

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

**IAW website: <http://www.womenalliance.com>**

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



**Equal Rights**

**IAW NEWSLETTER - January 2004 nr. 1**

*Dear IAW members,*

*The IAW Editing Committee wishes our electronic readers a happy and prosperous 2004, in a world where peace and wisdom will hopefully prevail!*

*We start 2004 with looking at the IAW Centenary, in particular the IAW objectives during a hundred years – they are still standing straight. You will find IAW members fighting for those objectives in CEDAW, in the AIWC and also in WSIS. Gender equality ranks high on the international agendas – we also have to tackle “gender mainstreaming” in the World Conference of Women.*

*At the end of this newsletter you will find the usual data of conferences, events, URLs, books etc. Our special correspondent from India tells us in her story: mind election time. That’s the right time to put forward your ideas about implementing women’s equal rights!*

**CEDAW**

The Committee is holding its thirtieth session at United Nations Headquarters from 12 to 30 January 2004. The following countries are reporting from States Parties that are scheduled to be examined during this session: Belarus, Bhutan, Ethiopia, Germany, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal and Nigeria.

Information of the reports is to be found on <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

*To look forward to: in the February newsletter you will find a note about CEDAW by IAW Board Member Lene Pind and her Danish working group on CEDAW.*

**All India Women’s Conference - AIWC**

We are happy to know about the Fawcett Society with whom we seem to be sharing common history and concerns. Economic upliftment of women, gender sensitisation, domestic violence and education rights of girl child are some of the issues in which our organisation has been actively involved.

AIWC also happens to be a 75 years old NGO established by Margaret Cousins. Growth of our organisation over the years and the branching out of different activities and programmes have been significant. AIWC has an electronic newsletter and a website. Please access our website - [www.aiwc.org](http://www.aiwc.org) for details regarding our organisation.

*From the President of AIWC, Aparna Basu*

**A bit of History - All India Women’s Conference - WIA - IAW**

In 1882 the first association for women in India was started by Arja Mahila Samaj. Their work was the rehabilitation and education of widows. Very important work. Widows were, due to child marriages, often very young and in miserable and dependent positions.

The Women’s Indian Association (WIA) was established in 1917 by Annie Besant from the UK with two friends, C. Jinarajadasa, who was to be the first President, and Margaret Cousins from Ireland. All three had experience in the European suffragette movement. Their objectives were: to present to women their responsibility as daughters of India, to secure the vote and the right to be elected to all legislative councils.

At the Rome Congress In 1923 the WIA, forerunner of the AIWC, was elected affiliate of the International Women’s Suffrage Alliance (IWSA) [the founding name of the Alliance 1904-1926]. The WIA had at that time 2.370 members in 47 branches, working for a strong women’s movement. In 1926 the IWSA became the International Alliance for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship and in 1946 the International Alliance of Women.

The founding of the All India Women’s Conference took place in Poona in 1927, by Margaret Cousins (1878 \_ 1953). Born in Ireland she made her home in India from 1915 with her husband and dedicated herself to India’s womanhood. A doctor of music, a good pianist, writer and lover

of Indian culture. Indian women owe a great deal to this pioneer and strong believer in women's rights.

### **WIA, forerunner of All India Women's Conference**

The WIA members were also involved in this new organisation. In 1921 the Non-co-operation movement of Mahatma Gandhi brought women into politics. It had become clear that lack of education was the most important deterrent to the development of women. The first Conferences were called "All India Conferences of Women on Education." They adopted educational reforms, demanding primary education for girls. A college for Home Science was set up in Delhi. To the first generation of AIWC members the most crucial problems were social problems. They condemned child marriage, leading to the child marriage restraint acts of 1929. They also condemned illegal trafficking of women and children. Although a non-political organisation, many WIA women played a prominent role in the struggle for freedom. At the Alliance's Silver Jubilee congress in Berlin in 1929 WIA was still the Indian affiliate to the IAW, with 6 delegates. Margaret Cousins was International representative.

*By IAW Archive Officer Marijke Peters*

### **WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY IAW PRESENCE AND ACTION**

Geneva 10-12 December 2003

Issues under discussion during the Summit included global cyber-security, spam, universal and affordable access to new technologies, open source software, and information and communication technologies applications for e-health, e-learning, e-business, e-employment, e-environment and e-government.

Vice-President Jessica Kehl took part and IAW submitted the following statement.

The International Alliance of Women, which has more than 70 national affiliate and associate member-organisations most of them in the African and Asia Pacific region, recognised at our World Congress in Sri Lanka in 2002 the reality of the ongoing movement of globalisation on condition that it includes always the globalisation of Human Rights and values.

In this regard we have to stress again during this important event, that **women's rights as human rights can only become effective, if women have easy and equal access to all information** that enable them to have a better understanding of today's needs for themselves, their children and families in a whole:

- The health of families largely depends on the ability of women about how to treat small diseases and – if possible - to discover early illnesses that need medical treatment in hospitals.
- AIDS and HIV, as well as drug misuse can only be beaten, if enough true information is disseminated to all concerned. The number of affected women is steadily increasing, so they have to learn about their rights to protect themselves in an effective way.
- To develop better knowledge about good governance there should be trustworthy, transparent and non discriminatory legislation about the use and access to all national and international information.
- Special priority must be given to the possibility for all women and men to use ICT in Human Rights education, in the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals and in the important field of the realisation of economic, social and cultural rights for women worldwide.
- Although we support the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its Art. 27 on intellectual property, we should not forget, that all Human Rights are indivisible and interrelated, so there must be balanced legislation which enables universal participation in cultural and social life.
- We support the idea of a tripartite summit, on condition that governments and civil society will be able to participate in a balanced and non discriminatory way! We have enough women in state administrations, universities and in NGOs who are well acquainted with every days problems with regard to ICT, so that delegations should be able to enhance their knowledge by the participation of women.

- We support as well the demand to develop global co-operation to tackle cyber-crime, illegal and harmful content, particularly the exploitation of women and children. We wish you all at WSIS held in a climate of an open, sustainable and peaceful information society respecting each other and the fundamental principles of UN.

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### **WSIS, ICT and Free Research Information on the Internet**

Scientists in developing countries can have access to research information on the Internet. All free or at reduced prices, thanks to some big publishers of scientific journals. This is one of the outcomes of the UN ICT Conference in Geneva, 10-12 December 2003. Scientific journals have become too costly for scientists, with prices of 1.500 Euro a year. There are two projects at the moment.

- 1) **Agora** (Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture) for exchanging knowledge on agriculture and environment between rich and poor countries. Delegates from 170 are calling for fast and safe internet entry for universities and research projects in the world. Big publishers are already implementing this idea with free or reduced prices for 70 different institutes to search in their databases of hundreds of journals (400 at the moment). Website: <http://www.aginternetwork.org/en/>
- 2) The Agora project follows the example of **Hinari** of the World Health Organisation. That project has been working since January 2002 and covers 2000 biomedic titles. Both projects will probably run until 2008. See for Hinari website <http://www.healthinternetwork.org/>

There are **two problems for researchers in developing countries: a) a lack of computers and b) a lack of (technical) knowledge**. They often don't know how to search the databases. There is also the problem that a lot of computers are being stolen before they are installed. For publishers of scientific journals the costs of Agora and Hinari are reasonable because most of the articles are already in a digital form. The publishers offer this service out of a sense of responsibility for the situation in developing countries but they also hope that the researchers in those countries will write articles themselves in the near future. And also, that they will let the publishers know what kind information they need.

The director of ICT of the FAO, Anton Mangstl, has already contacted Cisco, a supplier of hardware, and they will be talking soon about computers and networks. It is very important, said Mangstl, that projects like Agora and Hinari take place under the umbrella of the UN which provides credibility and continuity. It all will take a long time, but researchers of developing countries have one advantage: they can skip the stream of paper information.

## **GENDER RANKS HIGH ON INTERNATIONAL AGENDAS**

### **WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN**

Dear Sisters, (*Hilkka Pietilä writes*)

I assume that every one of you is following the discussions about the forthcoming 10 years review and appraisal of the Beijing PFA as well as the campaign promoting the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The UN questionnaire on the Beijing+10 review and assessment is still being awaited, while the preparations for the 48th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in March 2004 are taking place. Although the year 2005 seems to be still quite far away, there are a lot of activities going on in the UN system with the view towards 2005.

I find the UNDP report "Millennium Development Goals: National reports, a look through a gender lens" on gender analyses made on the MDGs country reports of 13 countries very interesting. You can find it in the UNDP Web: <http://www.undp.org/gender/docs/mdgs-genderlens.pdf> (If this web address does not work, there is a link to this report also in the first page of WomenWatch, which is the easiest way to find it!)

Other interesting reports related to the MDGs have been produced: UNIFEM has published "Volume 2: World's Women 2002. Gender Equality and the Millennium Development Goals" ([www.unifem.org/index.php](http://www.unifem.org/index.php)); The World Bank has produced a good booklet "Gender Equality & the Millennium Development Goals". Both of these and the UNDP Report (above) are also available: <http://www.worldbank.org/gender/mdgworkshop/home.htm>

Critical debate on these subjects is going on in many online workshops and also, for instance, in the latest issue of the DAWN Informs. All issues of DAWN Informs are available on the DAWN website: [www.dawn.org.fj](http://www.dawn.org.fj)

I find that the UN is very much ahead of its member states by relating gender mainstreaming so strongly with the MDGs. It looks like all these activities are aimed to assure that gender perspective is taken into consideration all the way in the implementation and follow up of the MDGs both in the international community as well as in the member states.

After all, the true implementation of the Beijing PFA and MDGs do take place at the national level in member states. Therefore it is up to us, women in all countries, to keep our governments accountable and see to it that

- both of these important programmes do have the attention and resources that they need;
- each one, BPFA and MDGs, is given due attention albeit seeing also their interrelationships;
- the particularly crucial issues for women in the BPFA are duly highlighted in the Beijing+10 review and appraisal.

I hope you find these notes useful and wish you a lot of energy and enthusiasm in the efforts and actions you deem appropriate!

*With best greetings,*

*Hilkka Pietilä, Senior Adviser for the Finnish NGO Committee for the 5th WCW.*

## **WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAINSTREAM GENDER ?**

**Mainstreaming gender is a process of institutional transformation to close gender gaps** by refocusing priorities and reallocating available resources. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as the lead agency on poverty reduction and the score keeper of the MDGs, should take the lead in bringing women — who make up the large majority of the poor — back to the centre of poverty reduction strategies and the implementation of the MDGs. UNDP is best positioned to promote an agenda for transformation of mainstream policies and investments to make them both pro-poor and pro-women.

Gender analysis brings to light many of the gaps and challenges, as well as the strategies for possible action. Even the achievement of the single MDG target, “girls’ education”, depends on access to water and fuel, transport and sanitation facilities, income, legal rights and traditions. Girls’ education is hampered by many competing priorities. And yet, investing in poor women is the right thing to do and also the smart thing to do because educated girls and empowered women are untapped resources for economic growth and key change agents for poverty reduction. But there is little evidence in PRSPs ((Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers) and in national MDG reports that gender equality is being addressed. There is no clear focus and little shift of priorities and resources by governments and donors.

The international community saw the gains of two decades of investment in women’s projects. By the 1990s, it was agreed to take these gains from the small-scale grass roots level where women were considered as victims/beneficiaries, to new spaces and levels in mainstream development. Mainstreaming gender and the empowerment of women became the two-sided global strategy expected to accelerate progress towards gender equality. But there is already a growing concern in the development community that mainstreaming gender has, in fact, reversed the gains of previous decades and further marginalised gender issues among competing priorities.

### **UNDP - UNPFA – UNICEF and UNIFEM**

In 2002, UNDP conducted a major review of its programme funding tools and performance measures, in partnership with UN/DAW. This review was also done for UNPFA and UNICEF to improve measures of mainstream investments in gender equality.

UNDP has also recently produced: the Annual Report on projects financed by the UNDP/Japan Women in Development Fund; and a report titled: “Transforming the mainstream: Gender in UNDP,” which illustrates achievements and raises challenges for the future.

*This is a summary of an article by the BDP Poverty Group, October 2003; Policy Adviser: Aster Zaoude – Group Leader: JanVandemoortele*

*Editors Note: In the IAW December newsletter we wrote that Dutch Minister Agnes van Ardenne wanted to cut back 20% of the UNIFEM funds, complaining that UNIFEM supported projects instead of implementing the process of gender mainstreaming. She was willing nevertheless to consider the decision, after she had informed herself about the process of gender mainstreaming at other UN organisations. She has not made a decision so far, but the process of gender mainstreaming is a complicated one and it can take years !!!*

### **Maternity Scheme Unveiled**

New Delhi, Jan. 13: Union Health Minister Sushma Swaraj (Bharatiya Janata Party) today announced the launch of the Vande Mataram scheme in partnership with private gynaecologists to provide safe maternity services. This ambitious scheme is being rolled out to arrest the spiralling maternal mortality rate in the country.

"From now on, private gynaecologists will provide ante-natal check ups free of cost for pregnant women who come to their respective clinics on the 9th of every month," Swaraj said at a news conference today. "This is the first step towards public-private partnership in this field."

At present, every third mother fails to have check-ups during pregnancy - this is one of the chief causes of the high maternal mortality rate. The Centre has a number of schemes on paper to reduce these deaths, but has not managed to do so.

#### **Gender Friendly Mode**

Under the Vande Mataram scheme, the government will provide medicines and contraceptives but no honorarium to private gynaecologists who enrol for the scheme. It will also provide Vande Mataram cards to the gynaecologists, 4,000 of whom have enrolled for the scheme. The timing of the scheme has led to murmurs, but Swaraj said there was no electoral motive behind the scheme. Even so, the BJP is hoping that the scheme would fetch some support among women voters. The BJP is in gender-friendly mode, having recently appointed women chief ministers in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. "This scheme has nothing to do with elections. It was planned long before the announcements were made," the minister said.

#### **Former scheme failed**

Nearly a year ago, the Centre had announced the launch of a Janani Suraksha Yojana, aimed at increasing the number of institutional deliveries. The yojana announced a cash award for every woman delivering a child at a medical institution and not at home. Rs 500 was to be awarded to any woman delivering a son and Rs 1,000 for a daughter. But the scheme failed to take off because of the financial implications.

The Centre has now come up with another scheme along the same lines. Swaraj said the new scheme would make a difference, adding that the response from the Federation of Obstetrics and Gynaecological Society of India had been enthusiastic. Even so, some unscrupulous gynaecologists and radiologists have managed to keep female foeticide going. From our Special Correspondent, [http://www.telegraphindia.com/1040114/asp/nation/story\\_2783640.asp](http://www.telegraphindia.com/1040114/asp/nation/story_2783640.asp)

*Sent to us by IAW member Anjana Basu*



## **BOOKS - EVENTS - CONFERENCES - WEBSITES**

### **Upcoming Conferences & NGO Accreditation:**

- For Today: read Today's Journal of the United Nations
- 04-13 Feb Commission for Social Development - forty-first session - New York  
Improving public sector effectiveness.
- 01-12 Mar Commission on the Status of Women - forty-eighth session - New York  
(i) The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality;  
(ii) Women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peace building.  
**Both reports are available on:** <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/>
- 14-16 Apr Preparatory meeting for Barbados +10 - New York  
Preparatory meeting of the International Meeting to Review the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Barbados +10).
- 19-30 Apr Commission on Sustainable Development - twelfth session - New York  
The CSD-12 Review Session will serve to evaluate progress made in implementing goals of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and in identifying obstacles and constraints to implementation, within the thematic cluster of water, sanitation and human settlements.
- 10-28 May Committee on Non-Governmental Organisations - 2004 Regular Session. - New York
- 10-21 May Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues - third session - New York  
Special theme: Indigenous Women.
- 26-30 Aug Barbados +10: International Meeting to Review the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Islands Developing States - Mauritius - tentatively scheduled for 26-30 August 2004

### **BOOKS TO READ**

**“Nine Parts of Desire”** by Geraldine Brooks, who spent six years in the Middle East as foreign correspondent for The Wall Street Journal, and is currently the Journal's UN correspondent. While covering wars, insurrections and resurgent fundamentalism, she gradually became aware that these headline events were the backdrop to the daily life of Muslim women. The title is taken from a saying: "Almighty God created sexual desire in ten parts, then he gave nine parts to women and one to men" by Ali ibn Abu Taleb, the founder of the Shiite sect of Islam and husband of Fatima, daughter of the prophet Muhammad. The book was first published by Anchor Books in 1995 and has been reprinted constantly up to 2003.

*Priscilla Todd recommends this book as informative and entertaining; it provides not only a well observed view of the lives and beliefs of a diverse range of Muslim women but also insights into the Koran and its history.*

**“A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide”**, by Samantha Power:  
Samantha Power is a Lecturer in Public Policy. She was the founding executive director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy (1998–2002), and the Pulitzer prize-winning author of *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide* (Basic Books, 2002), which examines U.S. responses to genocide in the twentieth century. From 1993–1996, Power covered the wars in the former Yugoslavia as a reporter for the US News and World Report and The Economist. She is the editor, with Graham Allison, of *Realizing Human Rights: Moving from Inspiration to Impact* (St. Martin's, 2000). She is a graduate of Yale University and Harvard Law School.

### **Trafficking – the Protocol**

The United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children now has 117 signatures and 45 ratifications and came into force on 25 December 2003. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, is supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Information on [http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crime\\_cicp\\_signatures\\_trafficking.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crime_cicp_signatures_trafficking.html)

### **2004: Slavery Abolition Year**

23 August: International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition

The proclamation by the United Nations General Assembly of the year 2004 as International Year to Commemorate the Struggle against Slavery and its Abolition marks, on the one hand, the bicentenary of the proclamation of the first black state, Haiti, symbol of the struggle and resistance of slaves, and triumph of the principles of liberty, equality, dignity and the rights of the individual, and, on the other, the fraternal reunion of the peoples of Africa, the Americas, the Caribbean and Europe.

Read more on:

[http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php@URL\\_ID=13974&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php@URL_ID=13974&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

### **Vacancy for Programme Officer**

The Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD), based in Chiangmai, Thailand, is currently inviting women from the Asia Pacific Region with relevant experience and skills to apply for the position of Programme Officer. The successful applicant must be able to relocate to Chiangmai, Thailand.

Programmes are implemented by respective Task Forces and working groups, in co-ordination with the Regional Council and Programme and Management Committee. The network has a Secretariat based in Chiangmai, Thailand. For more information about APWLD, visit website at [www.apwld.org](http://www.apwld.org)

In efforts to disseminate UN vacancy announcements to reach as many qualified professional women as possible, please visit the latest list of vacancies at the senior levels. For requirements, eligibility and application deadlines, please visit the United Nations website at UN Human Resources 'Galaxy' e-Staffing System at: <https://jobs.un.org/release1/vacancy/vacancy.asp>

The system provides instructions on application procedures. Please follow them. Kindly be aware that online applications are strongly encouraged to enable the UN to place your resume into a permanent database. It is most important that you observe the deadlines for applications.

To find more information on vacancies in the UN common system, please visit <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/news/vacancies/>, which will provide very useful links to other organizations, agencies and funds; as well as: \* [www.un.org/osagi](http://www.un.org/osagi) \* [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org) \* [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org) \* [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org) \* [www.unfpa.org](http://www.unfpa.org) \* [www.who.org](http://www.who.org) \* [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org) \* [www.wfp.org](http://www.wfp.org)

### **Globalisation - Doha**

**The follow-up of Cancun** on December the 15th: a compromise failed again. The so called Doha-round has to be concluded at the end of 2004, but the problem is that the EU will become enlarged with 10 countries and the USA will have presidents elections, so two important trade partners will be preoccupied.

### **Global Fund for Women**

The Global Fund for Women ( <http://www.globalfundforwomen.org/> ) works to strengthen women's organisations outside the United States by providing small, flexible, and timely general-support grants ranging from \$500 to \$15,000.

### **United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service**

The United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS) is pleased to announce the launch of its new website, which can be accessed at <http://www.unsystem.org/ngls> The new website seeks to provide civil society organizations with the latest information on the work of the UN System,

its agencies and relevant intergovernmental processes. In addition to accessing NGLS publications, you can also now obtain a number of featured UN publications and civil society reports, including official reports on the status of the implementation of major commitments undertaken at UN conferences over the last decade.

**Note:** to avoid misunderstanding, we always send the IAW Newsletter:

1) in the body of the e-mail, and 2) as an attachment, saved in Word 6.0/95. Both have exactly the same content. The only difference is, that the attachment has a better lay-out, so it will be easy for Affiliates to copy it and send it by post to IAW members without e-mail. Also, please advise Pat Richardson if you know of any IAW members or affiliate/associate organisations with an e-mail address.

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