

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN
ALLIANCE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES

Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities
Droits Égaux - Responsabilités Égales

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



Equal Rights

IAW ACTION SHEET No. 2 - October 2003

Dear IAW members,

As a follow-up of the IAW Action Sheet No. 1 and the IAW Action Programme 2002-2004 on Globalisation, we are giving you the following figures of worldwide debts in 2001.

Multilateral debts (Worldbank, IMF) \$417 bn

Bilateral debts \$572 bn

The bilateral debts consists of:

Bilateral loans \$201 bn

Export credit debts \$371 bn

Source: OECD annual estimates of total external debt www1.oecd.org/dac/Debt/xls/EDS_200:_2001.xls

The point is, that the Worldbank and the IMF are looking in general at human rights issues and sustainable development before they grant money for projects, but that's not always the case with bilateral projects. **So it is important that women ask for transparency at national level.** In this Action Sheet we are quoting parts of articles we found on the net, starting with the Jubilee Groups.

Due to computer trouble the IAW newsletter is late. Please wait for news of a most cordial welcome, inspiring introductions, gracious receptions and a successful IAW Board meeting, all organised by our sisters of IAW Affiliate ADDEM in the Dominican Republic!

Jubilee - Campaigning Groups for Debt Release

Jubilee 2000 grew from small beginnings to become an international campaign that brought great pressure to bear on G7 leaders to "cancel the unpayable debts of the poorest countries by the year 2000, under a fair and transparent process".

Jubilee Research works closely with campaigning groups around the world. In the North, these groups include the UK's Jubilee Debt Campaign (www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk) and Jubilee USA (www.jubileeusa.org). In the South, a network of Jubilee 2000 campaigns has coalesced behind the Jubilee Sites Movement International (JMI). Information on JMI and a list of JMI members worldwide can be found on the JMI homepage on <http://www.jubilee2000uk.org/>

GLOBALISATION - CANCUN – DUBAI – BANGKOK

Failed Cancún talks give impetus to Bilateral Deals

No sooner had the dust begun to settle from the collapse of the recent World Trade Organization talks in Cancún than a variety of officials began raising the spectre of a return to the very sort of bilateral trade arrangements that the Cancún talks aspired to replace. The **United States**, angered by the failure in Mexico, suggested pointedly that it might seek new agreements like those it concluded with Chile and Singapore almost on the eve of the Cancún conference. **Australians** say that they will focus this year on a possible new trade deal with the United States. And while the **European Union** had refused, since 1999, to open new negotiations for bilateral or regional trade accords, Pascal Lamy, the EU trade commissioner, warned that that might now change. Lamy, who on his way out of Cancún denounced the WTO as "medieval," citing the unwieldiness of a 146-member organisation seeking to operate by consensus, warned that the EU might now consider narrower trade deals. "We will have to have a good, hard think amongst ourselves," he told the Financial Times. "Should we maintain multilateralism as our priority, which was the basic tenet of EU commercial policy? "I am still a firm believer in it," he said. "But circumstances are such that when you get a bit of a shock, we have to make sure that we still all agree" on this approach.

A selection of an article by Brian Knowlton, who is on the staff of the International Herald Tribune, 23 September 2003. Read more on <http://www.iht.com/articles/110810.html>.

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates

During the Dubai Conference in the United Arab Emirates the dust from Cancun was raised again. World Bank president James Wolfensohn launched a blistering attack on rich countries for spending hundreds of billions more on their militaries and their farmers than they do helping the poor. "Our planet is not balanced," he told delegates in an opening speech. "Too few control too much, and too many have too little to hope for."

He criticised rich countries for providing just \$56 billion a year in development assistance to poor countries, compared with more than \$300 billion they spend on agricultural subsidies and \$600 billion spent on defence. The failure of global trade talks last week in Cancun, Mexico, highlighted the deep divide that must be overcome to create a stable future, Wolfensohn said. Rich nations balked at greater cuts in farm subsidies and poor nations, who say their farmers suffer as a result, refused to proceed on other concessions sought by the West. Wealthy nations need to practice what they preach. "It is inconsistent to preach the benefits of free trade and then maintain the highest subsidies and barriers for precisely those goods in which poor countries have a comparative advantage," he said. Developing countries are not blameless, Wolfensohn said, noting they spend more on defence -- \$200 billion -- than education.

Tuesday September 23 2003. This is a selection of an article by Paul Geitner, AP Business Writer. See for the whole article http://biz.yahoo.com/ap/030923/money_summit_5.html

Bangkok, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation - APEC

APEC Ministers reviewed the achievements of the 2003 APEC year hosted by the Kingdom of Thailand and agreed on initiatives for the 2004 APEC year to be hosted by the Republic of Chile.

Under Thailand's theme for APEC 2003, "A World of Differences: Partnership for the Future," Ministers discussed how to reinvigorate the World Trade Organization (WTO) Doha Development Agenda (DDA) Negotiations as well as how to address the challenge to regional security and prosperity posed by transnational terrorism and infectious diseases. Ministers regretted the missed opportunity to advance the DDA during the Fifth WTO Ministerial Conference held in Cancun, Mexico, on 10-14 September 2003. APEC Investment Mart 16-21 Oct. 2003, Bangkok, Thailand. Read more on:

http://www.apecsec.org.sg/apec/ministerial_statements/annual_ministerial/2003_15th_apec_ministerial.html

Hong Kong China to host next Ministerial Conference

WTO members accepted on 21 October 2003 Hong Kong, China's invitation for the Sixth WTO Ministerial Conference to be held there, but postponed a decision on the date. See www.wto.org

Iraq donors pledge at least \$13bn

A summit of international donors has raised at least \$13bn in pledges, mainly in grants, to help towards the reconstruction of Iraq. With \$20bn already pledged by the United States, the \$33bn total falls short of the estimated \$56bn needed to rebuild the war-torn country. But organisers are pleased with the outcome of the conference in Madrid. Most of the funds being raised in Madrid are to go into a trust managed by the World Bank, the UN and a committee of Iraqis.

*The pledges included: \$5bn from Japan in grants and loans - \$500m from Kuwait - \$500m from Saudi Arabia in loans plus \$500m in export credits - \$232m from Italy - \$812m from the European Union - * \$290,000 from Slovakia - \$24.2m from China - \$3bn-\$5bn from the World Bank - \$4.35bn over three years from International Monetary Fund*

A selection from an article in the Guardian.

Note: the attachment of this Action Sheet is saved as a word-document.

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