

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

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

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

IAW NEWSLETTER November 2008, no. 11



Equal Rights

Dear members,

This newsletter is about women.

Women preparing for the Commission on the Status of Women, women being promoted to UN positions, women celebrating 100 years of looking after women's rights, women demanding armament regulation at the Security Council, women in solidarity with victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation, women being harassed by police.

Women looking for clean water and good sanitation, women looking for funds to finance their projects for social change. And above all: women fighting sexual violence of women!

The ten promises of Barack Obama are not specifically about women, but they are all right. Let's remind the Obama administration in the coming years on what was promised!

The ten promises of Barack Obama

1. Reduce the US's carbon emissions 80% by 2050 and play a strong positive role in negotiating a binding global treaty to replace the expiring Kyoto Protocol
2. Withdraw all combat troops from Iraq within 16 months and keep no permanent bases in the country
3. Establish a clear goal of eliminating all nuclear weapons across the globe
4. Close the Guantanamo Bay detention centre
5. Double US aid to cut extreme poverty in half by 2015 and accelerate the fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria
6. Open diplomatic talks with countries like Iran and Syria, to pursue peaceful resolution of tensions
7. De-politicize military intelligence to avoid ever repeating the kind of manipulation that led the US into Iraq
8. Launch a major diplomatic effort to stop the killings in Darfur
9. Only negotiate new trade agreements that contain **labour** and environmental protections
10. Invest \$150 billion over ten years to support renewable energy and get 1 million plug-in electric cars on the road by 2015

You can find the ten promises on: <http://www.barackobama.com/issues/>

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

By the end of November 2008, all ECOSOC-accredited NGOs should have received an invitation to attend the fifty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women. We strongly encourage NGOs to update their contact details at <http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo/> after which they should alert the Division for the Advancement of Women through the designated email address (csw53@un.org) and on [Quick alert to NGOs wishing to participate in CSW53](#). The 53rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women will be held at the United Nations headquarters in **New York from 2 to 13 March 2009**.

**Priority Theme - the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men,
including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS.**

The deadline for pre-registration is 9 January 2009

An Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on the topic. The EGM took place from 6 - 9 October 2008 in Geneva, Switzerland. In preparation for that Meeting, the Division has hosted an [online discussion](#) on the theme.

The [Priority theme is to be found on: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/53sesspriorityhtm.htm](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/53sesspriorityhtm.htm)

International Alliance of Women

Among the related documents and resources you will find, with the observer papers, at EGM/ESOR/2008/OP.2, a [statement submitted by the International Alliance of Women](#)

Note: If you are attending CSW please advise President Rosy Weiss iawpres@womenalliance.org and Secretary General Lene Pind iawsec@womenalliance.org so that you can be involved in meetings of IAW members and Side Events that will be organised in New York.

Strengthening Collective Security and Armament Regulation

On Wednesday 19 November the United Nations Security Council, under the Presidency of Costa Rica, held an open debate on “strengthening collective security and armament regulation”. This debate provided an opportunity to reinvigorate and reenergise work to implement Article 26 of the UN Charter, specifically to reduce global spending on armaments and refocus spending on true human security needs.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) called on all governments to send high level representatives to address the Security Council to:

- Report on progress made towards a plan to reduce the human and economic resources spent on armaments;
- Request that, within one year, the Office of Legal Affairs, Office for Disarmament Affairs, individual governments, and NGOs report on ways and means for implementing Article 26; and
- Indicate an intention to evaluate the Security Council’s performance and initiatives towards advancing Article 26 in the next General Assembly session.

The **International Alliance of Women** strongly supports WILPF in its efforts. Information on article 26 is available on: <http://www.wilpf.int.ch/disarmament/Nov08Art26Action.html>

Send to us by IAW secretary Lene Pind.

Article 26

*In order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources, the Security Council shall be responsible for formulating, with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee referred to in Article 47, **plans to be submitted to the Members of the United Nations for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments.***

WOMEN IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Working together - Prevention and assistance to women victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation

The European Women’s Lobby (EWL) has just released a new publication, which outlines the context for working against trafficking in women for sexual exploitation in Europe, and highlights the achievements of the Nordic Baltic Network in strengthening support and assistance to women victims of trafficking.

The Nordic Baltic Network, comprising NGOs and government agencies, was set up in 2006 to work together to develop the best possible models to support and assist women who are trafficked in all eight participating countries: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden.

If you want to download the publication in PDF format, please do so via the EWL website or the Nordic Baltic Network web site:

<http://www.womenlobby.org/site/1abstract.asp?DocID=384>

<http://www.nordicbaltic->

assistwomen.net/IMG/pdf/Working_Together_Nordic_Baltic_Network_publication-5.pdf

For printed copies of the publication, please email Malin Björk <Bjork@womenlobby.org>

IAW representative at European Women's Lobby, Joanna Manganara

Women in Europe for a Common Future - Sustainable Sanitation in Kyrgyzstan

For the first time the International Conference "Ecological Safety in the International Year of Sanitation" held in the Netherlands had ministers, parliamentarians, village teachers and university professors speak about the down to earth issue of safe management of human faeces and urine.

Germany

"I am used to speaking about renewable energy, but this is the first time I have been asked to speak at a conference on sanitation and toilets, and I must confess it is not an easy topic to discuss. However, Germany has contributed financially as we see that the lack of safe sanitation is a real problem in

Central Asia", said Holger Green, Ambassador of Germany in Kyrgyzstan.

Norway

"It was the first time in Kyrgyzstan that a two day conference was focussed on both policy solutions and on innovative technical solutions to improve the water and health situation", says Carola Bjorklund, senior diplomat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, "and it is a strong signal to the governments that the conference resolution calls for the Central Asian countries to ratify the international protocol on water and health".

Kyrgyzstan

"We have a number of donor projects providing piped water supply to villages, but if sanitation is not addressed at the same time, we find that often waste water and toilet waste end up in puddles in the streets or gardens, or are lead into a nearby stream, a hygienic risk for the local population", said Mrs Sharshenova of the Ministry of Health of Kyrgyzstan.

More on: <http://www.wecf.eu/english/articles/2008/10/conference-Bishkek.php>

WOMEN WORLDWIDE

Australia - Victorian Women celebrating!

Melbourne. A brass septet fanfare has been composed especially for a celebration on November 23 of the Vote 1908 - 2008, by Catherine Connor and will be performed on the steps of Parliament House. The all-women ensemble will include: Katy Addis [trumpet], Jennifer Magoulas [trumpet], Laura Clisby [French Horn], Rosemary Savage [French Horn], Anna Pfitzner [trombone], Sue Bradley [tuba] Arwen Johnston [timpani/tenor drum].

More festivities will take place on that special day, including a display by the Women's Electoral Lobby and League of Women Voters Victoria, moving landscapes, 100 ceramic suffragists and ten commemorative banners. Many suffrage celebrations have been taking place throughout the year.

Editor's note: Congratulations! We would love to be there.

UNESCO - Jean King Global mentor for Gender Equality

Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura of UNESCO released a video message in which he said Ms. King had been chosen "in recognition of her tremendous career, which has inspired millions and changed the lives of young women across the world."

The UNESCO-WTA partnership, launched in 2006, already funds projects in Cameroon, China, the Dominican Republic, Jordan and Liberia aimed at improving the leadership capabilities and opportunities for women and girls.

As part of the appointment, the Billie Jean King Leadership Internship programme will be set up to give young women experience in the sports industry through internships at the Women's Sports Foundation and then job placement opportunities in the sports business.

More on: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=28845&Cr=gender&Cr1=equality>

Theresa A. Hitchens appointed to head UN disarmament research agency

14 November 2008 – Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced today that he has appointed an American woman with a long career in security affairs to head the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). Theresa A. Hitchens, will be the fifth Director of the independent Geneva-based body and will take up her duties next January.

The new [UNIDIR](#) head serves as the Director of the Space Security Project of the Center for Defense Information (CDI) in Washington. Prior to that, she was the Research Director of the Washington affiliate of the British American Security Information Council (BASIC), where she was tasked with managing the organization's research and advocacy in nuclear and conventional arms control, European security and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) affairs.

In Brussels, she reported on transatlantic relations, the European Union (EU), NATO and international security. Ms. Hitchens is on the editorial board of the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists and is a member of Women in International Security as well as the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Among her latest publications are Future Security in Space: Charting a Cooperative Course (2004) and European Military Space Capabilities: A Primer (2006).

More on: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=28954&Cr=disarmament&Cr1=>

IRAN: Sussan Tahmasebi Banned from Travel

Early morning on October 26, 2008, security officials at Imam Khomeini Airport confiscated the passport of Sussan Tahmasebi, women's rights defender and member of the One Million Signatures Campaign, preventing her from travel. Sussan explained: "This is the fourth time that security officials have prevented me from travelling under different pretences".

Following Tahmasebi's return to her house at 10:00am, she was faced with 5 security agents at her door, who presented her with a court order to search her home. The security officials, while filming the home, seized a number of CDs, books, writings, texts addressing peace building, cassette tapes and a Laptop.

More on: <http://www.change4equality.org/english/spip.php?article378>

Charlize Theron Messenger of Peace

14 November 2008 – The Academy Award-winning actor and activist Charlize Theron has been [designated](#) by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon as a United Nations Messenger of Peace, tasked with promoting efforts to end violence against women.

The actor has been recognized for her work focusing attention and mobilizing efforts on social issues, particularly in her native South Africa, where she has the Africa Outreach Project, which provides funding for a mobile health and computer clinic that visits high schools in rural communities affected by HIV/AIDS.

FUNDHER - Money Watch for Women's Rights

The 'Funders Forum' is a key event at AWID's International Forum, bringing together women's rights activists and donors to discuss foremost issues around resource mobilisation.

This year the Forum will be held in Cape Town, South Africa, November 14-17 2008.

The power of movements

In May and June 2008, AWID launched a global survey in English, Spanish, French and Arabic, that was answered by 1035 women's rights organisations from all over the world.

Additionally, 20 interviews were conducted with both donors and women's rights activists from different regions and sectors, as well as a document review.

The result is the 2008 "Fundher Brief: /Money Watch for Women's Rights Organisations and Movements".

What do women's organisations look like?

Building on previous research conducted by AWID, the 2008 research results indicate that women's organisations are young (82% of respondents to the survey were founded after 1990), and relatively small, both in budget size and in human resources (25% working without any full time staff).

Most organisations work at a local and national level, and with differing levels of funding.

For example, 22% of respondents have only limited start-up funding and 34% have done some fundraising but are looking for different sources. Many organisations have limited capacity for the implementation of more sophisticated fundraising strategies.

What is the current funding landscape?

The bilateral and multilateral agencies are the main donors in terms of funding and grants.

Some agencies are giving fewer but larger grants, and a number of agencies are "significantly escalating their contributions to civil society organisations doing women's rights work".

For example, "patriarchal societies, sexism and authoritarian, restrictive governments are some of the most common challenges that women's groups indicated they have to overcome in order to mobilize more resources that could support their work."

However, women's organisations "have found new ways of organizing and standing together by building alliances, transforming leaderships, questioning their own structures, and re-shaping the way in which they relate to money."

New funding opportunities

Some new funding opportunities have emerged for NGOs working on the Aid Effectiveness Agenda and the Millennium Development Goals, and of course through *women's funds* – which are gaining strength and are pivotal to continuing women's rights work ...

More on: http://www.awid.org/forum08/agenda_funders_forum.htm

Trials of Activists show Burma unwilling to reform

On 11 November, the military junta imposed prison sentences of up to 65 years on at least 14 activists of the 88 Generation Student group. After highly criticised closed-door trials, they join the more than 2,100 political prisoners currently behind bars in Burma.

The government of Burma has stated that its new constitution and plans for 2010 elections are genuine efforts to increase political participation and pave a 'roadmap to democracy'. The severe sentences handed down to these peaceful activists, however, demonstrate the opposite.

Peaceful protest is not a crime.

The imprisonment of these activists shows that the government remains intolerant to dissenting views, and unwilling to reform," said Ingrid Srinath, Secretary General of CIVICUS.

More on: www.civicus.org

CONGO - some of the most horrific waves of sexual violence on earth

Congolese army on the rampage as it flees

Hundreds of Congolese soldiers have rampaged through several villages in eastern Congo, raping women and pillaging homes as they pulled back ahead of a feared rebel advance, the UN has reported. Colonel Jean-Paul Dietrich, the UN peacekeeping spokesman, said that the army troops had reportedly raped civilians near the town of Kanyabayonga, in attacks that had begun overnight and lasted into Tuesday morning. Kanyabayonga is 60 miles north of the provincial capital, Goma.

Rampaging soldiers

Col Dietrich said 700 to 800 Congolese soldiers then left Kanyabayonga and went on a rampage through several villages to the north. "They looted vehicles, they looted some houses," Col Dietrich said from Kinshasa, capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The country's armed forces are notoriously ill-disciplined soldiers, historically better at looting than standing their ground. In recent days, some have been seen manning checkpoints drunk.

Ethnic hatred

The fighting in eastern Congo is fuelled by ethnic hatred left over from the 1994 slaughter of at least 500,000 Tutsis in neighbouring Rwanda. Nkunda says he is fighting to protect minority Tutsis from Rwandan Hutu militants, who participated in the genocide before escaping to the DRC.

Displacement

Fighting in Congo intensified in August and has since displaced at least 250,000 people despite the presence of the largest United Nations peacekeeping force in the world.

After a closed-door meeting members of the UN Security Council and the Congolese ambassador said broad agreement existed for beefing up the 17,000-strong peacekeeping force.

<http://news.scotsman.com/world/Campaign-of-rape-Congolese-army.4689016.jp>

Oxfam

Ariane Arpa from the anti-poverty group Oxfam said that "even before the recent upsurge of violence, the Democratic Republic of Congo was one of the worst places in the world to be a civilian."

Over five million people are estimated to have died as a result of a conflict that erupted in 1998, largely because of the hunger and disease that the war has spawned.

Within the eastern part of the Congo, at least a million are internally displaced, while the country has seen some of the most horrific waves of sexual violence on earth.

So far this year, more than 1,100 women are reported to have been raped per month, although the actual number is probably much higher, humanitarian workers have said.

"There is no military solution to this conflict, nor can it be solved by providing more troops or military hardware," said Arpa. "However, if done properly, additional military support could help improve security, enforce the ceasefire (declared by Nkunda in late October but broken in the interim), protect civilians, and allow aid agencies to provide help to all those who desperately need it."

More on <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=44605>

Sent to us by IAW member Anjana Basu

REPORTS - EVENTS - CONFERENCES

Against Gender Violence 25 November - 10 December 2008

This year's campaign will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights too and will make demands to advance women's human rights.

Human Rights Council – Geneva - December 2008

* Forum on **Minority Issues**, first session, 15 - 16 December

* Working group on the question of the **use of mercenaries** as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination, 5th session, 15 - 19 December

* Working Group on the **Universal Periodic Review**, third session, Geneva, 1 - 15 December.

Supporting Efforts to End Obstetric Fistula

The Report of the Secretary-General, of 6 August 2008, is to be found on:

http://www.unfpa.org/fistula/docs/sg_obstetric_fistula.pdf

The United Nations Democracy Fund Invites Civil Society Organizations to Apply for Funding

The United Nations Democracy Fund invites civil society organizations to apply for funding for projects to promote democracy. Project proposals may be submitted on-line between 10 November 2007 and 31 December 2008 at www.un.org/democracyfund View the full announcement [here](#)

Sent to us by IAW secretary Lene Pind

Doha, Qatar - 29 November-2 December 2008

Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus On: <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/doha/index.htm>

Committee on the Rights of the Child, fiftieth session, Geneva, 12 - 30 January 2009

CEDAW - Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, forty-third session, Geneva, 19 January - 6 February 2009

International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific has reprinted a new edition of the resource guide on the Optional Protocol of CEDAW, to be found on:

http://www.iwraw-ap.org/documents/resourceguide/Our_Rights_Guide.pdf.

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@womenalliance.org>
	: Mathilde Duval (French)	<aifnfi@womenalliance.org>
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