

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

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

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

IAW NEWSLETTER – July nr. 6



Equal Rights

Dear IAW members,

Many items in this newsletter were sent in by IAW members – thank you all ! We start the newsletter with the juggling around of funds by the United States – giving here, taking there. It is not that peculiar ... it is connected with the political view of the Bush administration. It's politics! Also in this newsletter a variety of subjects. Please have a look at CEDAW – WSIS – OMCT – IANSA – Girl Child – Discrimination – Diversity – Development. And some interesting websites and books.

FUNDING ASSISTANCE - BUT ON WHAT TERMS?

US Congress – House blocks 50 million for UN Population Fund

A narrow majority with a 216 to 211 vote blocked \$50 million in international family planning funds for 2004, contending that the program bolsters China's coercive population control policy. It was a setback for the United Nations Population Fund, known as UNPFA, which promotes contraception and safe birthing and child care practices in more than 150 countries. While the program generally has had bipartisan congressional support, senior Bush administration officials and some GOP Lawmakers say it violates US law by supporting China's "one child" policy, which critics say sometimes results in forced abortion. The Bush administration already diverted 34 million from UNPFA last year.

Several lawmakers said the program's critics were being shortsighted, since UNPFA provides millions of dollars to help poor women in developing countries. Rep. Joseph Crowley, who advocated keeping the \$50 million in the legislation, said his view of family planning changed after he spoke with a birthing assistant in Malawi. The woman asked for kerosene so she could see during her patient's labour, and so she could cut the umbilical cord. He said during an interview: "It's more than about providing contraception, it's about child survival and maternity care".

A selection from an article in the Washington Post, by Juliet Eilperin

Africa, HIV/AIDS Botswana

President George W Bush has pledged to help Africa tackle AIDS during a six-hour visit to Botswana, the third stage of his five-day African tour. He has now left to return to South Africa, before moving on to Uganda on Friday. "The people of this nation have the courage and resolve to defeat this disease and you will have a partner in the United States of America," he told his host, President Festus Mogae, at a lunch gathering.

Botswana has one of the world's highest rates of infection - four in 10 adults have HIV, the virus that leads to Aids. Mr Bush reiterated his pledge to spend \$15bn on fighting Aids across Africa over the next five years. While in Botswana President Bush also discussed trade with President Mogae. Botswana has one of the strongest economies in Africa, producing a third of the world's diamonds, and has a GDP per head of \$7,800 - high for Africa. But wealth distribution is uneven with one in two people living below the poverty line.

BBC, World News (a selection)

Editor's comment. There has been speculation in the media about why the Bush administration has suddenly become interested in Africa. It's attitude to funding vis-à-vis family planning, condoms and abortion can hardly advantage a continent overrun by HIV/AIDS except perhaps Uganda, which is said to have strongly encouraged abstinence in its successful fight against the disease.

US - AIDS research project cut for bio-defence

In his budget for 2003, President George W Bush asked Congress to provide funds for purchasing and evaluating a new anthrax vaccine. Congress declined, but the White House has now instructed NIAID to find the funds by cutting back on other projects.

This year the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) will divert \$145m to buying the experimental vaccine on anthrax and testing it. Half will come from the NIAID's own bio-defence budget, a quarter from its HIV projects, and the remaining quarter from research on other diseases. A further \$131m will come from NIAID's budget for the fiscal year 2004.

New HIV Research Project ?

Dr Luis Montaner from the Wistar Institute in Philadelphia has just started an HIV research project which has had its funding cut. Dr Montaner's team is evaluating a potentially cheaper way of using anti-retroviral drugs in southern Africa, one of the regions Mr Bush has been visiting on his current African trip.

"This is happening at a time when the administration and Congress are putting a special emphasis on AIDS," observed Robert Guidos, director of policy and government relations at the Infectious Diseases Society of America, the professional organisation for researchers and doctors in the field. "The Bush administration and the department of state have said that AIDS is a national security issue; that we definitely want to do more in Africa", he said. "Here we have an opportunity to do more, and yet we're taking away the research dollars."

A number of scientists, campaigners and members of Congress - including Senators Arlen Specter and Tom Harkin - have written letters of protest to the White House, some calling the move a "misuse" of research funds. If the money needs to be found, they say, it should come from the Homeland Security budget. By *Richard Black*, *BBC science correspondent*. (a selection)

NEWS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

IAW BOARD to Meet in the Dominican Republic

From 28 September to 5 October 2003 the IAW Board will meet in Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic, by the gracious invitation of IAW Associate ADDEM (Alianza por los Derechos y el Desarrollo de la Mujer y la Familia) and its active President, Reyna Comacho de Cohen.

This will be an uniquely important occasion which will allow the Alliance to show its full support and encouragement for ADDEM in its important work in the Dominican Republic in the cause of women's rights and internationalism in the region. It will also expand our knowledge and understanding of the region. ADDEM has also good contacts with organisations in the following countries: Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile, Peru, Haiti, Costa Rica, San Marti, and Venezuela. The Alliance still has some members in the West Indies and Caribbean and it is hoped that the work of the Alliance will be publicised and spread in the region

Two major items for discussion are: Centenary Celebrations 2004 and the draft Constitution. ADDEM is organising a one day seminar with the theme "Violence in the World".

NOTE: Although this is a Board Meeting, it has been Alliance policy for some years to welcome other IAW members as observers to all meetings. If you would like to attend, please advise Alison Brown, IAW Hon. Secretary mab@liwest.at

Hotel prices: Santo Domingo – single US\$80, double US\$90; Hispaniola – single US\$60, double US\$70 – all with breakfast. Coqui Mar – single US\$24, double US\$31 and 3 persons US\$39.

Greek League of Women's Rights

The Greek League of Women's Rights was unanimously elected to the National Human Rights Commission, a body created in 1998 to advise the government on human rights issues, in accordance with the Paris Principles www.nchr.gr

Editors comment: warmest congratulations !

IAW – Meeting of Individual Members : Friday 12 – Sunday 14 September

A meeting will be held at the Hotel De Biltsche Hoek, De Halle Bilt 1, 3732 HM De Bilt, starting at 7pm on the Friday evening, continuing on Saturday from 10am until 6pm, with the option of a morning session on the Sunday from 10am until 12.30 pm.

The main purpose of the meeting is to examine and promote the potential of the individual member to make a significant contribution to the work of IAW. *How can the knowledge and experience of individual members be more effectively recognised and used both for their own development and that of the Alliance?*

There will be no meeting fee. Coffee and tea will be served, plus lunch on Saturday. Depending on the number attending it may be necessary to ask for 10 to 20 euro towards the cost of food. Room tariff B&B: single 79 euro; double 93 euro; 3 person room 112 euro; 4 person room 131 euro.

The Hotel is situated some km north-east of Utrecht, a 20 minute bus ride. Plenty of parking. Tel: +31 30 2205811. Contact: Petra Hop, quoting 'Mary Noonan IAW meeting September'.

I wish to put on record my thanks for the outstanding contribution of Anje Wiersinga in facilitating this meeting. She met me from the airport, provided 'bed and board' and drove me on a tour of inspection of possible venues which she had checked prior to my arrival.

From Mary Noonan, IAW Board Member, Convenor of the Individual Members Network

e-mail: mkincol@eircom.net Address: 27, Kingston College, Mitchelstown, County Cork, Ireland.

Telephone: +353 25 85146

Good News from Maputo!

We have just heard that the AU Draft Protocol on the Rights of Women has been adopted in Maputo. These are good news for AFRICAN WOMEN and all the thanks go to ALL of you, your hard work has finally paid up. However, the REAL work is just beginning, the adoption of the protocol does not mean ratification and implementation. So we all have to start lobbying our governments, within this twelve months, to ratify it and ensure that this IMPORTANT Protocol is implemented. I hope that ALL our governments have signed..... VIVA AFRICAN WOMEN VIVA!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Regards, Mmabatho Maragoshi

Prostitution, Women and Misuse of the Law

The Fallen Daughters of Eve - by IAW member Helen Self

The house of Lords in the UK is currently debating the Sexual Offences Bill. Dr Helen Self, whose book *Prostitution, Women and Misuse of the Law* is about to be published by Frank Cass, has been lobbying some members of the Lords in the hope of influencing policy.

Painstakingly researched, her book examines the background to the present system of regulating prostitution in Britain, and reveals how it is not only discriminate and unjust but also ineffective even in achieving its stated aims.

A feminist historian, Dr Self looks into the socio-political aspect of this legislation and argues that widely held prejudices have been built into the legislation, creating a climate of vulnerability for the women involved. The law, she argues, should provide protection as well as control. As she notes, "...while the law acts in ways that withdraw civil rights from prostitutes and makes it almost impossible to practise the occupation legally, there is little appreciation among policy-makers of the need to protect the women from the violent and exploitative punter".

In hardback and paperback, e-mail info@frankcass.com

Editorial comment: Warmest congratulations, Helen!

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)

A third collection of reports, *Violence Against Women: 10 Reports/Year 2002* has been published by the World Organisation against Torture (OMCT) within the framework of its Violence against Women Programme. The publication forms part of the Programme's work in the field of integrating the human rights of women and a gender perspective into the activities of the United Nations human rights treaty monitoring bodies. Over the past year, OMCT submitted ten alternative country reports to the five "mainstream" human rights treaty bodies on: **Croatia, Czech Republic, Moldova, Poland, Spain, Sudan, Togo, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, and Yemen.**

States overwhelmingly fail obligations

The torture and ill treatment of women and girls occurs in many countries around the world on a daily basis. Besides being the victims of violence perpetrated by state agents and armed groups, women are frequently victims of physical and psychological violence within the domestic sphere and within the community. This violence at the hands of private individuals may include; domestic violence, crimes committed in the name of honour, female genital mutilation, rape and sexual assault, and trafficking

into forced prostitution or forced labour. The reports show that while there are some encouraging signs of progress in the development and implementation of new legislation and procedures with respect to violence against women, States are overwhelmingly failing to uphold their international and national obligations to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish gender-based violence at the hands of private individuals.

Violence in the family

Across the board, these OMCT reports found that the vast majority of violence against women takes place within the family. For example, information from the **Croatia** report reveals that as much as 98% of all violence against women is family violence. The report on the **Czech Republic** notes that spouses or partners are responsible for 51% of all rapes in that country. In **Moldova**, one study asserts that 22% of all the women interviewed reported having been a victim of abuse by their husband or partner, while in **Poland**, researchers have concluded that as many as 1 in 6 women are victims of domestic violence. In the two years from 2000-2001, 82 women were killed as a result of violence in the domestic sphere in **Spain**. OMCT's report on **Sudan** notes with concern that marital rape is not criminalised there and that although statistics concerning domestic violence are not available, such violence is suspected to be widespread. Domestic violence is also a serious problem in **Togo** where 85% of women interviewed reported that they knew at least one woman victim of such violence and 52% reported having been victims themselves. In **Uzbekistan**, an inspector estimated that 80% of the calls he receives concern family quarrels and 50 to 60% of them involve injuries. Additionally, the OMCT report on **Venezuela** highlights that in Caracas, a woman is killed every 12 days by a man for reasons related to their relationship. In **Yemen**, only 26% of women who participated in a survey reported never having been subjected to violence in the home.

While OMCT recognises that more States are beginning to develop laws against domestic violence, the problem remains grave in most countries. Lack of awareness raising, which results in police and judicial personnel who are ill equipped to handle domestic violence complaints and a continued culture of silence surrounding the crime, perpetuates this form of violence against women and hinders its eradication.

Legalisation on Trafficking Women and Children

In the 10 reports, OMCT also expresses considerable concern about the prevalence of trafficking in women and the failure of many States to enact specific legislation to address this form of violence against women. For example, there is no comprehensive legislation to prosecute traffickers in **Croatia**, **Uzbekistan**, **Sudan**, or **Venezuela**. In **Poland**, it is estimated that as many as 10,000 women and girls are trafficked out to foreign countries every year and 60% of the prostitutes in Poland are suspected of being victims of trafficking and the OMCT report on **Togo** notes that trafficking in children for domestic servitude is a growing problem. The **Czech Republic** has made trafficking a distinct crime, it focuses on the border crossing element of trafficking and thus does not cover trafficking within Czech borders. Further, Czech legislation does not provide financial and other social assistance to trafficking victims who are returned to the Czech Republic.

Monday 8 July 2003, Carin Benninger-Budel and Joanna Bourke-Martignoni, Violence Against Women: 10 Reports/ Year 2002, OMCT, 2003, ISBN: 2-88477-045-3, 392 pp.

For further information please contact the women's desk at: cbb@omct.org or loh@omct.org.

Sent by IAW Vice-President Jessica Kehl

India – Supreme Court steps in for Girl Child

Patna, July 13: Rajbardhan Sharma did not have to employ extreme methods to kill an unwanted girl child like his grandfather had done years ago. The Vaishali farmer's grandfather would have a dai (untrained village nurse) strangle his new-born daughters or feed them opium. But Rajbardhan only needed to turn to clandestine health clinics in Patna and Muzaffarpur. A sex-determination test costing Rs 5,500 confirmed that his wife was expecting a girl. That done, all the farmer needed to do was take his wife to a Patna nursing home to terminate the pregnancy. He informed his family that she had a miscarriage. Rajbardhan, who already has one daughter and son, did not want more girls. He feels no guilt at committing female foeticide. Even though the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act prohibits sex-determination, the practice is rampant in Bihar. Some diagnostic centres advise clients they should spend Rs 5,000 for determining the sex of their child instead of spending Rs 2 lakh (Rs 200,000) in dowry on their daughters.

Supreme Court

Alarmed at the Bihar health department's half-hearted attempt to curb the practice, the Supreme Court has directed the state government to form a board to monitor the operation of such diagnostic centres.

The board, headed by the Bihar medical education secretary, was set up on Friday and is expected to send periodic reports on the centres. A separate move by the National Human Rights Commission to get regular reports on the practice has galvanised the health department into action.

"The style and method of committing infanticide has changed. Nowadays, sophisticated medical gadgets have made killing a female child easy," Health Minister Shakuni Chowdhary said on Friday while addressing a health conference.

Study by NGO Vatsalya

Voluntary health groups like Adithi estimate that "as many as 163,200 female infants are killed every year in Bihar". This has upset the sex ratio in the state. As per the 2001 census, there are 921 girls per 1,000 boys, but the ratio is much lower in north Bihar districts such as Vaishali, Muzaffarpur and Sitamarhi. A study conducted by NGO Vatsalya says these districts have the worst female foeticide record.

Urban Muzaffarpur has a sex ratio of 888 girls to 1,000 boys, lower than in rural Muzaffarpur where the ratio is 927: 1,000. This would suggest that people in urban areas are using modern means to eliminate girls. Vaishali district has an urban sex ratio of 921 while the figure in rural areas is 934. The corresponding figures in Sitamarhi are 913 and 896. "The wide gap can be attributed to the prevalent practice of infanticide, either overt or covert," a member of Vatsalya said.

The NGO's study found that the rural poor continue to strangle girl children or feed them opium. "Of those interviewed, 21.7 per cent confessed that they used suffocation or opium to end the lives of female children," the study says. The NGO said of those interviewed in the urban sections of the three districts "in 93 per cent of the cases women underwent abortions after finding out that the foetus was female".

"Female foeticide is also dependent on the facilities available regarding ultra-sound and genetic tests. In all the major urban centres of Bihar, centres offering sex determination tests adopted a variety of methods to spread awareness of the facilities they were offering," the Vatsalya study says.

See http://www.telegraphindia.com/1030714/asp/nation/story_2161762.asp

Sent in by IAW member Anjana Basu

EVENTS – CONFERENCES – INTERESTING INTERNET SITES – BOOKS

World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)

The Summit will be held in two phases. The first phase of WSIS will take place in Geneva from 10-12 December 2003, after PrepCom-3, also in Geneva, 15 to 25 September. The second phase will take place in Tunis from 10 to 18 November 2004. Deadline for requiring accreditation for PrepCom-3 and the Geneva first phase of the Summit, August 1 2003. Website <http://www.itu.itu/wsisis>

CEDAW

Countries reporting during the 29th session at UN Headquarters, from 30 June till 18 July 2003: Brasil – Costa Rica – France – Japan - Marocco – New Zealand and Slovenia.

The pre-session working group for the 30th session will take place from 21-25 July 2003 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, and it is a closed meeting. The Working group will review the periodic reports of the following States parties: Belarus, Ethiopia, Germany, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal and Nigeria.

Website: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/29sess.htm>

IANSA - Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms - UN Arms Agreement Poorly Implemented

A new report finds that two years after a UN agreement on stopping gun proliferation, few governments have made much progress. The IANSA Report, Implementing the UN Programme of Action 2003, evaluates progress in 156 countries and has been compiled by over 100 local

researchers and experts from the Biting the Bullet project. Small arms, including handguns, rifles and long guns, cause 500,000 deaths a year – taking one life every minute. The humanitarian impact and political, social and economic costs of the spread of these weapons can be seen from Iraq to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The report finds that despite their obligations under the UN Programme of Action on small arms:

- * A third of all states have yet to establish a national contact points on small arms.
- * Only 37 states have established national committees to co-ordinate action on small arms.
- * Only 65 states have submitted national progress reports to the UN.
- * Only 19 states have launched a review of national small arms legislation.
- * Progress has been particularly slow in countries in North Africa, the Middle East and parts of Asia.

Yet the report also finds that significant progress has been made in some countries and that the involvement of civil society has been essential to this progress. **The most successful initiatives in the last two years have been partnerships between governments and NGOs**, and progress has often been slowest in countries where civil society is excluded.

To know how your country scored, visit <http://www.iansa.org/documents/poa03report>

European Union, For Diversity, Against Discrimination

According to a new Eurobarometer survey, only 1 in 3 Europeans would know their rights if they were discriminated against. The EU hopes to change this as part of a new five-year campaign against discrimination and its underlying causes...

See <http://www.neww.org.pl/#/Whats new in EU>

"Women making a World of Difference: Partnership for Gender and Development"

Leading women from economies in APEC (ASIA-PACIFIC Economic Co-operation): *Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, U.S.A, and Viet Nam* will once again have opportunities to get together, network, exchange valuable experiences.

The 8th APEC's Women Leaders' Network, Chiang Mai, Thailand, 31 July - 3 August 2003

Web: <http://www.wln2003.info> - Programme: <http://www.wln2003.info/EventsPro.htm>

On-line registration: <http://www.wln2003.info/Registration.htm> E-mail: Juree@nida.nida.ac.th

GEM, a new website for young women!

On Friday the 4 July, we were launching GEM KZN and also GEM website. This is the space we are giving to our girls all over the world to start communicating about issues that affect them as girls, and together come up with strategies that will support their different GEM networks all over the world.

The Website will have some few changes by the end of the week as there are SOME documents that were not included, and because we had a tight deadline, we had to launch without them but that is being corrected. PLEASE SHARE THIS SITE WITH ALL THE YOUNG WOMEN OUT THERE, YOUR DAUGHTERS, NIECE, YOUR FRIENDS GIRLS etc. LET THEM START PLANNING THEIR DESTINY <http://gem.gov.za>

From IAW member Mbatho Maragoshi

Women in Politics

Research in democracies in the developed world (Richard Matland) has demonstrated a clear correlation between the representation of women in politics and factors such as: Women's participation in the labour force; the ratio of women's literacy to men's literacy; and the ratio of university-educated women to university-educated men.

See http://www.niza.nl/uk/press/docs/women_onthe_rise/lecture_vankessel.htm

More documents are available online visit <http://www.onlinewomeninpolitics.org>

A world record was set on 02 May 2003 when the **Welsh assembly** became the first legislative body with equal numbers of men and women. Women's rights groups hailed the breakthrough after 30 women were elected to the 60-strong assembly - an increase of five.

Source: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/guardianpolitics/story/0,3605,948552,00.html>

Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Netherlands and Germany had all reached the 30% goal of parliamentary seats taken by women by the end of 2002 along with **Argentina, Costa Rica, South Africa and Mozambique**. According to UNIFEM's report 'Progress of the World's Women 2002' these states had met the target through quota systems. Despite these gains, however, women still accounted for only about 14% of members of parliament worldwide in 2002. In the same report by UNIFEM , **13 developing countries in the sub-Saharan region - the poorest area on Earth - had higher proportions of women MPs than the US (12%), France (11.8%) and Japan (10%). Rwanda has 25.7% and Uganda, 24.7%**. Of the Gulf states which have parliaments, neither Kuwait nor the United Arab Emirates give women the right to vote or stand for election.

Source: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/2995687.stm>

On May 2003 **Qatar** appointed Sheikha bint Ahmed Al-Mahmud as the Gulf state's first woman cabinet minister. The appointment followed an April 29 referendum in which Qataris overwhelmingly approved a written constitution recognising a woman's right to vote and run for office. Sooliveurce: <http://www.dawn.com/2003/05/07/int9.htm>

Other facts and figures on <http://www.onlinewomeninpolitics.org/statistics.htm>

Interesting Books

The History of Inequality (Africa), by Sampie Terreblanche (2002).

Changing Men in South Africa, by Robert Morell (2001).

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.

Contacts

IAW Newsletter / News Flash : Joke Sebus <joke.sebus@inter.nl.net>
International Women's News : Priscilla Todd <toddsec@netlink.com.au>
Membership Officer : Pat Richardson <iaw.membership@tsn.cc>