

**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 2011, no. 11**



**Equal Rights**

*Dear members,*

*In these last weeks of 2011 IAW members have to decide if they will go to the Commission on the Status of Women. If you are going, have a look straight away at the notes from IAW General Secretary Lene Pind.*

*Surfing the net for news on women we found a mixture of progress and saddening failures. The Global Gender Gap shows that gender equality ratios have improved in 85% of countries, but can there be a 'gap' in the investigation?*

*Bangladesh gets applause for its advance in health programmes for women and children, but the figures on child labour and under-age marriage for girls in Central Africa and also the figures of children killed and raped in India are very worrying.*

*Rural women in Latin America are confidently marching forward to the Conference on Climate Change in Durban. In the Human Rights Council participants are worried about 'mercenaries'. And in Iceland Big Sisters are fighting men buying prostitutes - with their own weapons (!).*

**INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN**

**Commission on the Status of Women 56, 2012  
IAW Secretary Lene Pind writes:**

*Dear IAW members/ CSW participants,*

"The deadline for registration is **January 17**, but to be able to finish the registration of all of us I need your information before **January 1**. Only I can register IAW participants and IAW is only allowed to register 20 persons. On the link below you can find information about CSW 56.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/56sess.htm>

More than 20 IAW members have wanted to attend up to now, so if any of you at this stage know that you will not come after all, let me know as soon as possible. Similarly if any of you can represent a different organization, let me know.

In order to do the final registration of each of you, I'll need information from you about arrival and departure, flight no., name, address and telephone no of your hotel in New York or the name and address of any other kind of accommodation that you have.

I need the following data from all of you: Weight - Height - Colour of hair - Colour of eyes -  
Emergency contact: first name, last name and telephone no.

*Please, be careful that the information you give me is the same as what you have in your passport,*

**NGO Consultation Day**

As usual the NGOCSW Committee will organize the so-called NGO Consultation Day, which will take place February 26. The following link will take you to information about this.

<http://www.ngocsw.org/ngo-csw-forum/ngo-consultation-day>

**NB! NB!**

Those of you who wish to attend Consultation Day must register for this event yourselves.

It costs 80\$. **Deadline is November 26**

## **IAW is going to Australia**

In early October 2012 the International meeting of the International Alliance of Women will be held in Melbourne. The meeting and a Regional Seminar are being planned and organised by Women's Electoral Lobby, the League of Women Voters and the Union of Australian Women. At this stage the tentative opening date is Monday 2 October for Registration and Welcome. Websites: <http://www.wel.org.au/> <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~league/> <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~uawvic/>

As soon as a firm date has been set, more information will be circulated. Meanwhile, Priscilla Todd would very much like to hear from anyone who plans to visit Australia in October 2012. Please use this email address [iaw@toddsec.com](mailto:iaw@toddsec.com)

## **COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

### **More on the Forum NGO Consultation Day and NGO Parallel Events**

The NGO Committee on the Status of Women, NY (NGO/CSW/NY) organizes an NGO CSW Forum that includes an [NGO Consultation Day](#) and [NGO Parallel Events](#) during the annual [UN Commission on the Status of Women](#) (CSW) meeting in New York.

These events are now open for registration.

NGO Consultation Day will be held on Sunday, 26 February from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm in preparation for [CSW 56](#). NGO Parallel Events will be held from 27 February to 9 March.

The NGO CSW Forum is an open process, a democratic space where boys and girls, men and women can advocate for gender equality, development and peace.

These events are convened by the NGO/CSW/NY in cooperation with our sister organizations in Geneva and Vienna under the umbrella of the Conference of NGOs ([CoNGO](#)).

We are a volunteer-based organization, funded largely by donations and contributions by members and participants. On: <http://www.ngocsw.org/ngo-csw-forum/>

### **Event Application: Deadline November 25 2011**

Register for NGO CSW 56 Events at this online link

<http://www.ngocsw.org/ngo-csw-forum/ngo-parallel-events>

#### Parallel Events

The NGO/CSW/NY organizes [NGO Parallel Events](#) as a volunteer-based service to NGOs.

Participation at these events is open, free of charge to the public from 27 February to 9 March. However, if you wish to organize an event, fees apply to help cover costs (required US \$80.00 application fee, optional US\$200.00 food/drink fee).

Priority will be given to events that address the UN CSW [priority theme](#) of "rural women" and the [review theme](#) of "financing for development." However, all topics are welcome.

Due to a severe limitation of space, NGOs cannot be assured of more than one time slot.

Space cannot be allotted at the premise for new events. NGOs are strongly encouraged to group together to co-sponsor events so as to encourage stronger attendance at each session.

No cash is accepted for payments.

The NGO Parallel Events space **Application: Deadline is 25 November 2011.**

On: <http://www.ngocsw.org/ngo-csw-forum/ngo-parallel-events>

### **Human Rights and Maternal Health – the position of IAW**

People promoting maternal health are generally credited with the best intentions as far as women are concerned. However, IAW members should be aware that the term maternal health is often referred to by interest groups that conveniently omit issues of women's rights such as the access to safe abortion, and the place reproductive rights play in women's health.

IAW has a firm position on women's health based on the CEDAW Art. 12, and the General Comment on Health. The current IAW Programme of Action approved by our members at Congress in 2007 asks us to:

*campaign for a woman's right to control her fertility as a prerequisite to equality and participation in development, and to secure women's sexual and reproductive health and rights.*

I would also like to quote from the UNFPA State of World Population 2011 Report launched 26 October: "Governments that are serious about eradicating poverty should also be serious about providing the services, means and information women, men and young people need to exercise their reproductive rights".

CEDAW art. 12 on: [http://www.bayefsky.com/general/cedaw\\_genrecom\\_24.php](http://www.bayefsky.com/general/cedaw_genrecom_24.php) .

By Gudrun Haupter, Convenor of the IAW Commission on Health

## AROUND THE WORLD

### **The 16 Days of Activism - 16 Days to say NO to Violence against Women**

November 25 - International Day Against Violence Against Women - to December 10 - International Human Rights Day. From: [Say NO – UNiTE to End Violence against Women](#)

See also the IAW website on: [www.womenalliance.org](http://www.womenalliance.org)

### **The 50 Million Missing Campaign: Fighting Female Genocide in India**

This is a global campaign to stop India's female genocide. Due mainly to sex selective abortion, there are over 160 million females missing from Asia's population and an unknown number missing from other continents.

Mara Hvistendahl is a correspondent with Science magazine and a contributor to publications ranging from Foreign Policy to Popular Science. She is also the author of :

[Unnatural Selection: Choosing Boys Over Girls, and the Consequences of a World Full of Men.](#)

*Unnatural Selection* looks at how this gap is transforming communities, leading to everything from a spike in bride-buying to an increase in crime—and details how the West played a role in sparking this global problem. See also <http://marahvistendahl.com/>

More on: <http://50millionmissing.wordpress.com/>

Sent to us by Honorary IAW President Rosy Weiss

### **Big Sister is Watching Buyers of Prostitution in Iceland**

A new underground movement called "Stóra systir" ("Big Sister") has handed over a list to the Reykjavík Metropolitan Police containing 56 names, 117 telephone numbers and 29 emails of men who expressed interest in purchasing the services of prostitutes through the websites [einkamal.is](http://einkamal.is), [mypurplerabbit.com](http://mypurplerabbit.com), [raudatorgid.is](http://raudatorgid.is) and classified ads, offering "massages" in daily newspaper *Fréttabladid*.

#### **The buyer can be prosecuted**

In Iceland the buyer of prostitution can be prosecuted, but not the prostitute.

The new movement made its intention known at a press conference in Reykjavik. They decided to take matters into their own hands after police authorities claimed they neither had the funds nor the manpower to fight prostitution, which they conclude is clearly thriving in Iceland in spite of it being illegal.

"We advertised and in the beginning it was just to check the reaction," one spokesperson said. "The demand proved extensive and so we expanded into other papers."

#### **Big Sister is everywhere**

The Big Sisters say that even though the buyers of prostitution try to hide their identities their computer skills vary and it is usually easy to find out who they are. "We are good at what we do and we have assistants, for example women who have been involved in prostitution," they said, explaining that they teach them the industry's lingo.

At the press conference a few conversations between the movement's members and buyers of prostitution were played. One was between a 48-year-old man and a woman whom he took to be 15, which made him all the more interested in buying her services.

#### **Demanding actions**

The movement is demanding various actions: first and foremost that laws are complied with, but also shutting down [einkamal.is](http://einkamal.is), as well as porn clubs, and that the publication of ads for prostitution in the media in all forms be stopped.

"No one is safe now, Big Sister is everywhere", one spokesperson warned. On: [http://www.icelandreview.com/icelandreview/daily\\_news/Big\\_Sister\\_Watches\\_Buyers\\_of\\_Prostitution\\_in\\_Iceland\\_0\\_383393.news.aspx](http://www.icelandreview.com/icelandreview/daily_news/Big_Sister_Watches_Buyers_of_Prostitution_in_Iceland_0_383393.news.aspx)

*Sent to us by Honorary IAW President Rosy Weiss*

### **World Economic Forum - Global Gender Gap**

November 2, 2011 - While gender equality ratios have improved in 85 percent of countries over the past six years, economic participation and political empowerment for women has failed to match the steady progress of health and education, says a new report by the World Economic Forum.

It illustrates the gender-disparity gap between men and women across 135 countries.

Based on information from 60 countries, 88 percent of countries have legislation prohibiting gender-based workplace discrimination and less than 45 percent have a national benchmarking tool.

#### **Gender-based disparities in several countries**

Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, held the top four spots, having closed between 80 to 85 percent of their gender gaps, while Yemen was the lowest ranking country closing less than 50 percent of its gender gap.

The gender gap worsened in Nigeria, Mali, Colombia, Tanzania and El Salvador. Mali, ranked 132, was positioned at 81 six years ago and the country's gender gap is now less than 60 percent and political empowerment is just 10 percent.

While women hold less than 20 percent of all national decision-making positions, the report revealed some small steps of progression for some countries.

Thailand, ranked 60th, elected its first female prime minister this year and remains in a good position with women making up more than half of tertiary-educated enrolments and high overall labour force participation.

Burundi, ranked 24th, was the only country where the labour force participation rate of women was higher than men.

In Africa, Lesotho ranked ninth overall on the list and was the only country to have no gap in education or health, joining Belize and the Philippines as the only other developing countries with the same result.

#### **Women's empowerment within patriarchal systems?**

Yasmeen Hassan, global director at Equality Now in New York says the report needs to also address the women's empowerment within patriarchal systems - not just access.

"What the report does not address is the existence of cultural practices and attitudes and discriminatory laws and policies that may discourage or prohibit women from participating in economic and political fields that continue to be more male dominated."

*By Sandra Sagian, IPS. More on: <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=105708>*

### **Rural women share their trials and wisdom**

CUZCO, Peru, Nov 15, 2011 - "This year the freeze killed my crops, our small livestock died, and now I can't even sleep because I'm worried sick thinking about how to put food on my family's table, since I'm a widow," said Rosaura Huatay, an indigenous farmer in Peru's northern Andes highlands. Huatay and four other campesinas or peasant women from different regions of Peru gave their personal accounts at the Rural Women Against Climate Change Public Hearing, held in this city 1,105 km southwest of Lima.

The forum, organised by the [Centro Flora Tristán](#) women's rights group, formed part of the Gender and Climate Justice Tribunals organised by the [Feminist Task Force](#) and [Global Action Against Poverty](#) (GCAP) since October in 15 developing countries.

#### **Suggestions for Climate Change in Durban**

The aim of the tribunals is to gather and compile the testimony and suggestions of women in the developing South and channel them to the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP17) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to be held Nov.28-Dec.10 in Durban, South Africa.

Skills training among women farmers for the efficient use of water, improvement of soil and organic farming were key proposals presented by the five women who gave their testimony at the hearing.

Another was the establishment of farm insurance that also covers women.

*By Mariela Jara. More on: <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=105849>*

### **India, 5,484 children raped, 1,408 killed in '2010'**

New Delhi: As many as 5,484 children were sexually assaulted and 1,408 others killed in different parts of the country last year, according to a government report.

Giving a gloomy picture about the crimes committed against children, the latest [National Crime Records Bureau](#) data says 10,670 children were also kidnapped or abducted during the year in various states and Union Territories.

In Uttar Pradesh, 315 children were killed while 1,182 children were sexually assaulted in Madhya Pradesh during the period - the highest in the two categories of crimes.

There were 211 incidents of [murder](#) of children in Maharashtra, another 200 such cases in Bihar and 124 victims in Madhya Pradesh, it said.

Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh recorded 747, 451 and 446 cases of sexual assault respectively in the last year. Similarly, 382 and 369 such incidents came to light in Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan.

In Delhi, 29 children were murdered and 304 others were raped in 2010.

The national capital has reported the highest number of kidnapping of children in the country - 2,982, followed by Bihar (1,359), Uttar Pradesh (1,225), Maharashtra (749), Rajasthan (706), Andhra Pradesh (581) and Gujarat (565).

Uttar Pradesh and Bihar have earned the dubious distinction of two most crime prone states, accounting for more than 7,800 lives lost in violent crimes in 2010.

On: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/5k-children-raped-1408-killed-in-2010/articleshow/10548372.cms>

*Mailed to us by IAW member Anjana Basu*

## **UNITED NATIONS**

### **Human Rights Council - Alarming rise in mercenary activities calls for attention**

New York, 1 November 2011 – The United Nations Working Group on the use of mercenaries warned of an alarming resurgence of the use of mercenaries in armed conflict –“often in new and novel ways”. The expert panel also noted in a report\* to the UN General Assembly that the growing activities of private military and security companies raise numerous human rights challenges, and called for international regulation.

“Recent events in Africa clearly demonstrate that the problems posed by mercenaries are still a live issue,” said Ms. Faiza Patel, who currently heads the Working Group. “Mercenaries pose a threat not only to security, but also to human rights and potentially to the right of peoples to self-determination. It is crucial that States cooperate to eliminate this phenomenon.”

Traditionally, ‘mercenaries’ are understood to be soldiers hired to fight in an armed conflict or to overthrow a Government. In contrast, during some recent conflicts, Governments have used foreign fighters against their own populations.

In Côte d’Ivoire there is considerable evidence that the government used some 4,500 Liberian mercenaries to avoid the results of a democratic election at the end of 2010. In Libya, foreign fighters’ involvement in the repression of peaceful demonstrations was reported earlier this year. Such mercenaries were allegedly recruited from neighbouring African countries and Eastern Europe.

“As for private military and security companies, their ever-expanding activities continue to raise a number of challenges,” Ms. Patel said. “Providing security to its people is a fundamental responsibility of the State and outsourcing security to private military and security companies creates risks for human rights, hence the need to regulate their activities.”

#### **Tip of the iceberg**

“This is the tip of the iceberg, because private military and security companies also operate in a variety of other situations ranging from drug eradication programs in Colombia to post-conflict reconstruction programs, she said. “And it is not just governments who take advantage of their services, but also NGOs, private companies and the United Nations.”

On: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Mercenaries/WGMercenaries/Pages/WGMercenariesIndex.aspx>  
*Chief Representative to the UN in Geneva, Hélène Sackstein*

## **UN Secretary-General lauds Bangladesh's progress in advancing health of women and children**

November 5, 2011 [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon today spotlighted the progress made by Bangladesh in advancing women's and children's health, lauding the South Asian nation for its efforts to end the tragedy of millions of needless deaths.

Last year Mr. Ban launched the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health, which has received the support of many developing countries, including Bangladesh.

### **Bangladesh one of 16**

"Bangladesh showed its vision early on," Mr. Ban noted at a dinner held in the capital, Dhaka, in support of the initiative, adding that the Government met the challenge with ambitious plans. These included bolstering the health workforce, doubling the number of babies who are born with the supervision of a skilled health worker, and making sure that all health centres in all sub-districts have a midwife available at all times, day or night.

Bangladesh is one of only 16 countries on track to reach the Millennium Development Goals ([MDGs](#)) to cut the deaths of mothers and children.

*More on:* <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40399&Cr=maternal&Cr1=>

## **UN finds child labour, under-age marriage among displaced Central Africans**

5 November 2011 – Displaced civilians in northern Central African Republic (CAR) are facing acute hardship, including a high incidence of child or teenage marriage and widespread use of children as labour, the United Nations refugee agency reported today.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)) and the Danish Refugee Council surveyed 300 families from a population of 17,000 people near the town of Ndélé between May and September. The survey found that 32.5 per cent of children between the ages of six and 15 were being used as child labour, while 30 per cent of girls between 12 and 17 had been sold into marriage.

UNHCR assists more than 176,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and some 20,000 refugees in CAR. They are mainly from Sudan's Darfur region and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).  
On: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40394&Cr=Central+African+Republic&Cr1=>

## **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization - UNESCO**

The General Conference of UNESCO voted to admit Palestine as a member state of the organization. [For its membership to take effect, Palestine must sign and ratify UNESCO Constitution](#) which is open for signature in the archives of the Government of the United Kingdom in London.

Palestine's entry will bring the number of UNESCO Member States to 195. The vote was carried by 107 votes in favour of admission and 14 votes against, with 52 abstentions. Admission to UNESCO for states that are not members of the United Nations requires a recommendation by the Organization's Executive Board and a two thirds majority vote in favour by the General Conference of Member States present and voting (abstentions are not considered as votes).

*Sent to us by Honorary IAW President Rosy Weiss*

*IAW Chief Representative to UNESCO, Monique Bouaziz*

## **UN Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence**

On November 7, 2011, the Ukraine became the 17th member of the Council of Europe that signed this Convention. Notably missing are: the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Denmark.

*See:* [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/convention-violence/default\\_EN.asp?](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/convention-violence/default_EN.asp?)

*IAW representative to the Council of Europe, Anje Wiersinga*

### **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.

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