

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN ALLIANCE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES

Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities
Droits Égaux - Responsabilités Égales

IAW NEWSLETTER - July, nr. 6



Equal
Rights

Dear IAW members,

*A historic day for Africa, the launching of the African Union on 11 July 2002. Happy news, but also disappointing news about the violation of the founding treaty of the International Criminal Court and of the UN Charter. Equal rights, yes, for women but also for big and small nations!
IAW Affiliates, Associates and individual IAW members are going steadily on with promoting equal rights for women, like the Greek League for Women's Rights has done for 50 years in Greece and Cyprus and like many IAW members are doing at conferences. To keep us all steadily on networking at an international level, the Executive needs to know your ideas and thoughts but also needs your contribution!*

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

Women's Struggle

In the journal of the Greek League for Women's Rights, January-June 2002, President and former IAW President Alice Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos sketches 50 Years of Political Rights for Greek Women in an English summary. It would take too much space in this newsletter to quote the whole excellent overview from 1952 to 2002, so just a few interesting facts are mentioned from the years 2000-2001 and today.

Finding that the distance between law and practice was great, a new concept for equality gained prominence. Positive measures, quotas etc. started being applied, at first by the ILO in favour of workers, then by the USA in favour of minorities, and finally in Scandinavia, where women demanded and achieved quotas in the representation of women in Parliament, Government and Local Administration.

In 2001 the Greek Parliament amended Art. 116.2 of the Constitution, introducing quotas and other positive measures. This was a significant turning point. The first laws which introduced quotas were:

- the participation of women by at least 1/3 in service councils and other organs of national and local administration,
- participation by an equal percentage of candidates in electoral lists for local government.

The position of women today

Progress has been achieved, but problems still exist. There still exists violence in the family, sexual exploitation, trafficking of women and children, unequal distribution of burdens at home, etc. Women, especially young women, have an obligation to lead the fight in the years to come, for the achievement of full substantive equality.

Cyprus

The Republic of Cyprus is about to introduce in its Constitution a provision similar to that of Art. 116.2 of the amended Greek Constitution, **which the Greek League for Women's Rights had proposed.**

IAW and Women, Water and Environmental Management

Some women attending the forthcoming IAW Congress will meet in Melbourne on July 30. Australian Women's NGOs are combining with the UN Association of Australia to hold a forum on Women, Water & Environmental Management, a topic of vital interest for rural and urban women, and an opportunity for Australian women to become better informed about policy and community action. Keynote speaker is

Rosemary Calder who heads up the Australian Office of Status of Women reporting on CSW 2002 - Gender and the Environment Theme and workshop leaders include young women working in the environmental sector. A roundtable luncheon will follow with Patricia Giles, IAW President as speaker.

With thanks for Sheila Byard in Australia for bringing this conference to our attention.

Women on the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg

Women had high hopes for Prepcom nr. IV in Bali, as you will have read in the June newsletter. It should be a “ministerial” Prepcom and indeed, several political heavyweights were present at the conference. Well, maybe it was not due to their influence, but the progress was slow and the result a bit disappointing. Listed below are some pointers from the draft document of 12 June, to be found at: <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org> and follow the links.

Women are seen as “actors”. They benefit from and implement sustainable development. See the Introduction, para 3; water, para 24a and 24h; agriculture, the chapeau of para 38 and 38 f-h. Gender equality is a condition for good governance. Have a look at the Introduction, para 4; poverty 6d; education 6g; agricultural resources 6h, 10a; income, credit and work 10c; energy 19m; technology and information, 23 a and b.

Reservations and backsliding

So far, so good, but concerning women’s rights there were sometimes reservations and even some “backsliding”.

Para 38 l runs as follows: “adopt policies and implement laws that guarantee well defined and enforceable land and water use rights, and promote legal security of tenure, *recognising the existence of different national laws and/or systems of land access and tenure ...*”

In Health, in the chapeau of para 47 we read: “Strengthen that capacity of health care systems to deliver basic health services to all in an efficient, accessible and affordable manner ... *consistent with national laws and cultural and religious values*”.

Backsliding on “*reproductive rights*” could be corrected at the last moment at three o’clock in the morning, after a protest of representatives of NGOs and an intervention of Canada.

We are happy with 47 l: “Ensure equal access of women to health care services, giving particular attention to maternal and emergency obstetric care”.

Also good is 47 j: “Address effectively, for all individuals of appropriate age, the promotion of their healthy lives, including their reproductive and sexual health, consistent with the commitments and outcomes of recent UN conferences and summits, including the World Summit on Children, the UNCED, the ICPD, the World Summit on Social Development and the 4th World Conference on Women and their respective reports and reviews”.

With cordial thanks to IAW member Alice Bouman, the representative of women NGOs in the Dutch delegation in Bali and at the moment preparing the WSSD in Johannesburg.

A Refuge for Domestic Violence

IAW member Reyna Camacho de Cohen from the Dominican Republic writes us:

“My organisation is called ADDEM and is campaigning for the first Refuge for Domestic Violence in the Dominican Republic. The project is including psychological therapy, sexual therapy and medical assistance. At the moment we have already the elemental infrastructure like help lines (telephones) and assistance in case of emergency. Thanks to initial contributions from sponsors we have been able to start a Publicity Project too. According to agreements established with the media (written press, TV, radio), they will donate 50% of all the publicity plus the marking of the TV spot and the operations cost. For the other 50% we need sponsors and ADDEM is looking for economic help. The campaigns will reach every corner of the country, with 80% of the population reached and in that way people will be aware of the instalment of the Refuge for Domestic Violence in the Dominican Republic.”

For more information, mail Reyna Cohen at addem01@tricom.net

Congratulations Reyna, with this first Refuge for Domestic Violence in your country!

A Request from the Treasurer

To any Affiliate or Associate member organisation or Individual member who has forgotten to pay their IAW contribution, please do so as soon as possible. The year 2002 is already halfway through and your financial support is essential to keep the Alliance going at full steam.

Please send your dues with your name and address, in convertible currency, to the Hon. Treasurer Anje Wiersinga, Post Box 614, 3400 AP Zeist, Netherlands

or direct into the International Alliance of Women Bank Account No. 50123048, Barclays Bank, Westminster Branch, 2 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ND U.K. **If you have received an invoice please mention Invoice/Membership No and also send details to the Treasurer.**

Annual subscriptions: Pounds sterling 60 for Affiliates / 30 for Associates / 15 for Subscribers / 10 for Individuals.

To Members attending Congress: it is essential that you are financial. The Treasurer would prefer to receive your payment by cheque or bank transfer as soon as possible, but if you are preparing to pay in Sri Lanka, please inform her now. This will prevent her from sending reminders to you and save postage costs.

Note: Payments made directly into the Bank after 15 August are unlikely to be confirmed by the Bank in time for Congress. Please bring a copy of your bank transfer with you to Colombo to ensure you are admitted as a financial member.

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT WEAKENED BY US / UK ALLIANCE DESPITE WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION

UN Security Council Passes ICC Resolution in Contravention of UN Charter

(New York, 12 July 2002)

Today the Security Council adopted unanimously a resolution supporting the right to defer jurisdiction of the new International Criminal Court in cases against personnel involved in operations established or authorised by the United Nations. The resolution creates a presumption that it will be renewed indefinitely every twelve months. This text, which followed successive draft proposals issued by the United States, with later support by the United Kingdom, is viewed by the NGO Coalition as a violation not only of the Court's founding treaty, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, but also of the UN Charter.

"The two biggest losers as a result of today's decision are the United States and the Security Council," said William Pace, Convenor of the NGO Coalition for the International Criminal Court. "The U.S. lost on two levels. First because it came away with a good deal less than it wanted, and second because it squandered any claim of legitimate interest or concern. The Security Council was damaged because it acted beyond its powers. Several Security Council members party to the Rome Statute shamed themselves by ignoring the UN Charter, international law and the ICC treaty. The ICC will rise above this assault and prove to be one of the greatest instruments of peace ever created by the international community."

The resolution would apply to personnel from non-State Parties to the Rome Treaty involved in a broad range of operations. It would not be limited to those actually undertaken by the UN, but would also include those approved by the UN, such as the NATO mission in Afghanistan. This classification places an entire class of individuals, namely personnel from non-States Parties to the Rome Statute, above the rule of international law.

Chapter VII

The NGO Coalition believes that this resolution violates international law because the Council contravened Chapter VII of the UN Charter. This chapter mandates the Security Council to act only when there is a threat to or breach of international peace and security or an act of aggression. It was this US contrived "crisis" in peacekeeping that was the pretext for invoking Chapter VII.

Other member states of the United Nations and States Parties to the Rome Statute have indicated their view that today's Security Council resolution is unlawful, and it remains to be seen whether they, the United Nations or the International Criminal Court itself, will take steps to reverse this decision or consider themselves bound by this resolution.

Special Plenary Session Voices Opposition

At a special plenary session of the Preparatory Commission of the ICC on July 3rd, statements in unanimous opposition to the US position were made on behalf of approximately one hundred-twenty UN member States. Additional statements were heard on behalf of seventy-two countries at an open session of the Security Council on July 10th. In adopting today's resolution, the Security Council acted in opposition to this overwhelming expression of disapproval. Even with its aggressive tactics, the US did not succeed in achieving either blanket or permanent immunity. In the face of allegations that peacekeepers had committed crimes falling under the jurisdiction of the Statute, the NGO Coalition expects the Security Attempts of the US to undermine the ICC treaty coincided with the treaty's entry into force on July 1st. An advance team has been created to ensure the logistical and administrative arrangements are put in place to allow the Court to be functioning in approximately one year. Today

also marks the close of the final Preparatory Commission, at which many of the final documents supplementing the treaty were concluded. The Court is expected to be operational by mid-2003.

About the Coalition for the International Criminal Court

The Coalition for the International Criminal Court (Coalition) is a network of over 1,000 civil society organisations supporting a permanent, fair and independent International Criminal Court. For more information, please visit <http://www.iccnw.org>.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

The search for a successor to Mary Robinson, outgoing High Commissioner for Human Rights, is in full swing. Judge Navi Pillay, President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), is among those being considered for the post and is the only female candidate. Judge Pillay has a long history of human rights advocacy in South Africa and has been a distinguished judge of the ICTR. She also chaired the Afghan Women's Summit, which was co-organised by the European Women's Lobby (EWL) in December 2001. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan is expected to make a decision very soon. If you wish to support the nomination of Ms Pillay, you can join the action proposed by the Women's Caucus for Gender Justice: email: caucus@iccwomen.org / A draft model letter has been prepared and can be sent as such or adapted. URL: <http://www.iccwomen.org>

MOVES TOWARDS UNITY IN AFRICA, EUROPE AND ASIA

AFRICAN UNION/UNION AFRICAINE

The Durban Declaration in Tribute to the Organisation of African Unity on the occasion of the launching of the African Union, 11 July 2002

We, the Heads of State and Government of the Assembly of the African Union, meeting in our inaugural session in Durban, South Africa, have adopted the following declaration in tribute to the Organisation of African Unity:

1. African Countries gathered in Addis Ababa Ethiopia to found the Organisation of African Unity.
2. The main objectives for establishing the organisation were, inter alia, to rid the continent of the remaining vestiges of colonisation and apartheid; to promote unity and solidarity among African States; co-ordinate and intensify co-operation for development; for the defence of sovereignty, territorial integrity and consolidation of the independence of African States, as well as promoting international co-operation within the framework of the United Nations.
3. The common identity and unity of purpose engendered by the OAU, became a dynamic force at the service of the African people in the pursuit of the struggle for the total emancipation of the African Continent in the political, economic and social fields. Nowhere has that dynamic force proved more decisive than in the African struggle for decolonisation. Through the OAU Co-ordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa, the Continent worked and spoke as one with undivided determination in forging an international consensus in support of the liberation struggle. Today, we celebrate a fully decolonised Africa and Apartheid has been consigned to the ignominy of history.

July the 11th 2002, a day of history for Africa! For the complete Durban Declaration, see the beautiful website on <http://www.africa-union.org> Other interesting websites, linked to the DESA/DAW's website, are: <http://www.womenambassadors.org> and <http://www.femmesambassadeurs.org>, intended to communicate, inform, and exchange ideas and debate on global gender-related issues. The site will also enable the private exchange of information between the ambassadors in a secure manner.

YOUTH CONVENTION

For three days Europe looked young and female

At the opening of the Youth Convention at the beginning of July, young women represented the majority of the members of this group. The 210 members of the Youth Convention have met for 3 days with the aim of discussing themes such as "democracy and participation in the EU" or "Europe in a globalised world" and make proposals to the Convention of the Future of Europe. The European Women's Lobby (EWL) has consistently highlighted the lack of representation of women in the

Convention on the Future of Europe (only 14%). "We very much hope that the presence of young women in such numbers will help to integrate women's views into the debates on the future of Europe", stated Denise Fuchs, President of EWL. EWL is an organisation gathering 3000 women's groups of all ages across Europe, which works with the European institutions and national governments in order to achieve equality of women and men in all areas. EWL has been following the work of the Convention of the Future of Europe and making proposals, which could make things better for all women. These proposals include:

- The introduction of parity democracy in the European Treaty, meaning the equal representation of women and men in all European decision-making bodies.
- The introduction of a specific title in the Treaty providing for a coherent and proper European policy on equality of women and men allowing for more effective measures in this field.
- Millions of girls and women in the world face gross violation of their human rights, EWL therefore asks the European Union to ensure that its foreign and human rights policies and aid & development policy contribute to the achievement of equality for women and girls.

The European Women's Lobby is recently producing an extensive newsletter with European and international news, called EWL's News Flash. See also: <http://www.womenlobby.org>

WORKING TOGETHER IN ASIA

Let's help each other, Asian Mayors pledge

10 July 2002, United Nations Information Services (Bangkok)

Asian mayors are vowing to invest in each other by working together to overcome poverty, the devastating effects caused by war, and lack of access to clean water. Mayors from **50 Asian cities** are taking part in the Fourth Asian Mayors Forum and Regional Workshop on Good Governance for Poverty Reduction and Social Development - Exchange of Tools, Techniques and Good Practices, co-sponsored by UN ESCAP. The meeting runs until 11 July at the UN Conference Centre in Bangkok. In the war-ravaged city of **Kabul**, Afghanistan, deprivation, homelessness, and poor sanitation are three of the most pressing issues, according to the city's mayor. "Our people need everything. Sixty to seventy percent of Kabul is destroyed," said Mr. Fazil Karim, Mayor of Kabul. "We have difficulty getting clean water, and disposing of solid waste. Each day the city of Kabul accumulates 1,600 cubic meters of solid waste that is not being disposed of properly," the mayor said. The situation in Kabul is aggravated by the daily influx of homeless migrants. "Every day 300 - 400 families are coming to Kabul," said Mr. Karim. Since the fall of the Taliban administration, the population of Kabul has nearly doubled from 1.2 million inhabitants to 2.3 million. Rents for the few habitable buildings in the shattered city have skyrocketed by "up to US\$5,000 - 10,000 per month," said the mayor. Seventy percent of Kabul's population is living in illegal structures. "Urban reconstruction following any war is an expensive proposition. "Anybody who can convert a building does so," said Mr. Yap Kioe Sheng, UN ESCAP's Chief of Human Settlements Section.

Other Asian cities are affected as well. In **Nepal**, an ongoing rebel insurgency has dealt a heavy blow to the tourist industry. "In Kathmandu, the tourist section has been affected and business is down," said Mr. Keshav Sthapit, Mayor of Kathmandu. "We usually see 300,000 tourists each year but a few days ago I couldn't find any," he said.

Although their stories can be harrowing, the fact these Mayors have come together to search for some common solutions is a step forward, the participants said. "This meeting co-sponsored by UN ESCAP lets Mayors develop solidarity with their counterparts from other cities," said Ms Erna Witoelar, a former Minister of Human Settlements and Regional Development from Indonesia.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN - Torture

Geneva, 10 July 2002, third Follow up to Case NGA 250302 VAW

The International Secretariat of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) is deeply concerned by the sentencing to death by stoning of 30 year-old Amina Lawal. According to information received from reliable sources, on Friday 22 March 2002, a Sharia court at Bakori in Katsina State sentenced Ms. Lawal to death after she confessed to having had a child while divorced. The man named as the father of her baby girl reportedly denied having sex with her and the charges against him were discontinued. In those Northern Nigerian states that apply Sharia law, pregnancy outside of marriage constitutes sufficient evidence to enable a woman to be convicted of adultery. Under the applicable procedural rules, Amina Lawal had 30 days in which to appeal her sentence.

On 3 June 2002 the Sharia court at Funtua in Katsina State, Northern Nigeria ordered the conditional release of Amina Lawal until January 2003, to allow her to return to her village in order to care for her

6 month old daughter. The court had stated that the decision in relation to her conditional release is independent of the decision in her appellate hearing which is expected to be handed down on 8 July.

Action requested. Please write to the Nigerian authorities urging them to:

- i. guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of Ms. Amina Lawal and her family;
- ii. ensure Ms. Amina Lawal the right to a fair trial and allow her effective access to legal representation.
- iii. take all necessary measures to secure respect for the rule of law in Nigeria which includes respect for the prohibition on torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment, such as the practice of corporal punishment;
- iv. guarantee women their human rights, including their right to be free from discrimination and their right to be free from torture and inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment;
- v. ensure in all circumstances the full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with national and international standards.

Addresses:

* His Excellency Olusegun Obasanjo, President of the Republic, The Presidency, Federal Secretariat Phase II, Shehu Shagari Way, Abuja; fax: 234 9 523 21 36 (press office),

e-mail: president.obasanjo@nigeriagov.org

* Alhaji Sule Lamido, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Maputo Street , Zone 3 Wuse District, Abuja, Nigeria; fax: 234 9 523 02 08.

* Kanu Godwin Agabi, Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice, New Federal Secretariat complex Shehu Shagari Way, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria; fax: 234 9 523 52 08.

* Alhaji Uman Musa Yar'adua, Governor, Office of the Military Administrator, Katsina, Katsina State, Nigeria.

* The Embassy of Nigeria in your respective countries.

World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), e-mail <omct@omct.org> <http://www.omct.org>

-----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.

NB: We invite you to redistribute this Newsletter to IAW members without an e-mail address. Also, please advise Pat Richardson if you know of any IAW members or affiliate/associate organisations with an e-mail address.

International Alliance of Women / Alliance Internationale des Femmes

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