

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

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

**IAW NEWSLETTER - October 2001, nr. 9**

Dear IAW members,



**Equal**

**Rights**

*In this newsletter items around the United Nations with the Nobel Peace Prize for the UN and Kofi Annan, and news about two postponed UN conferences - the UN Special Session on Children's Rights and the World Food Summit in Rome. IWTC looks after gender equality at all levels and so does UNIFEM. ILO will start a campaign for ratification of the Maternity Protection Convention and the number of ratifications of the Rome Statute of the ICC had grown from 38 to 42. In Bangkok Asian governments put up an action plan for fighting Child Sexual Exploitation, with 'time bound commitments'.*

*For IAW members preparing the two items of CSW 2002 we found lots of URLs on 'freshwater', a parable of a golden snail and a report about a day of fighting natural disasters in Bangkok.*

*Also: congratulations for the first Indian woman to win the Golden Lion prize for best movie and who likes to help Victoria Slatford?*

*And last but certainly not least: the IAW CEDAW Conference in Odense, Denmark is preparing a cordial welcome for the participants on the 31st of October and we are maintaining the dates and the venue of the IAW International Meeting in Vienna, promising a serious discussion on the role of women in the culture of peace and non-violence. And, with the Euro taking over in many countries next year, Alison Brown has a useful suggestion about what you can do with your old currency.*

## **UNITED NATIONS**

### **Nobel Peace Prize for UN and Kofi Annan**

The United Nations and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan have been jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2001 for "their work for a better organised and more peaceful world".

They will share the \$943,000 award in equal parts. It cited the United Nations for being at the forefront of efforts to achieve peace and security in the world. Annan, who has devoted almost his entire working life to the world body, was lauded for "bringing new life to the organisation".

Annan, born in 1938 in Ghana, became UN Secretary-General in 1997. He has been praised for his character, moral leadership, his focus on civil wars in Africa and elsewhere and his efforts to combat AIDS. He was the first leader to be elected from the ranks of United Nations staff. He was the head of UN peacekeeping operations when he was tapped for the top job after the United States lobbied to prevent his predecessor, Boutros Boutros-Ghali of Egypt, from taking a second term. In an unprecedented vote of confidence, Annan was unanimously re-appointed to a second five-year term by the 189 UN member states in June, six months before his first term expires on Dec. 31.

Annan has responded to the attacks on the World Trade Centre by trying to galvanise an international campaign under the UN umbrella to defeat terrorism. He stated recently: "One sentence which has caused some anxiety amongst the UN membership was the question that the US may find it necessary to go after other organisations and other States. The US has indicated that this is not a predictor of any intention that it intends to take but basically it is a statement that they are at the early stages and keeping their options open". The UN Charter allows for the exercise of the right of self-defence until the Security Council takes action to restore international peace and security. Self-defence can be exercised when the need is immediate and overwhelming and when there are no other options available.

### **Editorial comment**

*IAW President Patricia Giles writes: "The US justifies its attack on Afghanistan by pointing to two resolutions of the Security Council passed in the wake of the terrorist assaults on New York and*

Washington. The key one, number 1368 of September 12, said the Council regarded those assaults " as a threat to international peace and security" and recognised " the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence" under article 51 of the UN Charter. The second resolution, number 1373 of September 28, reaffirmed the need to combat such threats " by all means".

Source: *Guardian Weekly*, 11 – 17 October 2001

If there are IAW members who are interested in a four page list of UN treaties against international terrorism, we can send it to you by attachment; mail <[joke.sebus@inter.nl.net](mailto:joke.sebus@inter.nl.net)>

### **United Nations, General Assembly**

On October the 15th the General Assembly met in plenary to review the Report of the Security Council (document A/56/2). Ireland, as President of the Security Council for the month of September, introduced the report. The provisional list of speakers for the General Debate is now available. There are 23 Heads of State and 13 Heads of Government so far.

Regarding dates for the Special Session on Children, General Assembly is getting feedback from the Member States and early next week A decision should be announced.

### **ICC Prepcom, final week**

The Eighth Session of the Preparatory Commission for the International Criminal Court concluded on 5 October at UN Headquarters in New York. The Preparatory Commission meeting began on 24 September amid tight security and at the same time as the Security Council and General Assembly were formulating their responses to the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>.

By the end of the ICC Prepcom, the number of ratifications of the Rome Statute of the ICC had grown from 38 to 42 with the Central African Republic, Nigeria, Liechtenstein and the United Kingdom becoming the most recent additions to the growing list of States Parties. Sixty ratifications are required for entry into force. The pace of ratifications has led to predictions that the treaty will enter into force in early 2002.

Security was eased only slightly during the second week of the Prepcom to allow for better participation by NGO's. As of Thursday, 11 October, the UN announced it would begin allowing more access to all ECOSOC and DPI accredited NGO's.

For a more detailed history of the negotiations of each working group, contact the Women's Caucus at [caucus@iccwomen.org](mailto:caucus@iccwomen.org) or the Coalition for the International Criminal at <[cicc@iccnw.org](mailto:cicc@iccnw.org)>. See also [www.iccnw.org](http://www.iccnw.org)

### **UN Special Session on Children Postponed**

As a result of the devastating attacks in New York and Washington on September 11, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution to postpone the Summit on Children, which was due to convene on September 19 – 21, with more than 70 countries attending. Executive Director of the UN Children's Fund UNICEF, Carol Bellamy, said that the postponement of the conference is to be regretted but this tragedy made clear that creating and defending a world that is fit for children is hard, hard work. The summit had been planned by UNICEF two years in advance, with about 50 side events that would have involved hundreds of children. A new date does not appear to have been set yet.

However, the Committee on the Rights of the Child opened its autumn session (September 24) by observing a minute of silence in memory of the victims of the American attacks. Soussan Raadi-Azarakchi, speaking on behalf of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, told the Committee that negotiations were continuing to finalise the proposed 'outcome document' which would include a global agenda with a set of goals and a plan of action to be implemented during the next decade.

Source: UN, Reuters, 12 Sept. 2001; UN News Release, 24 Sept. 2001

### **World Food Summit in Rome postponed**

The United Nations has been forced to postpone a major World Food Summit, which had been due to take place in Rome next month. Around 4,000 delegates had been expected to attend, including scores of heads of state and government. The summit meeting, called "World Food Summit - five years later", had aimed at boosting attempts to halve the number of people suffering hunger by the year 2015. The currently total stands at more than 800 million.

Now, with the threat of terrorist attacks adding to existing security fears in the wake of the violence at the Genoa G8 summit in July, officials have conceded that postponement is the wisest course. The

director general of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation has written to 49 members of the organisation's council, postponing the summit until June 2002.

The summit, originally scheduled for Rome from 5-9 November, was cast under a cloud after the riots at the G8 summit. There were calls for the summit to be shifted out of Italy altogether, to avoid a repeat of the violence which left one protester dead, Italian police and security chiefs facing allegations of brutality, and major damage to the city itself. Further doubt was cast on its future by the US terrorist attacks, and the start of the US military response.

### **Asian and Pacific Governments Approve Action Plan to Fight Child Sexual Exploitation**

Asian governments have made combating child sexual exploitation a priority with the approval today of an action plan with specific deadlines to improve the rights and protection of children. Delegates were attending the East Asia and Pacific Regional Consultation on the commercial sexual exploitation of children, organised by ESCAP, UNICEF, ECPAT, and the Government of Japan, in Bangkok from 16 -18 October 2001. The meeting was attended by over 200 government leaders and representatives from UN

agencies, civil society organisations and the private sector, as well as young people from around the region. The meeting was called five years after the First World Congress on Child Sexual Exploitation, held in Stockholm, Sweden in 1996. The 2nd World Congress will be held in Yokohama, Japan in December.

### **Time Bound Commitments**

For the first time delegates from around the Asia Pacific region committed their governments to deadlines for putting in place legal and social frameworks for preventing child sexual exploitation and assisting survivors. Ms Margie de Monchy, UNICEF's Regional Advisor on Child Protection for East Asia and the Pacific said that by setting specific timeframes for achieving goals, the governments of Asia and the Pacific had taken a big step in tackling this complex problem. "By agreeing to time bound commitments for the first time, governments have moved one step further towards action on critical initiatives in this region," Ms de Monchy said. She also noted that the action plan recognised that Asia and the Pacific was a diverse region and that there was a need to address this issue in both the developed and developing countries. Ms Nanda Krairiksh, Chief of the Human Resources Development Section of ESCAP said that also of critical importance was the recognition by governments that, five years down the road from Stockholm, there was a need to monitor initiatives to ensure that they were effective in achieving their goals. "Many countries of the Asia-Pacific region have been making progress combating the sexual exploitation of children. However, the record has been uneven and monitoring mechanisms to measure both progress and lack of action are necessary," Ms Krairiksh said. "To move forward effectively, we need to take stock of the past," she added.

Regional governments will now prepare for the 2nd World Congress where they will share their experiences in battling child sexual exploitation with other governments from around the globe.

For more information, please contact:

Geoffrey Keele, UNICEF Media Consultant, e-mail: [mthomas@unicef.org](mailto:mthomas@unicef.org)

Olivier Perrais, ECPAT Programme Director, e-mail: [Olivier@ecpat.net](mailto:Olivier@ecpat.net)

Sacha Jotisalikorn, Regional Information Officer, Save the Children Alliance, e-mail:

[sacha@mozart.inet.co.th](mailto:sacha@mozart.inet.co.th)

Margaret Hanley, Information Officer, United Nations Information Service (UNIS),

e-mail: [hanley@un.org](mailto:hanley@un.org)

Bangkok, United Nations Information Services.

## **GENDER EQUALITY**

### **World Summit of the Information Society (WSIS)**

Anne Walker of the International Women Tribune Centre writes: "My comment regarding the High Level Summit Organising Committee (HLSOC) for the World Summit of the Information Society (WSIS), to take place in December 2003 in Geneva, referred to the fact that HLSOC seems to be comprised totally of heads of UN Agencies...with the exception of women heads of UN Agencies. So we at IWTC put together a list of women heads (e.g. Catherine Bertini/WFP, Gro Harlem Brundtland/WHO, Mary Robinson/UNHCHR, Noelene Heyzer/UNIFEM, Carole Bellamy/UNICEF, Thoraid Obaid/UNFPA) and sent this to ITU, the implementing agency, asking why they had been

omitted from the list. We are also preparing a list of women NGOs from every world region to give to ITU during the Task Force on Gender Issues in September. I am currently Chair of Working Group 6 which has been given some responsibility for lobbying for gender issues at the WSIS".  
IWTC, August 2001

### **UNIFEM, Gender Budget Initiatives**

*The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) works to promote women's empowerment, rights and gender equality worldwide. For more information, visit [www.unifem.undp.org](http://www.unifem.undp.org)*

Noeleen Heyzer, director of UNIFEM says: "Budgets matter to women because they are an indicator of government commitment to address women's specific needs." A two-day conference, 'Towards Gender-Responsive Budgeting' (October 16-17) in Brussels has been attended by experts, members of Parliament, senior policy makers and representatives of bilateral and multilateral donors and finance ministers. The Conference responds to the increased demand by government ministries and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to mobilise resources and provide training on how to review national budgets from a gender perspective".

Over the past five years, UNIFEM and the Commonwealth Secretariat have supported gender budget initiatives in a number of countries including Barbados, Fiji, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Sri Lanka, St Kitts/Nevis, Tanzania and Uganda.

A gender budget analysis prepared by the French Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry, shows that in 2000, 31 percent of working women held part-time jobs, compared with 5 per cent of men.

The report also said that women who worked part time did not do so by choice - especially women raising children on their own, who headed 84 percent of single parent families in 1997.

Gender-responsive budget analysis was pioneered in **Australia in 1994**, with a federal government assessment of the budget impact on women. It refers to the analysis of actual government expenditure and revenue on women and girls compared to men and boys. Today there are over 40 initiatives worldwide at varying stages of development.

**Sweden's** commitment to provide decent childcare at an affordable price can be seen in its budget: It spends almost 2 per cent of GDP on publicly provided childcare and has one of the highest rates of female employment in Europe.

In the **UK**, the Women's Budget Group (WBG) has been active since 1989, issuing press releases on every budget and working to put issues of gender and budgets on the policy agenda. WBG, an informal thinktank of researchers and members of women's and trade union organisations, focuses primarily on changes in the tax and social security systems that disadvantage women.

In **Sri Lanka**, changes to the food ration and subsidy programme in the 1980s revealed that despite rapid economic growth, the real value of food stamps eroded in the first half of the decade and there was a decline in the real incomes of the poor. A gender-disaggregated analysis concluded that within poor households, girls and women bore the brunt of the resulting food deficit, citing higher levels of malnutrition among young girls and declining birth weights of babies born to low-income mothers.

In **Zambia** between 1983 and 1985, real per capita expenditure on health fell by 16 per cent. People had to travel greater distances and wait for longer periods of time to get health care treatment.

Interviews with Zambian women about how they used their time revealed that they had to spend more time caring for sick family members, including time spent in hospitals providing meals and nursing care, and had less time to spend on farming. In many countries, tax subsidisation of retirement savings is gender biased because women have fewer opportunities for full-time employment with pension benefits, experience more frequent labourforce interruptions due to care-giving responsibilities and earn less than men on average, thus accruing lower benefits.

In **Canada**, speaking to a parliamentary finance commission, NGOs demonstrated the differential impact of the current system of tax benefits for private retirement savings on women and men, promoting a campaign to reform the government-sponsored retirement scheme.

### **WCL Launches New Maternity Protection Campaign**

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 183, on the protection of maternity rights in the working environment, has been ratified by only two states. Therefore, the World Confederation of Labour (WCL) is launching a world-wide campaign in order to promote the ratification and implementation of the ILO Maternity Protection Convention. The Convention was adopted in June 2000 by 304 votes for, 22 votes against, with the massive abstention of the Employers' Group. By comparison, 1 year after its adoption, Convention 182 on Child Labour had already been ratified by 27 countries. Many countries, among them Afghanistan, have been summoned to appear before the

ILO Committee on the Application of Standards for Discrimination against Women in the Working Environment. The Women's Conference of WCL will hold its 5th meeting in Bucharest in October (see events section). In 1997 it met in Bangkok.

Source: Andre Linard, World Confederation of Labour, 33 rue de Treves, 1040 Brussels,  
<http://www.cmt-wcl.prg> or <http://www.chron.com/cs/CDA/story.hts/world/1050690>

## **CSW 2002 – FIGHTING POVERTY – FIGHTING ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTERS**

### **Freshwater**

This e-mail came in on an Earth Summit 2002 Online Debate, containing lots of URLs like [www.earthsummit2002.org/es/life/default.htm](http://www.earthsummit2002.org/es/life/default.htm).

Dear Colleagues,

Look at the question of "How can multi-national companies be influenced to adopt corporate citizenship and accountability for sustainable development? Who are the key actors and what are the main barriers? What strategies could Earth Summit 2002 develop to address this issue?" We have also posted online our latest Millennium paper titled 'The Road from Rio to Johannesburg', which is available from our homepage at [www.earthsummit2002.org](http://www.earthsummit2002.org)

UNED has recently produced 2 documents to assist national assessments of implementation of Agenda 21. The first is a National Reporting Template giving time bound targets from the agreements met at the various global Summits. The other relates specifically to the Education Committee [http://www.earthsummit2002.org/es/issues/Conventions/rio\\_conventions.htm](http://www.earthsummit2002.org/es/issues/Conventions/rio_conventions.htm)

The order form for the second edition of the book on Earth Summit 2002 with chapters on freshwater and climate and energy can be found at:

UNED Forum Publication <http://www.earthsummit2002.org/es/Press%20Release/pb1.htm>

The Habitat II Series: Cities as Symbols of Hope: <http://www.earthsummit2002.org/es/life/2002.pdf>  
and <http://www.earthsummit2002.org/es/life/Finance.pdf>

Making Women Count: <http://www.earthsummit2002.org/es/life/Beijing.pdf>

Promoting Development with a Human Face:

<http://www.earthsummit2002.org/es/life/Copenhagen.pdf>

<http://www.earthsummit2002.org/es/life/Decision-making.pdf>

<http://www.earthsummit2002.org/es/life/participation.pdf>

National Reporting, Global Public Goods, Health and the Environment, Gender, Land Use, ICT, Oceans and Seas, Environmental Justice and Global Governance.

UNED Forum has produced a Methodological Framework for Multi-stakeholder Processes. An Executive Summary of the report is available on the dedicated website [www.earthsummit2002.org/msp](http://www.earthsummit2002.org/msp)

Toby Middleton Communications Co-ordinator UNED-Forum,  
3 Whitehall Court SW1A 2EL London, 0 207 839 7171, (44) 0 207 930 5893  
tmiddleton@earthsummit2002.org [www.earthsummit2002.org/roadmap](http://www.earthsummit2002.org/roadmap)

### **International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction**

Bangkok (United Nations Information Services): ESCAP organised a special event to observe the "International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction" at the United Nations Conference Centre on Wednesday, 10 October 2001. Apart from an exhibition of ongoing activities of international and national organisations in this area, the programme included a Session of Panel Experts focusing on the theme: "Countering Disasters, Targeting Vulnerability" with a special emphasis on future investment required to minimise risks from water-related hazards, possible future planning direction for development and potential strategies for vulnerability reduction in Thailand as well as ongoing and future regional efforts to minimise flood risks in the urban areas.

Typhoons and induced floods have caused serious annual damage in the Asia-Pacific region, varying from US\$5.5 million in Hong Kong, to US\$1,960 million in Japan according to a 2001 regional survey conducted by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

"Extreme flood events could cause even more serious damage, such as the floods which resulted in a total loss of over US\$20 billion in China in 1998, US\$75 billion in Japan and US\$266 million in VietNam in 2000", said a senior ESCAP official.



In 2001, floods and typhoons have caused a great deal of damage and loss of lives in several countries in the region. These increasing trends of higher damage and effects, and in particular the impacts of flashfloods, such as that which recently occurred in the Petchabun Province, have called for the need for more regional co-operation in "Countering Disasters and Targeting Vulnerability".

### **The Parable of the Golden Snail**

Genetic Engineering of Food Crops for the Third World:

When a group of Filipino farmers were asked recently for their thoughts on genetically engineered rice seeds, a peasant leader responded with what might be called the 'Parable of the Golden Snail'. It seems that rice farmers have long supplemented the protein in their diet with local snails that live in rice paddies. At the time of the Marcos dictatorship, Imelda Marcos had the idea of introducing a snail from South America that was said to be more productive and, as such, a means to help end hunger and protein malnutrition. But no one liked the taste, and the project was abandoned. The snails, however, escaped, driving the local snail species to the brink of extinction, thus eliminating a key protein source and forcing peasants to apply toxic pesticides to keep them from eating the young rice plants. "So when you ask what we think of the new genetically engineered rice seeds, we say that's easy," the leader said. "They are another Golden Snail".

Next time we hear of the latest 'magic bullet' invention, altruistically developed in private sector labs for the benefit of the poor, we would do well to heed this parable, as well as to keep in mind the true causes of hunger, poverty and lagging agricultural productivity in the third world.

Peter Rosset, Ph.D. Co-Director Food First/Institute for Food and Development Policy

[rosset@foodfirst.org](mailto:rosset@foodfirst.org) [www.foodfirst.org](http://www.foodfirst.org)

## **REQUESTS**

### **Request for Information Relating to Women's Conventions**

*Although this is appearing 'after the event', it is not too late for individual members to make contact and provide support and information.*

I work for the World Federation of United Nations Associations in New York and I am currently working on a research paper aimed at enhancing the capacity of United Nations Associations all over the world to encourage their governments to ratify international treaties relating to the advancement of the rights of women and children. This research paper will be distributed to United Nations Associations all over the world next month, in preparation for the UN Special Session on Children and the General Debate of the 56th Session of the General Assembly held from 19th September - 5th October 2001 in New York, where state representatives will be given the opportunity to sign or ratify international conventions. In addition to other areas, my research paper is focused on the following Conventions:

- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women 1979
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women 1999
- Convention on the Political Rights of Women 1953
- Convention on the Nationality of Married Women
- Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children,
- Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime, 2000
- Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of
- Others, 1950
- Final Protocol to the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, 1950

I hope that as a result of my paper, the Conventions above which are not yet in force, may enter into force as a result of more state ratifications. I would be grateful for your views and any help that you could give me in this project. In particular, I am looking for arguments advocating the ratification of the above Conventions, that can be given to United Nations Associations, which they can then use to lobby their governments. Any other information concerning the aforementioned Conventions would

also be greatly appreciated. Moreover, would you be willing to get involved with United Nations Associations in pushing for the ratification of these treaties? Please contact me with information. Many thanks, Victoria Slatford

Contact Details: Victoria Slatford, WFUNA-FMANU, United Nations, Room DC1-1177, New York, NY 10017, USA. Tel: 212 963 0970, Fax: 212 963 0447, e-mail: veslatford@yahoo.co.uk

### **IAW members, bring your small change to Vienna!**

Dear Participants of the IAW International Meeting,

As you know, in January 2002 the Euro will replace the currency of 12 European countries. As of February 28, 2002 it will no longer be possible to easily exchange the bills of those countries into Euro. The coins will present a special problem, since they will become practically unconvertable. The current Euro country currencies are: Austrian Shillings, Belgian Francs, Finnish Marks, French Francs, German Marks, Greek Drachmas, Irish Punt, Italian Lire, Luxemburg Francs, Netherlands Gulden, Portugese Escudos and Spanish Pesetas.

I know that Women who travel as much as the Activists of the IAW do often have small stashes of money from the countries they have visited and are likely to visit again. Other women in your national group may also have currency "left over" from a visit to Europe. In order that this money not go to waste, we suggest you bring along the currency of the Euro 12 to Vienna and donate it to the IAW and we will use our international network to change the coins (and bills) gathered into negotiable currency.

At the International Meeting from November 6 to 9, 2001, I will have a set of containers for these currencies available for your donations. Please help make this action a success for the benefit of the IAW and its affiliates.

Alison Brown

### **Indian Woman Film Director wins prize at Venice**

Film director Mira Nair has become the first Indian woman to win the Golden Lion prize for best movie at the 58th Venice Film Festival with her film 'Monsoon Wedding'. The story follows the four day preparations for a wedding being held by an affluent family in Punjab, India. It is regarded as a tribute to India's global diaspora, showing relatives flying in from Australia and California. Nair, who teaches cinema in America, made her feature film debut in 1988 with 'Salaam Bombay!' which highlights the pressures on single women in a caste-ridden society. Collecting her Golden Lion award, she said this is a prize for the whole of India, her continuing inspiration - though her relationship with her mother country has been problematic, as she highlights controversial issues. Her 'Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love' in 1996 brought her into clashes with censors.

Monsoon Wedding too has attracted controversy, as it shows wedding preparations being marred by long-suppressed revelations of incest. Judge Nanni Moretti in Venice described her as 'a visionary'. On being the first woman to win the prize, she said that 'when we win, and we happen to be women, it is wonderful'.

Source: BBC News, 10.9.01

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=====Note  
: to avoid misunderstanding, we always send the IAW Newsletter twice, 1) in the body of the e-mail, and 2) as an attachment, saved in Word 6.0/95. Both have exactly the same content. The only difference is, that the attachment has a better lay-out, so it will be easy for Affiliates to copy it and send it by post to IAW members without e-mail.

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.

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International Alliance of Women / Alliance Internationale des Femmes

IAW Secretary: Priscilla Todd, [toddsec@golocal.com.au](mailto:toddsec@golocal.com.au)

14th Floor, 10 Queen Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000, Australia

Membership Officer: Pat Richardson, [patgum@nvi.net.au](mailto:patgum@nvi.net.au)

P.O. Box 380, Nambucca, Heads, NSW 2448, Australia

IAW Newsletter, provisional e-mail address: Joke Sebus [joke.sebus@inter.nl.net](mailto:joke.sebus@inter.nl.net)

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