

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

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

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

IAW NEWSLETTER June 2011, no. 6



Equal Rights

Dear members,

Congratulations from us all for Soon-Young Yoon, who has become the new chair of NGO/CSW/NY. With every good wish for the future!

In this newsletter you will find a short description why five countries are the worst place where women have to live. Those five were mentioned in many national papers. We ask you urgently to use your political influence to improve the way of life for the women in those countries.

Many organisations are working for peace in conflict areas; for example, ending the use of child soldiers in Chad, at an Arms Trade Treaty, to install Peace Keepers and to appoint more female UN police. Also in this newsletter: the rights of indigenous people; a report of the IAW Health Commission; tobacco control legislation; rights for women in Turkey; the adoption of a UN standard for domestic workers; the EU on prostitution and on a gender-responsive financial framework. And, the Human Rights Council passed a resolution on violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

**COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
NGO/CSW/NY ELECTS NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Leadership poised to ensure an open, democratic forum for women's voices at the UN

June 17, 2011 – New York, NY – The NGO Committee on the Status of Women, NY (NGO/CSW/NY), one of three women's committees of [CoNGO](#) that advocates for women's rights and gender equality, today announced the appointment of new Executive Committee members.

At the helm of the NGO/CSW/NY is new Chair, Soon-Young Yoon (former Vice-Chair). Ms. Yoon is the UN representative for the International Alliance of Women and works as a consultant for the World Health Organization. She was one of the organizers of the NGO Forum during the UN Fourth World Conference on Women. Ms. Yoon currently serves as a board member of the Global Advisory Council at the Harvard AIDS Initiative and of the International Foundation for Ewha Woman's University. She holds a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Michigan.

"All issues are women's issues," said Ms. Yoon. "We are the committee that makes it possible for the international women's movement to meet at the UN every year, renewing its inspiration and energy. I look forward to helping this organization weave the world's women together."

Joining Soon-Young Yoon are Susan O'Malley (Vice Chair), International Federation of Business and Professional Women; Mary Ann Tarantula, Zonta International (Recording Secretary); Madeleine Brecher, Council of Jewish Women (Communications Secretary); and Lois Beilin, Soroptimist International (Treasurer). Dr. Jafar Jawad of the Al-Hakim Foundation and Dr. Padmini Murthy of the International Women's Medical Association are Members At Large. Vivian Pender, American Psychoanalytic Association, will stay on as Past Chair, ex-officio.

The 55th CSW report is available

The report of the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women is now available. It includes the agreed conclusions on access and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work, the report of the Working Group on Communications concerning the Status of Women and the resolutions adopted by the Commission.

On: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/55sess.htm>

Send to us by IAW General Secretary Lene Pind

UNITED NATIONS

Resolution on human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity

June 17, Geneva - In a groundbreaking achievement for upholding the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the United Nations Human Rights Council has passed a resolution on human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

The resolution, presented by South Africa along with Brazil and 39 additional co-sponsors from all regions of the world, was passed by a vote of 23 in favour, 19 against, and 3 abstentions. On:

<http://ishr.us1.listmanage.com/track/clicku=97549cf8cb507607389fe76eb&id=ab686595ce&e=1465e5b5c1>

Send to us by IAW Immediate Past President Rosy Weiss

Increase in female UN police worldwide

16 June 2011. More and more countries are getting behind a United Nations initiative designed to boost the number of female police serving in peace operations, with women now accounting for just over 10 per cent of the more than 14,000 officers deployed worldwide.

UN Police are deployed in 11 peacekeeping operations including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Somalia and Sudan. They are involved in a range of activities such as training local law enforcement personnel, conducting joint patrols with national police and helping to provide security for local elections.

More on: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=38743&Cr=female+police&Cr1=>

Countries adopt new UN standards to improve conditions for domestic workers

16 June 2011. The new Convention on Domestic Workers states that workers around the world who care for families and households must have the same basic labour rights as those available to other employees.

It calls for reasonable hours of work, weekly rest of at least 24 consecutive hours, a limit on in-kind payment, clear information on terms and conditions of employment, as well as respect of the rights associated with employment, including the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. More on: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=38744&Cr=ILO&Cr1=>

Women conquering new expanses of freedom - on UN Multimedia

Speaking out against tyranny, fighting modern forms of slavery, breaking down social barriers that restrict women's freedom - these are some of the challenges taken on by the exceptional women who contributed to this issue.

They include Michelle Bachelet (Chile), Roza Otunbayeva (Kyrghyzstan) and Michaëlle Jean (Canada), three major political figures, with dedicated lawyers Sultana Kamal (Bangladesh), Aminetou Mint El Moctar (Mauritania), Asma Jahangir (Pakistan) and Sana Ben Achour (Tunisia), as well as journalist Humaira Habib (Afghanistan), poet and novelist Luisa Futoransky (Argentina) and Maggy Brankitse (Burundi), mother to 20,000 children.

Also in this issue: a tribute to Édouard Glissant (1928-2011), poet from Martinique and former editor-in-chief of the UNESCO Courier. On: courier.unesco@unesco.org

UN envoy hails Chad's action plan to end use of child soldiers

Chad is one of only six governments listed by the Secretary-General for violations against children in conflict. The action plan signed today between the UN and the Chadian Government aims to ensure the release of all children associated with the Chadian National Army (ANT) and associated security forces. Ms. Coomaraswamy, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, said the action plan is an expression of the Government's "steadfast commitment" to building a protective environment for children in Chad.

More on: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=38720&Cr=chad&Cr1=>

ALL AROUND THE WORLD

Afghanistan, the worst place in the world for women

The women in Afghanistan resorting to self-immolation
India, where domestic violence is endemic
'No woman in Somalia is happy to be a woman'
Congo, 'the rape capital of the world'
A Pakistani acid attack victim fights for justice

1. Afghanistan - High maternal mortality rates, limited access to doctors and a "near total lack of economic rights" render Afghanistan such a threat to its female inhabitants.

"Women who do attempt to speak out or take on public roles are often intimidated or killed, said Antonella Notari, head of Woman Change Makers."

2. Democratic Republic of Congo - The "staggering levels of sexual violence" in the lawless east of the DRC account for its second place in the list. One recent US study claimed that more than 400,000 women are raped there each year. The UN has called Congo the rape capital of the world. "Rights activists say militia groups and soldiers target all ages, including girls as young as three and elderly women," the survey reports, "They are gang raped, raped with bayonets etc."

3. Pakistan is ranked third on the basis of cultural, tribal and religious practices harmful to women. "These include acid attacks, child and forced marriage and punishment or retribution by stoning or other physical abuse," the poll finds.

Divya Bajpai, reproductive health adviser at the International HIV/Aids Alliance, added: "Pakistan has some of the highest rates of dowry murder, so-called honour killings and early marriage." According to Pakistan's human rights commission, as many as 1,000 women and girls die in honour killings annually.

4. India is the fourth most dangerous country. "India's central bureau of investigation estimated that in 2009 about 90% of trafficking took place within the country and that there were some 3 million prostitutes, of which about 40% were children," the survey found.

Forced marriage and forced labour trafficking add to the dangers for women. "Up to 50 million girls are thought to be 'missing' over the past century due to female infanticide and foeticide," the UN population fund says, because parents prefer to have boys rather than girls.

5. Somalia, a state in political disintegration, suffers high levels of maternal mortality, rape, female genital mutilation and limited access to education and healthcare.

Qasim added: "The most dangerous thing a woman in Somalia can do is to become pregnant. When a woman becomes pregnant her life is 50-50 because there is no antenatal care at all. There are no hospitals, no healthcare, no nothing."

The survey

The survey was based on responses from more than 200 aid professionals, academics, health workers, policy-makers, journalists and development specialists, chosen for their expertise in gender issues. Each country was also ranked in terms of six risk factors including: health, discrimination and lack of access to resources, cultural and religious practices, sexual violence, human trafficking and conflict-related violence.

TrustLaw Woman website

The survey has been compiled by the Thomson Reuters Foundation to mark the launch of a website, TrustLaw Woman, aimed at providing free legal advice for women's groups around the world. The website has been in existence for some time, linking up local NGOs and social entrepreneurs with established law firms who are prepared to offer legal advice on a pro-bono basis. The groups are vetted by Transparency International.

More than 450 law firms are already involved including some from China. Among those that have recently benefited have been the charity Riders for Health, which delivers medicine to remote villages, and reviewed its contracts in Nigeria.

More on: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jun/15/worst-place-women-afghanistan-india>

The content of this article appeared in media all over the world.

Mailed to us by IAW member Anjana Basu.

Turkey: Bitter-sweet poll victory for women

The increase in the number of female members of Parliament following Sunday's election is good news, but not sufficient to ensure strong political representation for women, according to women's rights activists.

In the previous Parliament, 50 deputies were women. Sunday's polls saw 78 women elected to represent the Turkish people in the new Parliament, where they will comprise 14.1 percent of the total number of deputies.

"Today, unfortunately, according to gender equality and society development index, Turkey ranked 126th among 134 countries," read the letter The Women Entrepreneurs Association of Turkey, or KAGİDER. They added in their press release that if Turkey's main purpose to be listed in ten biggest economy, the country should aim to receive highest ranks in both gender equality and society development index.

New constitution

The association asked the government to appoint at least 10 women as ministers, in order to show as an example of political and administrative representation of women in the parliament to the society.

More on: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=more-women-in-the-new-gov8217t-turkish-body-suggests-2011> and on: <http://www.iknowpolitics.org/node/42030>

Sent to us by IAW member Arina Angerman

Rights of indigenous peoples

Even though indigenous peoples are known for their rich cultures, knowledge and identities, they continue to be among the most marginalized groups in society, with limited or no access to decision-making processes that have an impact on their lives and future.

According to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in his opening remarks for the 10th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues <<http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article3411>> (New York, 16-27 May), "Millions of indigenous peoples continue to lose their lands, their rights and their resources. They make up one-third of the world's one billion rural poor. And they are among the most vulnerable and marginalized of any group."

To better promote and protect the rights of indigenous peoples, the United Nations-Indigenous Peoples' Partnership (UNIPP) – the first global UN inter-agency initiative on indigenous peoples – was launched on the sidelines of the 10th session.

More information is available online <<http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article3430>>.

And have a look at <http://www.youtube.com/user/UNWomen>

WOMEN WORKING FOR PEACE

UN Security Council Resolution 1983 (2011) on Peacekeepers - and HIV/AIDS

On 7 June 2011, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution recognising the importance of UN peacekeeping operations in responding to HIV/AIDS in conflict and post-conflict situations.

The Council specified that HIV/AIDS programmes in peacekeeping could include confidential counselling, testing and other activities; and in the context of assistance to national institutions, security sector reform and disarmament demobilisation and reintegration processes, with particular attention paid to the needs of women and girls.

Combat HIV/AIDS with campaigns against sexual violence

UN Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon pointed to the fact that rape is still used as a weapon against women and girls in many conflicts. He urged all Member States to link efforts to combat HIV/AIDS with campaigns against sexual violence and for the rights of women, recognising the correlation between AIDS, the international drug trade, sex trafficking, the abuse of women and post-conflict peace building challenges.

For more information see: <http://www.unwomen.org/2011/06/un-security-council-adopts-new-resolution-on-hiv-aids-in-conflict-and-post-conflict-situations>

Towards an Arms Trade Treaty: the UN process - in 2012

In 2006, the General Assembly adopted a resolution on an arms trade treaty. The resolution requested countries to submit their views to the 2007 report of the Secretary-General on the issue. More than 100 countries did.

In 2008 a Group of Governmental Experts produced a report on the topic.

In 2009 an Open-ended Working Group held two meetings on an arms trade treaty, which allowed all States to contribute to the debate. A total of six sessions of this Group were planned.

At the end of 2009 the General Assembly decided to convene a Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty in 2012 "to elaborate a legally binding instrument on the highest possible common international standards for the transfer of conventional arms".

2010, the first PrepCom took place in July 2010. In 2011, PrepComs were held on 28 February - 4 March, and will be held on 11 - 15 July. All UN documents mentioned can be found through [Documents](http://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/ATTPrepCom/Documents.html) on: <http://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/ATTPrepCom/Documents.html>

The IANSA Women's Network calls for a strong Arms Trade Treaty

Small arms facilitate a vast spectrum of women's rights violations, including killing, threats and intimidation, rape and other forms of sexual violence. IANSA ask that the ATT does not authorise the transfer of arms if they will be used to perpetrate acts of armed violence, especially gender based violence including sexual violence used as a weapon and tactic of war.

The IANSA Women's Network is the only international network focused on the connections between gender, women's rights, small arms and armed violence.

It was formed in 2001 as a women's caucus at IANSA events and now links members in countries ranging from Fiji to Senegal, Argentina to South Africa, Canada to Sudan.

More on: <http://www.iansa-women.org/about.html>

Egypt - forced 'virginity tests' ?

31 May 2011: A high ranking Egyptian military official denied comments by CNN saying the military had conducted forced 'virginity tests' on female protesters in March. The military official, who was not named, called on the media to "to practise precision before publishing these accusations that seek to cause a rift between the army and the people". On: www.reuters.com/article/2011/06/01/us-egypt-virginity-denial-idUSTRE7504LT20110601

Amnesty International told another story. The reason for the 'tests' was "[w]e didn't want them to say we had sexually assaulted or raped them, so we wanted to prove that they weren't virgins in the first place". On: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/egypt-admission-forced-virginity-tests-must-lead-justice-2011-05-31>

EUROPEAN UNION

EWL Campaign: Together for a Europe free from prostitution

The policy on prostitution of three countries has been compared. The three, Germany, The Netherlands and Sweden have taken opposite stands on prostitution. Germany and the Netherlands have decriminalised procuring, Sweden criminalises the 'clients' and the pimps.

On: <http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?rubrique187&lang=en>

Send to us by IAW Vice-President for Europe Joanna Manganara Statement of the European

Women's Lobby, WIDE Network, and CONCORD - a joint statement

towards a gender responsive, accountable and participatory post-2013 EU Multi-Annual Financial Framework and EU financing instruments.

We call on European and national policymakers to integrate women's rights and gender equality perspective in the forthcoming decisions about the scope, priorities, and financing of the post-2013 EU multi-annual financial framework (MFF).

A gender responsive financial framework

A gender responsive MFF that takes into account the differential impact of budgetary decisions on women and men, allocates sufficient funding for women-specific actions, and encourages gender mainstreaming in all EU financing instruments will make the limited EU budget more effective.

More, including a joint statement, on: www.wide-network.org

Send to us by IAW Vice-President for Europe Joanna Manganara

WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION

UN World Health Commission - Keeping Promises, Measuring Results

At a technical briefing during the 64th World Health Assembly (WHA) the United Nations Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health presented its findings. Margaret Chan, Co-Vice Chair of the Commission, was one of the presenters.

An advance copy of the report and its 10 recommendations to increase women's and children's health includes advice that resources are spent in the most effective way to save lives. Available on http://www.who.int/topics/millennium_development_goals/accountability_commission/en/

MDG Summit, every woman, every child

The Commission was set up in December 2010 following the launch of The Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health, September 22nd at the 'Every Woman, Every Child' special event during the MDG Summit in New York.

The strategy calls for a bold, coordinated effort, building on what has been achieved so far - locally, nationally, regionally and globally. It calls for all partners to unite and take action – *through enhanced financing, strengthened policy and improved service delivery.*

\$40 billion in resources

Summit participants have committed \$40 billion in resources to this global effort to reach key outcomes. These include saving 16 million lives by 2015, preventing 33 million unwanted pregnancies, protecting 120 millions of children from pneumonia and 88 million children from stunting, advancing the control of deadly diseases such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, and ensuring access for women and children to quality facilities and skilled health workers.

IAW members Hélène Sackstein and Gudrun Haupter attended on behalf of IAW the World Health Assembly, 16-24 May 2011.

More on: <http://www.everywomaneverychild.org/commitments>

Tobacco-control legislation: already saving lives - in Europe

The evidence shows that tobacco legislation is working. Confounding its early critics, it is already saving lives and improving health across the WHO European Region. Studies from countries that enforce bans on smoking in public places are finding reductions in heart attacks. Exposure to tobacco smoke contributes to cardiovascular diseases, cancer and tuberculosis, and the scientific literature indicates that, just a few months after the implementation of smoke-free laws, the hospitalization rates for myocardial infarctions decrease by 20–40%.

Legislation

Tobacco is the single most preventable cause of death in the world and there is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke. This year, tobacco will kill nearly 6 million people globally: more than tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and malaria combined. Legislation is proving to be an effective way to regulate and control exposure to tobacco, and to reduce the number of people who smoke. Smoke-free policies in workplaces in several industrialized countries have reduced total tobacco consumption among workers by an average of 29%.

The web site of the WHO Regional Office for Europe includes a fact sheet giving current data and background information on anti-tobacco legislation in Europe.

On: <<http://pr4.netatlantic.com/t/2257419/45169333/141526/0/>>

IAW Consultant for the World Health Organization Tobacco Free Initiative, Soon-Young Yoon.

Note: Australia is proposing legislation to have plain packaging for cigarettes with no logos or company branding. This is being challenged by the large cigarette companies.

Latest news: IAW member Judy Gordon of the New York team was elected as Member of Large of the NGO Committee on Mental Health. More on the IAW July Newsletter.

LINKS ON THE NET

Scanning the net by UN webcast

UN in ACTION, an award-winning *television* series, reports on the work of the UN and its Agencies. It is well worth visiting.

For example webcasts on: [South Sudan: Midwives Fighting to Save Lives](#), or: [Pakistan: Girls' Education](#), or: [Lebanon: First Female Electrician](#) or: Brazil Drylands: The Promise of Water , or: [Bangladesh: Seeking Justice](#) More on: <http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/unia/>

Scanning for interesting blogs, Facebook, YouTube videos, Twitter etc.

An interesting journalist with a 'human touch' is Nicholas D. Kristof. He ends his article with: "I invite you to visit my blog On the Ground. Please join me also on Facebook, watch my YouTube videos and follow me on Twitter".

So we did. We invite you to do the same. On:

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/26/opinion/26kristof.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=tha212

Note

We are sending this Newsletter as an attachment, saved in Word 97. Please be so kind to advise Pat Richardson if you know of any IAW members or affiliate/associate organisations with an e-mail address, so we can mail them this Newsletter too.

IAW Newsletter / News Flash :	Joke Sebus	<iaw.newsletter@inter.nl.net>
International Women's News :	Priscilla Todd (English)	<iaw.iwnews@womenallince.org>
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