

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 2009, no. 11

Equal Rights

Dear members,

Three big issues in this newsletter: 1) preparing for the Commission on the Status of Women by looking at the implementation of the Platform of Action 15 years after Beijing; 2) the Copenhagen Summit and the position of women during the warming-up of the earth; 3) you will find several issues concerning women all over the world, such as: the outrage of 43 small islands; the connection between sexual and reproductive health and HIV; older women; Muslim suffragettes; the courage of women to unite against rape in conflict areas; hunger and the enormous sum that is yearly spent on arms; the arms treaty; good news from the Global Gender Gap Index 2009, and news of several surveys, reports, links etc, at the end.

Beijing + 15 - all over the World Where do women stand?

Gender equality and women's empowerment ten years after Beijing

The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women undertook a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) and the Outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000) during its forty-ninth session from 28 February to 11 March 2005.

[Final Report of the Online Discussion on Education and Training of Women and the Girl-child.](#)

Editors note: online discussion are always interesting. Join them if you can! If you don't have much time, read the concluding remarks on page 31.

[Summary of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality Online Discussions on Selected Critical Areas of Concern of the Beijing Platform for Action and other Emerging Issues](#)

Editors note: this 2005 report has 65 pages. On: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/forums/review/>

Beijing +15 - What is WomenWatch?

WomenWatch is an electronic gateway to web-based information of all United Nations entities' work as well as the outcomes of the United Nations' intergovernmental processes on the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. On: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch>.

The Gender Based Violence (GBV) conversations are part of a UN system-wide series of online discussions dedicated to the 15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000). It is hosted by **WomenWatch**, on <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/beijing15>.

Beijing +15 - Bangkok

Participants have been [meeting](#) for three days at the Bangkok headquarters of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific ([ESCAP](#)) for a three-day review of the follow-up to the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, specifically to assess progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action – a wide-ranging blueprint for promoting and protecting the rights of women and girls.

While there are signs of progress since the creation of the agenda, persistent obstacles and challenges remain. Joanne Sander, Deputy Executive Director of the UN Development Fund for Women ([UNIFEM](#)), said, "Accountability is particularly crucial at this time. Who will answer for the painfully slow progress on **reducing maternal mortality** when it is entirely preventable? Who will answer for the inadequate progress in increasing women's meaningful **political participation** in most countries in the region?"

Carolyn Hannan, Director of the UN Division for the Advancement of Women, emphasized accountability on the issue of **violence against women**. She highlighted the importance of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women, and drew attention to the adoption by the Security Council of two new resolutions on **sexual violence in armed conflict**.

More topics

The last two days of the meeting will focus on topics such as gender and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the pledges world leaders made to slash a host of social ills, including extreme hunger and poverty, infant and maternal mortality, and lack of access to education and health care – all by 2015, as well as CEDAW and a regional campaign to end violence against women.

To be found on: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=32963&Cr=gender&Cr1=>

Asia Pacific - Beijing +15 Regional Review

The Asia Pacific NGO Forum on Beijing + 15 was held from 22-24 October 2009 in Quezon City, the Philippines, and had as a theme: "Weaving Wisdom, Confronting Crises, Forging the Future."

It addressed a number of issues from a gender perspective; including climate change and disaster risk reduction, as well as human security in situations of conflict and post-conflict.

For more information, click [here](#).

Asia Pacific - Beijing +15 - Publications on best practices in Domestic Violence legislation

The analysis in the publication is based on CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. CEDAW obligates governments to promote and protect the rights of women in all spheres of their lives.

As violence against women and girls is a severe violation of human rights, governments in the Asia Pacific region have the responsibility to respond.. Many countries have enacted specific legislation against domestic violence while other countries address domestic violence through other laws and by adopting and implementing policies and programmes of action.

It is equally important to ensure that these laws, policies and plans are effectively implemented toward the ultimate goal of eliminating violence against women and girls.

The event was aimed at promoting accountability of duty bearers to women in the Asia-Pacific.

Sent to us by IAW member Pat Richardson.

Europe - Beijing +15 Regional Review

In the lead up to Beijing +15, various regional initiatives are being undertaken to evaluate and monitor national and regional achievements in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

As such, the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE) held a two day review meeting on 2-3 November in Geneva, in which various stakeholders participated, including civil society.

Other information on the outcomes of the meeting is available [online](#).

Women and the Copenhagen Summit

State of the World Population report 2009

Robert Engelman, Worldwatch Institute's Vice President for Programs, was lead author of the report, which argues that women's issues, and especially women's health issues, have been largely overlooked in discussions leading up to the UN climate talks in Copenhagen, Denmark, this December.

Women will bear the greatest burden of a changing climate but so far have received little attention from negotiators working toward a new global climate deal, according to the 2009 edition of the United Nations Population Fund's State of World Population.

"We can't successfully confront climate change if we neglect the needs, challenges, and potential of half the people on this planet," said UNFPA Executive Director Thoraya Ahmed Obaid in a UNFPA release announcing the State of the World Population report.

"If we are really serious about halting climate change, then we must get serious about eliminating inequalities between the sexes and empowering women to persevere in our warming world."

For more information or to download the State of the World Population 2009, please visit

<http://www.unfpa.org/swp/> and <http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2009/en/>

AOSIS - Small Island States Outraged !

November 6, Barcelona, Spain. Over 4,500 participants from 181 countries participated in the five-day gathering, during which progress was made on the issues of adaptation, technology cooperation, reducing emissions from deforestation in developing countries and mechanisms to disburse funds for developing countries.

Two key issues

Little progress was made, however, on mid-term emission reduction targets of developed countries and finance, according to a news release issued by the UNFCCC.

These are two key issues that would allow developing countries to limit their emissions growth and adapt to the inevitable effects of climate change.

Several video's are available on: <http://www.vimeo.com/6655817>

The 43-member Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) expressed outrage at attempts this week to steamroll the worlds most vulnerable countries into accepting a watered down political agreement at the Copenhagen Climate Summit this December, rather than internationally legally binding outcomes.

Ambassador Dessima Williams, Permanent Representative of Grenada to the United Nations and current AOSIS Chair, said: "Many states put forward their proposed treaty texts nearly six months ago. There are no practical obstacles whatsoever. All that's lacking now is the political will to finish the job. Weak political declarations are not the solution. Leaders must come to Copenhagen ready to sign on to new targets under the Kyoto Protocol, and a new broader treaty to bind all countries".

Population and Climate Debate

Gudrun Haupter, convenor of the IAW Health Commission, recommends reading also the article in the bulletin www.who.int/bulletin/ 'Taking the heat out of the population and climate debate and Climate change and family planning: least developed countries define the agenda.'

Sustainable Forests - UN Member States reach agreement on financing

The [UN Forum on Forests](#), representing the world's countries, agreed at a meeting at UN Headquarters in New York to establish two initiatives that it says will particularly help poor countries in need of assistance. 1) An intergovernmental process is being set up to conduct in-depth analysis of all forms of forest financing over the next four years and 2) a separate process will help countries mobilize funding so they can protect their forests.

More than 1.6 billion people across the globe are estimated to be dependent on forests for subsistence living or employment, according to the World Bank, and trade in forest products is thought to represent almost 4 per cent of global trade in all commodities.

13 million hectares lost every year

But as many as 13 million hectares are lost each year because of deforestation, threatening biodiversity and reducing the protection offered by forests against the ravages of greenhouse gas emissions. *More on:* <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=32795&Cr=forest&Cr1=>

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

Strengthening linkages between sexual and reproductive health and HIV

Gudrun Haupter recommends for reading several interesting themes for women in the November 2009 bulletin of the World Health Organisation.

For example, an article on: 'Strengthening linkages between sexual and reproductive health and HIV'.

Interesting too is the article on: 'Back to basics: HIV/AIDS belongs with sexual and reproductive health', to be found on: <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/87/11/09-065425-ab/en/index.html>

The basis is the consensus at the [International Conference on Population and Development](#) (ICPD) and the path-breaking Cairo Programme of Action in 1994.

Beijing PFA and MDG

The Beijing PFA echoed the statement of the ICPD on reproductive rights and added agreed language on women's right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health free of coercion, discrimination and violence.

How then did sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS drift apart, as is most obviously documented in the Millennium Development Goals? MDG 5 is on maternal health, MDG 6 on HIV/AIDS.

Good news in the bulletin is that MDG 5 in 2007 finally got as a second target universal access to reproductive health with four indicators: the rates of contraceptive prevalence, adolescent births, antenatal care coverage, unmet need for family planning.

However, this highly welcome addition to MDG 5 did not solve the segregation problem but there are signs of hope.

Please read also in the bulletin: 'A footnote: the 16 articles of the Cairo agenda presaged the 8 MDG'.
By Gudrun Haupter, convenor of the IAW Commission on Health.

New on the IAW website - in IWA's Weblog - Older Women

Elizabeth Sclater, who is active in the older women's movement and who advises the UK government on policy for older women, sent this message.

"The [CEDAW general recommendation on older women](#) progresses and it looks like it will be signed in July next year (another trip to New York!). I attach the latest report and would be grateful if IAW would disseminate it through their network".

By IAW Weblog editor Alison Brown. More on: www.womenalliance.org and click on IWA's Weblog

A New Research Website: UN Member States on the Record

The work of the Member States in the principal organs shapes all the work of the organisation, from peacekeeping and treaty-making to statistics gathering and human rights monitoring.

Member States are the United Nations and they make the decisions and guide its activities. People everywhere should have access to information about that decision making process.

Please have a look at: <http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/unms/>

Sent to us by Heide Schütz, Resource Member of the IAW Peace Commission

Women all over the World

Muslim suffragettes' fight for mosque vote

Muslim women have launched an audacious campaign to win the vote at Scotland's biggest mosque.

A group of students, many aged under 20, say they are being effectively barred from taking part in elections because applications from women to become voting members are being turned down.

Dubbed "Muslim suffragettes", the group believes Glasgow Central Mosque, Scotland's biggest place of worship, is in breach of its own constitution, charity rules and discrimination laws.

The mosque, which can cater for up to 2,500 worshippers, has no female members but allows women to pray and wash in segregated areas.

Nazia Iqbal, 19, a pharmacy student at Strathclyde University, this weekend wrote to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) asking whether the mosque had undermined its charitable status by refusing to accept her application to become a member.

Iqbal said: "I was shocked when I was knocked back. I just found it downright wrong that a committee decided that women can't be members."

The Campaign for Women's Votes in Our Mosques claims there is nothing in the Koran saying women cannot play a full role in places of worship. Some mosques in England and the US allow women to become voting members and stand for election to their ruling committees.

An OSCR spokesman yesterday said any complaint from Iqbal would be considered, while mosque president Bashir Maan pledged to look into why applications from women had been turned down.

On: <http://www.scotsman.com/latestnews/39Muslim-suffragettes39--fight-for.5846743.jp>

By David Leask, 22 November 2009. Sent to us by IAW member Anjana Basu.

Iceland (1) has claimed the top spot of the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index 2009 from **Norway (3)** which slipped to third position behind **Finland (2)**. **Sweden (4)** completed the Nordic countries' continued dominance of the top four. The report's Index assesses countries on how well they are dividing their resources and opportunities among their male and female populations, regardless of the overall levels of these resources and opportunities. **South Africa** and **Lesotho** made great strides in closing their gender gaps to enter the top 10, at sixth and 10th position respectively. The **Philippines (9)** lost ground for the first time in four years but remains the leading Asian country in the rankings.

Out of the 115 countries covered in the report since 2006, more than two-thirds have posted gains in overall index scores.

Direct Link to Country Rankings: <http://www.weforum.org/pdf/gendergap/rankings2009.pdf>

Sent to us by IAW secretary Lene Pind

World Survey, 2009

The United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women ([DAW](#)) launched its new [World Survey on the Role of Women in Development \(2009\)](#), providing an overview of long-standing gender inequalities. DAW produces the World Survey every five years, focusing on a different aspect of women's role in development each time.

At the heart of this year's World Survey is the question of how to increase women's access to resources, in particular financial and economic ones, but also to resources such as water and energy, infrastructure and services, information and communication technologies, and housing.

Microfinance

The survey also presents a mixed assessment of microfinance, stating that while it has been successful in reaching poor women, the increased focus on financial sustainability and commercialization could hinder microfinance's ability to empower women. The survey calls for financial sector and microfinance reforms, as well as legislation, legal aid, and land reform.

Conversations for a Better World

On www.conversationsforabetterworld.com a blog has been opened about the burning issues of our time, especially women, health and development. It is open to the public and is sponsored by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Throughout November and December, the conversation topic focuses on issues around violence against women and intends to explore the many human rights and development challenges.

We are looking for strong opinion-pieces, blog-posts, case studies, best practices, stories from the field, report findings, and testimonials.

Join the conversation online !

* Please register at <http://www.conversationsforabetterworld.com/become-a-conversation-starter/>

* Every week, you will find a summary of the prior week's response.

It will be a good opportunity to promote your ideas and your organisation.

Contact - You may address all questions to Radha Patel at ichristensen@unfpa.org.

Call for Action: Get Angry, Get Involved, GET CROSS (cross your arms) - and stop rape now!

UN Action's global campaign, Get Angry, Get Involved, GET CROSS! calls upon the general public to show solidarity with survivors of sexual violence by uploading their crossed-arm image to www.stoprapenow.org.

These photos will create a global photo-montage evidencing outrage against sexual violence in conflict, in order to mobilize public support and political will for the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1820.

The campaign invites activists and policy-makers to ask what their country is doing to enhance security for women affected by war, including:

- Contributing troops or police – including women – to peacekeeping missions;
- Resource-mobilization to fund services for survivors;
- Oversight and training of the security sector in sexual violence prevention/response;
- Supporting legal measures to end impunity; and/or
- Sponsoring women's full and equal participation in peace talks.

The campaign contributes to the Secretary-General's Campaign, UNiTE to End Violence Against Women, 2008-2015. For more information, please visit: <http://stoprapenow.org/takeAction.html>

EVENTS - CONFERENCES - FUNDING - LINKS

The United Nations Democracy Fund invites civil society organisations to apply for funding

The UN Democracy Fund (UNDF), will start a new funding round (round 'four') from 16 November until 31 December to support civil society organisations that are working to advance democracy.

Project proposals may be submitted in only French or English on-line between 16 November 2009 and 31 December 2009 at www.un.org/democracyfund

This website also provides guidelines, FAQs and lessons learned from previous rounds.

More information available on: <http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article1690> or click here [online](#)

Financing for Development 23 -24 November 2009

The General Assembly, in its decision 63/564 of 14 September 2009, decided to hold its fourth High-

level Dialogue on Financing for Development on 23 and 24 November 2009 at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

It is proposed that the overall theme of the fourth High-level Dialogue be the following: "The Monterrey Consensus and Doha Declaration on Financing for Development: status of implementation and tasks ahead". More on: <http://www.un-ngls.org/ffd>.

Arms Trade Treaty 2010/2011

The adopted resolution on the Arms Trade Treaty (see also the October IAW Newsletter on www.womenalliance.org) must now go before the 192 member General Assembly. After the First Committee's vote, the resolution is expected to be approved before the end of the year. Pending the expected GA approval, the resolution calls for preparatory meetings in 2010 and 2011 leading up to the 2012 Arms Trade Treaty Conference.

2008 - Arms Transfer Agreements by Supplier (in US Dollars) - A TOTAL of \$55 BILLION !

United States 37.8 billion - Italy 3.7 billion - Russia 3.5 billion - France 2.6 billion - Germany 1 billion - China 800 million - Britain 200 million - All other Europeans 3.2 billion - All Others 2.4 billion.

Source: U.S. Government, Congressional Research Service Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Nations, 2001-2008 by Richard F. Grimmett, September 4, 2009.

Information available on <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/129342.pdf>

Editors comment: *Imagine the good things that could be achieved in this world with \$55 billion especially when we read the item on Hunger below.*

HUNGER

Global Hunger is worsening, warns UN: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8306556.stm>

Only 15% of G8 pledge is new money, Reuters:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSL3424540>

ActionAid's HungerFREE Scorecard: Small scale farming systems critical in tackling hunger and poverty: <http://www.hungerfreeplanet.org/what-we-do/world-food-day>

More information about ActionAid's HungerFREE global campaign at:

<http://www.hungerfreeplanet.org/>

World Food Day: There is enough food grown in the world for everyone (Op-ed), Oxfam

International: <http://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressrelease/2009-10-16/world-food-day>

About the World Food Summit: <http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article1399>

International Women's News

Due to unexpected delays the second edition of IWNews has only recently been posted. The third and final edition for 2009 will be arriving in January. In case you have an article for that edition, the deadline for Priscilla and Mathilde to receive text from you is 7 December.

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>

: Mathilde Duval (French)

<mathilde.duval@yahoo.fr>

Membership Officer

: Pat Richardson

<iaw.membership@womenalliance.org>

Treasurer

: Rakesh Dhawan

<iaw.treas@womenalliance.org>