

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

Equal Rights—Equal Opportunities
Droits égaux—responsabilités égales



Newsletter June 2016

no. 3

In this issue:

1. News from IAW
 - Congress in Zimbabwe
2. International representatives
 - EWL
 - International Day of Women's Health
3. IAW around the world
 - CEFAP, Cameroon
 - Greek League of Women's Rights
 - Norway, Australia
4. Around the World
 - Child marriage
 - Check list from GirlsNotBrides
5. Interesting statistics



Dear members and subscribers

Our hostess in Zimbabwe presents herself in this Newsletter, and there is a new deadline for registration: July 1.

IAW has joined an international campaign protesting against the way The ECOSOC Committee on NGOs operates. The campaigning for a feminist Secretary-General continues.

Arina Angerman reports from EWL and the IAW Commission on Health has presented a statement at the 69th WHA in Geneva

We have interesting news from our members in Greece, Cameroon, Norway and Australia.

Child marriage is a scourge in many countries.

Happy reading!

News from IAW

Congress in Zimbabwe

Glen Middlemost, president of WCCFT, has sent the following presentation of our hostess: Women's Comfort Corner Foundation Trust

Women's Comfort Corner Foundation Trust is dedicated to advancing and protecting the rights of women and children. Through our program, chapter members become agents for change, working to alter the face of our country's rising statistics of rape. Prevention of violence against women and children is our passion and failure to deliver is simply not an option. We envision a nation where our children are healthy, educated, and free from violence.

Objectives

The objectives of Women's Comfort Corner Foundation are to:

- Provide training for all disciplines with an emphasis on evidence based investigations and proper response to rape and domestic violence.
- Counter crimes of rape and domestic violence by ensuring a coordinated, competent and effective response with the help of community stakeholders to hold offenders accountable.
- Working in partnership with men's organisations, the corporate sector, the media and other partners to create a future with no

violence against women and children.

- To become a leading player in championing and campaigning for respect of human rights of those who have been raped and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Membership

Eligibility

- Membership is open to interested people of 18 years of age and above and institutions who shall meet the set requirements.
- Members should not be affiliated to any political party or religious party.
- Our team works together to provide best-in-class services for survivors, inform and educate the nation about sexual violence, and improve the public policy and criminal justice response to sexual violence.

WCCF raises the visibility of sexual violence and advance the public's understanding of the crime. We work with the media, entertainment industry, and schools across the country to provide accurate information about sexual violence prevention, prosecution, and recovery.

Victoria Falls Safari Lodge

Our Congress Hotel, the Victoria Falls Safari Lodge, is nearly sold out. Reservations should be made as soon as possible because the block will sell out quickly. With close to 50 professionals expected to attend, you can anticipate countless opportunities to meet, rejuvenate and share ideas with others. Perhaps most important, we offer the opportunity to re-fill your own "commitment tank."

"To thank you for coming to Zimbabwe on a selected day at the end of the day, all the delegates will sail upstream to celebrate the setting African sun. Share in the end-of-day ritual which sees wild herds streaming to the river banks for their last drink. Flocks of birds skim the waterline as the sun sets behind the African skyline. **Bring a camera and create your own golden memories.**

We hope to see you in Zimbabwe, Victoria Falls!"

New deadline for registration:

A number of members have had difficulties registering for Congress before the end of April. So deadline to book your hotel at the venue: Victoria Falls Safari Lodge has been postponed till July 1.

You will find the [updated registration form and other information here](#)

A regional conference on elimination of violence against women is being prepared

UNITED NATIONS

The ECOSOC Committee on NGOs politicises.

IAW joins an international campaign to protest against the highly politicised manner in which the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Committee on NGOs operates, in particular regarding applications for

NB! NB! NB! NB! NB!

New deadline for registration: July !

UNITED NATIONS

accreditation from human rights organisations. The Committee is the key gateway for NGOs to gain access to the UN

[Continue reading](#)

On May 25 at the NGO Committee and following the issuing of the joint NGO letter, the US requested for an NGO to be given the floor to speak. This is an unusual step, and prompted some protracted and tense exchanges between Committee members on whether this should be allowed.

ISHR (International Service for Human Rights) was finally permitted to take the floor and we spoke to the content of our joint letter. The room was full of NGO colleagues observing the session, and of an unprecedented number of Observer States.

[More information on all of this.](#)

Update on Feminist Woman Secretary General campaign:

Message from the NGO/CSW New York Committee:



IT'S TIME
FOR A
FEMINIST
UN SECRETARY-
GENERAL
#femUN

A new round of Secretary General nominations has begun. On June 7th the President of the General Assembly (PGA) will host another set of candidate 'hearings', and that may not be the last one. In July, it is expected that the debates at the Security Council on the selection will begin.

We have several objectives:

1. To select a woman with a gender justice agenda
2. To outline a gender justice/ feminist agenda for the UN and hold the UN to account for it.

The first project is hard enough, but it will be easier than the second. The people who need to be influenced are the foreign policy establishments of our countries, and in particular of Security Council members (Russia, China, USA, France, UK, Angola, Egypt, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, Uruguay and Venezuela).

Can we work together to build global pressure from the world's women's movements to support these objectives?

[Please see this letter for action steps to be taken.](#)



Joanna Manganara

IAW President Joanna Manganara has participated in the process of candidate "hearings" by sending a question to the Moldova candidate for UN Secretary General Ms. Natalia Gherman. The question was: "What initiatives are you going to take to help with the actual refugee crisis, in particular with the needs and human rights of refugee women and children?"

CSW 60

International representatives

Ether Suter, IAW representative to Geneva, has sent the following reports from CSW 60

[Violence against Women](#)

["Leaving no one behind"](#)



Arina Angerman has sent the following information:

Empowering women in the digital age with more eSkills in EU?!

Lifelong learning of new eSkills is urgent in order to improve women's economic rights and independence. Financial independence for women is very important because one out of three women is a victim of sexual and/or physical violence in the EU!

On 16 March 2016 I attended the Conference eSkills for Jobs 2016 in The Hague (Photo). Marietje Schaake, Member of the European Parliament (MEP) and eSkills for Jobs Ambassador, told us “We have to have a leadership that knows why eSkills are important.” **Her key recommendation: “Invest in the eSkills of politicians and policy makers”**. You can see the summary video of the High-level Conference #eSkillsNL in The Hague by opening link to video here <http://ow.ly/10ae0U>

Resolution on gender equality and empowering women in the digital age

On 28 April the European Parliament adopted a very important resolution on gender equality and empowering women in the digital age. The resolution of 19 pages was developed by MEP and Rapporteur Terry Reindtke with help of many others. I selected three points of context and some recommendations to inform you:

- the study by European Parliament Policy Department C entitled ‘Study on Empowering women on the Internet’, published in 2015,
- the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention),
- the report of the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality and the opinion of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

C. whereas only 9 % of developers in Europe are women, only 19 % of bosses in the ICT and communications sectors are female (compared with 45 % in other service sectors) and women represent just 19 % of entrepreneurs (compared with 54 % in other service sectors)

H. whereas improving digital skills and IT literacy presents a unique opportunity for increasing the inclusion in the labour market of women and girls, but also of people with special needs, such as people with disabilities; whereas increasing the number of women in the ICT sector, which is one of the highest paying sectors, could contribute to their financial empowerment and independence, resulting in the reduction of the total gender pay gap;

N. whereas women aged 55 and over are at a particular risk of unemployment and labour market inactivity, with the average EU employment rate for women aged 55-64 being only 42 %, compared with 58 % for men; whereas a low level of IT literacy and e-skills further amplifies this risk; whereas improving and investing in digital competences of women aged 55 and over would boost their employment opportunities and offer a level of protection against exclusion from the labour market;

3. Calls on the Commission to exploit and better target the Digital Agenda and the Digital Single Market Strategy with a view to addressing the severe gender gap within the ICT sector and fostering the full integration of women into the sector, particularly in relation to technical and telecommunication professions, to foster education and training of women and girls in ICT and other STEM subjects, to increase the visibility of women in the digital arena,

to enhance gender equality and participation of women through better access to funding, to systematically implement gender impact assessments and gender budgeting in its work on the Digital Agenda and the Digital Single Market Strategy so that the fundamental European principle of equality between women and men can be duly incorporated and to support civil society and women's organisations in making an inclusive internet a reality;

5. Urges the Commission to include in the upcoming Strategy for equality between women and men 2016-2020 specific actions to support the integration and participation of women in the information society and to strongly promote women's networks online as they are the manifestation of a self-organised, bottom-up approach to female empowerment and should receive all the support necessary for them to become long-term;

21. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to support lifelong learning as well as training and schemes which help prepare for a better adaptation or potential change of career path in accordance with the growing demand for e-skills in many different sectors, paying particular attention to women aged 55 and over, in order to safeguard them from exclusion from the labour market.



Conclusion

In the summer of 2015 I wrote "Equal education of women and girls" in the *IAW Newsletter August 2015* about results of the Gender Equality Index research by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). Most (extended board) members of IAW and their member associations are digital migrants. My conclusion still is a valid opinion: lifelong learning of new eSkills by women or feminists of all generations has to improve in order to remain agents of change!!!

Arina Angerman (55plus) represents IAW on the Board of the European Women's Lobby

Joke Sebus calls attention to this interesting website:

MEP Ranking on <http://www.mepranking.eu>

This website is an excellent one for letting you know on what issues your MEP is working. It is for all the 28 countries of the EU.

Look up the members of the European Parliament representing your country and find out about their activities and priorities as MEPs.



68th World Health Assembly 18—26 May 2016

Commission Convener Gudrun Haupter has written the following statement for the 68th World Health Assembly, and IAW main representative to WHO, Seema Uplekar, presented it at the Assembly:

IAW, an International Women's rights organisation, commends WHO on the response to the challenges arising from the ZIKA virus which has spread to as many as 55 countries and territories.

This recent health emergency of international concern has many facets and IAW would like to voice concern on one of them – ZIKA and pregnancy.

Mothers bear the brunt of caring for children born with microcephaly and other neurological disorders which may show only later. According to Dr. Sonja Rasmussen of the US Centres for Disease Control what we see now could only be the tip of the iceberg. Few countries have care infrastructures



Seema Uplekar

to cope with this emergency. Thus for women who already have children this burden means additional mental and physical stress.

Women, including adolescent women, who would rather delay a pregnancy often cannot access modern contraceptives let alone safely terminate a risky pregnancy.

This means their right to health and to development is severely thwarted in all countries where the threat of ZIKA infection exists but Governments and Society disregard these essential reproductive health rights.

Women either have to carry unwanted pregnancies to term or resort to unsafe abortion.

In March 2016 women's and girls' right to sexual and reproductive health has been strengthened by General Comment No. 22, on the article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The introduction reads "Due to numerous legal, procedural, practical and social barriers, people's access to the full range of sexual and reproductive health facilities, services, goods and information is seriously restricted, especially for women and girls."

May the ZIKA emergency prompt countries to revise restrictive laws as appropriate, and abandon traditional norms which make for unequal power relations between women and men. Governments who act now can count on healthier and empowered women who will contribute to their country's development.

IAW Around the World

Greece

The Greek League of Women's Rights

On International Women's Day (8th March), the GLWR rewards women distinguished in the field of important selfless social work, by conferring the "Social Achievement Award ALICE YOTOPOULOS MARANGOPOULOS", after the name of our Honorary President and Past President of the IAW.

This year, this award was conferred to the women of the Eastern Aegean Islands, for the support, hospitality, kindness and solidarity they offered to refugees, arriving in thousands every day during all of 2015 and until recently, destitute and in despair, to the Greek islands, trying to escape war and violence prevailing in their countries. From the little they had, these poor but brave and sensitive women of the Greek Islands gave a lot to their fellow human beings.

During a gathering on March 18 2016 to honour Women's Day, attended by Women's Organisations, East Aegean Islanders and many citizens, the Award, bestowed to all the women of the Islands, was handed over to four of these brave women, from Lesbos, Samos, Chios and Kalymnos. Speakers from the UN High Commission for Refugees, the Greek National Committee for Human Rights and the Greek Council for Refugees, and the Head of the North Aegean Region, gave an account of the Refugees problem in Greece both from the legal, the social as well as the administration point of view. Most important of all, all people attending the event unanimously approved a Resolution: (a)declaring respect and pride over the humanitarian spirit and solidarity of people of the Greek islands for the rescue and shelter they offered to refugees, (b)denouncing countries of the EU, which, acting

by infringement of fundamental rules and values of the EU and international Conventions on Human Rights, build fences and close borders, (c) demanding the immediate cease of armed conflicts at the countries of origin of Refugees as well as (d) the immediate lifting of all barriers that obstruct the passage of Refugees, the opening of the borders and the allocation of the burden for receiving and sheltering those distressed fellow human beings proportionately to all EU countries.”

[Read the resolution](#)

Cameroon

News about CEFAP-LADIES CIRCLE's actions in Cameroon



Anne Pelagie –CEFAP

Our organization is a national network of women, young girls (also men that are helping us rolling back gender based violence in communities) leading social and economic change in Cameroon. This journey started in 2003 and still continues... When it comes to women/girls' empowerment (economically and socially), eradication of violence against women/girls, fight poverty/hunger and promote social justice, reinforce sustainable development for all in local communities, advance women/girls' rights and justice, give smile to underprivileged/poor/disabled, share skills, touch and change lives.... we'll always stand tall.

More information about our activities, [please visit our website](#)

Some upcoming activities on our agenda:

May-July 2016 : Fundraising for launching of a project called “[HELP HER LIVE WHEN GIVING LIFE](#)” an advocacy program for a “FREE MEDICAL CARE TO POOR PREGNANT WOMEN” to help and save 50 disadvantaged, vulnerable and poor pregnant women/young girls.

8-16 November 2016, Victoria Falls- Zimbabwe

We will be part of the IAW 37th Triennial Congress

Norway

New leadership in the [Norwegian Association for Women's Rights](#) (NKF)

Margunn Bjørnholt steps down and is replaced by Marit Nybakk as President.

Australia

Gloria Steinem www.gloriasteinem.com in Australia

from Priscilla Todd (WEL) and Eva Court (League of Women Voters)

Gloria Steinem attracted an enthusiastic audience of 2000 at the Melbourne Town Hall on 16 May; mostly women, many with their daughters, and ranging in age from the Fitzroy High School Feminist Collective to well-known Melbourne feminist Mary Owen, now 95, who IAW members met at the International Meeting in 2012. Meeting Mary before the session, Gloria said she was aiming for 100!

Gloria has been visiting New Zealand and Australia to promote her latest book *My Life on the Road*. She talked about her early journalistic years in the 1960s and co-founding Ms Magazine in 1972 through to her latest project, a TV series titled *Woman** a series about global abuse against women and how destabilizing it is for the entire world. Asked by the Fitzroy students what was feminism's greatest failing, Gloria said “I think we've been too nice”.

The interview was conducted with warmth and empathy by Virginia Trioli, one of Australia's best-known journalists, with a formidable reputation as a TV anchor, radio presenter, writer and commentator.



Photograph by Annie Leibovitz
from website

<http://www.gloriasteinem.com>

*Steinem is executive producer and host of the series that features a team of all-female journalists telling the stories of women and men on the front lines of fighting gender-based violence. Episodes include reports on the impact of sexual violence in Democratic Republic of the Congo; the epidemic of femicides in El Salvador; the prevalence of sexual assault in the U.S. military; the devastating effect on American society of incarcerating mothers of young children; and a special episode produced by Oscar-winning filmmaker Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy on how the rise of extremism in Pakistan is both rooted in and reflected by violence towards women.

“Polarized gender roles are the mark of terrorist groups and violent societies,” says Steinem. “More than poverty, natural resources, religion or degree of democracy, violence against females is the most reliable predictor of whether a nation will be violent within itself or will use violence against another country—and gender violence has become so great that for the first time, there are now fewer females on earth than males. This series records on-the-ground realities and gives viewers ways to help”.

Readings Book Stores hosted the event and kindly provided table space to Women’s Electoral Lobby, Emily’s List, International Women’s Development Agency and Victorian Women’s Trust.

Around the World

Child Marriage Malawi

In a country with one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world, [Chief Theresa Kachindamoto](#) is dismantling child marriage—about 850 unions in three years, according to [Al Jazeera](#) and more than 300 in one month, according to [UN Women](#).

Bangladesh

[The forgotten girls of Dhaka](#)

A Check-list for National Strategies to End Child Marriage

Since 2011 a growing number of countries affected by child marriage have started to make national strategies, action plans, and country wide initiatives to address the practice

India

In India the wedding industry unites to fight child marriage

[Read more](#)



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IAW Editorial group: lenepind@gmail.com

International women’s News:
iawiwn@womenalliance.org

Membership Officer:
iaw.membership@womenalliance.org