanitarian Help Project for traumatized women and children in Gaza</li> <li>3. Congress for students and teachers who work in peer mediation in schools in the Cologne-Bonn region</li> </ol>	

### **1. Critical review of the implementation of UN SCRES 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888(2009), 1889 (2009)**

The tenth anniversary of UN RES 1325 on October 31<sup>st</sup> 2010 is a momentum that has stirred a lot of activities among women's NGOs, NGOs, politicians, governments, even NATO. The Women's Network for Peace, Germany, participated in a lot of conferences on the national and international level. Several times the organisation was invited as a panelist or representative of civil society (German Foreign Ministry, Ministry on Economical Cooperation and Development). A critical review and statement on the occasion of this anniversary was written at the beginning of the year which was approved by the membership on the occasion of the annual meeting. Later an article on this issue was published in one of the leading peace periodicals in Germany "Science and Peace". It must be said, however, that the Women's Network for Peace, Germany, is not the only active NGO in this field. There are several others who work on behalf of UN SCRES 1325 and its implementation and there are a number of good publications.

The occasions mentioned above were excellent chances to strengthen advocacy for the resolution's demand for women's equal participation in all peace related processes on all levels and to put emphasis on their right to be protected from violence in armed conflict, protection being the other mainstream of this resolution. The additional resolutions mainly specify the need to protect women in times of war and armed conflict and they also clarify the end of the impunity of the perpetrators concerning sexualised gender based violence, but the right of the women as survivors to have access to physical and psychological treatment and reparation has not been provided yet. If one looks at all four resolutions women's role as victims is prevailing and it is important to notify that the role of women as peace activists – the motto being "bring women to the peace table" - has not been specified alike, but at least has been reaffirmed by UN SCRES 1889 (2009). There is some discussion around the question whether it would be wise to call for a fifth resolution which should focus exactly on the specification of women's role as peace activists. The examples on the ground are numerous but women have not been invited to sit at the peace table yet unless they have made a political career to the very top. This change is crucial.

Although after ten years some progress is to be observed much has to be done still to implement and monitor the many relevant fields of action to bring these resolutions to life worldwide. However, without Kofi Annan who continuously called upon governments to send in their

reports on the implementation of UN SCRES resolution 1325 this resolution would have fallen to ashes as many others have. The UN NGO working group on UN RES 1325, the [www.peacewomen.org](http://www.peacewomen.org) website or the European NGO network lead by EPLO have also been of enormous value for this advocacy work.

Those governments who had agreed on a National Action Plan (NAP) have taken the lead and could serve as role models. The German Foreign Ministry has rejected a NAP but the Ministry on Development and Economical Cooperation has agreed on a Gender Action Plan on the basis of UN SCRES 1325 and invites NGOs to informal consultations from time to time. Moreover an interministerial working group has started work lately which gives hope that Germany will become more pro-active in this field.

For the progress of the implementation of the four resolutions in all the manifold facets it is important that NGOs continue monitoring the implementation on their respective national levels closely and to strengthen advocacy and lobbying through networking with other NGOs, grassroot women worldwide and with parliamentarians and representatives of governments as well. Collaboration with the military, however, is dangerous. UN SCRES 1325 is already being instrumentalised for military strategies, the anchor being the resolution's demand for more women in UN peacekeeping missions.

## **2. Humanitarian Help Project for traumatized women and children in Gaza**

Since June 2009 the Women's Network for Peace, Germany, is a partner of the Palestinian Working Women Society for Development in supporting physical and psychological help for deeply traumatised women and children in Gaza after the war, including speech therapy. From our side this included fundraising (benefit concerts, sale of goods and food) as well as advocacy work: panel discussions, exhibitions, vigils. After a number of weekend workshops a special working group "Women's Paths to Near East" was founded which probably will become independent at the end of this year. Several letters of concern were written to the German government to appeal to Israel to end the blockade of GAZA.

We have also been organizing meetings and panels with peace activists from the Israeli and the Palestinian side, especially women.

## **3. Congress for students who work as peer mediators in schools in the Cologne-Bonn region**

For several years the Women's Network for Peace has been organizing together with the Forum of Civil Peace Service the yearly fundraising sponsored walk (run4peace) of about 2000 young and older school children in Bonn. The money goes to peace projects abroad or in Germany especially where children and young people are involved. Over the years interesting formats of peace pedagogy have been developed for the schools to choose from, e.g. theatre and dumb show training, discussions with activists from the civil peace service, films, books etc.

This year an additional event is being organized by the Women's Network for Peace to strengthen the peace culture in the schools of the region: a congress (weekend) for those boys and girls who voluntarily work in their schools as peer mediators and agents of non-violent conflict resolution and those teachers who take the responsibility to support these activities. Generally the schools and the mediators are rather isolated and have no platform to exchange their experiences, successes and challenges. There will also be the chance of further training (including the gender perspective as well as the intercultural dimension). The appreciation of their work will be very important and we hope that the students will have fun, too (sport activities, music etc.).

### What else?

Among other activities we continuously follow up advocacy work for the 1000 PeaceWomen project by exhibitions etc. Thus we showed the documentary film “1000 Women and a Dream” on International UN Peace Day, 21<sup>st</sup> of September, in one of the popular film studios in Bonn with great success.

This year UN Peace Day was celebrated in Bonn within a whole week with peace events of quite different formats. Women’s Network for Peace has been a member of the preparatory group since the beginning - watching carefully over the principle of gender balance.

**Fredrika Bremer Förbundet  
Sweden**

<b>Fredrika-Bremer-Förbundet</b>	<b>Email:</b>
<b>Highlights (maximum 3 points)</b> preferably relating to the IAW Action Programme, CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, and the Millennium Development Goals. 1. Everyday life 2. Welfare 3. Fight against violence	

The Swedish government investment in gender equality has focused on three main areas - everyday life, welfare and the fight against violence.

Being able to combine work and domestic responsibilities with child-raising is an equation that many parents have to balance. Through tax reductions for household services, a growing number of women and men have access to help in everyday life. At the same time this discourages use of the black market, where mostly women worked, without access to social benefits and labor rights. Black market jobs have become “white”.

The biggest investment ever has been made in gender equality in the school and educational system. Also significant resources have been allocated to improve gender equality in health care. A research program on women's health has been started. Girls have better average grades than boys in both levels of compulsory secondary education. A greater proportion of women than men complete higher education and in around 90 percent of professional programs women have a higher throughput.

The government has also taken a comprehensive approach to tackle gender-based violence suffered by women and against prostitution and sex trafficking. A large number of initiatives to both support victims and prevent violence and repression have also been taken. The violence that women suffer, often by someone she has, or has had, a close relationship with is the most pressing issue of gender equality. It is about women's power over their lives and their bodies.

Violence and oppression against women can take many forms and is a serious obstacle for gender equality in Sweden. During 2009 just over 26 000 cases of assault against women over 18 were reported to the police and approximately 6000 cases of rape.

But the underlying situation is much worse, since it is estimated only one fifth of cases are reported to the police. Relatively few of the reports will lead to prosecutions in court and still fewer to convictions. The so-called “honor-related” violence and oppression is different from other types of violence in that it is collective in nature. A central issue is control of girls' and women's sexuality. Five percent of all young people between 16 and 25 years in Sweden feel that they are not free to choose whom to marry.

How common prostitution is in Sweden today is difficult to measure, partly because many of the people involved want to conceal their activities. According to studies it seems that prostitution in Sweden has decreased since the ban on buying sex was introduced.

A more detailed investigation of the law's impact is scheduled to be completed during 2010. Many of the women who sell sex have been forced to Sweden, often under false pretenses with promises of a better life. What percentage of those who find themselves in prostitution have been trafficked for sexual purposes is unknown.

In Sweden, men and women work almost equally but in different fields and roles. Almost half of all working women are employed in education or health care, which is largely funded within the public sector. More than 80 percent of men are employed in the private sector. Two thirds of managers are women. Women also generally occupy more junior positions than men. Of all the managers in private and public sector, barely a third are women. This segregation is most apparent in the private sector, where 77 percent of managers are men. The proportion of women Board members in public-listed companies is low - only 22 percent. In private-sector management teams women make up just over ten percent of the total. In the state-sector boards the distribution is better, with 46 percent women. In recent years, the proportion of women who are managers in the state-sector has increased dramatically.

Gender distribution in terms of Political Representation is more equal. In the Sweden parliament 45 percent of the members are women. But women are still underrepresented in the more senior positions in regional and local government. Approximately one third of full-or part-time paid positions at these lower levels of government are occupied by women.

Women's wages are on average 16 percent lower than those of men and have been for the last few years. But even if women's salaries are consistently lower than men's, there are variations between different sectors. The biggest wage gap is in the regions, where women's salaries are 28 percent lower than men's. Women work part-time, both voluntarily and involuntarily, to a much greater degree than men. One in three working women work part-time compared to every tenth man. Male part-time work is more often from choice, while many women work part- because it is difficult to get a full-time job. Women are therefore also part-time unemployed to a greater extent than men. Involuntary part-time work affects mainly women in the public sector.

Like the overall labor market, entrepreneurship displays significant gender differences. Historically just over a quarter of Sweden's entrepreneurs are women, but this proportion has increased in recent years. Over the past decade, the proportion of women entrepreneurs increased from 27 to 34 percent. Gender segregation among entrepreneurs also varies across industries. Women entrepreneurs are better represented in industries such as services, health care and education. Men are more often engaged in manufacturing, construction, transport and communications.

While most of men's work is paid, women's work is more evenly spread between paid employment and unpaid household work. Men's work is done more often during daytime and on weekdays. Women's work is more evenly spread out over the days and weeks. Men's everyday life is characterized by a clearer distinction between work and free time. Women's free time is more fragmented than men, and divided into short episodes that often interspersed with or interruption by, housework. Women spend twice as much time as men on domestic work. It is also much more common for women to take on domestic work directly after work than men. For men, there are only small differences in the proportion of domestic to professional work throughout their working lives. For women the differences are large. Having small children has much greater impact on the mothers' paid work than the fathers. There are more

women taking responsibility for the care of their own children in early childhood and also for elderly relatives with disabilities. Playing with the kids is, however, shared equally between the mother and father.

The taking of parental leave also differs between men and women. Although the number of men on parental leave has increased in recent years, it still accounts for only about one-fifth of the total. Use of parental leave is also unevenly distributed between different groups. When both parents are university graduates the proportion of men taking parental leave is higher than the average. Foreign-born fathers however take out fewer days of parental leave than native-born fathers.

## Greek League for Women's Rights

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1. *Legislation for the elimination of discrimination against women in all sectors of political, social and economic life (IAW Action Programme.-Democracy and Art. 2, 3, & 7 of CEDAW)*

### **i. Political Life**

In October 2009 Greece had its first national elections since the new electoral system, providing for 30% quota participation of candidates from each gender in the electoral lists, was enacted.. The GLWR, together with the Marangopoulos Foundation for Human Rights and supported by 24 women's organization of the country, had played a leading role in the campaign for the institution of such quotas

(See Report 2007-2009). The electoral results of the October 09 elections gave to women 52 seats out of a total of 300 parliament seats, or a percentage of. 17,3%, slightly better than the 48 seats and 16% of the previous parliament. This number of 52 women participation in parliament may be a historic best for the country, but it still lacks behind the desired 100 women seats, for which we will continue fighting. A total of 9 women participate in the new Government, which is also a historic national best.

Maria Stratigaki, Professor at the Social Policy Department of the Panteion University was appointed General Secretary for Gender Equality. Maria Stratigaki was a member of the GLWR Board until her appointment.

The previous General Secretary for Gender Equality Eugenia Tsoumani was elected member of Parliament. She is now a member of the GLWR.

The GLWR President Soula Panaretou was appointed by the General Secretariat for Gender Equality member of the Law Making Committee, which will prepare a draft law aiming at substantial gender equality.

In view of the forthcoming municipal and district elections next November, the GLWR has already started campaigning for strong women participation in electoral lists, and for social relief policy measures to be included in the pre-electoral programmes of all candidates.

The “Greek Parliament Foundation for the Parliamentary System and Democracy” awarded the Hon. President of the GLWR Alice Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos a prize for her great offer to letters, to promoting women’s rights and to the defending Human Rights in Greece and abroad.

## **ii. Social life**

In an article appeared in the latest issue of the GLWR’s Journal “Women’s Struggle”, the President Soula Panaretou, referring to the public debt crisis the country is going through, advocates for the correct priorities to be established in facing the crisis, the first of which should be sustainable growth. In the framework of growth based on natural and human resources women can and should have a role as a social gender. Women can contribute to growth and must share its fruits, she argues. Economic measures are expected to hit women harder. Loosing of jobs, unemployment, salary reductions, unequal pay, restrictions in social relief programmes (nurseries, care services for the old etc.) are to be expected, and can create a climate in which out of date notions regarding gender roles can revive and women as a social gender can be put to the margin again. Existing social rights should not diminish with the economic crisis, they should, on the contrary, be reinforced. We have come so far, says Mrs. Panaretou, overcoming so many difficulties, we fought and struggled as a feminist movement, we are not going to accept being dependant in life.

The GLWR, in association with AFEM (Association of Women of Southern Europe) have prepared a Declaration for “Reinforcing social rights in order to exit the economic crisis” which we submitted to the Greek members of the European Parliament, and, through IAW Affiliates, to all members of European Parliament and all EU Commissioners.

## **iii. Economic life**

a. As a result of the recent severe measures enacted by the government, concerning social insurance and labour rights, drastic changes were introduced in the working and insurance status of Greek citizens. These measures crucially affect women.

The GLWR and the Marangopoulos Foundation for Human Rights, supported by 26 Women’s Organisations have asked, as a compensation for such negative developments, the removal of a series of inequalities against women still existing. Such inequalities refer to employment, social insurance, family law, care services for children and other dependent members of families and to the tax system. To this end, they appealed to the competent government officials, submitting a list of well documented demands.

(See GLWR’s Journal “The Struggle of Women”, issue No. 88). Since not all of our demands were met, we continue pressing for solutions to still existing problems.

b. Following up on the Programme “Combating Sex Discrimination in the Labour Market and Sexual Harassment” which the GLWR, implemented from July 2007 to June 2008, culminated by a Conference held in Athens in June 2008, a book is now published, together with AFEM (Association of Women of Southern Europe), with support from EU Commission and the French Government, titled “Egalite de genres et lutte contre le harcèlement sexuel: les politiques de l’ Union europeenne”.

## **2. Elimination of prejudices and stereotypes (article 5 of CEDAW)**

**i.** Reacting to Resolution 12/21 adopted by vote on 2 October 2009 by the UN “Human Rights Council” on “promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms through a better understanding of traditional values of humankind” whereby traditional values were put in forward with an intention to more or less legitimize them, the Marangopoulos Foundation for Human Rights, with consultative status with the UN (ECOSOC), has raised the alarm signal at a



global scale, preparing and signing an intervention which, at its invitation, was co-signed by three other NGOs (I.A.W., Greek Council for Refugees, AFEM) with consultative status with the UN. This intervention was submitted to the 54<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women of the UN (New York, March 2010).

ii. The GLWR is preparing to celebrate its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary next December, organizing a Conference on the subject of traditional values, reacting against any attempt of strengthening traditions and practices violating Human Rights in general and in particular women's rights and respect of gender equality.

iii. Twice a year we publish our Journal "Woman's Struggle". This Journal is published since 1923, is the only solely feminist publication in the country and is totally dedicated to the support of gender equality, promoting women's rights, fighting gender stereotypes and prejudices and disseminating news and information on the status of women in the country and all over the world. In the "Struggle of Woman" appear activities and guidelines not only of the GLWR but also of I.A.W., AFEM, EU, Council of Europe and the UN. It has permanent columns on Legal, International and European matters, News from everywhere in the world concerning women, suggested feminist reading, and cinema.

iv. As from 2008 our web site [www.leaguewomenrights.gr](http://www.leaguewomenrights.gr) is in operation.

v. Annual Awards to Journalists of the printed and electronic media who consistently during one year support and promote gender equality are given each year during a special event organized each January.

vi. Annual Awards for Woman's social achievement: The 8<sup>th</sup> of March each year (Woman's Day) is dedicated by the GLWR to making known, projecting and awarding "Woman's social achievement". The prize, given in the name of the GLWR's Hon. President Alice Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos, has made known the generous disinterested offer of women in many sectors of social life (education, public Health, Social Welfare, Justice, drugs fighting, facing immigrants' problems, relief to children (orphans, neglected, with special needs) and many others. A public discussion is each time organized on a subject relative to the work of the honored person.

### **3. Elimination of violence (IAW Action Programme and Art. 6 of CEDAW)**

The GLWR, already for four decades, has been operating a free "Legal Counseling and Social Support Service" on a weekly basis, on matters of domestic violence, divorce, child abuse, child custody, alimony and other problems involved in family conflict. These services, given in our premises, are available to members and non-members alike and are provided by specially qualified members of the Board.

With the Law on family violence in operation since 2007, the GLWR works constantly towards disseminating information on the contents of its provisions, changing attitudes and old stereotypes, promoting victim protection and rights among all citizens and especially women, as well promoting policy measures and prevention strategies for an effective application of the law. To this end, there is a constant effort and activity in organizing seminars, open discussions, publications and exchange of opinion at all levels.

**Kvenrettindafelag Islands**  
(Icelandic Women's Rights Association)

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**Highlights**

1. Nordic and domestic conferences in 2009 on the gender politics of the economic crisis.
2. Women and environmental issues, in 2009.
3. Planning of an International Conference on Gender based violence Oct. 24 2010 and mass demonstration in centre of Reykjavik against gender based violence and pay gap on Oct. 25 2010.

In the year 2009 a great deal of the discussions and KRFI's organized public meetings and conferences, dealt with the economic crisis Iceland is now going through after the collapse of the Icelandic banks in 2008. The gender politics of the crisis has been the topic of at least one public meeting organized by KRFI and one Nordic conference also organized by KRFI in 2009. A part from that, KRFI's Board Members have participated in several other meetings in Iceland as well as abroad on this topic.

One of the consequences of the economic crisis is the fact the funding for KRFI is getting very difficult. Hence KRFI did not have a representative in IAW's Annual meeting in Switzerland and will not send a representative to participate in IAW' Congress in S-Africa. But KRFI is looking forward to inviting IAW's Board to its Annual meeting in Reykjavik in 2011.

KRFI hosted one public meeting in 2009 on gender en the environment. Board members have also attended conferences on this topic abroad. The climate changes are affecting men and women in a different way. This should be considered in policy-making in this field and since women are generally more "environmentally friendly" than men in Western societies, women have greater opportunities in affecting climate changes and more so, when they are equally taken into the decision-making cycles. KRFI works on advocating and promoting women in decision-making positions in all areas of society.

On June 19<sup>th</sup> 2010 KRFI celebrated th 95 years anniversary of women's rights to vote in Iceland. A celebration took place in Reykjavik's City Hall.

Although Iceland ranks highest on the Economic Forum's list of Gender Gap Index, Iceland cannot boast itself of being a safe-haven for women when it comes to gender based- and sexual violence. Since October 2009, women's organizations in Iceland, including KRFI, have been organizing a mass-demonstration against gender based violence in October 2010. October 24<sup>th</sup> marks the 35 years anniversary of the first Women's Day Off, which received an international attention in 1975. Women left their work-places, wheather it was their homes or public work places, and gathered in the centre of Reykjavik where around 25.000 women came together. At that time this was about 15% of Iceland's population. This was done to remind everyone in Iceland of women's contribution to society and to point out the wage gap between men and women. 35 years later there is still a wage gap between the genders. Statistic say that in 2009 women received only 66% of the total income of what men receive. Therefore we urge women this time to leave their workplaces at 2:25 in the afternoon, which is 66% of an 8 hours work day, gather in the centre of Reykjavik (and other large towns in Iceland), and demonstrate

against the wage gap as well as the sexual violence and ineffective legislation and justice system when it comes to sexual violence assaults.

## Vrouwenbelangen, The Netherlands



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### Highlights

1. The 5<sup>th</sup> Dutch CEDAW shadow report
2. Fighting political discrimination by conservative party
3. Role models for immigrant women and girls

### The 5<sup>th</sup> Dutch CEDAW Shadow Report

In the summer of 2008 the Dutch government presented its 5th periodic report to the CEDAW-Committee. Though this report was more comprehensive than the previous one, it comprised *measures and intentions* rather than clear objectives and results.

Nor did it follow or explain the abandoning of the conceptual approach used in the earlier reports of the Netherlands, identifying three levels of policy in relation to the three sub-goals of the Convention:

- achievement of complete equality of women before the law
- improvement of the *de facto* position of women
- efforts to confront the dominant gender-based ideology.

In 2007 the Dutch CEDAW Network together with other NGO's, including Vrouwenbelangen, started to monitor the implementation of the Concluding Comments of the 4th periodic report. In 2008 they took the lead, starting open consultations with NGO's to identify main issues to address in the shadow report. Because of the tight time schedule only a few issues arising from the consultations and the monitor were selected. Two appointed rapporteurs organised several meetings with experts, on a wide range of subjects. Thus many people were involved, directly or indirectly.

Members of Vrouwenbelangen cooperated in the selection of focal points, the production and reviewing of preliminary drafts. Lyda Verstegen attended the 45th session of the CEDAW Committee in Geneva, from 18 January – 5 February 2010; more members attended the briefing and follow-up meetings.

The thorough preparation of the shadow-report and the oral statements of the rapporteurs paid off. The Committee's Concluding Comments on the 5th governments' report: The Government has to do a lot more to ensure equal rights to women and to accelerate the advancement of women.

### Fighting political discrimination by conservative party

In 2003 women's organisations, including Vrouwenbelangen, took the Political Reformed Party (SGP) to court. It excluded women from direct political participation, with the Dutch Government tolerating this illegal situation (CEDAW Article 7c).

The SGP is an orthodox Calvinist party, established in 1918. It has been represented in Parliament continuously since 1922. It specifically excludes women from being eligible as representatives in Parliament or political representative bodies.

Both the SGP and the Government claimed that the case is about conflicting fundamental human rights without hierarchy, so that the freedom of religion could not be restricted by rules against discrimination of women. In the final decision the High Court did not accept this argument, as political activity does not belong to the core of the religious practice. So for that reason a party cannot exclude women from eligibility for political functions.

The Court ruled that the State has to take appropriate measures to ensure that the SGP will effectively allow women to stand for election. On the other hand, the High Court ruled that the State can continue its regular financial support to the SGP, because withdrawing this support is not necessarily effective in ending the discriminating practices.

### **Vrouwenbelangen, a new start**

Like many longstanding associations Vrouwenbelangen experienced a steady loss of members. Less members were ready to fill vacancies in the National Board and in Regional and other Committees. Also the average age of the members was steadily increasing and other related factors.

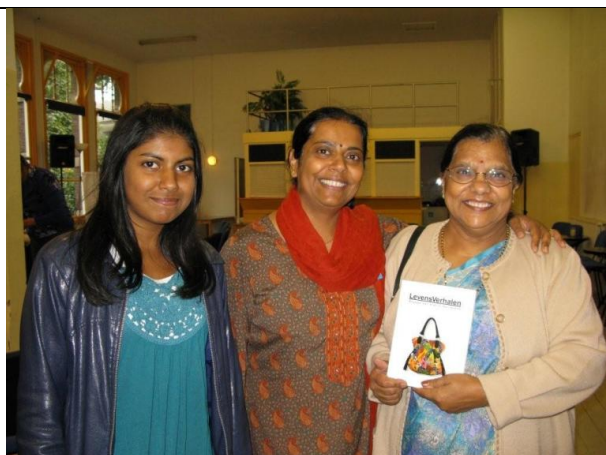
The Board's ambition at the moment is to find new ways to empower small groups of members to engage in projects, preferably together with networks of younger women or newer women's organisations to further the goals of our organisation. With good communication practices this is expected to lessen the burden of the Board.

In line with this ambition, the 2009 General Meeting of Vrouwenbelangen was followed by a workshop on the practical use of instruments given by the Women's Convention and the Optional Protocol.

### **Role models for immigrant women and girls**

The wish for role models, expressed by immigrant women and girls, becoming 'new' Dutch women, led to a successful project. It was set up and executed by members of Vrouwenbelangen. A women's organisation was found to cooperate to realise a book with life stories relevant for immigrant women and girls.

Twenty-one 'new' Dutch women from thirteen countries were willing to tell and share their life stories. The resulting book supplemented with a DVD with highlights was presented in a heart warming meeting for all these immigrant women and members of Vrouwenbelangen.



Three generations, with grandmother Sheela Vyas holding the book with life stories

In addition, the website [www.vrouwenbelangen.nl](http://www.vrouwenbelangen.nl) , with her international part in Dutch and English, will be renewed in the near future, small lively articles are being published in LinkedIn, and the three monthly journal has become digital and is reverted into a regular News Flash.

#### **Norsk Kvinnesaksforening**

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**Affiliate:** Norwegian Association for Women's Rights

**Date:** 15 Oct 2010

#### **Highlights**

1. Promotion of CEDAW – legal rights
2. Women in power
3. Women and the economy

#### **1. Promotion of CEDAW – legal rights**

The Norwegian Association for Women's Rights has requested for many years that CEDAW should be incorporated in the Human Rights Act, so it is put on an equal footing with other equal rights instruments and will prevail over any conflicting Norwegian statutes. In 2009, the Government incorporated CEDAW in the Human Rights Act. This was an important step forward.

At the same time, however, a public commission proposed to abolish the Gender Equality Act and replace it with a general act against all kinds of discrimination. The proposed act is formally gender neutral, and gender is placed on the same level as political views, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, handicaps etc. Discrimination on the basis of gender will be prohibited (for both men and women), but there are no provisions aimed at the advancement of women. If adopted, the act will undermine the protection of women against discrimination, will weaken the institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women and make it more difficult to introduce temporary special measures to strengthen the position of women.

The Association is requesting the Government not to adopt the proposed general act against discrimination and instead transform the Gender Equality Act into an Act against the Discrimination of Women, in line with the CEDAW.

In general, the Association is trying to combat the tendency of the authorities to describe Norway as a "Gender Equal" country. We still have marked inequalities in our society. Women are being systematically given less power, less prestige and less resources than men. Traditional gender stereotypes still exist. Violence against women is widespread, and the female body is exploited by commercial interests in advertisement and the media. An act prohibiting the purchase of sex has been adopted, but the follow-up remains to be seen.

#### **2. Women in power**

For many years the Association has been struggling to increase the representation of women in decision-making bodies. The general elections in 2009 resulted in a Parliament with 39.6 percent women – just beneath the 40 percent goal. In the local councils there are 37.5 percent women. So the representation is increasing, but progress is extremely slow.

The stagnation is due to many factors. There is resistance, particularly among right wing parties, against the introduction of gender quotas, which are used to a great extent by other political parties. Norway has proportional elections, and quotas usually imply that the electoral lists are composed of every other man and woman. This has given the representation of women a marked leap forward, and the Association is requesting that the use of quotas should be made compulsory, not voluntary, as it is now. In any case, there is still the challenge that too many



lists have a man, not a woman, at the top. Further, the electoral system needs to be revised so it works in a more democratic way and the results are less influenced by chance.

Norway has not had a woman prime minister since the time of Gro Harlem Brundtland. But most of the parties represented in Parliament have women as party leaders: 5 out of 7, and the Government has for the first time 50/50 men and women with the red-green alliance in power. This is very encouraging.

But at a general level, the picture is not so bright. Looking at the Norwegian power elite as a whole (not only politics, but all sectors), a study a few years back revealed that about 85 percent of the elite consisted of men. Only 15 percent were women. So there is still work to do to increase women's access to positions with power.

Norway made headlines in 2003 when the conservative Government decided that the largest corporations must have at least 40 percent women as their board directors. The number of women in the boards has also increased markedly, but at the same time the number of corporations has been dramatically reduced. Many corporations have reorganized to avoid the provisions of the Quota Act.

### **3. Women and the economy**

The Norwegian women's movement broadly speaking is struggling to achieve equal income for men and women. The demand was a central one during the extensive wage settlements in the public and private sectors this year, but the results remain to be seen. On the average, women's wages per month are 83 percent of men's in the private sector and 89 percent in the public sector. With the same education women earn less than men. At higher levels the differences are greater than at lower levels, and immigrant women earn less than ethnic Norwegian women. But this is only part of the problem.

In the labor market there are more men than women, but the difference is no longer very large. While around 2/3 of Norwegian women are in paid employment, around 3/4 of the men are. During recent years, the Government has increased the establishment of day care centers so that we nearly have full coverage. The Association appreciates these efforts very much, but is concerned about privatization of the sector and the lack of qualified personnel.

The Association is also concerned about the fact that around 2/5 of the women in paid jobs only work part-time, many doing so not because they want to, but because they cannot get full-time jobs.

Totally, women's work related income is 62 percent of the work related income of men. This is due to the lack of equal pay for equal work, the large sectors of women dominated low paid jobs, the widespread use of part-time among women and the absence of women from the labor market during child birth and care.

The Government is making conscious efforts to change the traditional gender roles by stimulating fathers to take parental leave in connection with childbirth. Totally, the parental leave in Norway is 46 weeks with 100 percent social insurance benefits or 56 weeks with 80 percent. The proposal is now to increase the leave earmarked for father from 10 to 12 weeks. If the father does not take his leave, these weeks are annulled. The Association appreciates parental leave for fathers very much, but is of the view that the parental leave of mothers must not be reduced in an appreciable way.

## **PANCYPRIAN MOVEMENT Equal Rights – Equal Responsibilities**

The Pancyprrian Movement "Equal Rights-Equal Responsibilities" was established in 1978. It is a non-Governmental organisation, non belonging to any political party based in Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus. It is a member, together with other women's organisations, of the National Mechanism for Women's Rights.



The aim of the Movement is that all people, independently of sex, to achieve the same rights in the sectors of education, health, salaries and development in their business, in the Decision Taking Centres, and to stop violence and trafficking, etc. We have created shelters for protecting victims of domestic violence. The Cypriot housewife gets her pension after her 65<sup>th</sup> year of age and all foreign women working in Cyprus are entitled to lessons of learning the Greek language free of charge. Together with other women's organisations we succeeded to put Cyprus in the 3<sup>rd</sup> better position among all countries of the European Union as regards the confronting the violence against women.

One problem which especially concerns our Movement is that, because of the Turkish occupation of part of Cyprus, Turkish Cypriot women should acquire the rights which they deserve. For this reason we created together with other women's organisations the Multicultural Women's Centre for the purpose of exchanging views and to assist wherever we can.

As regards the participation of women in the Parliament and the Government we have unfortunately a very small percentage of participation, about 15% generally. For this reason, and in view of the forthcoming Cyprus Parliamentary Elections in 2011, we are now trying through various seminars, discussions and pressure on the political parties to achieve a higher percentage of participation of women in the Parliament. We have a long way to go until the achievement of really equal rights with men but we are hopeful that we will attain our targets.

Koulla Koumides

President.

Nicosia, October 10, 2010

## *Middle East*

## **World WIZO/ Israel**

<b>Name: WORLD WIZO</b> <b>Date: 18 OCTOBER 2010</b>	<b>Email: <a href="mailto:helenag@wizo.org">helenag@wizo.org</a></b>
<b>Highlights</b> <b>1 WORLD WIZO REPORT TO THE IAW - 2010</b> <p>On 11 July 2010 World WIZO celebrated its 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. It was founded as a voluntary international social movement in 1920, in London, by a group of women led by Rebecca Sieff (who was also one of the suffragettes who fought to obtain voting rights for women in England) in order to promote the welfare and education of the Jewish women and children, and to advance the status of women here, prior to the establishment of the State of Israel. This remarkable group of woman was successful in creating a dynamic movement for Jewish women from all over the world and many of their first projects became the foundation of the social infrastructure of the State of Israel established in 1948.</p> <p>Through over 50 Federations worldwide, World WIZO also strives to preserve and maintain the Jewish tradition and culture in the Diaspora and to bridge the distance between the Jewish population in Israel and the Diaspora.</p> <p>The WIZO movement sees equality as a basic value and right afforded to all and therefore, in all its projects it strives to provide the supporting, professional and advancing environment in which to achieve this – irrelevant of gender, origin, age, residence, circumstances, religion or social status (native, new immigrant or minority). Through 800 projects and services</p>	

nationwide, WIZO enables every member of society receiving its services, to obtain the tools and skills they need to achieve equal opportunities to better their lives, thus helping to reduce gaps and differences, and the polarization between the various sectors.

World WIZO as a **women's social and voluntary organization**, has always addressed the needs of the family and its individual members with warmth, sensitivity, and compassion. WIZO's strength lies in its ability to adapt to specific needs and events, and in times of national crisis deploy thousands of volunteers and enlist individuals to assist World WIZO operates within the community, with the authorities in order to best serve its service recipients.

**Education** is a cornerstone & centerpiece of WIZO's activity. The WIZO concept believes that education can be acquired at any stage in life, and it must include values of love and giving, along side the granting of quality learning & knowledge that allows academic & professional advancement that can break the cycles of illiteracy and poverty. Special attention is paid to locating and helping those with learning deficiencies and physical, mental or behavioral handicaps, guaranteeing that they too may have equal opportunities to be productive members of society.

The first recipients of WIZO services were pioneers and refugees from the Holocaust. New immigrants of every age and origin have always found a warm welcome, an open heart, an attentive ear and assistance in their integrating into Israeli society at WIZO projects

World WIZO established **Day Care Centres** to enable women to go to work and advance themselves professionally, socially and financially safe in the knowledge that WIZO is there to nurture, educate and advance their children. **Today** World WIZO operates 172 Day Care Centres attended by over 14,000 babies, toddlers and children and 16 Multi Purpose Day Care Centres that address Children/Parent problems and provide parental guidance. World WIZO operates two facilities for babies and toddlers that have been removed from their parental home until the authorities find suitable solutions for them.

World WIZO opened its first schools to provide female pioneers that arrived from Europe with the skills to manage vegetable plots, dairy and poultry farming and to contribute to the developing Jewish communities. **Today** World WIZO 8 **WIZO Schools and Youth Villages** attended by over 5,000 students – many children at risk from dysfunctional families and low socio-economic families as well as children who have been abused and neglected. . One of our schools is very unique- it is specialized residential therapeutic educational facility for children from the age of 12 to 18 who suffer from sever behavioral, psychological or emotional problems, and who need intensive care and supervision. It is the only facility in Israel to take in children from psychiatric wards and institutions.

This year (2010) WIZO launched a new project "The WIZO Open House for the Enrichment of Children, Parents and Professional Staff in Sderot, to address the specific problems of the local population that experienced daily Kassam missile attacks for nearly 8 years.

As a social organization for **the Advancement of the Status of Women**, World WIZO addresses issues on a number of levels.

First through **legislation** - Rachel Cagan - Chairperson of WIZO Israel was WIZO's representative in the 1st Israeli Parliament and was instrumental in the phrasing and passing of the Family and Equal rights for Women's Act in 1951. World WIZO continues to promote and lobby for the equality of women's civil and professional rights in a wide spectrum of fields, and

for stricter punishment for sex offenders and children abusers, Lately WIZO was partner to the initiation of a longer maternity leave and amendments to the Sexual harassment law to recognize sexual harassment as a work related accident.

World WIZO also acts on the *practical* level. WIZO has always been able to identify and analyze current problems – when domestic violence came to the public awareness, WIZO as one of Israel's leading Women's organizations took practical steps to assist, by opening two Shelters for Battered Women and their children. The Shelters address all the problems the women experience with emphasis on their mental, social and professional problems. Assistance is also extended to the children who also bear scars - mental and/or physical - of the domestic violence.

WIZO also operates 3 WIZO Centres for the Prevention of Domestic Violence – where both the abused and the abusers receive individual, group and family unit treatment and counseling. WIZO Girls Clubs for Adolescent Girls in Distress has prevented many girls from deteriorating to a life of drugs and crime.

The Partnership between WIZO, the Employment Service in the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Labour, and Microsoft for Computer Training for Unemployed Women and Single parents, was initiated to upgrade the women's level of performance and improves the quality of employment available to them. The result is an increase in income and the opportunity to make a positive change in their lives and reach eventual financial independence

In its 60 WIZO Centres nationwide, women from all walks of life receive empowerment and enrichment to improve their lives and those of their families. WIZO branches also conduct social and educational activities for senior citizens and children and in some cases siblings, grandmothers, daughters and granddaughters take part in the same circles.

At World WIZO we believe in making the impossible – possible. After 90 years of successful activity – World WIZO will continue to make a difference and improve the lives of those they touch.

## **The Kuwaiti Union for Women Associations**

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Email: [Theunion1994@hotmail.com](mailto:Theunion1994@hotmail.com)

Date: 14<sup>Oct.</sup> 2010

### **Highlights**

- 1. Empower woman for the leadership role**
- 2. Empower the Arabian Gulf Woman to play her role socially and financially**
- 3. violence against woman**

Report: (maximum 2 sheets incl. this page)

The president of Kuwaiti Union For Woman Associations, Her Highness, Shaikha Latifa Fahed Al-Salem

Al- Sabah (God bless her) is one of the gulf pioneers in supporting woman all over the Arab world.

As a regional vice president for the Arabian Gulf region, I'd like to point out that the Arabian Gulf area is linked by the legal laws which are taken from the Islamic code. The social, political and economical restrictions are derived from these laws.

On the other hand, the Gulf Co-operative Council links the Arabian Gulf countries "Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain and recently Yemen". It

also organizes and unifies policies and regulations as education, health, energy, transportation, judiciary and customs taxes.

The three highlighted points from the Beijing Platform of action declaration reflected Kuwait and Gulf region issues and activities as follows:

### **1-Empower woman for the leadership role**

The Kuwaiti woman has achieved an unprecedented role in the leadership field that was even realized before her accept to the Kuwaiti parliament, since then she has been proceeding in developing herself to play out pending roles on the governmental and nongovernmental level.

If we take the educational level, we'll come to the fact that the woman has overlapped males in the rate of education to the extent that PHD holders exceeded them which proved her dedication to promote her role in the society to be able to play a vital pioneering role.

The Kuwaiti Union For Women associations is always ensuring that role by organizing local, regional and international conferences workshops and seminars . Moreover the union sends its members abroad to exchange views and ideas to gain a new and different experiences.

During that year ,lots of activities had been mentioned of which some of them as follows:

1. Attending international assemblies of volunteering work -in Saudi Arabia.
2. Attending regional conference means for developing the women leadership - Jordan
3. Attending the annual conference for International Alliance for women - IAW Switzerland.
4. Attending the (54) for the permanent committee for women in the celebration of Beijing+15 – UN,NY
5. Holding a seminar in raising feeling of citizenship - Kuwaiti union for women associations.
6. Holding a conference for the welfare of the family and the effect of globalization , opportunities and challenges . . Kuwait union For Women Associations.
7. Attendance of the conference ( woman and the nation renaissance) which was held by the administration of the Islamic studies.

#### **The union hosted many visits for this matter as follows:**

1. The visit of the delegation of the European parliament union comprise of 23 members headed by MS: ANGELIKA NIEBLER. On 1/4/2010 .They exposed cooperation fields ,exchanging experiences in political , social and parliament life. It achieved its great value on both sides.
2. The visit of the UAE delegation on 20/5/2010 to exchange experiences in the field of children with difficult learning. Members of the union, specialists and those who are interested in children with difficult learning were participated in this matter.
3. The visit of the Somalia Minister for acquaintance and exchange points of view on 22/10/2009.

Various meetings among governmental, formal ,local , regional and international were held to ensure the leadership role of the Kuwaiti woman.

### **2. Empower the Kuwaiti Woman to play her role socially and financially:**

The Kuwaiti and Gulf woman have already prepared spontaneously for the social and financial role before the discovery of oil. This is due to the absence of men most of the year where they used to work in diving for pearls or shipping in west Africa and west Asia for trading.

Although civilian and natural institutions took over after the discovery of oil the vital role played by women was still continued in socio-economic development , this enable her to

participate effectively in different sectors such as governmental, academic, financial, geometric , health , military and many technical fields.

Though there is a kind of controversy between the international businesswoman and those with limited income ,all of them were constantly supported by the governmental and non governmental sectors .

Now I will focus on the role played by the women with limited income in the Gulf region . The MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS pays monthly salaries to the women who are not working and those with limited income. They provided them with free education, health and residential care.

In order to help women to be independent the MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIR together with NGO'S to establish projects and support them in order to be productive families.

Different exhibitions are held around the year to purchase their products .Every two years, they launch festival to gather them in one of the Gulf Countries (the last one was held in Saudi Arabia) on the 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2010. This festival was attended by the ministers of SOCIAL AFFAIRS OF GCC Countries. It was a cultural, financial and honoring the pioneers .It was a good chance to show them by the role played by the institutions that support families with low income and orphanages and women societies.

All the six gulf countries participated by submitting paper work among which a lecture with the title of (The Effect Of the volunteering Task And Constant development ) another one under the title of (Integration Between the Governmental and the Private Sectors) Exhibitions were also held in order to display the products of these families which were sold. The income of these products was given back to those families.**3. Violence against woman**

In general, the role of the Muslim woman is governed by the Islamic legal rules. Islam sponsors equality in rights and duties to Muslims. It prevents the harmful practices for man, woman, child and the elderly.

The Kuwaiti and the Arabian Gulf woman enjoy the equality of their rights in education, health care, residential care and equality in salaries and professions .Woman retains her name after marriage, her right to choose to be independent in her life and properties. She also has the right to keep her children in case of being divorced or being widow.

Personal Status Law supports woman to be protected against harm or aggression by hand or by any tool. This law prevented the illegal relationships, apportion, adoption or the sexual aberration. This law will maintain woman's rights and dignity. The individual practices, which don't follow the law, decrease woman's right, get her be under violence from the man and sometimes from the society. That's why we're working hard to apply the law that supports women.

#### **Many activities had been carried out by the Kuwaiti Union:**

1. A workshop to activate the convention of getting rid of all the kinds of discrimination against woman regionally and internationally. Kuwaiti Union for woman associations.
2. Attending the fifth session for the Arabian family committee which was held by the Arab league cooperated with the Algerian Union for woman -Algeria.
3. Presenting a lecture of reinforcing the basic values. Kuwaiti Union For Woman Associations.
4. Attending the international conference titled "types of social rules for facing the declinate behavior " held by " Committee Of Woman's Affairs In The Kuwaiti Cabinet".

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2010**

2010 has been a year of celebration: the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Union of Australian Women. A joyful function was held on 10 July at the Queen Victoria Women's Centre, with speakers Minister Maxine Morand, writer and curator Morag Loh, members Nancye Smith and Eileen Capocchi, and with messages of congratulation and support from many women's organisations. We had a great opportunity to celebrate the activism, determination and far-sightedness of so many of our early members, and to reflect on what remains to be done. An anniversary edition of the Newsletter was much appreciated by members.

2010 was also the year that saw Australia's first female Prime Minister take office. While congratulating Julia Gillard, the UAW looked forward to a feminist, progressive leadership that acted boldly on climate change, with compassion for refugees, and for a fair, decent Australia. The federal election campaign was disappointing on these and other measures, but the pattern of voting and the resultant minority Labor Government may auger well for a more inclusive, open form of government.

Activism in the form of discussions with speakers aimed at action; letter writing; joint action with other groups and participation in forums, conferences and other meetings have continued.

**Coffee with a Focus:**

- Vicki Roach: *One indigenous woman's struggle to succeed against the odds*. AGM, October 2009
- Morna Sturrock, journalist, historian, embroiderer, community activist: *Hearing Each Other, Healing the World*. IWD March 2010
- Dr Celestina Sagazio, senior historian, National Trust: *Women's Melbourne*. May 2010
- Sister Brigid Arthur, Coordinator, Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project: *The Human Face of Asylum Seekers*. August 2010

**Letter writing/lobbying:**

This year, we have written to Federal and State governments and politicians on a range of issues including asylum seekers, same sex marriage, child care, religious exceptions to the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act, paid parental leave, the reinstatement of the Racial Discrimination Act, strip searches in women's prisons, and a submission to the Review of Defensive Homicide. We have endorsed campaigns emanating from Equal Rights Alliance and Women's Health Victoria's 10 Point Plan for Women's Health.

**Membership** continues to be steady. We were saddened by the deaths of longtime members Betty Olle, Jean Critchley, Janet Grace Pine and Sarah Neave, but we celebrated their lives and contributions to the women's movement. A number of members have left us generous donations in their will. We need to discuss how best to use these funds in our campaigns for the advancement of women. Thanks to Evelyn Meindersma for her work.

**Branches:**

**Darebin** Group continues to meet monthly and is a definite local presence. Thanks to Clare Nugent and Vera Hunt, and to other members for their active engagement with local bodies.

**Southern** Branch meets bi-monthly with speakers, discussion and action. Like Darebin, it maintains effective contact with local councillors and politicians. Thanks to Amy Duncan and Mairi Neil for their commitment and work.

**Moreland** Group continues to exist as a local presence, but is not active on a regular basis



### **Newsletter, 3CR, Web page**

The monthly newsletter is a valuable means of communication with our members, particularly country women and those who cannot get to meetings. Articles have covered a wide range of topics: the war in Afghanistan; Women and Finance, Pay Equity; older women, housing and homelessness; asylum seekers; paid parental leave, to name some. Thanks to the Editor, Carmen Green, to the writers and to the mail-out team organised by Fran Mackieson and Jenny Stewart. The decision to outsource the photocopying has led to less stress about breakdowns, but the production is a big commitment of time and energy.

Thanks to Elizabeth Kourtis and 3CR for keeping our weekly program on air. Thanks to Cath Morrison for undertaking monthly updates of the web page and other computer tasks.

### **Photographic Exhibitions, Photos, DVD.**

*Nothing on a Plate* curated by Morag Loh, was part of the Incinerator's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and is as valid as ever and available for community use.

Thanks to Allie Dawe for her continuing work with UAW photographs, some of which were in evidence at our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations in July.

The DVD *Apron Strings and Atom Bombs* is still available.

**Informal Groups** have continued to flourish and give members the opportunity to meet and enjoy each other's company.

**The Film Group** meets monthly.

**The Book Group** has flourished.

Excursions to **art galleries** have continued: the Jewish Museum, Bendigo and the Incinerator.

### **Affiliation and Co-operation:**

The UAW continues to have representation on, work with and support other groups: Equality Rights Alliance – Carmen Green; National Council of Women Victoria – Clare Nugent (Junior Vice President) and a number of proxies; UNAA Status of Women Committee – Clare Nugent; Victorian Women's Trust; Women's Health Victoria; League of Women Voters; Sunshine International Women's Committee; Emily's List; RAWA. Many of our members are also active in and have links to other organisations.

### **Organising Committee and Conclusion:**

2010 has been a year of celebration. The 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was a wonderful celebration of our activism. Eileen Capocchi was added to the Victorian Honour Roll of Women, bringing our number to 17, 7 of whom were nominated by the UAW.

Many thanks to all members of the Organising Committee for their contribution, ideas, energy and good humour. We have not had a formal secretary, but have shared many of the tasks. A particular thanks to Treasurer Vera Hunt, who was far more than treasurer and who, for health reasons, is unable to continue in the position at present. Thanks to Carol Stals for undertaking the immense task of organising our material for archives. Thanks to the organisers and caterers for our functions and to members who contribute in other ways. Best wishes to a number of our activist members who are dealing with difficult health issues. We look forward to engaging more members of the organisation: to help organise and maintain the office; to help with computer based updates; to undertake further activities that will focus on the advancement of women and ensure that a UAW voice is heard for many more years to come.

*Anne Sgro 2 October 2010*

## Women's Electoral Lobby Australia

The Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL), supported by a number of active branches particularly NSW, Victoria, WA and the ACT continues to work to promote its goal of "creating a society where women's participation and potential are unrestricted, acknowledged and respected...".

As in previous years, WEL has contributed to Government enquiries and reviews dealing with issues of concern to women. This has included submissions on issues such as: a Charter of Human Rights; the impact of the Global Financial Crisis on Women; the implementation of the Paid Parental Leave scheme and the changes to Federal legislation with respect to Income Management (affecting Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory in particular).

Despite our pessimism expressed in last year's report, a limited but welcome form of universal Paid Parental Leave will be introduced throughout Australia at the start of 2011. Pay equity continues however to elude us. In June, WEL members around Australia supported union organised rallies on Pay Equity Day, which aimed to highlight this continuing disparity in wages for women.

The recent Decision from Fair Work Australia regarding casual employment in the retail sector does provide some security of working hours for the many casual workers, mainly women, who work in this sector. The Retail Employers had applied to have the Retail Award call-in hours reduced from 3 to 2 hours – meaning that employers could call in workers just for two hours work. Fair Work Australia accepted that a minimum of three hours work is appropriate and rejected the employers' argument.

WEL Australia is an active member of the Equality Rights Alliance (ERA, formerly WomenSpeak), a national non government network of women's organisations and advocates. ERA, which brings together over 50 organisations, is Australia's largest network advocating for women's equality, women's leadership and recognition of women's diversity. The Alliance is one of six National Women's Alliances, funded by the Federal Office for Women, and focuses on equality, diversity and leadership.

A generous bequest to NSW WEL enabled us to employ a part time Coordinator to work on the Federal elections and to enhance WEL's effectiveness as a lobby group. This resulted in a higher profile presence for WEL during the Federal election campaign and elections held on 21 August.

A detailed Federal Election strategy was developed, using *fairness* as the underpinning value for analysing policies and promises. Fact Sheets assessing policies of the major political parties were produced on a range of issues and uploaded onto the WEL Australia website. During the campaign, in cooperation with existing WEL branches throughout Australia, we managed to draw media and political attention on a range of issues. A policy 'scorecard', which tracked the major parties' election promises from a feminist perspective, was posted on the WELA website and was well received. A leaflet, including the scorecard, was produced and distributed in Sydney's Martin Plaza.

Both the WEL Australia and WEL NSW Websites were significantly upgraded, and social networking tools – such as Facebook and Twitter – were used effectively in the run up to the

Federal elections. An **e-Update** (weekly email bulletin) was introduced and an election “hotspot” page added to the WEL Australia website.

NSW WEL continued our representation at Peak Women’s Meetings convened by the NSW Office for Women’s Policy and attended by the Minister for Women. A member of the WEL NSW Executive played a pivotal role in the organisation of International Women’s Day and a WEL contingent marched under the WEL banner on IWD. WEL NSW also continues to hold its very successful annual “Ednas” – an evening dedicated to Edna Ryan who was a great activist for women’s equal pay, which celebrates feminist achievement in many fields.

We reviewed the NSW Government’s revised State Plan for our meeting with the Minister for Women. The Plan, after many criticisms from WEL NSW and other women’s organisations, contained a section “Delivering Opportunities for Women”. It also foreshadowed a new Women’s Plan.

A highlight of this year in Sydney was the **f-Conference** held at the NSW Teachers’ Federation on 10-11 April. A number of women from WEL NSW were on the organising collective. There were over 300 participants across generations. We are still hopeful that the **f-Conference** has injected a new impetus to feminist activism.

In Western Australia, WEL representatives attended the award night at Murdoch University where an annual prize, “The Barbara Buick Women’s Electoral Lobby Prize” was presented for the best student in the field of Women and Development. The prize aims to honour a WEL member who tirelessly worked in the field, including in Papua New Guinea, in the 1960s and 1970s to improve education and financial sustainability for women and the girl child.

WEL Victoria was strongly involved during the Federal election campaign and is delighted to have the first female Prime Minister Julia Gillard. WEL Victoria has been particularly concerned about the low number of female directors in public companies and welcomes the introduction by the Gillard Government of a policy of appointing at least 40% of women and 40% men to all federal government boards. The Australian Stock Exchange has introduced a policy to monitor the percentage of women directors in all public companies.

WEL ACT has been active in relation to the ACT Government’s decision to hold an enquiry into why women are being paid less than men within the ACT public service. This is a very welcome enquiry and WEL is hoping it will open the door for more detailed analyses of salary differences throughout the ACT community.

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## **International Representation**

**Geneva**

### **Geneva IAW representation report 2007-2010**

#### ***Brief summary of main activities and themes covered***

*Avec toutes mes excuses pour ne pouvoir soumettre qu’une version en anglais.*

*Cela est dû au fait que mon travail est presque exclusivement en anglais pour atteindre le plus grand nombre et que je n’ai pas le temps de traduire. je n’ai pas le temps de traduire*

*Hélène Sackstein - representative in Geneva*

***The report includes also:***

- ***Statements endorsed and/or drafted with input of IAW Geneva rep.***
- ***Relevant concept papers used for lobbying governments and assist partner NGOs as well as states***

## **INTRODUCTION**

### ***Objective of the report***

*The purpose of this report is to provide an insight to members regarding the nature of the work of the representative of international NGO with consultative status. In this case the representation, being in Geneva deals essentially with human rights issues, some directly related to women others indirectly but relevant to women's survival and empowerment.*

*As the Right to Health is part of the mandate, the representative also works in collaboration with the Convenor of the Health Commission as Liaison with WHO. Hence, the Health Commission report will cover WHO-specific activities.*

*Finally, the Geneva representative has been elected vice-chair of the NGO Committee for Human Rights, a function which requires availability for regular bureau and Committee meetings as well as often chairing these.*

*As no comprehensive report had been provided in the past few years, this one will cover the last 4 years which happen to coincide with the existence of the newly created Human Rights Council which replaces the defunct Human Rights Commission.*

*The Geneva representative has worked actively with the main HR NGOs to ensure that the document setting the functions of the HRC – called 'Institution-building package' – preserved the positive aspects of the Commission regarding NGOs' role to ensure meaningful input and interaction in the future. This implied working closely with some governments on clear and unambiguous language.*

### ***Time spent and nature of the output of the representative***

*In terms of time, it translates into approximately full time work of a consultant during 2 years. Subsequent work .representation work is also concrete and active and represents again approximately 60% of the time of the representative on work which could qualify as expert consultancy (see attached output of documents).*

*During each of the following years, work included collaboration with an electronic coalition of human rights actors including mostly active participation from Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Fédération des ligues de droits de l'homme, International Service for Human Rights, Action Canada for Population and Development, IPAS, Equality Now and a Latin American Coalition for Women's Rights.*

*It further included active cooperation with the Governments of Chile (till 2009 before the election of a new conservative government which adopted the Vatican's position on reproductive rights), Colombia, New Zealand, Brazil, Argentina, Germany, Switzerland, The USA beginning 2009, Burkina Faso in 2010, all of which had been directly involved either in maternal morbidity and mortality, women's equality before the law, and the right to health. On the invitation of Missions of Germany, Canada, USA, France, Chile (till 2009), the representative attended regularly small pre-HRC session consultations and informal negotiations on relevant resolutions with the possibility of providing relevant language and making comments.*

## **2007**

**Work covered essentially the mainstreaming of Women's rights throughout the UN system; the creation of a mechanism dealing with women's rights protection gaps; and the follow-up of the Special Rapporteur on Health report on maternal morbidity and mortality.**

## Relevant documents

- *Statement - Human Rights Council - 4th session - 28 March 2007 during the Related debate on Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health - A massive Human Rights Catastrophe: Maternal Mortality*
- *Item 10 - Technical assistance and capacity building*
- *Human Rights Education (including a gender perspective)*
- *Concept paper - Proposal to create a mechanism to identify and close protection gaps with a Special Procedure mandate on Emerging Issues* – accompanied by a list of country positions identified by an assessment of their vote and responses to conversations with the representative.

## 2008

Work dealt with mainstreaming gender perspective throughout the UN system; developing UPR guidelines with a gender focus

### Relevant documents

- *Concept note for discussion on the integration of a gender perspective into all areas of work of the Human rights Council*
- *Questions & Answers on the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council*
- *Of the utility of a Universal periodic review (UPR) for all states and NGOs/ De l'utilité d'un Examen périodique universel pour les gouvernements et ONG*
- *Background/concept/guidelines for lobbying – Maternal mortality: an urgent human rights issue*

## 2009

Work at the HRC dealt with the maternal mortality and morbidity resolution adopted June 2009 and preparation for a resolution in 2010 dealing with laws that discriminate against women.

Also covered preparation for the Board meeting in Switzerland, specifically a) the organisation of a seminar for board members with the UN Liaison officer, Mr. Espinosa and the person responsible for the OHCHR Gender Unit, Melinda Ching-Simon and b) a seminar at WHO including the Geneva rep.'s presentation of work done on maternal mortality and morbidity in the framework of the right to health.

Finally, the Geneva rep was convener/rapporteur of a caucus on minority women during the European review of Beijing+15 (in Geneva) and delivered the outcome of the caucus discussions

### Relevant documents

- *Supporting a resolution at the Human Rights Council on maternal mortality and human rights: talking points and list of targeted countries*
- *Laws that discriminate against women - Some arguments for a new mechanism*
- *Statement at ECOSOC Session 2009 – Item 14 (g) Human rights – preventable maternal mortality and morbidity: A human rights issue*
- *Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: One size doesn't fit all*

*Contribution from the NGO caucus on minority women in the ECE region - Item 5 – Gender-sensitive economic policies in the context of the economic crisis - Rapporteur Hélène Sackstein – International Alliance of Women.*



## 2010

Work dealt with the follow-up of the HRC resolution on maternal mortality and morbidity which implicated following informal negotiations on the governments resolution. Intense lobbying on a resolution dealing with laws that discriminate against women containing provision for a monitoring mechanism and related work countering the HRC emphasis (with leadership from Russia and Islamic countries) on ‘traditional values’ while ensuring the indigenous peoples’ legitimate concerns on the issue were not jeopardized.

### Relevant documents

- *Report: Human Rights Council creates new mandate on discrimination against women*
- *New mechanism at the Human Rights Council on equality before the law: Why; What would it add to CEDAW; What would it do and what would be its structure*
- *Traditional values backgrounder/fact sheet*

The above summary and list of documents is not exhaustive, nor does it represent all the work required of the IAW representative. Not included are various NGO working groups meeting and informal NGO brainstorming on strategies and statements.

*Hélène Sackstein*  
*October 2010*

### Annex to the Geneva representative report

#### Some documents produced during the period covered by this report

## 2007

### 1.

#### Human Rights Council 4th session, 28 March 2007

#### International Alliance of Women

*(Hélène Sackstein)*

### A massive Human Rights Catastrophe: Maternal Mortality

In his excellent report on the right to the highest attainable standard of health, Mr. Hunt challenges human rights civil society organizations and health professionals alike to give more attention to economic, social and cultural rights in general and the right to health in particular. In short, the right to health needs a boost.

One shocking example of this general lack of interest underscored in the report is maternal mortality. The report notes that each year there are 500.000 maternal deaths, or one every minute; 95% of these are in Africa and Asia and most could be avoided and the burden of this scourge falls disproportionately on women in low income countries and on women living in poverty in affluent countries.

There is no single cause of death and disability for men between the ages of 15 and 44 that is close to this magnitude. Maternal mortality reveals sharp discrepancies between men and women in their enjoyment of sexual and reproductive health rights.

Maternal mortality exposes profound and multiple inequalities - global ethnic and gender. It's not just a health issue, argues the report, it is a human rights issue which violates women's rights to life, health, non-discrimination. Unfortunately, although it represents a massive human rights catastrophe, it has not attracted the attention it deserves.

Since 1980, the WG on Enforced Disappearances has taken up about 50.000 while cases there have been well over 10 million maternal deaths during the same period.

The report encourages human rights NGOs to campaign against maternal mortality and other egregious health and human rights issues just as vigorously as they taken up the death penalty, torture, or disappearances. We have taken note.

Fighting maternal mortality could become a powerful vehicle for strengthening health systems accessible to all , thus providing an entry to the implementation of the full scope of the right to health and all related rights on which it is both related and dependant: such as the right to drinking water, to food, to housing, to privacy, to education, to information, to healthy occupational and environmental conditions, etc.

Our question is: could we not also use combined efforts to fight maternal mortality as an equally powerful vehicle to better integrate the human rights of women in the implementation of the full range of economic social and cultural rights for all special groups on the Council's agenda such as minorities, indigenous peoples, children, migrants, etc. and as indicator of this integration in the work of the Council?

Thank you Mr. president.

*2. Sorry, I accidentally erased this joint statement dealing with the integration of a gender perspective into programmes on Human Rights Education. HS*

3.

**Proposal to create a mechanism to identify and close protection gaps:**

**A Special Procedure mandate on Emerging Issues**

### **Background**

Selectivity in identifying and closing protection gaps runs contrary to GA Res. 60/251. To avoid this, there must be a strong emphasis on protection gaps being identified and closed independently, objectively, and using human rights expertise.

There must be an emphasis on promotion and protection of the human rights issues falling into protection gaps. There are many victims of human rights violations who cannot rely on the system of Special Procedures to have their issues or situations find voice within the Human Rights Council's structure. There are groups of vulnerable rights-holders or situations in which rights-holders are vulnerable not currently receiving attention within this system due to lack of thematic coverage. These victims and rights-holders deserve to have the human rights issues confronting them addressed within the Special Procedure system.

### **Proposal**

Whether or not the Working Group recommends creating some additional mandates to the Council, it is extremely likely that many gaps in thematic coverage will continue to exist even after the creation of these mandates. To address these remaining thematic protection gaps **the Working Group should recommend the creation of a Special Procedure on Emerging Issues.**<sup>2</sup> Such a Special Procedure would have as its mandate the protection of human rights

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<sup>2</sup> This is simply a suggested name. Other possible names exist including "Special Procedure/Working Group on human rights issues not covered under other thematic mandates".

issues falling into thematic protection gaps existing at the time. It would have the following features:

- Given the range of human rights issues currently falling into protection gaps, this Special Procedure should be constituted as a working group of 5 – 7 human rights experts, appointed in the same manner as any mandate holder, with an emphasis on geographical balance and a diversity of expertise.
- After identifying an issue falling into a protection gap, the Special Procedure on Emerging Issues would undertake an exploration of the issue in an initial report to the Council.
- After this initial report, the Special Procedure on Emerging Issues would fill in this gap in the same manner as any other Special Procedure: further thematic studies of the issue, receiving communications from victims, undertaking country visits, and formulating recommendation to States to improve their human rights practices in the area.
- The Special Procedure on Emerging Issues would be able to continue giving protection to a human rights issue until such time as the Council took action to otherwise deal with the issue in the Special Procedure system.

### **Presenting the proposal**

- The mechanism must be put forward under another name that will reflect that many issues falling into protection gaps are not new in any sense. Further, the term “emerging issues” conjures up images of mandate proliferation and uncertainty as to what the mechanism might raise.
- The technical nature of such a mandate must be emphasized.
- Consultation with OHCHR as to the technical issues involved in the creation of such a mandate.
- An oral statement voicing the proposal at HRC4 should be considered. Building broad NGO support around this proposal and statement is critical.
- Making Presidency aware of proposal as well as keeping Czech Facilitator aware of our activities on this issue.
- At HRC4, bringing possibly supportive States together to have a discussion over ways of closing protection gaps with ultimate goal of having one of them ready to raise the proposal and others to support it at the April round of WG negotiations.
- Fallback options should not be presented until it is clear in the negotiations that this proposal is not going to work.

**2008**

**1.**

### **Concept note on the integration of gender into all areas of the Human Rights Council**

#### **Objectives:**

This Concept note addresses the need to:

- (i) schedule in the upcoming September Council session a half or full day session on gender integration. *This session would specifically focus on successes based on integration/ gender mainstreaming experience at the CHR and in other UN areas, and in a specific discussion of how best to integrate a gender perspective and human rights of women into the work of the Human Rights Council.*
- (ii) address, on an ongoing basis and in a substantive way, the human rights of women, and gender-related violations. It is suggested that this substantive session take place in either the March/April or June session.

### **Rationale**

The UN has long made commitments to strengthening its work in both areas. Sometimes called

gender mainstreaming, this work has been tasked to all agencies and entities within the UN system. In more current analysis, the term “gender integration” tends to be seen as a synonym for gender mainstreaming. Within the UN system, the responsibility to address gender and human rights of women *does not rest solely with the women’s entities of the UN*. It is a responsibility borne throughout the UN system, and should not be “ghettoized” into the work of only the entities who focus solely on women and gender, such as UNIFEM, the Division for the Advancement of Women or the Commission of the Status of Women, CEDAW, etc. There is already significant work achieved and concrete decisions have been adopted by the UN.

### **September, the road forward and terminology**

*This Concept note suggests that a half day session be held in September on gender integration, and that a proper session on human rights of women be held annually at future sessions of the Council, beginning possibly in March/April or June of 2008.*

It is important to note the distinction between analysis of gender integration into the HRC and substantive work on human rights of women. In gender integration, discussions should and can revolve around *methodology*. Gender integration and integration of a gender perspective answers the primary question of “how can gender be properly integrated into the work of the Council?” What should the agenda and programme of work of the Council look like? How can gender issues be addressed in the review of states’ human rights records in the UPR and mandate review process? How can special procedures or Working Groups do their research in ways that capture women’s experience and in ways that look at gender-related violations?

*This is different from the more substantive issues related to human rights of women (and gender-related abuses), which would respond to a general question of “what human rights issues related to gender need to be addressed by this particular mechanism or group?”. What are the particular experiences that have to be addressed to look at, for instance, women and housing-related rights, or girls in relation to education and health?*

### **The short-term approach:**

*1) Half day session in September that would*

- a) Look at overview of “lessons learned” from CHR – to affect planning for future Council sessions.
- b) Ensure the gender mainstreaming is fully addressed in the agenda and programme of work of the HRC throughout the year.
- c) Ensure that a gender perspective is fully integrated in the UPR.
- d) Ensure gender integration within the work of Special Procedures and identify gaps and overlaps for the Review of Mandates in that regard.
- e) Ensure the Chilean Resolution reflects the general approach and fully echoes the potential of the different mechanisms of the Council a) Agenda, Programme of Work, UPR, SPs, HRCAC.

2.

### **Questions & Answers on the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council**

What is the Universal Periodic Review?

Why does the Council have this mechanism?

What are the objectives of the UPR?

What is the normative basis for the UPR?

On what information will the review be based?

What is the national report likely to contain?

Who will carry out the review?

*What will be the sequence of events in a typical review?*

*What form will the review take?*

*What could be the outcome of a review?*

*How will a country review be followed up?*

*What happens if a country does not cooperate with the UPR?*

*When does the review start?*

*Which countries will be reviewed first?*

*When will the Troika rapporteurs be known for each country review?*

*How can NGOs participate in the UPR?*

*Are NGOs limited to the formal procedures of the UPR?*

*Further background information*

### **What is the Universal Periodic Review?**

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a new mechanism of the Human Rights Council under which it will review, on a regular basis, the fulfilment by all 192 UN Member States of their human rights obligations and commitments. It is to be a cooperative mechanism, based on objective and reliable information, and equal treatment of all States. The review process is to fully involve the State under review, while at the same time not be overly burdensome for States.

**It should not duplicate the work of any treaty bodies, including CEDAW.** The UPR process comprises:

- Preparation by the State and other stakeholders, e.g. consultation at the national level to
- review and prepare the documentary bases,
- A three-hour interactive dialogue in the UPR Working Group with the State concerned,
- Adoption by the UPR Working Group of the report on the country review,
- Adoption by the Council (in a regular session) of the outcome of the review, and
- Follow-up and implementation by the State concerned and other stakeholders as relevant.

The novelty of the mechanism offers NGOs and governments an opportunity to shape it, including through the establishment of good precedents.

### **Why does the Council have this mechanism?**

By being applicable, on an equal basis, to all UN Member States, the UPR is intended to address one of the main criticisms levelled at the Council's predecessor, the Commission on Human Rights, namely that its focus on individual country situations was selective and based on double standards (the Commission considered only a small number of countries at its annual sessions and shied away from addressing some of the most pressing situations, often for political reasons).

The UPR offers an opportunity to address in the UN's principal interstate human rights body country situations that were never the subject of action by the Commission on Human Rights.

### **What are the objectives of the UPR?**

- Improvement of the human rights situation on the ground,
- Fulfilment of the State's human rights obligations and commitments and assessment of developments and challenges,
- Enhancement of the capacity of the State to protect human rights,
- Sharing of best practice among States,
- Cooperation in the promotion and protection of human rights,
- Encouragement of full cooperation with the Council, its mechanisms



### **What is the normative basis for the UPR?**

- The UN Charter,
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- Human rights instruments to which the State is a party,
- Voluntary pledges and commitments by the State, e.g. pledges made in the context of elections to the Council and in statements to the Council's high-level segment, and
- Applicable international humanitarian law.

### **On what information will the review be based?**

The review will be based on three key documents:

1. Information prepared by the State concerned. For most countries this information will probably take the form of a national report (maximum 20 pages). However, it is important to note that the modalities of the UPR stipulate that the State under review may choose to present this information only orally. The Council has encouraged States to prepare their information through a broad consultation process at the national level with all relevant stakeholders.
2. A compilation, prepared by the OHCHR, of information contained in reports of the treaty bodies, Special Procedures and other relevant UN bodies (maximum 10 pages). For many countries fitting this information into a 10 page compilation is going to be a challenge for the OHCHR.
3. A summary, also prepared by the OHCHR, of additional "credible and reliable information" by other stakeholders, e.g. NGOs, national human rights institutions, labour unions, church groups (maximum 10 pages).

### **What is the national report likely to contain?**

- The Council has adopted guidelines for the preparation and content of the national information (report). It should include:
- Description of the methodology and broad consultation process followed in preparing the national report,
- Information on the normative and institutional human rights framework, including constitution, legislation, policies, and institutions,
- Information on implementation of international human rights obligations, national legislation and voluntary commitments; as well as national human rights institutions, public awareness of human rights and cooperation with human rights mechanisms,
- Information on achievements and best practice, as well as challenges and constraints,
- Key national priorities and initiatives to overcome challenges and constraints and improve the human rights situation,
- Expectations for capacity building and requests for technical assistance,
- Follow up of previous reviews (beginning in the second cycle of review in 2012).

### **Who will carry out the review?**

The review of all UN Member States will take place in the UPR Working Group, composed of the 47 members of the Council, and chaired by the President of the Council. Each member of the Council will decide on the composition of its delegation to the UPR Working Group and may decide to include human rights experts in their delegation.

The Council will select a group of three rapporteurs, *Rapporteurs Troika*, to facilitate each review. These rapporteurs will be chosen from among the 47 members of the Council and each member of a Troika will come from a different UN Regional Group. The State under review may request that one of the rapporteurs be from its own Regional Group and may also

object to a selected rapporteur; however, *it may do so only once*. A Rapporteur may also request to be excused from a particular country review, in which case another rapporteur will be selected. There is no set limit to the number of times a Rapporteur may request to be excused.

### **What will be the sequence of events in a typical review?**

- The State undertakes broad national consultation in preparation of national information (report), including with NGOs,
- The State prepares a national report of no more than 20 pages to be ready in time to ensure the distribution of the report simultaneously in the six UN official languages six weeks prior to the review in the UPR Working Group in accordance with the UN's "six-week rule" for document distribution,
- The OHCHR prepares two documents each of no more than 10 pages: one is a compilation consisting of information from the treaty bodies, Special Procedures and other UN bodies; the second a summary of other credible and reliable information, e.g. from NGOs. Both documents will also be available in all UN official languages in accordance with the "six-week rule";
- The *Troika rapporteurs* may collate issues and questions (but are not required to do so) to facilitate and focus the review; they would transmit these to the country concerned to assist in the preparation of the review;
- The State engages in a 3-hour interactive dialogue with the UPR Working Group. In addition to Members of the Council, observer States may also participate. NGOs may attend, but not speak;
- The *Troika rapporteurs* prepare a report on the review with a summary of the proceedings, recommendations and any voluntary commitments by the State;
- The report on the review is adopted in the UPR Working Group. A reasonable period of time is to be allowed between the inter-active dialogue and the adoption of the report in the Working Group. Half an hour is allocated for the adoption of the report. The reviewed State is to be fully involved and may indicate which recommendations it supports and doesn't support, but cannot veto any of the recommendations;
- The outcome of the review is submitted to a regular session of the Council for adoption. (There is a standing agenda item on the UPR on the Council's agenda.) Up to one hour is to be allocated for the Council's adoption of the outcome. The State concerned, Members of the Council, observer States, and other relevant stakeholders (e.g. NGOs ) are to be given the opportunity to express their views on the outcome before the Council plenary acts on it;
- The Council adopts the outcome of the review and decides if and when specific follow will be necessary;
- The outcome of the review should be implemented primarily by the State concerned and, as appropriate, by other relevant stakeholders;
- The state of implementation of the review is to be reviewed in the subsequent review of a State (i.e. up to four years later).

### **What form will the review take?**

The rules establishing the UPR speak of the review as the 3-hour interactive dialogue between the State under review and members of the Council. Observer States may participate as well, whereas "other relevant stakeholders", such as NGOs, may only "attend" the inter-active dialogue (this means that NGOs will not be able to make statements or ask questions of the

country during the dialogue). Countries under review should be encouraged to ensure that national NGOs are able to observe the review, irrespective of their status with ECOSOC.

### **What could be the outcome of a review?**

Bearing in mind the emphasis on the UPR as a cooperative mechanism, the outcome is likely to be the result of a consensus-based process rather than a voting process. The reviewed country should be fully involved in the outcome. This means, for example, that the State concerned may indicate in the outcome document which recommendations it supports and which it does not. However, it will not be able to veto recommendations.

The outcome could include some or all of the following provisions:

- Assessment of the situation of human rights in the reviewed country, including positive developments and challenges faced by the country,
- Identification of best practices,
- Proposals for cooperation in the promotion and protection of human rights,
- Provision of technical assistance,
- Voluntary commitments by the country concerned.

### **How will a country review be followed up?**

When the Council adopts, in a regular session, the outcome of the UPR it will also decide if and when any specific follow-up is necessary. The outcome of the UPR should be implemented primarily by the State concerned and by others, as appropriate, e.g. the OHCHR, UN country teams, or UN agencies. Subsequent reviews will consider the state of implementation of the outcome of the previous review.

### **What happens if a country does not cooperate with the UPR?**

In cases of persistent non-cooperation with the UPR mechanism, the Council will “address” such situations.

### **How can NGOs participate in the UPR?**

There are a number of possible entry points in the UPR for NGOs. Some of these are stipulated in the rules governing the UPR; others are advocacy opportunities for NGOs. Efforts should be made to create good precedents for future reviews whenever possible.

#### *National consultation prior to development of national report*

- Encouraging a broad national consultation as input to the national information (report) by the State to be reviewed,
- Participation in any national consultation, including by bringing human rights concerns to the attention of the State and suggesting measures to address these.

#### *Information basis for the review*

- Submission of information to the treaty bodies and Special Procedures to generate observations and recommendations to be pursued in the UPR,
- Submission of information to the OHCHR compilation of “other objective and credible information”,
- Publication, independently of the OHCHR compilation, of information pertaining to the situation of human rights in the country to be reviewed, with recommendations for addressing violations of human rights,

- Critique of the information (report) submitted by the country under review,
- Submission of written statements for inclusion in formal record of the UPR Working Group.

#### *Interactive dialogue in UPR Working Group*

- Lobby Council members to include human rights experts in their delegation in the UPR Working Group,
- Lobby Council members to put forward human rights experts as *Troika rapporteurs*,
- Lobby *Troika rapporteurs* to focus the review on critical human rights issues in the country under review, and to encourage the rapporteurs to raise the issues and questions with the State prior to the inter-active dialogue,
- Lobby Council members and observer States to raise pertinent human rights issues and questions during the dialogue,
- Lobby *Troika rapporteurs* to reflect key human rights concerns in the report on the review and to make recommendations to address human rights violations.

#### *Outcome of the review*

- Lobby members of the UPR Working Group to adopt a report on the review that addresses directly and transparently key human rights issues in the country under review,
- Critique the report of the review adopted by the UPR Working Group, as necessary.

#### *Adoption of outcome of review*

- Submission of written statements in advance of regular session considering UPR reports and making oral statements during discussion under item 6 when the Council takes action on the outcome of the UPR,
- Lobby members of the Council to ensure that the final outcome adopted adequately reflects key human rights concerns in the country reviewed and makes effective recommendations for addressing these,
- Lobby the Council to decide on specific follow-up.

#### *Implementation of review recommendations and commitments*

- Encourage the State reviewed to hold broad national consultations on and public discussion the outcome of the review,
- Encourage the State reviewed to ensure full and prompt implementation of the outcome of the review, e.g. in bi-laterals, through initiatives in the Council (e.g. raising situations under item 4), in the context of election to the Council, in context of initiatives by other UN bodies (e.g. reviews by the treaty bodies, missions by Special Procedures, visits by the HCHR, etc.),
- Ensure reference to recommendations and commitments in correspondence and public documents on the country concerned,
- Encourage review of implementation of recommendations in subsequent UPR reviews of the country concerned.

### **Are NGOs limited to the formal procedures of the UPR?**

The UPR will attract national or international media and public attention for many countries. Irrespective of what NGOs do in the formal procedures for the review of such countries, or even irrespective of whether they contribute to the formal procedures for such countries, the public

interest generated by the UPR will offer a campaigning platform that NGOs should consider using.

### Further background information

Information available on the website of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights:

- Country profiles: <http://www.ohchr.org/english/countries/>
- Schedule of countries coming up for review under the UPR: <http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/upr/uprlist.pdf>

### 3.

#### **Of the utility of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) for States and NGOs OF A**

The UPR is the most interesting mechanism of the new Human Rights Council

- **In no way does it detract from CEDAW which focuses only on women's rights.**
- It's a much simpler complementary process targeting even states which haven't ratified CEDAW.
- It covers ALL aspects of human rights and this is actually an advantage giving NGOs an opportunity to insert a gender perspective on all issues and focus on areas not traditionally considered 'women's' issues, such as trade, economics, etc. where women's associations are frequently and notoriously absent.
- It can also simply focus on the removal of all reservations to CEDAW for the states examined.
- Finally, the examination – including the state's responses - is webcast and available for all to see, including the press.

#### **De l'utilité de l'Examen Périodique Universel (EPU) pour les Etats et les**

*L'EPU est le plus intéressant des mécanismes du nouveau Conseil des Droits de l'Homme.*

- *Il ne détourne aucunement du processus CEDAW qui cible le droit humain des femme, mais il est complémentaire avec l'avantage d'être beaucoup plus simple.*
- *Il s'adresse à tous les états, même à ceux qui n'ont pas ratifié la CEDAW.*
- *Il recouvre toutes les violations de droits humains et cela s'avère être un atout car les ONG peuvent ainsi y intégrer une perspective sexopositive partout, même dans les domaines où les associations de femmes sont souvent absentes, tels que le commerce, l'économie, etc.*
- *Ce processus permet aussi de simplement exiger l'élimination de toutes les réserves que l'état examiné a pu introduite à la CEDAW lors de son accession..*
- *Enfin l'examen - y compris les réponses des états - est webcasté et ainsi ouvert à tous, y compris aux media.*

### 4.

#### **Maternal Mortality and Morbidity as urgent human rights issues**

##### **Concept/background and guidelines for lobbying states**

##### **Background and Mandate**

As set out in the 2000 Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2) and the 2005 World Summit Outcome (A/RES/60/1), the international community has committed itself to reducing maternal mortality and morbidity. Despite these commitments, current MDG development measures are not sufficient to reduce maternal mortality to the target levels by 2015. These measures are also often not linked to the human rights entitlements of those affected and the human rights obligations of those responsible for change. In response to this, the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and various UN committees have urged the international community to recognize and treat maternal mortality as a human rights issue of the utmost importance and urgency affecting

all countries. Recognizing that maternal mortality is a human rights issue helps to define the role of those affected and the needed state action, both in country and as international donors. The Council's debate on preventable maternal mortality and morbidity should be situated within the MDG process and aim at fulfilling three core goals:

1. Identifying human rights violations which lead to and result from preventable maternal mortality and morbidity;
2. Identifying human rights obligations relating to the reduction of maternal death and ill-health, including those of international actors and institutions,
3. Exploring what effective contribution the Council can make to addressing preventable maternal mortality as an emergency issue; and
4. Articulating best practices and formulating rights-based, collaborative strategies for meeting the objectives of Millennium Development Goal (MDG) V.

### **Main Concept: Supporting and Furthering Action to Address Maternal Mortality**

The Council's debate can further the work of preventing maternal mortality and morbidity by focusing primarily on implementation of standards and goals already set. The Council would do well to start its deliberations on priorities with a perusal of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the Maputo Plan of Action for the operationalisation of the continental policy framework for sexual and reproductive health and rights, and relevant reports by the Special Rapporteur on the right to health, notably the segments on health, poverty, and the MDGs in report E/CN.4/2003/58, the segments on integrated health systems and health indicators in report E/CN.4/2006/48, and the SR's report to the General Assembly on maternal mortality, A/61/338. The Council might also do well to examine the existing international human rights framework and the work of human rights treaty-monitoring bodies with regard to how maternal mortality and morbidity seriously impacts women's and girls' ability to enjoy their human rights fully, and violates their rights to life, to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, and to equality and non-discrimination.

### **Integrating Maternal Mortality into the Council's Work**

Maternal mortality is a human rights issue of tremendous urgency and impact. Every year, approximately 529,000 women die from pregnancy-related causes. This is one death every minute. Over 300 million women in the developing world suffer from illness and disabilities from pregnancy and childbirth. No single cause of death and disability for men comes close. . Addressing maternal mortality will allow the Council to build upon the work of the Commission on Human Rights and of the General Assembly in deepening the understanding of a timely and urgent human rights emergency. The Council's debate on priority setting for its work on maternal mortality and morbidity should address **how to integrate the issue into its agenda, how the issue can be most effectively addressed in its various mechanisms and institutions, and how the Council's work on the issue can complement the work of other UN bodies.** This would include using the full range of Council work methods and mechanisms to address maternal mortality and morbidity, including: emergency sessions, regular sessions, special events, work of the special procedures, and the UPR.

### **Potential Concrete Suggestions from the Panel**

The panel's recommendations will, of course, reflect the day's discussion. The debate might include concrete suggestions for looking at maternal mortality and morbidity through the lens of all Council mechanisms. This might include how to integrate maternal mortality and morbidity clearly into the universal periodic review process by taking into full account indices of maternal



mortality and programs and policies to address maternal mortality, including in the preparation of information submitted for the review, during the review dialogue, in the review outcome and in the review follow-up. Other areas of recommendations from the panel might involve how the Council can follow up advancements in the reduction of maternal mortality and morbidity and how to develop a forum for sharing best practices on programs and policies in this regard. In addition, the panel might also discuss ways in which international donors and the UN agencies can cooperate with states to help improve programs and policies to combat maternal mortality and morbidity.

### **Practical Guidelines for States Formulating Interventions**

As this panel relates to furthering action to address maternal mortality and morbidity and examining the Council's role in this regard, it is suggested that States formulate their interventions to elicit recommendations on these issues and to share in the successes and challenges their countries are experiencing. Following are some suggested example topics for States' interventions during the discussion:

- How maternal mortality fits within a human rights framework and implications this might have for both State and Council actions;
- How human rights accountability mechanisms at local, national, regional and international can address maternal mortality;
- Factors contributing to maternal mortality and effective policies and actions to address them;
- Identification of maternal health services that are effective at reducing maternal mortality and morbidity and challenges in expanding primary health care to include these services;
- Populations disproportionately affected by maternal mortality and morbidity and policies and strategies to meet their sexual, reproductive and maternal health needs specifically;
- Developing, implementing and regularly evaluating national and international commitments and strategies;
- How women (especially those from groups disproportionately affected) and those working on their behalf can participate in shaping strategies for the reduction of maternal death and ill-health.
- Elements of effective systems of maternal death reviews.

**2009**

**1.**

#### **Lobbying paper: New mechanism at the HRC on equality before the law**

##### **Why a new mechanism on equality before the law?**

Equality before the law is not a new concept and governments have been working around the world to reform their legal systems to remove obstacles to women's full enjoyment of their rights. However, the pace of change remains slow.

In 1995, at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, governments pledged in the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) to "revoke any remaining laws that discriminate on the basis of sex". The Beijing + 5 Special Session of the General Assembly, held in 2000, focused on implementation of the BPFA. The Outcome Document adopted at that meeting established a target date of 2005 for the revocation of all laws that discriminate against women. At its 49th Session in March 2005, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) reviewed implementation of the BPFA. While progress has been made, this target date did not, unfortunately, mark the end of sex discrimination by law.

With Beijing +15 just around the corner, discriminatory laws still exist all over the world. While laws in themselves are not sufficient to eliminate violence and discrimination against women, they are an essential first step towards this goal and they provide a critical framework and collective vision. Laws that promote both equality between men and women can foster an environment in which women can live to their full potential, enabling them to participate proactively and play a greater role in the economic, social, political and cultural sectors of society. In addition, discriminatory laws violate virtually every international human rights treaty, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. A new mechanism is urgently needed to carry forward the process of eliminating legalised discrimination against women.

### **What would a new mechanism on equality before the law do?**

Created by and reporting annually to the Human Rights Council (HRC), the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) and, if agreed, also the CSW, a new mechanism could accomplish women's equality before the law by building on the critical work of, and collaborating very closely with, the CEDAW Committee in an innovative manner that also builds on and breathes new life into the BPFA.

### **How would a new mechanism be structured?**

A new mechanism on equality before the law would consist of one or more independent expert(s) appointed on the basis that she or he possesses the requisite legal training, knowledge, and expertise to research and interpret laws, to engage in a constructive dialogue with member states, and to make appropriate recommendations to the HRC and, if applicable, to the CSW. The expert(s) should have training in international law, strong experience in women's rights, and be highly regarded in the international and legal communities.

### **Why link it to the Human Rights Council?**

The HRC is responsible within the UN system for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe, including by addressing situations of human rights violations and making recommendations on them. Discrimination against women falls squarely within its mandate. On 4 June 2009, the previous President of the HRC, HE Martin Ihoeghian Uhomoibhi, Ambassador of Nigeria, in closing the annual meeting on the human rights of women, confirmed the great importance the HRC attaches to the human rights of women and recognised the key role the HRC has to play in promoting and achieving gender equality. He summarised the consensus of the meeting that more had to be done and immediately to address women's inequality before the law and said the HRC would take up the challenge to take effective action to contribute to existing efforts to advance this important agenda. The HRC works closely with the UN Special Procedures established or assumed by it, including the special rapporteur on violence against women. As such it makes logical sense to link the new proposed mechanism on equality before the law to the HRC.

### **What would a new mechanism add that isn't covered already by CEDAW?**

The CEDAW Committee is responsible for monitoring member states' implementation of CEDAW, including a specific undertaking to abolish sex discriminatory laws. However, its one-day examination of a State Party's report has to cover the 16 substantive articles of CEDAW. In addition, the CEDAW Committee is limited to engaging with the government delegation presenting the report which often does not include officers who are involved in law reform. Its review is based on information that comes to it from States Parties and NGOs. As such, an in-depth review with the most relevant stakeholders is not possible. The CEDAW Committee does not engage thematically across countries or undertake an exchange of good practice examples from similar countries. The work of the CEDAW Committee would be

complemented by (and would itself complement) the work of a new mechanism on women's equality before the law, which could have a more sustained engagement with relevant stakeholders on the issue of equality before the law, including through the presentation of promising examples used successfully to overcome obstacles to legal reform.

Following consultation with member states, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the CEDAW Committee on the advisability of appointing a special rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women, the UN Secretary-General issued a report to the CSW for its 2006 session. The Secretary-General concluded that "[a] dedicated mechanism that would tackle [discriminatory] laws as its primary and exclusive concern, rather than as incidental to a broader mandate, from a global perspective could provide the necessary momentum for change that has so far been absent."

In 2008, the previous High Commissioner for Human Rights released a report, on the advisability of instituting a special rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women which noted that "if the UN is to maintain its credibility and not be dismissed as a mere talking shop, then it will have to ensure that the failure to meet what should be a simple pledge, the removal of laws that discriminate against women made in conference documents in 1995 (Beijing), reviewed in 2000 (Beijing +5) and which remained unfulfilled a decade later in 2005 (Beijing +10), is dealt with as a matter of urgency." The report concluded that "...the time may well have come to have a focal point to address this very important conference pledge [to revoke all laws that discriminate against women] whose fulfilment underpins a great deal of UN policy and work not least in the delivery of the MDGs."

**Is the proposed mechanism an attempt to impose the values of one region on another?**

No. Gender equality is a human right that is universally applicable. It reflects international commitments affirmed by States from all regions. The commitment to gender equality is reflected in the institution-building text of the Human Rights Council. All regions have made progress towards women's equality and all regions could do more. The proposed mechanism would ensure continued progress towards the realisation of these goals, without politicisation and without selectivity.

**2.**

**Maternal Mortality and Human Rights**

**What is the objective of discussing this issue in a human rights context?**

Contribute to efforts to decrease the number of preventable deaths by:

- Contributing to efforts to increase political will to combat the issue
- Awareness-raising
- Broadening scope of discussion to include human rights implications, including women's rights

**What added value can the HRC provide to existing efforts?**

- Encourage States to focus on the issue in the preparation of human rights reporting, to raise awareness and to increase attention paid to the issue from human rights ministries/justice ministries at the domestic level;
- Use the UPR to raise awareness of the issue and to make recommendations to States for reporting through the UPR cycle (4 years);
- Encourage States to include human rights in their prevention strategies and to review strategies from human rights perspective (i.e. to remove real or de facto discrimination in provision of services)

- Encourage UN agencies to mainstream human rights in their response strategies;
- Encourage national human rights institutions and regional human rights bodies to engage on the issue;

### **What do we want to achieve in the first resolution?**

- Statement that maternal mortality is a human rights issue
- Commitment to increase political will to tackle the issue
- Identification of potential human rights implications- i.e. which rights are most affected for women?
- Remind States to consider human rights implications of maternal health/mortality in their development partnerships and programmes;
- Call on States to include MM in the human rights reporting, treaty bodies, UPR (i.e. use existing reporting lines);
- Call on States to include women, civil society, in prevention/response strategies and decision-making, at local and national level;
- Call on states to recognise women's right to skilled/professional services before, during, after pregnancy (in their prevention/response/service provision strategies)
- Request report from the OHCHR on maternal mortality and human rights, with brief overview of the status quo in the UN system, and including recommendations on how the HRC can add value to existing efforts; the report would form the basis of future/objective discussion in the HRC;

### **References**

- ICPD
- Beijing Platform for Action (and review outcomes)
- ICCPR and ICESCR
- CEDAW, Convention and General Comments of Committee
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- MDG5
- CSW agreed conclusions

### **What is the longer-term plan for discussion of the issue in the HRC?**

- How long does the issue need to be on the Council's agenda- what is end point?
- Is a resolution enough or do we need a mechanism? (e.g. working group; agreed conclusions?)
- What is the indicator of progress from a human rights perspective- lower rates; better response strategies; increased political will; reference to human rights in national response strategies?
- Where is review of progress in respect of human rights implications best placed- in WHO; MDG or HRC? (i.e. an existing body submits report also to HRC for annual/biannual debate within HRC?)

### **What are the parameters for action on the issue in the HRC?**

- The HRC cannot duplicate or contradict existing efforts of other agencies
- The HRC is not a health system design, implementation or monitoring body
- Scope: maternal mortality and morbidity
- Consistent use of terminology within system

## **3.**

## ***Preventable Maternal Mortality and Morbidity: A human rights***

### ***ECOSOC SESSION 2009 – Item 14 (g) Human rights***

*Hélène Sackstein – International Alliance of Women*

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#### **Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** **Adopted in 1976 and ratified by 160 States**

*1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.*

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According to the latest WHO statistics (April 2009) 536 000 women die of complications before, during and after pregnancy or childbirth. The global maternal mortality ratio of 400 maternal deaths per 100 000 live birth in 2005 has barely changed since 1990

Most of these deaths are preventable and failure to address this situation is a great social injustice.

In addition, according to the 2006 *UN Special Rapporteur's report on the highest attainment of physical and mental health*, for every woman who dies from obstetric complications, approximately 30 more suffer injuries, infections and disabilities. There is no single cause of death and disability for men between the ages of 15 and 44 that is close to the magnitude of maternal death and disability.<sup>1</sup>

These shocking statistics reveal chronic and entrenched inequalities.

**First**, the burden of maternal mortality is borne disproportionately by developing countries.

**Second**, in many affluent countries, marginalized women, women living in poverty, ethnic minority or indigenous women are more vulnerable to maternal mortality. In others, women are simply excluded from the quality health care they may need simply because they are women.

**Third**, maternal mortality and morbidity rates reveal sharp discrepancies between men and women in their enjoyment of sexual and reproductive health rights.

In recent years, there has been increasing understanding that maternal mortality morbidity are closely linked directly or indirectly to all MDGs and need to be tackled from a human rights perspective to be effectively eliminated.

States have made legal and political commitments to protect the health of women through a variety of international human rights treaties and have expressed these commitments through their national legislative systems. What is dismally lacking is a sense of urgency to implement them.

Applying the lens of human rights to maternal mortality and morbidity shows clearly that it's the result of cumulative denials of a woman's human rights and that too frequently, women's right to health focuses on survival rather than on her right to a quality of life which cannot be attained without health. Sadly, maternal death has too often been accepted as part of the natural order of things rather than the result of ill health due to unjust disadvantages.

Preventing maternal mortality is not simply about improving technical interventions or making the interventions affordable. It also requires addressing discriminatory laws, policies, practices which have institutionalized gender inequalities and prevented women and adolescent girls from seeking good quality services;

Indeed, the right to health is not just a right to health care, but includes other social, economic,

cultural and political factors which impact directly or indirectly on a woman's health such as:

- *Gender equality, non-discrimination, and women's literacy*
- *Women's participation in health-related decision-making processes that concern them,*
- *Information targeting women on nutrition as well as sexual and reproductive health*

States should therefore be challenged to deal with maternal mortality and morbidity in a more holistic manner and develop appropriate human rights-focused indicators.

At its last session, the Human Rights Council adopted by consensus a landmark resolution that recognizes maternal mortality and morbidity as a pressing human-rights issue that violates a woman's right to health, life, education and information. This is important because it places specific legal and ethical obligations on states and demands monitoring and accountability.

This recognition of maternal mortality and morbidity as a human rights issue signals a new trend by the entire human rights community to take health issues as seriously as, for instance, the death penalty which has traditionally mobilized public attention.

Of course the issue of avoidable maternal mortality and morbidity presents challenges as responsibility is often attributable to multiple actors. However, that does not stop these preventable deaths – over ½ million cases per annum - from being a violation of women's rights which states ultimately have the obligation to prevent. It must be investigated precisely to ensure the urgent introduction of appropriate policy changes when necessary as well as monitoring, transparency and accountability by all actors.

A coherent and coordinated effort to eliminate avoidable maternal mortality and morbidity would inevitably lead to other crucial issues of interest to the entire population, not least of which is the crucial importance of establishing effective national health systems that are accessible to all..

I. Yamin, A., Maine, D., "Maternal mortality as a human rights issue: measuring compliance with international treaty obligations", 21 (3) *Human Rights Quarterly*, 1999.

#### **4.**

#### **For the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**

##### **One size doesn't fit all**

##### **Beijing+15 European region review - Geneva**

##### ***Contribution from the NGO caucus on minority women in the ECE region***

##### ***Item 5 – Gender-sensitive economic policies in the context of the economic crisis***

*Rapporteur Hélène Sackstein – International Alliance of Women*

NGOs participating in the caucus began by including in the category of minority women all those who are different in some way from the majority of women in their country because of their ethnicity, their religion, their culture, their extreme poverty, their real or perceived disabilities, their sexual orientation and gender identity, their marital status or their life style. The list is far from exhaustive, but the recommendations made are relevant to most minorities women victim of marginalization and/or social exclusion in the UNECE Member States.

Both the states reviews and this meeting agenda appear to treat women as a monolithic mass with essentially similar demands. Little attention is paid to those who are more concerned by the need to put some food on the family table or place a roof above their head than by equal pay or access to multinational board rooms.



It has also been shown over and over that gender roles are key in either hindering or facilitating the integration of minority communities and could prove to be most cost-effective to invest in these women and girls; the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action provides a road map to deal with some of the negative impact of economic policies on minority women and girls.

In addition to its call for social justice, it noted the structural causes of poverty,. In Point 4 of the **Declaration**, among others, it urges governments to listen to voices of women everywhere and to take note of their diversity, their roles and circumstances.

Again, among many others, point 18 of the Global framework of the **Platform for Action** in a specially relevant section acknowledges that economic programmes are not designed to minimize their negative effects on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups or women, nor have they been designed to assure positive effect on them by preventing their further marginalization in economic and social activities but point 45 of the Strategic objectives emphasizes that the Platform of Action is intended to improve the situation of all women without exception while paying special attention to groups that are most disadvantaged.

As an example of lack of progress in 15 years, let's consider the case of the Roma, some 8 million of them, - over 4 million women - the largest ethnic minority in European region, present in every country, but likely to be more prevalent in Central and Eastern Europe.

Most are poorer than their non-Roma neighbours; their children die twice as fast as the children of their neighbours; maternal mortality statistics are equally dismal. Along with many other poor people, the Roma have difficulties maintaining property, paying rent, mortgages or utility bills and this has led to increasing homelessness, displacement, tensions with local authorities. They suffer conspicuous disadvantages in relation to the criminal justice system, are grossly over-represented among the region's prison population and are often the main victims of racial violence and discrimination. To those ills, Roma women suffer from a variety of other disadvantages and discrimination simply because they are women, both in their own communities and outside of it.

In an attempt to provide some remedies, we urge governments to, at the very least

- Develop and implement assessments of impact on minority populations, particularly women and girls, before putting in place any new economic programme
- Review existing European and national legislation and socio-economic policies in the light of their impact on reducing gender inequalities, by addressing all forms of discrimination and social exclusion
- Ensure the participation of minority women in the development of more effective economic and social policies and programmes, giving real weight to their inputs
- Ensure that poverty reduction policies and programmes reach disadvantaged and vulnerable populations
- Develop campaigns against violence, including homophobia and transphobia, in business and industry as it impacts negatively on the physical and mental health of employees and reduces their productivity
- Ensure equality of social protection for lesbian families, including in cases of immigration linked to employment, especially for binational couples
- In view of the increased numbers of widows of all ages, ensure that policies address not just their needs but also acknowledge and support their positive roles in society
- Ensure adequate funding for minority women organizations to enhance their collective voice and participation at all levels of decision-making regarding their status and needs
- Pay special attention to the situation of minority women during the 2010 European year to combat poverty and social exclusion

Finally, we reaffirm that, in spite of the financial crisis, woman's rights remain human rights as contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and need to be effectively mainstreamed throughout all socio-economic policies and programmes of the region

## **2010**

### **1.**

#### **Laws that discriminate against women - Some arguments for a new mechanism Brief note for lobbying purposes**

This mandate is meant to complement and help strengthen the work of the CEDAW Cttee. Unfortunately CEDAW only engages with member states every four or five years. Members of the Cttee have publicly expressed dismay that they are often dealing with the same discriminatory laws every four or five years. The commitment made by member states under the CEDAW Convention and at Beijing 15 years ago now is to remove all discriminatory legislation, but the pace of change is really slow. Without legal recourse women have so few tools with which to assert their rights so this mechanism aims at helping solidify this essential platform for women. One idea suggested also was that this mandate could look at cross-cutting issues, say nationality as one example, and share good practice across states to help accelerate the pace of change. This is not something the CEDAW Cttee can do, but could really help CEDAW in its work.

Egypt raised the issue of whether a mandate holder could understand whether a woman is discriminated against or not if the mandate holder didn't understand the local context. This seems part of a trend in the Human Rights Council, which many groups and governments have been trying to push back on, aimed away from international human rights standards and towards cultural relativity. Thankfully we still have international human rights standards and this mandate holder as a UN mechanism would use those so there should be no confusion.

We have the special rapporteur on violence against women, but not all discrimination against women manifests itself as violence and this mechanism could help enormously in having a very concrete focus in the amendment and maybe even enforcement of laws. From work with groups all over the world, we know that working within countries to have these laws changed or enforced and this mechanism will help in this area.

In the intervening years when CEDAW isn't focusing the same country there aren't many other international tools to use. There is also the SR on trafficking focusing exclusively on women and other mandate holders should be encouraged to do so, but that's still a bit ad hoc not the same as having a dedicated mechanism.

Governments promised 15 years ago in Beijing to get rid of discriminatory laws and gave themselves a target date of 2005. Far from achieving this, some countries are trying to introduce new laws that discriminate and some are moving back on their promises to enforce equality legislation. In this fifteenth anniversary of Beijing it would be nice to celebrate a very concrete new mechanism that could help us achieve some of these promises.

### **2.**

#### **Traditional values – A backgrounder**

##### **Universality of Human Rights**

While there are positive aspects of diverse cultural and historical backgrounds that could contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights and human dignity, "tradition" comprises a mixed set of views and practices often used to legitimize human rights violations.

The common "values of humankind" underpinning international human rights law are already

inscribed in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** and other international human rights instruments. These include **equality and non-discrimination** – specifically **to protect groups that have “traditionally” faced marginalisation or exclusion**. Injecting undefined concepts of “tradition” into this framework risks upsetting the careful balance found in existing instruments and subordinating the universality of human rights to cultural relativism.

### **Concerns with a traditional values approach:**

Human rights are inherently **forward-looking**; tradition is inherently **backward-looking**. States often seek to justify human rights violations on the basis that it’s “always been this way”. “Tradition” is frequently invoked to justify **maintaining the status quo**, ignoring the fact that cultures and social norms have always evolved and will continue to change with time; by contrast, a human rights-based approach often requires *changes* to the status quo in order to ensure compliance with international standards.

Worldwide, many practices claiming to be “traditional” are in fact of recent origin; all cultures contain diverse and contradictory traditions. Most importantly, many “traditional values” may be inconsistent with international human rights, and **“traditional values” are frequently invoked to justify human rights violations**. In previous decades and centuries, **mixed-race marriages, desegregation, women having the right to work, to vote, to hold public office, or to own property would have been thought by many to be inconsistent with “traditional values”**.

As many marginalised groups have experienced, “traditional values” are frequently invoked to restrict access to human rights for those segments of society who, from the conservative viewpoint or perspective of those in authority, challenge the mainstream or fall outside the dominant norm. For example, recent reports issued by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and UNICEF have highlighted how women and children are targeted as “witches” through traditional practices and traditional justice systems, resulting in numerous violations of their human rights through stigmatization, abandonment, eviction from communities, torture and murder. In 2002, the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women had already noted how these, and other cultural practices, constitute violations of women’s rights.

In another recent example, a Government Minister of State for Ethics and Integrity defended a Bill that would have included the **death penalty** for certain forms of consensual same-sex conduct on the basis that it was needed to maintain **“traditional Christian values as prescribed in the Bible.”** (*Ugandan MPs debate Bill proposing death penalty for gay sex*, Times Online, December 18, 2009). UN Secretary General **Ban Ki-moon** recently noted that “deeply-rooted cultural sensitivities can be aroused when we talk about sexual orientation” but underlined that **“cultural considerations should not stand in the way of basic human rights”**.

**Women** are frequently the subject of traditions, often linked to national, cultural or ethnic practices, which violate human rights and freedoms. For example, reports of the **Special Rapporteur on violence against women** have repeatedly addressed **harmful traditional practices** such as **female genital mutilation; honour killings; spousal abuse; dowry-related violence; and customary laws that deny women’s equality**. Last year a resolution on discrimination against women by the Human Rights Council recognized that “laws, policies, customs and traditions that restrict women’s equal access to participate fully in development processes and public and political life are discriminatory.”

While “tradition” is used in certain circumstances to circumscribe or deny rights, it is also true that the claims of **Indigenous Peoples** to rights are sometimes **inappropriately pitted against** those urging caution in using frames of “traditional values”. “Traditional values” can be and

are manipulated, and these struggles related to “misuse of tradition” are not mutually exclusive.

**The link between traditional values and traditional practices:**

**Harmful traditional practices** are frequently legitimised by the **values on which they are founded**.

One NGO representative pointed out in a statement to the Human Rights Council during discussions around the resolution on traditional values:

“Today, women and other marginalized communities in my region and around the world have made significant gains. Yet there are some who still advance so-called “tradition” as an argument against many attempts to remedy injustices or protect human rights:

- calling on the State to protect women from **domestic violence**, we are told, would violate the **“traditional value” of familial privacy**;
- combating **marital rape** allegedly contravenes the **“traditional value” of women’s duty to obey their husbands**;
- **equality in marriage** similarly goes against the **“traditional value” of male guardianship**, or qawama.
- Even when [our] government finally decided to ban the practice of **female genital cutting** last year, it was accused of standing against the **“traditional value” of protecting the chastity of girls.**”<sup>3</sup>

**UN Precedents on Tradition, Culture and Human Rights:**

*For example:*

- The **Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action** calls upon States to work towards the **elimination** of “the **harmful effects of certain traditional or customary practices**, cultural prejudices and religious extremism” (VDPA, para. 38).
- “All human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated. ... While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, **regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems**, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms.” (VDPA, para. 5)
- The **Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women** (A/RES/48/104), for example, recognizes **traditional practices harmful to women** as a form of violence against women, and includes amongst these harmful traditional practices: “**battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, and female genital mutilation**”;
- HRC Resolution 7/29 on the **Rights of the Child** expresses concern at “the **horrific scale and impact of all forms of violence against children**, in all regions, in their homes and families, in schools, care and justice systems, workplaces and in communities, **and urges States**: ... to take measures to **change attitudes that condone or normalize any form of violence against children, including** cruel, inhuman or degrading forms of discipline, **harmful traditional practices** and all forms of sexual violence” (OP 14(e), 2008).
- That resolution also calls upon States to take all necessary measures “to **eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against girls**, including female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, rape, sexual abuse and **harmful traditional or customary practices, including female genital mutilation, son preference, marriages without free**

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<sup>3</sup> Oral statement, item 8, Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, 30 September 2009.

**and full consent of the intending spouses, early marriages and forced marriages and forced sterilization, including addressing their root causes” (OP 24(b));**

- HRC Resolution 6/37 on the **Elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief** emphasises the need to address “the **situations of violence and discrimination that affect many women as well as individuals from other vulnerable groups** in the name of religion or belief or **due to cultural and traditional practices**” (PP 10 and OP 11(b));
- HRC Resolution 10/23, on the Independent Expert in the field of cultural rights, affirms that “**no one may invoke cultural diversity to infringe upon human rights guaranteed by international law**, nor to limit their scope”;
- The **UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** affirms the spiritual traditions of Indigenous Peoples, while also underscoring that the “human rights and fundamental freedoms of all shall be respected.” (art 46).
- The **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** (A/CONF.177/20) requires governments to “**refrain from invoking any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations**”;
- The **African Women's Protocol** requires States to “**eradicate elements in traditional and cultural beliefs, practices and stereotypes which legitimise and exacerbate the ... tolerance of violence against women**”.

#### **Concerns expressed in the Human Rights Council:**

During explanations of vote on the “traditional values” resolution at the Human Rights Council, States from diverse regions acknowledged that traditional values may be applied to undermine human rights protections. Those which supported the resolution did so on the explicit understanding that traditional values may not be invoked to undermine or limit international human rights standards:

- Senegal: “We share the idea that taking into account traditional values must in no shape or form undermine the principles we have adopted in the field of human rights. This is a challenge that the Human Rights Council has set itself.”
- Nigeria: “We agree that there are some traditional values that have been used to abuse human rights, but we believe that it is only when such values are discussed ... that we can truly protect those rights.”
- Bolivia: “In no case, and I repeat *in no case*, would we accept that through traditional values one should try to include acts that are contrary to human rights.”
- Norway: “It is, however, evident to my delegation that significant developments of human rights norms and standards took place *in spite of* traditional values. In this regard, I would particularly highlight the progress achieved on gender equality”.
- United States: “We are also concerned that the term ‘traditional values’ ... is so vague and open-ended that it could be used to legitimize human rights abuses”
- Japan: “We remain concerned over the expression ‘traditional values of humankind’, which is open to various interpretations, and could be viewed as in conflict with the universality of human rights and basic freedoms outlined in the UDHR and other international human rights instruments. ... Although we do respect the unique history, traditions, custom and culture of each State, we remain concerned that overemphasising these elements could run counter to the universal value of human rights.”
- Ukraine: “Ukraine supports the paramount importance, priority and supremacy of the universal nature of all human rights, and strongly objects to any attempts to substitute them by those national traditional values or regional particularities which run contrary to the .... very essence of the body of human rights and fundamental freedoms established in contemporary human rights law.”

### **Role of the Human Rights Council:**

The Human Rights Council is “responsible for promoting universal respect of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind and in a fair and equal manner.” (GA resolution 60/251, OP 2).

The standards that guide the Council are **international human rights standards**. **The HRC is not a Council of Tradition; it is a Council of Human Rights**. The Council would face an impossible task if it were to pursue anthropological investigations in an attempt to adjudicate competing claims about what is a “tradition” and what is not, and certainly could not make decisions about which traditions within a country or community would take precedence over others. Care must be taken to ensure that “traditional values” are never invoked to justify violating human rights, including of groups or minorities which historically have endured persecution.

Agreed international standards have already been affirmed by UN Member States in carefully-negotiated instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. If the goal of a traditional values approach is to **promote respect for the values and standards already articulated in these instruments**, this can best be accomplished through **human rights education**.

### **3.**

#### **Summary of relevant issues during the 15<sup>th</sup> session of the HRC – Sept. 2010**

##### **Creation of a new mandate on discrimination against women**

On 1 October 2010 the Human Rights Council (the Council) adopted, without a vote, a landmark resolution to establish a working group of five independent experts on discrimination against women. The resolution calls on States to revoke any legislation that discriminates against women, both in law and in implementation. It establishes the working group for three years, with a mandate to compile best practices on the elimination of laws that discriminate against women and to report annually to the Council on the continued existence of such laws and good practices in revoking them.

The resolution was adopted by consensus despite strong opposition from several States, in particular from within the OIC. Many States, whose opposition stemmed from more ideological grounds (Egypt, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Libya and Iran), expressed their disapproval to the mandate in procedural terms. They argued a new special procedure would duplicate work of existing mechanisms, such as the newly created UN Women and CEDAW, and questioned whether there were the financial resources to support the creation of another special procedure. Throughout the negotiations some States also made strenuous efforts to weaken the new mandate.

In an effort to reach consensus, initial plans to create an Independent Expert were shelved at the last minute in favour of the working group. There are divided views on whether this is a good thing. Some States have concerns about the high cost of a working group (more than 1.5 million US dollars per year), some believe a working group will have more legitimacy in dealing with these sensitive issues, as it will be able to represent a range of different cultural and legal perspectives, and some are concerned a working group will be less efficient than an individual expert. The key challenge now will be to ensure strong candidates from the five UN regions are found for this important mandate.

During the adoption of the resolution Saudi Arabia proposed an amendment that would



limit States to respecting only the commitments towards women's equality they have signed up to under international law. The original resolution called on States to eliminate all discrimination against women. Since many OIC States in particular have made declarations under CEDAW that limit their obligations where they conflict with Sharia law, this amendment would have greatly hindered the effectiveness of the new mechanism. The amendment was narrowly defeated in a vote, with 22 against, 18 in favour and four abstentions. The original resolution was then adopted without a vote.

In other developments, Cuba's controversial attempt to present a resolution, which would limit the independence of the High Commissioner in respect to the Council, was abandoned after the President agreed to issue a Presidential Statement on the matter. However, hopes this would enable the development of a text that did not commit the High Commissioner to formally presenting OHCHR's programme of activities to the Council did not materialise. The Presidential Statement invites the High Commissioner to present OHCHR's human rights programme, part of the UN's strategic framework, to the Council, and to pass the views of States and relevant stakeholders to the Committee for Programme and Coordination for its consideration. In doing so it inserts the Council into already established procedures for oversight of the human rights programme, and gives it a role that may be misused by States that seek to undermine the High Commissioner's independent role.

**WHO**  
**Commission on Health**

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<b>Convenor Commission on Health</b>	
<b>Main Representative at WHO</b>	<b>Email: iaw.health@womenalliance.org</b>
<b>Date: 15 October 2010</b>	
1. Following through with women's rights and gender concerns regarding the WHO FCTC 2. Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights, focus on Maternal Mortality/Morbidity (MDG 5) 3. Collaboration with WHO	

**Report:**

**Ad 1. Women and Tobacco** remained an important focus of the Commission's work based on the *WHO Frame Convention on Tobacco Control, FCTC*. The yearly *Conferences of the Parties, COPs*, have been attended by Commission member Soon-Young Yoon, an NGO expert on gender issues and on relating these issues to women's rights and empowerment as applicable to the WHO FCTC.

Among the tools:

Writing NGO reports on Women and smoking for the sessions of the CEDAW Committee, with country information and statistics. Report No. XIV, of July 2010, is attached.

Results:

- IAW membership has been made aware of the WHO FCTC and its importance for the human rights of women, including health rights; the NGO reports on countries where IAW has a member society have been forwarded to them for information and reaction.
- The Committee places importance on the issue in the discussion of government reports on the CEDAW.
- The number of countries reporting under CEDAW on Women and Tobacco as a health issue is on the rise.



**Soon-Young Yoon (forth in front row) promoting women's rights in Tokyo, October 2010**

Presenting statements at UN events: the written statement on Women and Tobacco for the ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review, June 2010, is [attached](#).

**Ad 2.** The Commission kept working on issues of **reproductive health rights**, on the basis of resolutions 1 and 2 the New-Delhi Congress adopted in 2007 ([www.womenalliance.org](http://www.womenalliance.org) , click on Other Issues).

Messages have reached membership via the *e-Newsletter* and the *International Women's News*.

Commission member and Liaison Officer to WHO Hélène Sackstein -who also represents IAW at the Human Rights Council- provided input for a number of international events and did considerable lobbying work and negotiation on language strengthening women's rights - in collaboration with a Global coalition made up of key NGO human rights activists - to ensure adoption by the human rights council of resolutions on

- Maternal mortality and morbidity in 2009 and its follow-up in 2010
- The right to health containing a strong reproductive health component, also in 2009 and 2010
- the creation of a new mechanism to eliminate laws that discriminate against women in 2010 ([attached](#)) many of which impact on health.

We also attach as examples

The statement (IPAS and IAW) on MDG 5 for the 2010 session of the Commission on the Status of Women, CSW, containing 4 key issues: managing the consequences of sexual violence against women and girls; broadening the involvement of men in reproductive health; enabling women to exercise their reproductive and sexual rights; linking or integrating various aspects of reproductive health.

- The oral statement we wrote for the WHO Health Assembly, WHA 2010.
- For the ECOSOC session in June 2010 we followed the President's invitation to provide statements. The title: *Achieving MDG 5 is both feasible and cost-effective*.

**Ad 3.** The role of the Commission Convenor and Main IAW Representative at WHO has been a) that of a communicator and coordinator of the above-mentioned activities and included writing to the Commission members;

b) that of the main organizer and the rapporteur of the successful IAW roundtable at WHO, June 19, 2009 on *Implementing the Internationally Agreed Goals and Commitments with regard to Public Health. MDG 5 and MDG 6– more than Health Issues ?!*

Since April 2009 IAW is listed on the platform <http://nims.who.int> among the civil society organizations in official relations with WHO.

In June 2010 our Triennial report to WHO was due. It is the basis for the Executive Board's decision (in January 2011) whether we keep our official status.

IAW relates to the Department Gender, Women and Health, GWH. A slightly **revised Plan of Collaboration for 2011 to 2013 is in the process of elaboration**. For the current one go to [www.womenalliance.org](http://www.womenalliance.org)

According to the Plan IAW has to organize, at Congresses and the International Meetings, an event in one of the priority areas of GWH. These include Violence against Women, and the roundtable about Human trafficking programmed for the Boksburg Congress will serve the purpose.

After years of interim leadership Dr. Tonya Nyagiro was appointed Director of the department GWH. The small but dedicated staff continues educating and sensibilizing the 3 levels of the WHO: Headquarters, Regional and national levels, on the gender dimensions of health.

From end of November 2009 to end of January 2010 the department hosted an **online discussion on Women and Health** "How far have we come since Beijing?" For IAW I wrote comments on reproductive health and on cervical cancer testing (see *International Women's News*, No. 1, 2010, p. 8). A wide array of health and gender experts from many countries took part in the exercise in preparation of the CSW 2010 writing on the achievements, the remaining challenges and the way forward to improve women's health.

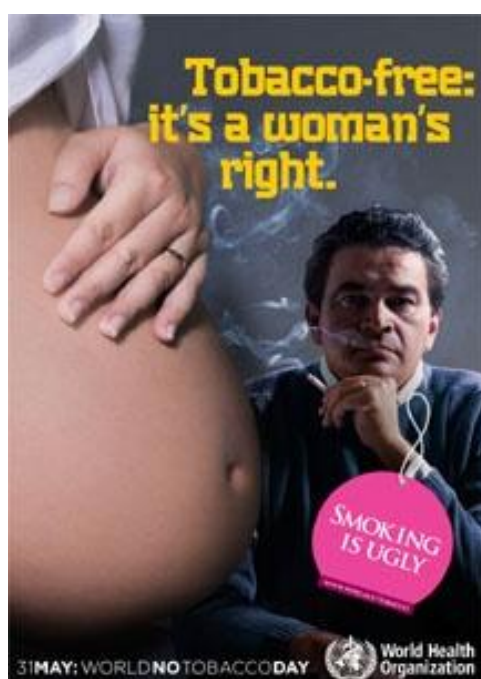
#### **Annexes to above report:**

##### **NGO REPORT on Women and Tobacco**

**Albania, Argentina, Australia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Russian Federation, Turkey, India**

**Submitted by the International Alliance of Women and the International Network of Women Against Tobacco**

**to the 46<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women  
12-30 July 2010, New York**



**TOBACCO USE IS A SERIOUS THREAT TO THE HEALTH OF PREGNANT WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN.** In many high-income countries tobacco use has been a leading preventable cause of low birthweight, preterm delivery, sudden infant death syndrome. Globally, about 40 % of men smoke and only about 9 % of women smoke, increasing risks for women of reproductive age to secondhand smoke (*Gender, Women, and Tobacco*, WHO, Geneva, 2010). This is of concern in Turkey where about 52 % of men and 17.3% of women smoke. Similar situations are found in India where more than 30% of men (compared to only 2.8 % women) smoke and Fiji (27.7% for males versus 5.1% for females).

**THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY IS TARGETING GIRLS AND WOMEN.** Images of glamour, independence, and modernity are used to market tobacco to youth and women of reproductive age. There are danger signs ahead. In countries like Argentina (27 %), India (9.7 %) and the Russian Federation (24.4%), more

girls age 13 to 15 years use tobacco than do adult women (WHO, *Report on the global Tobacco Epidemic*, 2008, Geneva 2008). Tobacco use is an additional risk factor to adolescent pregnancies that already account for 15% of total maternal deaths worldwide. Perinatal deaths are 50% higher among babies born to mothers under 20 years of age than among those born to mothers aged 20-29 years (*Women and Health: today's evidence, tomorrow's agenda*, WHO, Geneva 2009).

• **SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH ARE AFFECTED.** Women and men who smoke are more likely than non-smokers to experience infertility and delays in conceiving. Maternal smoking during pregnancy reduces birth weight and exposure to paternal smoking can contribute to a pregnant woman's ill health. For example, there is sound evidence that exposure to secondhand smoke causes lung cancer, coronary heart disease and contributes to breast cancer, stroke and pre-term delivery.

• **TOBACCO USE CAN UNDO GAINS MADE IN REDUCING MATERNAL MORTALITY AND IMPROVING CHILD HEALTH.** The gains made in maternal and child health due to prenatal care, attended births, **access to family planning**, and immunization programs will be adversely affected if tobacco use among reproductive-aged women and men is not curbed (Bloch, M. et.al, "Tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure among pregnant women in low-and middle-income countries: a call to action" in *Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica*, April, 2010). Tobacco use increases the burden on health services, contributes to rising costs of health care delivery, and disproportionately affects poor urban and rural families. Many households in low-income countries spend more on tobacco than on food and education. (For example, the poorest 20% of households in Mexico spend nearly 11% of their income on tobacco).

• **WOMEN HAVE THE RIGHT TO A TOBACCO FREE ENVIRONMENT.** Tobacco companies use terms like "light" and "mild" so their products seem less harmful. These misleading terms are an affront to women's dignity and violate the rights of women to protection against false advertising. The CEDAW committee should note that none of the States Parties at the 46<sup>th</sup> session reported on tobacco use, even though the guidelines request information on substance abuse, alcohol and tobacco. The health of millions of poor families is at stake, and there must be stronger compliance with provisions of protection under Article 12 of CEDAW and the General Recommendation on health.

### Statement submitted by the International Alliance of Women and the International Network of Women Against Tobacco



Meeting of ECOSOC – Annual Ministerial Review  
June 28 – July 2  
New York, New York

Distinguished delegates,  
A new WHO report on "Gender, Women, and Tobacco" released on World No Tobacco Day this year points out that there are more than a billion smokers worldwide and that about 9% of women and 40% of men smoke. By 2015, tobacco use is expected to cause almost three times as many deaths as HIV/AIDs and will be responsible for 10% of all deaths. Those trends will worsen unless we act now. The International Alliance of Women and the International Network

of Women Against Tobacco believes that preventing an epidemic of tobacco use among women is essential to achieve the Millennium Development Goals related to gender equality, poverty, child and maternal health.

Health and poverty lies at the heart of the issue. Poor women, both urban and rural, are disproportionately affected by the tobacco epidemic. In many countries, these women are the ones who use tobacco the most and yet have the least access to information and services, making them vulnerable to the tobacco industry's marketing of their deadly products. In developing countries, rural women working in tobacco production, manufacture, and marketing are exploited by unfair wages and substandard work conditions. The economic burden of deaths due to tobacco use and exposure also falls hardest on women. Imagine the plight of someone who has lost a husband to lung cancer, and is suddenly thrust into the role of sole breadwinner for the family. If she is one of the millions of illiterate women without rights to land or credit, how can she hope for decent work?

The health of economies as well as mothers and children is at stake. Tobacco aggravates efforts to mobilize resources and optimize financing for development. Rapid urbanization and changes in lifestyle and diet mean that scarce resources are now being used for treatment of noncommunicable diseases. According to WHO, estimates of the total costs of medical care for treatment of smoking-related diseases range from 6% to 15% of countries' total health-care costs and from 0.1% to 1.1% of gross domestic product. The annual direct medical costs of prenatal and postnatal secondhand exposure for children in the United States totaled US\$ 44.6 billion in 2001. Many low income households spend more on tobacco than on food and education. In Indonesia, where smoking is most common among the poor, 15% of the total expenditure of the lowest income group is on tobacco, while the poorest 20% of households in Mexico spend nearly 11% of their income on tobacco.

In addition, commercial interests have violated women's rights. Poor developing countries are flooded with advertisements portraying smoking as glamorous and modern. Tobacco companies have specially designed brands for women. The appeal to women is twofold: attractive packaging and terms like "light" and "mild" to make their products seem less harmful. These misleading strategies are an affront to women's dignity and violate our rights to protection against false advertising.

We draw your attention to these health facts: women who smoke or exposed to smoke are more likely than non-smokers to experience reproductive problems. Men's reproductive health is also affected. Paternal smoking may negatively affect sperms and can contribute to infertility. Smoking during pregnancy increases risks of prematurity, stillbirth, and neonatal death and may cause a reduction in breast milk. In addition, smoking and smoke exposure is one of the major causes of coronary heart disease in women. Smoking and smoke exposure are also risk factors for developing breast cancer.

The rights of women to a safe and healthy environment are violated most when they are exposed to secondhand smoke. This can happen at work or in public places, but it happens mostly at home where women are often powerless to speak up for their own rights. The scientific evidence on secondhand smoke is clear. You can get lung cancer from consistent exposure. Indeed, an estimated 580 lung cancer deaths in the Americas in 2003 were caused by secondhand smoke. Exposure to secondhand smoke results in lower respiratory illnesses, middle-ear disease, and reduced lung function in children and an increased risk for sudden infant death syndrome.

Pregnancy can provide an opportunity to improve the health of the entire family, but maternal health programs have to stop blaming the victim. Most health practitioners talk to pregnant women who smoke about quitting in order having a safe and healthy pregnancy. However, little



attention has been paid to empowering women to reduce their tobacco use or exposure, particularly that in the home. To achieve the MDG on maternal mortality, reproductive health services should address the health of women and men, mothers and fathers. Smoking-cessation interventions designed specifically for women and men need to be developed and delivered to audiences of women and men in appropriate, gender specific environments.

We believe that women's empowerment is key to achieving smoke-free homes and should be included in all maternal and child health policies. And since men are currently the majority of the world's smokers, they are an important audience for anti-tobacco campaigns and key to protecting women's rights to health.

As noted by Article 12 and the General Recommendation on health in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and many recommendations in the Beijing Platform for Action, women's rights to health is a human right. Governments represented here have signed CEDAW and endorsed the policy documents upholding these rights. At least 170 of governments have also ratified the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control that outlines the international standards and legislation that would set the right course for tobacco control with gender equality.

The grave situation calls for adding tobacco use as an indicator for the MDGs in reducing poverty and furthering women's rights to health. To date, national legislation has yet to provide adequate protection. Despite the scientific evidence that tobacco kills, nearly 90% of the world's population remains uncovered by comprehensive smoke-free laws. We call for governments to legislate and enforce strong tobacco control measures. Much more can be done by raising taxes to reduce tobacco use. Governments should also enforce total bans on advertising and promotion including standardized plain packaging, and improved health warnings that address our concerns. Take action now so that the MDGs can rapidly move forward.

Statement submitted by the International Alliance of Women



**WHA 63, agenda item 11.24 C - Oral statement**

IAW, Business and Professional Women International, World Wide Organization for Women and other like-minded organizations associated with this statement welcome WHO Secretariat's Progress report on *Reproductive Health Strategy*.

Although Reproductive health, including family planning, is an essential component in the fight against maternal mortality and morbidity, family planning still remains a thorny issue and the rate of this unmet need has barely changed in the least developed countries in spite of the fact that *Rates of contraceptive prevalence* and *Unmet need for family planning* are target indicators for the implementation of MDG 5. Family planning and reproductive health need to be fully integrated into effective primary health care programmes accessible to all, including young men.

There is now plenty of irrefutable evidence showing that family planning information and access to contraception are essential for progress. Recent research by the Guttmacher Institute<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Report ADDING IT UP, the benefits of investing in sexual and reproductive health care, published in December 2009 by the Guttmacher Institute and UNFPA.



indicates, for example, that maternal deaths in developing countries could be slashed by 70 percent, and newborn deaths cut nearly in half, if investment in family planning and maternal and child health services was doubled.

Financial considerations which drive the development agenda are also quite convincing when the same research shows that combining investments in family planning with maternal and newborn health services could save \$1.5 billion annually.

As for the role of family planning in the entire Millennium Development Agenda we recommend an article published in *PROGRESS*<sup>5</sup>, a publication of the joint UNDP/UNFPA/WHO/World Bank programme entitled: “*The MDG with and without reproductive health care*”. It illustrates clearly the undeniably positive impact of reproductive health care, including family planning, on each and every one of all 8 MDGs.

Finally, in June 2009 the U.N. Human Rights Council adopted landmark resolution 11/8 recognizing maternal mortality and morbidity as a pressing human rights concern. This is a clear indication of the need to consider MDG3 on gender equality in the implementation of strategies to achieve of MDG5, both of these MDG also have a strong impact on the attainment of MDG 4.

The foundations have been laid. Based on all the evidence and on WHO Secretariat’s Progress report, success now depend on urgent action by countries, the international community and donors.

The International Alliance of Women stands ready to collaborate on advocacy to ensure our common goals are reached in time.

**UNESCO**

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<b>Highlights:</b> 1.gender Equality 2.Education 3.Africa Poverty	

### **UNESCO REPORT 2010**

In addition to the reports sent during the year the months of September and October have been witness to:

--- **The International Literacy Day** - 8 September 2010- An awards ceremony celebrating International prize winners for their contribution to literacy and non-formal education, followed by the launching of the Knowledge and Innovation Network for Literacy and a roundtable on Literacy and women’s empowerment.

On this occasion Mrs. Irina Bokova, General Director of UNESCO underlined that the decision of creating UN WOMEN will permit to speak in the name of gender and help make other UN entities held more accountable. These ideas were shared by Rachel Mayanja and Aminata Touré who spoke during the **meeting « UN WOMEN: the new UN framework for women »** held at

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<sup>5</sup> Issue N° 76, 2008 - Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction

UNESCO on September 13<sup>th</sup> 2010 when Mrs .Touré highlighted that « the main challenge for UN WOMEN will be to incorporate the gender question into the UN system. The challenge, [she added] will also be in the coordination between countries. »

--- **Committee on International Non-governmental organizations** - October 6th and 7th 2010, where NGOs reaffirmed their accord with UNESCO. 336 NGOs are in official relations with UNESCO. During these days the new partnership strategy was referred to: Instead of considering NGOs as simple program executants, the later are proposed a strategic partnership. They have been allowed to participate to national consultations (as observers). now they would like to become real actors. They also wish the secretariat to be present and to participate in all the commissions.

NGOs and Member States have been able to express their ideas on how to use « such powerful tool as shown by NGOs ‘s numerous actions, their presence on the ground, their dynamism based on volunteering and their work potential » They also reflected on how to use that power in the best way. They think it can be done through the JPCs (joint programmatic commissions NGO-UNESCO) and mostly through the work done on the ground, by strengthening the contact with and the action of UNESCO. This cooperation has to be done with respect to the UNESCO texts, but also with respect to NGO liberty within the frame of this work.

Within this framework, we participated in the drafting of a text in which, after presenting women NGOs, we called for the resuming of the JPC on Women that has stopped functioning for a few years.

For better States/NGO relationships, it is necessary to establish contacts between National Commissions and NGOs.

It was suggested to create a data bank - Member States /NGO partners, to allow all to find any information they need about the other.

October 2010 has seen the opening of the **185th Executive Board session** when, during the plenary, the UNESCO General Director, Mrs Bokova, explained that since her arrival she has changed her teams to implement gender. She explained that she has reduced a certain number of started works to concentrate only on priority subjects --- education, mainly of women and girls, gender equality (to prepare the after 2015), culture to peace and the dialogue between cultures, education in conflict areas---. to spend the funds allowed in a better way. 2011 will be the year of China. Mrs Bokova’s priority, as she had announced during the ECOSOC meeting, is that UNESCO should take the lead in education. She also congratulated Mrs Michele Bachelet for her new position at the UN. She hopes to cooperate a lot and work with her.

In addition to the general conferences, we **participate in the work of the JPCs and their ad hoc groups**. This has allowed IAW to participate in:

- The elaboration of a full day for the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Children’s Rights in the presence of 250 youth. UNESCO has asked us the reprogramming of this day next May. Now we are preparing another day on « women, Africa and human development » within the Human Rights framework .

- A booklet « ground actions testimony » presenting the work of grassroots NGOs in Africa ( the priority country this year at UNESCO). In the name of IAW we presented what the association La Colombe does in Togo. The Booklet is to be presented to the UNESCO ambassadors during the 185<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Board.

- Files and a booklet within the framework of the dialogue between cultures.

- A colloquy: « Literacy with respect to Human Rights: NGOs and University voices » , allowed us to present the work of the Israeli association HIPPY, in non-formal education, offering literacy to women, together with their children in infant schools.

- Answers to the questionnaire in view of the preparation of the program and budget for 2012-2013

IAW has been elected to the Committee Board of the EFA (Education for All) group.

### **INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT**

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**Affiliate / Associate: IAW, Italy**

**Email:**

**International rep: Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC)**

**Date: 14 October 2010**

#### **Highlights**

1. Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC)
2. Gender Justice

### **REPORT ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AT THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT**

Currently three States Parties to the Rome Statute that established the International Criminal Court (ICC) have referred cases to the Court. They are Uganda, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In addition, the Security Council has referred the situation in Darfur, Sudan – a non-State Party. The Prosecutor has opened and is conducting investigations in all these situations.

Regarding Uganda, the case The Prosecutor v. Joseph Kony, Vincent Otti, Okot Odhiambo and Dominic Ongwen is currently before Pre-Trial Chamber II. Five warrants of arrest have been issued against five top members of the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) but after the confirmed death of one of them, proceedings against him were ended. The other four suspects remain at large.

Regarding the Central African Republic, the case The Prosecutor v. Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo is at the pre-trial stage and is currently being heard before Pre-Trial Chamber II.

Regarding the Democratic Republic of the Congo, three cases are being heard before the relevant Chambers: The Prosecutor v. Thomas Lubanga Dyilo; The Prosecutor v. Bosco Ntaganda; and The Prosecutor v. Germain Katanga and Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui.

Two cases are at the pre-trial stage, while the proceedings against Thomas Lubanga Dyilo are at the trial stage. The accused Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, Germain Katanga and Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui are in the custody of the ICC. Bosco Ntaganda is still at large

Regarding Darfur, Sudan, three cases are being heard before Pre-Trial Chamber I: The Prosecutor v. Ahmad Muhammad Harun (“Ahmad Harun”) and Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman (“Ali Kushayb”); The Prosecutor v. Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir; The Prosecutor v. Bahar Idriss Abu Garda and The Prosecutor v. Abdallah Banda Abakaer Nourain and Saleh Mohammed Jerbo Jamus. Bahr Idriss Abu Garda appeared voluntarily for the first time before Pre-Trial Chamber I on 18 May 2009. He is not in custody. The three other suspects remain at large.

On 6 November 2009, the situation in the Republic of Kenya was assigned by the Presidency of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to Pre-Trial Chamber II which on 31 March 2010, authorised the Prosecutor to open an investigation about it.

Of most recent relevance has been that, on 8 October 2010, the Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Court (ICC) reversed a decision of Trial Chamber I of 8 July 2010 to stay proceedings in the case *The Prosecutor v. Thomas Lubanga Dyilo* and to release the accused. The decision of the Trial Court was based on the fact that Lubanga who is accused of conscripting children under the age of 15 into the Patriotic Forces for the Liberation of Congo between September 2002 and August 2003 could not be given a free trial because the prosecution had refused to release the names of two witnesses.

Judge Sang-hyun Song, presiding judge in the appeals, delivered a summary of the judgments in open court, and explained that the Appeals Chamber found that the Trial Chamber did not make an error in determining that the Prosecutor failed to implement its orders and threatened the fairness of the trial but that there were less drastic measures, such as sanctions to bring about compliance, at its disposal besides staying the proceedings and ordering the release of Lubanga. The trial can and will, therefore, resume and Lubanga remains in custody.

Between 31 May and 11 June 2010, the Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice took (WIGJ) part in the Review Conference of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, in Kampala, Uganda. The Review Conference was the largest gathering of states in 2010 outside the General Assembly of the United Nations and was attended by over 600 members of civil society. In its advocacy paper entitled 'Advancing Gender Justice - A Call to Action', WIGJ called for the implementation of the Rome Statute and complementarity strategies including the full domestication by states of the gender provisions of the Rome Statute; improving victims' participation at the ICC and in other justice processes through an accessible legal aid framework, policies that address the participation of vulnerable victims, and a comprehensive security framework; boosting resources for the ICC Trust Fund for Victims and developing a set of gender-inclusive, victim-centred guidelines for case-based reparations; encouraging stronger and more consistent jurisprudence on gender-based crimes from international judicial bodies; and enhancing state cooperation in their responsibilities as to assist the ICC with arrests of suspects, freezing and seizing of assets, and promoting of universal ratification of the Rome Statute. The paper also advocates that gender justice should be advanced through peace processes.

Only by implementing such measures will it be possible to dispel the conviction that gender-based crimes are still under-investigated, under-prosecuted and are considered the least reprobative war crime.

Deirdre Exell Pirro, IAW Member, Italy

IAW representative to the Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC)

**FAO 2010**

Submitted by Bettina Corke

2009/2010 has been a very busy period for me as the UN Representative for IAW at the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO,) I would have liked to have been able to report to this Congress, that some major FAO policy changes have been made to include women living in the

rural areas, in some major FAO agricultural and rural development schemes during the last three years. Sadly, this not the case.

I cannot write this report in the traditional reporting back IAW style because ,on this occasion I need to share with you the political reality of why I think that after ten years of attempting to have the issue of women living and working in the rural areas included and not excluded from FAO national programmes of action , the issue of women and our inclusion into the policies and actions of FAO will still be sidelined and misrepresented.

In addition, to the regular monthly meetings of INGOs , (the AD HOC GROUP of INGOs in Rome-IAW is a member of the AD Hoc Group) there have been countless meetings, informal and formal, around the question of Reform of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), The Reform of FAO is being carried out under the general Reform Process being undertaken by the entire UN system, under the guidance and leadership of the UN Secretary General..

The end result of the FAO Reform Process is that (i) a Committee of FAO has been elevated into being the main policy making body at FAO and the \UN for Food Security and (ii) a new form of Civil Society UN form of participation is being set up and led by a civil society organization /network (CSO) with some self selected CSOs who have elected themselves to be the lead actors for the entire FAO civil society partnership arrangement. This limited social movement CSO/FAO concept was pushed forward as the only one to play the major role in Food Security, which would then sit very well into the overall Global Partnership for Food Security arrangement- The INGOs and WINGOs meaningful participation and representation into this Food Security debate has been deliberately sidelined

The very legitimacy of the UN functioning under international law and the UN Charter has been undermined . If this is not challenged by INGOs/WINGOs and other INGOs at the UN; the UN will lose its legitimacy to operate as a multilateral body. -This particular FAO/ CSO/network emerged here in Rome and it was supported by and funded by FAO and other Rome based agencies and the UN Non Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS) took on the promotion and public relations work on behalf of civil society. This particular UN/FAO/ CSO arrangement ( as are the other Global Partnership arrangements throughout the UN System) is not open and transparent and it is without accountability to the General Assembly or to the FAO/CFS and /or to certain other UN Agencies.

Another policy management issue to emerge during this long debate was the question as to whether or not the FAO\* and its reformed Committee on Food Security (CFS) should be under the direct control of the UN Secretary General in New York. The annual budget of the 3 Rome based UN agencies is around 11 Billion

*\* FAO, World Food Programme (WFP) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) are the three Rome based agencies and now are together on the question of Food Security.*

The UN Secretary General has also imposed a restriction on how far this Reform could in fact go. He did that, by insisting that the day to day operations and developmental aspects of the UN must follow the same path that the UN has been following for at last ten years - Yet, it is this UN way of doing business which has brought us, since 1993, developmental failure after failure By imposing this limitation, the Secretary General can be assured that his chosen experts to his High Level Panel of Experts(HLPE)... (who are quite often ex-employees from the UN, World Bank or Government Ministries and/or are lobbyists/consultants for the political arm of the

private sector and for specific financial and banking investment & transnational interests) ..will continue to advise and guide the future development of policy and programmes

Two NEW “social engineering” approaches are being used in this on-going UN Reform process . One is called “ UN Global Partnerships. A Global Partnership for Food Security is already being established and it is being established within FAO and the UN, without precise accountability and monitoring. procedures in place. So much so, that in the case of FAO/CFS its reform process is dominated by special interests . a few Donor member States and transnational elite funders at the UN G8 and World Bank levels. The other approach functions under the banner of Civil Society. Both are unaccountable and unmonitored. These two UN and UN related “projects” are coming in under The Reform of the UN process and it is this undemocratic and non transparent way of functioning, that is being “fast tracked” through the UN and “rubber stamped” without due thought or due process by the various Governing Bodies, the FAO and other UN Agencies.

Because, the FAO/CFS/CSO Reform infrastructure and method of operation has been framed by this inadequate Global Partnership and Civil Society way of working it would be unethical for INGOs in status with ECOSOC to support these unmonitored ways of working and use of development funds. They cannot expose their memberships to this flawed way of “doing business”. This may account for the fact that right from the very beginning of 2009 NGO/ INGOs have not been treated as equal partners in this FAO contrived and un-monitored civil society CSO&NGO& Private Sector grouping and internet network The AD HOC GROUP OF INGOs ( 30 INGOs in FAO Rome) has written officially to convey their concern over this matter of FAO/CSOs lack of accountability. INGOs see this new FAO/CFS/CSO approach as an approach which undermines the “*we the people aspect*” of the UN Charter. A UN Charter which ties INGOs, and their memberships, internationally, nationally and regionally into a legal and binding commitment to international law and accountability.

For Women & WINGOs this link back to the General Assembly and to all the International Laws and Treaties is essential, because it gives women an opportunity, for example, to implement the Convention to Eliminate all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) at the national and Regional levels For IAW at FAO, this means the implementation of Article 14 of CEDAW on Rural Women.

The one bright spot for me personally and for IAW here in Rome was that IAW’s, President , Rosy Weiss, was invited by FAO to participate in the JUNE 2010 Intergovernmental Meeting What she noted during that meeting was that in spite of all evidence to the contrary of the worth and the urgent need to include women farmers , peasant and subsistence farmers, rural women workers in the schemes being undertaken by FAO that women were still being excluded,, In a letter written by IAW to FAO and to the CFS, Rosy Weiss said “*Women are not vulnerable they are made vulnerable when they appear in the final text of the CFS report to the FAO Council in the category of the “... most affected and the most vulnerable...” along with Youth & Indigenous Peoples*”

Women INGO’s (WINGOs) here in Rome constantly struggle to remind FAO that their refusal to include women farmers, peasant and subsistence farmers, agricultural and food processing workers, women living and working in the rural areas in their priority programmes is self-defeating. Being included for women, is the only way in which women can benefit from the programmes which offer training, credit , food security, employment and sustainable development in the rural areas. Women’s exclusion is not only indicative of. male chauvinism but also indicative of bad development and bad governance..



Whatever happens to FAO, whether it is in New York or in Rome , I sincerely hope that the CFS will finally see the critical need to include women in their schemes to alleviate the hunger and poverty of rural populations. If this happens, the IAW representative to FAO will be able to submit a more cheerful and hopeful Report to the next IAW Congress,

I am honoured and privileged to serve IAW at FAO and I look forward to a Reformed FAO which will truly involve women into its policies and programmes. A reformed FAO and a Reformed CFS which will no longer treat women as victims of circumstance, worthy only of charity, pity and adhoc projects.-

*Bettina Corke*



## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **IAW MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT**

**Pat Richardson, [iaw.membership@womenalliance.org](mailto:iaw.membership@womenalliance.org)**

It gives me great pleasure to present my fourteenth Annual Report as Membership Secretary. As most of you know, the administration of the IAW is done by volunteers working from their own computers, photocopiers and homes at different ends of the earth...At the moment, our President, Rosy Weiss, lives in Austria and our Secretary-General, Lene Pind, in Denmark, and our Treasurer, Rakesh Dhawan in India; Joke Sebus, the Editor of the monthly email newsletter, in the Netherlands and Priscilla Todd, the editor of 'The International Women's News' in Melbourne in Australia.

My duties keep me busy for many hours every week, and I view myself as the International switchboard, contacting and answering people, mainly by e-mail, ...I endeavour to reply immediately to inquiries as I am 'on-line' all day.

My duties also involve keeping the master files up-to-date on my computer, plus I keep extra files for the use of the Regional Directors, lists of our libraries, life members and 'freebees'. As you can imagine, all this keeps me busy...**I would like to thank all those IAW members, who let me know their changes of address, (not only postal, but email), and, especially those members who act as the Collectors in various countries, who keep me up to date on our individual members whereabouts and payments...** I e-mail copies of the updated master files to the President, Secretary and Treasurer after every major update for their information and use. I also send a back-up copy to Priscilla Todd in Melbourne as an extra safety precaution.

**For the last two years, I have taken back the task of looking after and updating the names and addresses of our members for our Printers in Switzerland to post out 'The International Women's News'. Alison Brown, our wonderful Web content manager, has devised a new system for this part of the administration. Our journal goes to 448 postal addresses...and, as Affiliates, Board members, Collectors and UN reps get extra copies, an extra 332 copies are mailed out to them...making a total of 780 copies of the IWN being posted.**

Since 1998, I have worked very closely with Joke Sebus, the Editor of our very successful monthly email newsletter, in searching the world for our member's email addresses. We are in almost daily contact with each other. **From a handful of email addresses in 1998, we now have hundreds of email addresses for our members, kept on a confidential list.**

**One of my other hats is as the Individual members Representative** on the IAW Board, and in Oct 2008 on my way to The Hague, I organised an afternoon tea in London for our Associated societies and individual members to meet Rosy...this was hosted by our Associated

society in the UK, the Sri Lankan Womens Assoc. of the UK...for which I thank them very much...and as a result of this gathering, we now have Ann Higginson as our individual members' Collector in the UK...

I enjoy the work I am doing and hope it is meeting the needs of the IAW.



## IAW Newsletter 2010

The electronic newsletter reaches more than 450 IAW members and friends in 60 countries by e-mail.

It is always put up promptly on the IAW website by webmaster Trevor Bennet, which is appreciated very much. He has also put it in yellow on the starting page, under 'Recent updates', so now it is easy to find too.

A team that consists of Priscilla Todd (editing), Pat Richardson (administration) and myself (composing) is trying to mail around at least one newsletter every month.

We keep the lay-out very simple so it will be easy to open, without too many costs. And we try to keep the content as actual and concise as possible, on 6 pages.

In May 2010 we have mailed around an *Action Sheet* and many sheets after this first one, to the IAW members for the 35<sup>th</sup> IAW Congress, on 23 – 27 November 2010 in South Africa. With the Preliminary Program, registration forms, accommodation details and other information, all produced by the good work of IAW Secretary General Lene Pind and hostess Mmabatho Ramagoshi and her organisers.

A *NewsFlash* in July 2010 asked attention and action of IAW members for three deadlines. On:

- \* submissions of communications for the 55<sup>th</sup> Commission on the Status of Women (August 1;
- \* the lack of fairness in the UN Women hiring process for selecting the Under-Secretary General of UN Women during the International Aids Congress in Vienna;
- \* a better nomination for NGO and civil society representatives at the MDG Summit.

A *Talking Point* in October 2010 pointed to two issues:

- \* the UN will go local in case of the MDGs and
- \* a passionate statement of the Youth Coalition on sexual and reproductive rights for women.

During 2010 we closely followed the news of the United Nations on:

- \* *CEDAW - CSW - the Human Rights Council - the Security Council*
- \* *climate change and the role of women in environment and sustainable development*
- \* *the architecture at the UN, UN Women and the appointment of Michelle Bachelet*
- \* *the discussion of the MDGs and in particular Goal 3 and 5*
- \* *the evaluation of ten years of resolution 1325 and the peace and security process*
  
- \* *the action Women Unite, for decreasing violence against women*
- \* *and also on health, with the fight against HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and the resistance of some countries and organisations against reproductive health and reproductive rights for women.*

In general: the *economic crisis* has entrenched and even reinforced gender gaps and will ask our continuing attention. The number of seats for *women in parliamentary chambers* is slowly and steadily rising, although women are still marginalised in the global economy.

*Priscilla Todd* has this year again done a marvellous job editing all the (many) drafts of the newsletter I mail her every time. She corrects my Dutchy English and puts in poignant headers. *Pat Richardson* has been patiently writing members with e-mails that bounced, because their e-mail addresses had been changed or their quota got exceeded.

So, many thanks for my team mates Priscilla and Pat, for their support during 2010.

I also kindly thank all the IAW members who have been sending us interesting articles and actual news.

*The Netherlands, Oktober 2010,  
Joke Sebus*

## WEBSITE

**Name:** Alison Brown

**Email:** [Arachnae@womenalliance.org](mailto:Arachnae@womenalliance.org)

**Individual member**

**Appointee:** Web Content Manager

**Date:** 12. October 2010

**Highlights (maximum 3 points)** preferably relating to the IAW Action Programme, CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, and the Millennium Development Goals.

1. Maintained the Website with new material in French and English
2. Trouble shot the website when hackers disrupted service over the course of 3 months!
3. Worked closely with Webmaster Trevor Bennett to reach good solutions for the IAW internet presence.

### Report:

After the XXXIV Congress I took on the job of Web content manager, knowing that my skill set was not sufficient to be the actual webmaster/mistress. Fortunately, we have an excellent partner for our web endeavors in Trevor Bennett, friend of the honorary President Patricia Giles.

During the past three years I have endeavored to keep the material updated in both English and French and make the individuals leading the IAW visible to the membership. I wish especially to thank Gudrun Haupter and Hélène Sackstein for their continued contribution to that content. Soon Young Yoon and Irini Sarlis have also sent me useful material.

After a horrible spate of hacker attacks in the summer of 2009 we have had peace return to the web space, but my confidence in our provider, "Network Solutions", has been shaken. We have moved the homepage and domain to another, considerably less expensive provider, with which our webmaster has had favorable experience.

My goal to have a web presence for every institutional member of the IAW has not been achieved because of the lack of cooperation with such organizations without their own website. Ignorance of other member organizations, their structure, and leadership I see as a weak point in our ability to network among ourselves.

During the past triennium I began a blog which has been read by a few people active in the IAW, but not contributed to by most of the membership, although the invitation was there. The lack of response to posts on the blog, except by the occasional spammer, has diminished my enthusiasm for this project.

The presence on Wikipedia began hopefully, but only in English. We have not followed the existence of the page and the current version on-line at Wikipedia has nothing to do with the page I originally put up! References are made to works I have never read and I have no idea who

made all the changes. However, it is not inaccurate, so I will not fuss with it. My account at Wikipedia for the purpose of creating the site was closed and I do not know why.

After the XXXV Congress I expect to update the members' list with the existing affiliates and associates of the IAW and such website URLs that are provided to me. I would be grateful for a short page of description for such affiliates and associates without their own web presence, including a sentence on the founding of the organization, a listing of goals and projects, and a roster of officers and employees along with contact information. The new IAW Board and Executive Committee will be presented in the format currently used on the website along with the Convenors, appointees and other officials. For that purpose I need a portrait photo of each new member and one or two biographical statements. New Officers will receive their official womenalliance.org e-addresses (address and password enabling them to access the mailbox on line or to install the address on their own computers) and I encourage them to use them exclusively for IAW business as that makes for a seamless transition from triennium to triennium.

While the response to the website and blog is not overwhelming (quite the contrary) it should be considered whether the IAW should invest time and energy in a Facebook page and/or open a Twitter account. I am not involved in either of those personally (I have grave data protection/privacy concerns with Facebook) and would need to do a bit of work to get up to speed on the workings of the two social media sites. We know that other organizations have members who tweet from UN meetings. Once again, as with our own Website, the main questions are: who is our audience, who is watching and reading, who would we serve with it, and who will keep the content coming?

I am willing to continue to serve in the capacity of web content manager for the IAW in the coming triennium. Note the title says "manager", not "originator" – here in the woods of Carmel, Indiana, I have no access to original IAW material, neither word nor picture; that is for the women on the forefront of the actions of the IAW.

## **SECRETARY GENERAL**

**Name: Lene Pind**  
**Executive: Secretary General**

**Email: [jawsec@womenalliance.org](mailto:jawsec@womenalliance.org)**  
**October 2010**

### **My computer**

My computer is my contact with the world. It is amazing. The first thing I do every morning when I get up is to turn on my computer to see if there is any news from anybody in IAW. There usually is. So communicating with IAW is part of my daily routine, and I usually spend quite a few hours every day at my computer answering questions, distributing information, exchanging news about email addresses with Pat Richardson, IAW Membership Secretary and Joke Sebus

### **Membership**

I consider the secretariat to be the centre of communications in IAW. Even though I find that I am very busy throughout the year, I still think there is too little communication between members in different parts of the world and the IAW executive. We hear too little from our membership. I hope that the booklet with all the reports will help change that now that it has been published twice. Communications is a key issue nowadays. Therefore I strongly believe that it is time IAW begins to accept and use modern technology in form of social networks (facebook, LinkedIn, ning.com) just as we need to use *skype* to be in close contact with each other at low costs and to attract young people.

### **International Representation**

I am often in contact with our representatives at various international organizations, and I am impressed with the work they do. If I had more time, I would spend it on ‘translating’ UN and other international jargon into ordinary everyday speech. I often wonder how much of the information from our representatives that I distribute is made good use of. And I understand the problem. The language is often difficult.

One of my important tasks in this context is getting our representatives accredited. Often that is complicated, but the interesting thing is that one gets a fairly good idea of international cooperation and difficulties of language and culture in that process.

### **Preparing Congress**

Preparing Congress is a huge job. I won’t deny that. Documents must be sent out, emails bounce, reminders of deadlines must be sent out again and again and again, lists of participants must be worked out, agendas, programme etc. How much easier life would be for the Secretary General if members respected deadlines etc. But I think I am up against human nature here, so it probably cannot be helped. I wish it could.

Working out the agenda is a special challenge. It is so important that the time we spend together is well-spent. So what are the important things to discuss? This year we shall focus on how to improve the workings of the Alliance, and hopefully we shall see some great ideas being developed.

### **THANKS**

I wish to thank **DANIELLE LEVY** for all her help. Unfortunately my French is very poor, but whenever I need help Danielle is ready to provide it – often at very short notice. I am really grateful for that.

I also wish to thank Mmabatho Ramagoshi for her good cooperation during the preparations for Congress