

Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities
Droits Égaux - Responsabilités Égales

IAW NEWS FLASH - September, nr. 8



Equal
Rights

Dear IAW members,

A short IAW News Flash this time, to express our deepest concern at the situation in the world. At the moment, just before leaving for Sri Lanka, we are awaiting President Bush's speech to the United Nations, the debate that follows and the outcome of that debate. In this News Flash there is a quotation of WILPF US. Also some URLs on the outcome of the WSSD for women and on CSW 2003, which is being prepared with an on-line discussion of women in the media. Other news just has to wait till after the 32nd IAW Congress at Sri Lanka, where our hosts are preparing a most cordial welcome with a most inspiring programme! It is hoped, however, that some media releases will be issued from Congress.

The Bush administration, Iraq and the UN

A statement from WILPF US:

"We urge, now more than ever, the United States to use the resources and commitments of the United Nations as the channel to address both the need for security and the need for justice ... We also call now more than ever, for the United States to reconsider our policies in the Middle East to support a peaceful and just resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. WILPF has rejected violence and war as a means of settling disputes since our founding in 1915 by Jane Addams and women from twelve other countries. We have worked always for peaceful societies under law with liberty and justice for all. WILPF (and the International Alliance of Women) was among the first to propose the League of Nations and has consistently supported the United Nations and the development of international law".

CSW 2003

From 26 August to 27 September 2002 there is an online discussion on "Participation and access of women to the media and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women" at <http://esaconf.un.org/~women-media#top>

For additional information on the Expert Group Meeting on 12– 5 November 2002 in Beirut, see <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/media2002>

Women struggle to bring their Perspectives to WSSD Process

Devaki Jain, a feminist economist from India called on women in a FIRE webcast to form a "united political voice" in the face of ever greater corporate domination of globalisation and efforts at sustainable development. Likewise, Anita Nayar from the Strategic Analysis for Gender Equity, noted that the **increasing privatisation of resources including water, energy and land**, gave corporations a growing amount of power, and expressed concern that there are few mechanisms to ensure corporate responsibility and accountability. In the Women's Caucus Irene Dankelman of the Netherlands and WEDO (Women's Environment & Development Organisation) noted that the caucus was most concerned about language in the health section of the final document that would present a serious setback for women's sexual and reproductive rights. This language obliges governments to provide basic health services to all, taking account agreements reached at other UN conferences, but "consistent with national laws and religious values." This would make women vulnerable to serious oppression in exercising their human rights according to international standards. Prisca Molotsi of the University of South Africa and the IAW talked to FIRE about the importance of including **a gender perspective in the final WSSD documents** and in the enforcement of Agenda 21 "because women are central to sustainable development."

A summary is to be found on <http://www.womensnet.org.za> and <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org>
See also the BBC website: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/2230670.stm>

