

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

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



**IAW NEWSLETTER - July 2000**

**Equal Rights**

Dear IAW members,

*Please have a look at the inspiring program of the IAW Board Seminar in Tel Aviv and join us in sending us your comments. The EC will be very pleased to put the newsletter at the service of our members. And again we have added new members to our IAW e-mail list, with a total of 175 members with an e-mail address. Denmark leads with 21, followed by Australia with 17. Welcome to you all! In this newsletter you will find an important article of Gudrun Haupter, warning us about the often underestimated danger of smoking, for women in particular. And of course we are following-up the document of Beijing +5, to be found at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/reports.htm>*

**FOLLOWING BEIJING +5**

**Women's Rights as Viewed from a Different Angle**

**The Program for the IAW Board Meeting in Tel Aviv, from October 29-November 2000 includes a very interesting seminar with an inspiring theme:**

1. Where do Women's Rights stand at the beginning of the new Millennium?
2. Women in Politics and Decision Making Positions
3. Violence against Women

These are three important subjects, maybe a fourth will be added. The Editorial Committee is proposing to give these subjects special attention in the next newsletters. The UN Special Document has to be implemented on a national and international level in the following years and there is a lot of work to do. We invite our members to send us comments, notes, articles, internet links etc. etc. on these issues so that IAW Board members and Officeholders will have as much up to date information as possible prior to the Seminar.

**A website with interesting links**

Have you visited Women's Human Rights Net, [www.whrnet.org](http://www.whrnet.org) lately? And checked Beijing 5+...?

If you have, you must be familiar with the Outcomes Document and the Linkage Caucus' valuation of it. You must have been deeply moved by the Statement on Widowhood delivered at the UNGASS, angry at the Catholic's Friday Fax calling Beijing +5 a defeat of the radical feminists, concerned with Unifem's report on the Progress of the World's

Women. You must surely understand why Indigenous women have limited faith in the UN system. And you already know where Devaki Jain thinks we may have gone wrong. Wrong? Yes, that's right! So if you haven't joined our web community recently, we welcome you to do it now: [www.whrnet.org](http://www.whrnet.org)

Le pouvoir d'information. Pas de doute! Les Penelopes, Beijing+5 page:  
[www.penelopes.org/pages/beijing.htm](http://www.penelopes.org/pages/beijing.htm)

With links to: Report from the secretariat of the European Women's Lobby on the Beijing+5 UN General Assembly Special Session in New York, and also some additional relevant documents mirroring the Outcomes of the meeting.

EWL report UNGASS 23 June 2000

Linkage Caucus statement 10 June 2000

EWL statement 07 June 2000

EWL statement 06 June 2000

Youthforum press release, French, 05 June 2000

Youthforum press release, English, 05 June 2000

### **Healthy life styles for women means NO SMOKING**

*By Gudrun Haupter, Convenor of the IAW Health Commission*

The WHO Tobacco-Free Initiative is based on unrefutable grave health concerns. Here are some figures and facts related to women and to youth, especially young girls, from the Report on the WHO International Conference on Tobacco and Health, Kobe, Nov. 1999, Avoiding the Tobacco Epidemic in Women and Youth.  
[www.who.int/toh/Otherlinks/tabacweb.htm](http://www.who.int/toh/Otherlinks/tabacweb.htm)

There are already over 200 million women smokers, and tobacco companies have launched aggressive campaigns to recruit women and girls worldwide. By the year 2025, the number of women smokers is expected to almost triple, with more than 200 million women dying prematurely from tobacco induced diseases. In developed and developing countries the smoking epidemic is increasing fastest among women, particularly young women. Even in countries with an overall decrease in smoking there is an increase among young women aged 18 to 24. Smokeless tobacco such as chewing tobacco use is highest among women in South Asia where 10 to 50 percent of women of reproductive age are users. In 1987 lung cancer surpassed breast cancer as a cause of death in American women and by 1999, it accounted for one-quarter of all deaths in the USA. The risk of coronary heart disease is increased among women smokers who use oral contraceptives. Among postmenopausal women, current smokers have lower bone density than nonsmokers which means increased risk of hip fracture. Generally, women who smoke have markedly increased risks of heart disease, stroke, emphysema, and tobacco-related diseases lead to high morbidity rates worldwide. There are immeasurable personal, social and economic costs to women and children particularly those living in poverty in low-income countries and in rural settings.

### **Addiction, side-effects**

Nicotine is highly addictive. Physical dependence but also anxiety, irritability, restlessness, impatience, hunger, racing heart, sweating, headaches, weight gain and sleep disturbance are among the side-effects. Transnational tobacco companies have implemented well-formulated and deliberate strategies to expand tobacco markets among women and children, especially in populous and developing countries. Adults can choose for themselves, but poor women everywhere have less access to health information and services. 80 percent of smokers in many countries start before the age of 18, often at 14,15,16. What do children know about informed choice at that age! They succumb to the wrong messages which the media carry via advertising but also through an inaccurate and unbalanced image of tobacco in reporting women's health issues. Among the themes used in advertising is women's independence, stress relief, slimness, glamour and modernity.

Watch out for tobacco companies sponsoring women's organisations, sports, arts and music events! Sharp rises in tobacco use occur after aggressive advertising campaigns which include film and TV stars as well as brand-stretching on other products. Eastern Europe and Asia are currently considered highly lucrative new markets.

Women's right to health is a fundamental human right. International treaties such as the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, FCTC, under discussion at WHO, should be seen in this light. The CEDAW Committee requires reporting by governments on Article 12 that includes tobacco, to give just a few examples.

### **What can the IAW do?**

Spread the information and use all means of access we have to young women and girls. This is a task for our member organisations and for the IAW individual members. One practical suggestion: in our respective countries we could make correct information the focus of our International Women's Day celebrations. Or: get involved in the development of local materials through contacts with women and environment groups, consumer and human rights groups. Our aims should clearly be: discourage from taking up smoking and from continuing to do so, inform girls and women smokers where to look for cessation treatment. Just as false or biased information lures very young girls into smoking, correct information can prevent their initiation, may encourage those who started to quit, and may also be helpful to channel addicts to successful treatment.

It is well known that smokers not only put themselves in danger. Exposure to tobacco smoke has particularly severe consequences for the children of smoking mothers: they weigh less at birth, are more likely to be small through gestation and are at greater risk of still-birth and neo-natal death. Dealing with this Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) is another long story.

Those of you who feel the urge to act, who have ideas on how to act, or who are already involved, please contact the IAW HEALTH COMMISSION, Gudrun Haupter, Haupter@t-online.de.

Note: See also paragraph 107 j of the unedited document Beijing +5.

*Jessica Kehl has forwarded the following letter on migration and refugees:*

## **On Migration and refugees**

Dear colleagues,

In consultation with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, we take this opportunity to remind you that the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights of Migrants, Ms. Gabriela Rodriguez of Costa Rica, is now fully engaged in her mandate. Having earlier written to governments and international agencies, the Special Rapporteur would like to invite more extensive NGO and civil society cooperation in fulfilling the responsibilities entrusted to her.

The Special Rapporteur would like to invite all concerned organisations interested in establishing contact and cooperating in her work, to write a brief note to her office by email if possible, or by post, giving:

1. A brief description of the organisation (including name and address) and the categories of migrants they work with.
2. A brief list of the key issues and concerns affecting the migrants they work with.

As you may know, the UN Commission on Human Rights established last year a broad and comprehensive mandate for the Special Rapporteur. The "SR" is "to examine ways and means to overcome the obstacles existing to the full and effective protection of the human rights of this vulnerable group, including obstacles and difficulties for the return of migrants who are non-documented or in an irregular situation, with the following functions:

- (a) To request and receive information from all relevant sources, including migrants themselves, on violations of the human rights of migrants and their families;
- (b) To formulate appropriate recommendations to prevent and remedy violations of the human rights of migrants, wherever they may occur;
- (c) To promote the effective application of relevant international norms and standards on the issue;
- (d) To recommend actions and measures applicable at the national, regional and international levels to eliminate violations of the human rights of migrants;
- (e) To take into account a gender perspective when requesting and analysing information, as well as to give special attention to the occurrence of multiple discrimination and violence against migrant women."

Ms Rodriguez intends to send a formal letter inviting further dialogue and cooperation to all those NGOs and other institutions which reply to this informal request.

Address: Special Rapporteur on Human Rights of Migrants  
Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland  
E-mail (please write to both addresses):

[sway.hchr@unog.ch](mailto:sway.hchr@unog.ch) and [pespiniella.hchr@unog.ch](mailto:pespiniella.hchr@unog.ch)

### **Honour Killings? Shame Killings!**

Readers of the IAW newsletter will have seen regular articles about 'honour killings'. Alternating between 'bad' situations and good practices, we have tried to keep attention focussed on the fight against this horrible traditional practice.

One of the motors behind the articles was Dutch IAW member Willy Stigter, who died this month. Willy was a strong and colourful fighter for women's rights - standing up in meetings to ask a thorny question, or to produce with humour a flashing one-liner or to give a clear opinion after an analysis of the situation. Always on subjects, never personal. And the opposition had to give her a clear answer because otherwise she would pin them down, without giving a damn about their high status.

Willy was a good friend and great admirer of Dr. Riffat Hassan, who, with the Koran in her hand, is defying everywhere the accusation that the cruel practice of honour killings has anything to do with Muslim faith; explaining it is a harmful traditional or customary practice of ancient times.

At the special session Beijing +5 the practice of honour killings was, with other bad practices, condemned by many. One verdict I would like to quote. At the start General Secretary of the UN Kofi Annan said: "Those so called honour killings? They are shame killings!" Hearing this I instantly thought: "Willy, you will be pleased. Here is another one-liner for you!".

In paragraph 130 a of the unedited final outcome document, as adopted by the plenary of the special session, you will find a summing up of unacceptable situations. Honour killings and early and forced marriages have been added to this list for the first time.

*Trafficking in women and children, female infanticide, crimes committed in the name of honour, crimes committed in the name of passion, racially motivated crimes, abduction and sale of children, dowry related violence and deaths, acid attacks and harmful traditional or customary practices such as FGM, early and forced marriages.*

This paragraph is now backed up with 130 e, 130 d, 130 f and 130 g, paragraphs to be moved to other places in the real document.

Paragraph 130 e reads as follows:

*Prosecute the perpetrators of all forms of violence against women and girls and sentence them appropriately and introduce actions aimed at helping and motivating perpetrators to break the cycle of violence and take measures to provide avenues for redress to victims.*

Well, the fight has to go on. Without our colourful Willy, but with us all.

The Vrouwenbelangen Internet team, in loving memory.

*Jessica Kehl has sent us this urgent plea of a Brazilian action group.*

*Maybe there are IAW members who have political influence and who can help?*

## **The Amazon Forest**

### **This is important for all of us!!!**

Brazilian Congress is now voting on a project that will reduce the Amazon forest to 50% of its size. The area to be deforested is 4 times the size of Portugal and would be mainly used for agriculture and pastures for livestock...

All the wood is to be sold to international markets in the form of wood chips, by multinational companies...

The truth is that the soil in the Amazon forest is useless without the forest itself. Its quality is very acidic and the region is prone to constant floods. At this time more than 160.000 square kilometers deforested with the same purpose, are abandoned and in the process of becoming deserts.

We cannot let this happen. Copy the text into a new email, put your complete name in the list below, and send to everyone you know. (Don't just forward it because then it will end up with rows of >>>'s ) If you are the 100th person to sign please send a copy to [fsaviolo@openlink.com.br](mailto:fsaviolo@openlink.com.br)

### **From the EC**

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

*Please note too that the e-mail address of IAW Secretary Priscilla Todd has changed into [toddsec@golocal.com.au](mailto:toddsec@golocal.com.au)*

NB: We invite you to redistribute this Newsletter to IAW members without an e-mail address. Also, please advise us if you know of any IAW members or affiliate/associate organisations with an e-mail address, and in that case: please be so kind to contact Pat Richardson.

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International Alliance of Women / Alliance Internationale des Femmes

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