

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

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

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

IAW NEWSLETTER September 2009, no. 9



Equal Rights

Dear members,

IAW is very pleased with the adoption of the resolution on creating a new single entity within the UN to promote the rights of women. There still is a lot to decide, like the mission, the structure and the funding of the new entity, but the first step has been taken.

We had a lot of requests this time from members to print articles and news - from India, the US, Afghanistan, Germany, Denmark, Norway and Australia - on sexual and reproductive health, on campaigning against violence and the (good) role of fathers. Thank you all!

The negotiations on climate change are still in full swing. We will try to look at the role of women in the negotiations in the next newsletter. Please mail us your suggestions.

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

GEAR - UN to establish single new agency to deal with rights of women

After three years of extensive consultations, the UN General Assembly, on 14 September, adopted a resolution that takes the next step in the process that seeks to establish a new United Nations entity focused on the rights of women.

Four United Nations agencies and offices will be amalgamated to create a new single entity within the Organization to promote the rights and well-being of women worldwide and to work towards gender equality.

The General Assembly adopted a resolution late yesterday on improving system-wide coherence within the UN, and the text spells out the support of Member States for a new consolidated body – to be headed by an under-secretary-general – to deal with issues concerning women.

The resolution means the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the UN Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues (OSAGI) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) will be merged.

Mr. Ban said in a statement that he had appointed more women to senior posts than at any other time in the history of the UN, including nine women to the rank of under-secretary-general. The number of women in senior posts has increased by 40 per cent under his tenure.

The Assembly's resolution tasks Mr. Ban with providing Member States with a comprehensive proposal outlining the mission statement, structure, funding and oversight of the new entity so that it can be created as soon as possible.

Campaign of over 300 Women's organisations, including IAW

The Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) Coalition, led by the Women's Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO) and the Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL), consists of over 300 women's organizations across the world, has been campaigning for greater recognition of gender within the United Nations system since 2006.

It was officially launched as the GEAR campaign in February 2008 during the 52nd session of the CSW.

On: <http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article1598>

For more

information: ■ <http://www.ipsterraviva.net/Europe/article.aspx?id=7811> ■ <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=32066&Cr=women&Cr1=>

IAW and Climate Change

On 7 December 2009, world leaders will gather in Copenhagen, Denmark, to respond to one of the greatest challenges facing humanity: climate change. UNEP is supporting the negotiations leading to

Copenhagen through its programmes, campaigns, official submissions and newly launched discussion series (on: <http://www.unep.org/climatechange/>). Most IAW members are watching the news too. What about the CEDAW Campaign IAW joined, to put in more women leadership and expertise during the negotiations on climate change? We will try to give you a follow-up in the next newsletter.

UN ESCR Optional Protocol Ratification & Implementation.

IAW has joined the Campaign of promoting the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. *IAW President Rosy Weiss signed the petition.*

“Women hold up half the sky”

—Chinese Proverb

Action to protect women against abuse and discrimination - related to the action UNiTE to End Violence Against Women

Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has called for action in New York at a panel discussion and book signing ceremony for *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*, a book by Pulitzer Prize winners Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn.

"Violence against women stands against everything in the United Nations Charter. Whichever form it takes, it is an abomination.

Human trafficking, sex slavery, domestic violence, institutionalized discrimination - all of these must end. So must the silence that is so prevalent and that serves only to shield the perpetrators and perpetuate their crimes," said Secretary-General Ban.

He added, "we are striving to improve maternal health and to better protect women and children during times of conflict. And we are committed to engaging men, for we will never fully empower women without changing attitudes and stereotypes".

In the book

In the book, Kristof and WuDunn plead for a worldwide grassroots movement in support of the women of the world, their education, health (with a strong emphasis on reproductive health), economic and political empowerment, and human rights. Stories of women overcoming appalling circumstances such as violence and degradation of sex trafficking, sexual enslavement and rape to change their world constitute the core of the book.

Both the authors are campaigning for Mercy Corps, to be found on: <http://www.mercycorps.org/>
Sent to us by IAW member Irimi Nike Sarlis, New York

Check also the website <http://www.halfttheskymovement.org> for links to other, related sites.

Have a look too at the website of the UN Office of Drugs and Crime, on: <http://www.unodc.org/>

16 Days Campaign against Violence on Women 2009

From November 25 to December 10th, the Women's International Network of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC-WIN) will actively participate in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence with an Internet Campaign to Denounce Gender Violence in the media and transform media into a catalyst to end violence against women.

The audio documents and other information will be available on www.amarc.org/16journ

Reclaiming ICT's to end Violence Against Women

Join [Women'sNet](#) and [Girls'Net](#) to keep mobile phone and internet use safe from harassment, bullying and violence. "[Keep Your Chats Exactly That!](#)" is a campaign that aims to empower young people in the use of the internet and cell phones. It looks at both strategies of prevention from harassment, bullying and violence, as well as strategies for using ICTs in affirmative ways to advocate for change on issues that concern them.

Read the [concept paper](#) to find out more about the campaign

In South Africa, Women'sNet and Girls'Net will be addressing violence experienced in internet and cellular phones by raising awareness and disseminating information through the distribution of stickers, fact sheets, posters and outreach to schools, learners, parents and NGOs.

More on: <http://www.takebackthetech.net/>

Mailed to us by IAW secretary Lene Pind

The 1944 Cairo Conference on Reproductive Health

in Bangkok and Berlin

Asian Governments Pledge to Complete Cairo Reproductive Health Agenda

UN meeting seeks to accelerate progress towards population goals for 2015

Bangkok (UN/ESCAP Information Services and UN Population Fund) – A global action plan linking reproductive health, women’s rights and development remains an urgent priority 15 years after its adoption, Asian and Pacific governments affirmed today.

Senior officials from 30 countries pledged to do more to promote safe motherhood, family planning, gender equality and adolescent health, at a forum reviewing regional progress since the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, organised the meeting as part of a worldwide series of activities commemorating the landmark 1994 Cairo conference.

“Fifteen years later the ICPD goals remain out of reach for too many countries and too many groups of people in Asia and the Pacific,” UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of ESCAP Noeleen Heyzer noted in welcoming remarks.

Sexual and reproductive health and development

Participants from 131 countries met in Berlin, September 2 - 4, at the conference *Global Partners in Action: NGO Forum on sexual and reproductive health and development*, financed by the German Ministry of Cooperation.

After the ratification of the Cairo Programme of Action, 15 years ago, the experts underlined "that challenges had considerably grown since 1994 and that we must prove to the world that improving sexual and reproductive health is an efficient long-term investment."

Among actions to be taken immediately: Guarantee that sexual and reproductive rights, as human rights, are fully recognized and fulfilled.

Such requests are very much in line with positions and proposals of IAW, expressed during our round table at WHO in June 2009. Read the Berlin Call to Action (in English and French) on

www.globalngoforum.org Several IAW members have prepared the content of this conference.

Send to us by Gudrun Haupter, Convenor of the IAW Commission on Health

ALL AROUND THE WORLD

Father & Daughter Alliance - FADA

India - 22 girls from slums enrol in school with help from fathers. The Sanjay Colony, a slum in India’s capital Delhi, has 22 less girls who are at school, instead of just cooking, fetching water, and being vulnerable to sexual and labour exploitation and slavery.

These girls (most of whom never attended school before) are attending a new “FADA Learning Centre” funded by the Father and Daughter Alliance (FADA), in partnership with Deepalaya, a local and reputable NGO.

Pedro Moreno, FADA founder and president stated: “During my recent visit to Delhi people kept telling me that all the girls were already attending school. So we went personally to three slums, Sanjay, Jagdamba and Golkua during school hours to check. We found them, left and right, all over the place. Girls like Sarjeena, who is 10 years old and was bound to a small tent taking care of her younger siblings. And Noori, who is 7, and was helping around the house and with younger siblings.” Well, today Sarjeena, Noori and over 20 other girls we met are attending school.

Not only that, but these girls are attending school with help and protection from their fathers. That is not always the case in societies where girls are often called, by their own fathers, Paraya Dhan, which means “somebody else’s property.”

Moreno met fathers in all 3 slums and FADA is now launching the first Fathers’ Association for Daughters’ Advancement in the Sanjay Colony with an initial group of 16 fathers.

Chief Minister of Delhi, Ms. Sheila Dikshit

The Chief Minister of Delhi, Ms. Sheila Dikshit, has been welcoming these 22 girls to school, ages 5 to 13, and will officially launch the first Fathers’ Association for Daughters’ Advancement on September 26 at 10 am in her Official Residence in Delhi.

Ratio of girls not attending school worldwide

Most of the 75 million children of school age not attending school worldwide are girls. UNESCO estimates that there are 426 girls not attending school for every 100 boys out of school in India.

FADA plans to expand to Afghanistan, Benin, Guatemala and Yemen, all countries with high rates of female illiteracy.

The Father and Daughter Alliance (FADA) is a movement of concerned fathers appealing to the father's heart in other men so they can help their daughters enrol in school and have access to the same educational, economic and societal opportunities as boys.

More on FADA on: <http://www.fatheranddaughter.org:80/>

Mailed to us by IAW member Anjana Basu and IAW President Rosy Weiss

On India's Railways, Women Find New Peace in Commute

As the morning commuter train rattled down the track, Chinu Sharma, an office worker, enjoyed the absence of men. Some of them pinch and grope women on trains, or shout insults and catcalls, she said. Her friend Vandana Rohile agreed and widened her eyes in mock imitation. "Sometimes they just stare at you," said Ms Rohile,

Up and down the jostling train, women repeated the same theme: As millions of women have poured into the Indian workforce over the last decade, they have met with different obstacles in a tradition-bound, patriarchal culture, but few are more annoying than the basic task of getting to work.

The problems of taunting and harassment, known as eve teasing, are so persistent that in recent months the government has decided to simply remove men altogether. In a pilot program, eight new commuter trains exclusively for female passengers have been introduced in India's four largest cities: New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Calcutta.

Ladies Specials

The trains are known as Ladies Specials, and on one recent round trip in which a male reporter got permission to board, the women commuting between the industrial town of Palwal and New Delhi were very pleased.

"It's so nice here," said a teacher, Kiran Khas, who has commuted by train for 17 years. Ms. Khas said the regular trains were thronged with vegetable sellers, pickpockets, beggars and lots of men. "Here on this train," she said, as if describing a miracle, "you can board anywhere and sit freely."

India would seem to be a country where women have shattered the glass ceiling.

Comparing working women

The country's most powerful politician, [Sonia Gandhi](#), president of the [Congress Party](#), is a woman.

The country's current president, a somewhat ceremonial position, is a woman.

So are the foreign secretary and the chief minister of the country's most populous state, [Uttar Pradesh](#), and the new minister of railways.

India's Constitution guarantees equal rights for women, while Indian law stipulates equal pay and punishment for sexual harassment.

And the average working woman?

But the reality is very different for the average working woman, many analysts say.

Since India began economic reforms in the early 1990s, women have entered the urban workforce, initially as government office workers, but now increasingly as employees in the booming services sector or in professional jobs.

Overall, the number of working women has roughly doubled in 15 years. But violence against women has also increased, according to national statistics. Between 2003 and 2007, rape cases rose by more than 30 percent, kidnapping or abduction cases rose by more than 50 percent, while torture and molestation also jumped sharply.

Reserved compartments did not work

For many years, women traveling by train sat with men, until crowding and security concerns prompted the railroad to reserve two compartments per train for women. But with trains badly overcrowded, men would break into cars for women and claim seats.

Mumbai started operating two women-only trains in 1992, yet the program was never expanded.

Then, with complaints rising from female passengers, Mamata Banerjee, the new minister of railways, announced the eight new Ladies Specials trains.

By Jim Yardley. Send to us by IAW member Anjana Basu. More on: http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/16ladies.html?_r=1&th=&emc=th&pagewanted=print

A woman leading UNESCO

A former foreign minister of Bulgaria, Irina Bokova, will become the first woman to lead the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) after she won a narrow victory in the fifth and final round of voting for the post.

Mrs. Bokova received 31 votes from the 58-member Executive Board, UNESCO announced from its headquarters in Paris, where the voting took place early this evening local time. Egypt's Culture Minister Farouk Hosny was runner-up. Mrs. Bokova's nomination will now be submitted on 15 October to UNESCO's 193-member General Conference for formal approval.

Mrs. Bokova will serve an initial four-year term as head of UNESCO.

More on: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=32139&Cr=unesco&Cr1=>

United States - Trafficking

Trafficking is the fastest growing means by which people are forced into slavery. It affects every continent and most countries. It is impossible to know exactly how many people are trafficked and statistics are difficult to obtain because trafficking is an underground activity.

Human trafficking involves the movement of people through violence, deception or coercion for the purpose of forced labour, servitude or slavery-like practices.

It is slavery because traffickers use violence, threats, and other forms of coercion to force their victims to work against their will.

This includes controlling their freedom of movement, where and when they will work and what pay, if any, they will receive.

Estimation

A US Government report published in 2003, estimates that at least 800,000-900,000 people worldwide are trafficked each year.

* Every 10 minutes, a woman or child is trafficked into the United States for forced labour.

* In 1999, the CIA estimated that 45,000 women and children are trafficked to the United States annually.

* Men are also trafficked into forced labour in agriculture, restaurants and other unregulated industries.

* Human trafficking has become a \$9 billion a year global industry and is increasingly an activity of organized crime.

* There are an estimated 27 million people living in slavery around the world today.

* In 1999, the Department of Justice prosecuted 25 cases of slavery. In 2000, 76 cases were prosecuted. Currently, there are 120 cases open for investigation.

* In October 2000, the United States enacted the most comprehensive modern-day anti-slavery legislation in the world, offering significant protection to victims. It is called the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000.

* Currently, there is not one shelter for trafficked persons in the United States.

See also: <http://www.worldrevolution.org/guidepage/humantrafficking/literature>

Send to us by IAW member Irimi Nike Sarlis, New York.

Irimi writes:

Some groups (in the US) have supported the establishment of Rescue Houses, shelters for young girls sold to traffickers, etc. (60,000,000--100,000,000 people are missing every year: 80% of them women--10% girls, 70% grown women. In China, 39,000 female babies disappear every year.) CAST (Coalition to Abandon Slavery & Trafficking is the only organization in the United States dedicated exclusively to serving trafficked persons. On: <http://www.castla.org/>)

Afghanistan: did the Women's Vote Count?

On 4 August 2009: According to the constitution of Afghanistan and national and international treaties, one of the important social rights of human beings is to determine their political future (the right to elect and to be elected), but unfortunately in Afghan society women are facing many problems in order to use their rights.

Considering the time constraints in presidential and provincial councils' elections, among the society there are growing concerns over participation of women in the election process.

The Five Million Afghan Women Campaign

Therefore, women's rights activists and civil society representatives from all over the country gathered on 25th June, 2009 and held comprehensive talks on related issues. At this gathering a decision was taken to launch a campaign of 5 million Afghan eligible women to support women's political participation in order to ensure the rule of law and gender equality.

Afghan Women Network

The Afghan Women Network as the implementer and supporter of this campaign believes that promoting democracy without women's independent and active participation is unattainable. Therefore, all Afghan women are asked to realize the value of their votes and by considering their social responsibility, they shall participate in election.

(Translated from Dari)

The text of the Declaration of Commitment to Afghan Women is to be found on:

<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/09/14/was-womens-vote-counted?tr=y&auid=5338832>

Interesting pictures of Afghanistan are to be found at Fardin Waezi blogspot at:

<http://thruafghaneyes.blogspot.com/search?updated-max=2009-08-04T20%3A33%3A00-07%3A00&max-results=7> Send to us by IAW President Rosy Weiss

EVENTS - TOOLS - CONFERENCES - REPORTS

Pairing up refugee and immigrant women with women of the Danish workforce

The 20 - 21 November KVINFO's Mentor Network is hosting a large international conference under the title "Mentoring and Networking: Women Building Trust and Social Capital in Our Cities." KVINFO's Mentor Network was started in 2003 and is a programme that pairs up refugee and immigrant women with women who are firmly established members of the Danish workforce. Since the beginning the network has grown and has today been in contact with more than 4,000 women. More information at: <http://mnw.kvinfo.dk/>

Australian Centre for Leadership for Women - Women Getting on to Boards Report 2009

As the implementation of quotas is being debated in the community to ensure a gender balance in board composition, it is clear that we have reached the point where stricter measures are being considered to effect change of the size and scope needed. Based on a survey of 317 women, 93% of whom were Australian, the study canvassed women's views on the difficulties they experience getting on to boards. The findings of this study will apply to women, workplaces, government and most significantly to boards. Board members will gain an insight into the perceptions women have of how boards operate and how boards could benefit by adopting their suggestions.

Full Report at: www.leadershipforwomen.com.au

Monitoring the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820

Oslo, Norway, 11-13 November 2009. The Norwegian organisation FOKUS Forum for Women and Development, and UN-INSTRAW (United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women) Putting policy into practice.

Please see: www.fokuskvinner.no and www.un-instraw.org

Toolkit on Gender & Security Sector Reform

The integration of gender issues is being recognised as a key to operational effectiveness, local ownership and strengthened oversight. Security sector reform (SSR) is increasingly prioritised by governments, and on the agenda of international development, peace and security communities.

The 12 tools can be downloaded from http://www.dcaf.ch/gender-security-sector-reform/_index.cfm

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