

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

**Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities
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SPECIAL STOP EXPRESS IAW NEWSLETTER - March 2000

Dear IAW members,

This is an Special Stop Express IAW Newsletter, to let you know the latest date to register for the Beijing +5 Special Session. We also ask you to notify Priscilla Todd as soon as possible if you are planning to go to the IAW Board Meeting in Israel.

For the moment no news from CSW in this letter. There is plenty of news to find on the net and also very interesting news in the Daily Bulletins. See

<http://lists.sn.apc.org/public/b5ngonews/subsform.htm>

If you are an IAW Board or Office Holder

and you will be attending the Board Meeting in Tel-Aviv or even if you are just thinking of going (refer March newsletter) please **advise Priscilla Todd now**

toddsec@surfnetcity.com.au Fax: +61 3 9629 2904 .

This information is needed as early as possible by Hana Elroy so that sufficient hotel rooms can be booked. You will receive more information soon about hotels, etc.

3-4 June 2000, New York

NGO Working Session on the Beijing Plus Five review process. The Working Session is planned as a time for NGOs to finalise and publicise a Global NGO Alternative Report, and to review and analyse progress made and obstacles to overcome in the UN report on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action by the UN and Member States.

5-9 June 2000, New York

"Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace", the UN Special Session (Beijing Plus Five) to review and assess progress made in implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. NGOs will hold parallel activities during the Special Session, but there will not be an NGO Forum.

DEADLINE EXTENDED -- Update on the Millennium Forum,

from IAW Vice-president Rosy Weiss

To: All non-governmental organisations, humanitarian and community-based organisations, private voluntary organisations, academic institutions, religious organisations, unions, parliamentarians, local authorities and other representatives and groups of global civil society.

PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS POSSIBLE PLEASE FORWARD TO OTHER INTERESTED GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS; PLEASE ACCEPT OUR APOLOGIES FOR CROSS-POSTINGS

In an effort to accommodate the vast numbers of grassroots-level non-governmental organisations and civil society groups in remote areas of the world who have expressed a

keen interest in participating in the Millennium Forum, the deadline for applications to attend the Millennium Forum has been extended to

31 March 2000.

The Millennium Forum is scheduled to be held 22-26 May 2000 at United Nations headquarters in New York. It strives to solicit the best thinking of civil society in all its sectors worldwide as they relate to six broad themes: PEACE, the eradication of POVERTY, HUMAN RIGHTS, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, GLOBALISATION, and "STRENGTHENING AND DEMOCRATISING" THE UNITED NATIONS.

The Forum will also be GENDER BALANCED in its representation.

As of the initial deadline of 1 March 2000, the Forum had received more than 750 applications for participation in the Forum, from organisations and individuals in more than 90 countries. However, the Forum has also received many inquiries from remote regions of the world, and the time-delay in getting information out to and back from civil society organisations in such regions has necessitated extending the deadline.

To be assured of being considered for participation in the Forum, then, organisations and individuals should ensure that their printed application forms are postmarked no later than 31 March 2000 -- or that their on-line,

email or fax applications have been sent to the Forum by the end of the day on 31 March 2000.

To Register on-line, or to learn more about the Forum, please visit our website at:

<http://www.millenniumforum.org>

**REGISTERING ON-LINE IS THE QUICKEST AND MOST EFFICIENT WAY TO
SUBMIT YOUR
APPLICATION.**

In other developments, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan gave the Forum a boost recently during remarks to civil society in New Zealand, when he said that the "NGO Revolution" has been "the best thing that has happened to our Organisation in a long time." He invited civil society organisations to the Millennium Forum, calling for a stronger partnership between the UN and civil society.

"Civil society organisations have already given new life and new meaning to the idea of an international community," said Secretary General Annan on 23 February 2000. "And you can give us your ideas about the role the United Nations should play in the twenty-first century. "I hope you will come to the Millennium Forum in May full of constructive suggestions on how to approach the world's most pressing problems, and how to deal with them in a spirit of global solidarity," Mr. Annan concluded. "I hope you will help us achieve our goal of bringing the United Nations closer to the people."

The Millennium Forum represents the next step towards strengthening the influence of global civil society in international affairs, particularly at the United Nations. It is the next in the series of major global NGO conferences, following on The Earth Summit, the Social Summit, the Beijing NGO Forum for Women, the Hague Appeal for Peace, and other great conferences of the 1990s. In tackling such a wide range of issues, from peace to human rights to globalisation, and in its attempts to reach a new level of global diversity and participation, the Forum is unique for a United Nations-related civil society conference.

We continue to seek your participation in this process, which we believe will result in more effective efforts by NGOs and civil society organisations in global decision-making and the implementation of action plans, especially at the United Nations and in other international organisations. In particular, we hope that you will take one or more of the following actions:

-- Log-on to our Website at <http://www.millenniumforum.org> and read through the various draft papers on the themes that interest your organisation and send comments on those drafts to the thematic convenors, which are listed on the website. YOUR INPUT INTO THESE PAPERS IS VITAL IF WE ARE TRULY TO REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF CIVIL SOCIETY WORLDWIDE.

-- Log-on to our Website at <http://www.millenniumforum.org> and register for participation in the Forum's main meeting in May via our on-line registration form (which can be found under the "How to get involved" section). (Please note: we do hope to have some travel funds available in the near future for organisations from the Global South.). -- Send this message to other NGOs and civil society organisations in your network and/or to the appropriate person within your own organisation. WE WANT, PARTICULARLY, TO WIDEN THE NETWORK. SO PLEASE FORWARD THIS TO OTHER PEOPLE YOU ARE WORKING WITH ON LOCAL-TO-GLOBAL ISSUES.

-- Print out this message and share it with others at various NGO/Civil Society organisation meetings such as you may be attending or organising in the next few weeks. We do understand that many organisations in the Global South do not have email, so we are counting on those that do to spread this message.

-- Publish news about the Forum in your organisation's newsletter, magazine or website. We have on our website a range of press releases and publishable background materials that are available for downloading and public action. Visit <http://www.millenniumforum.org> for more information.

Up to 1,400 representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other groups of civil society will be able to gather at the United Nations in May to discuss these topics through an innovative program of "interactive plenaries" focusing on the main themes of the Forum. Plans are also being made to allow representatives of civil society worldwide to participate through various on-line and satellite meetings.

Among the main expected outcomes of the Forum will be an extended document on the topics of peace, poverty, human rights, environment, globalisation and "strengthening and democratising the United Nations and other International Organisations," all under the main theme of "the United Nations for the Twenty-First Century." This document will be presented to the world leaders who gather at the Millennium Summit in September.

As explained in previous emails, you been subscribed to this general Millennium Forum announcement list because of interest you or your organisation has express in previous NGO/Civil Society/United Nations - related conferences or issues. Some of you are also new to this list. If you wish to unsubscribe from this list, please rely with the words "UNSUBSCRIBE" in the subject line. Please understand, however, we are seeking to reach as many NGOs and civil society organisations as possible around the world and you may end up on our list again, especially if you subscribe to any of the various list services on the Forum's main topics.

We expect to be making periodic announcements about the Forum to this list, at a rate of roughly no more than one per week until the Forum takes place in May. Please regard this as a process whereby YOU and your organisation can be included in a process of global decision-making that is open, transparent and representative manner, reflecting democratic principles. If you have any questions, please contact us by at our main email address: mngof@bic.org .

The Millennium Forum mngof@bic.org 866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 120 New York, NY 10017, USA

Phone: USA 212-803-2522 Fax: USA 212-803-2561

And here is another message from Rosy Weiss,
in particular for the IAW members in the European Women's Lobby

Dear friends,

Here the latest information we received about the NGO participation in the June Beijing+5 session of the UN General Assembly from 5 to 9 June 2000 in New York: NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC and those, that were accredited in Beijing may participate. However, the maximum number of participants per organisation will be 3 or less. In order to get the pre-registration form, please contact: Sudha Acharya
CONGO Focal Point for Beijing+5 - tel. +1 212 986 6117 - fax: +1 212 687 7352 -
email: Beijing5ngo@aol.com The pre-registration form should be sent NOT LATER THAN
31 MARCH 2000 TO Koh Miyaoi, Division for the Advancement of Women, Department
of Economic and Social Affairs, Room DC2-1204, United Nations, New York N.Y. 10017,
USA - Fax +1 212 963 34 63 - email: <Beijing5@un.org>

Concerning rooms reservation for NGO briefings or caucuses, please also inform Koh Miyaoi
no later than

15 APRIL 2000. Please note that, given the limited number of participants per organisation
(3), the EWL will not be able to register additional persons under its accreditation.

Tarja Halonen becomes Finland's Head of State

The social democrat Tarja Halonen did win the presidential election this past Sunday and therefore becomes the first female Head of State of Finland. Halonen attained 51,6% of the votes running against the liberal opposition leader Esko Aho in the final ballot. "It were the women, who decided this election in our favour.", said social democrat and Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen. Halonen herself argues that the mobilisation of especially young people moved her into office. The new President will take office on March, 1st.

With the change from Ahatisaari to Halonen the post will lose part of its political influence. This is due to an amendment of the constitution decided by Riksdag (National Parliament) which is restricting the President's active participation in foreign affairs as well as in the formation of the government.

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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. The attachment is saved in Word 6.0/095
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International Alliance of Women / Alliance Internationale des Femmes

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