

# INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

Equal Rights—Equal Opportunities  
Droits égaux—responsabilités égales



Newsletter

October 2016

no. 5

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*Dear members and subscribers.*

*In this issue we appeal to members and friends to support the work of IAW by following, liking, sharing posts of IAW facebook and twitter.*

*The President's letters provide substantial information about burning feminist issues. Read and share in your network. Soon-Young Yoon has been given an award. Lyda Versteegen writes about CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention, and Arina sends a personal letter to our readers, especially young readers.*

*We have news from the UN and from around the world. And this time we also have a book review.*

*Thanks to all of you who sent contributions to this Newsletter. Your efforts are much appreciated.*

*Deadline November 15 for contributions to the December Newsletter.*

## News from IAW

### IAW and Social Media

#### • an Appeal to our members and friends

IAW has had a website for many years. The latest revision was made after Congress in 2013. IAW also has a facebook and twitter account. The number of people accessing our website is growing, but very slowly. The number of likes on facebook and followers on twitter is growing. But we can do a lot better.

Using social media is a way to get in contact with a lot of people, even have a discussion with a lot of people, which is why all organisations incl the UN, UN Women, Equality Now, EWL etc. invest time and money in being active on social media. It is also an important way to become known to a larger audience.

IAW has to move forward in this field. It is of paramount importance for IAW and IAW's continued potential to be an important player in our field of work.

Many IAW members have a facebook account and/ or a twitter account. You can all help IAW. I have noticed that some members often 'like' or 'retweet', but it would be a great big step forward if members with a facebook account and a twitter account made it a habit to like and share IAW postings on their own facebook account and to retweet IAW tweets.

Members may also post their own messages on the IAW facebook, or—even better—comment on the message.

There is no doubt that IAW will soon have to find somebody who will be responsible for an IAW Instagram account.

**Support the work of IAW!**



[Like us on facebook](#)

[Follow us on twitter](#)

## Board Meeting Zimbabwe

### Board Meeting and Conference in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

Elimination of Violence against Women will be the main issue at the IAW meeting in Zimbabwe. Women's Comfort Corner, headed by Glen Middlemost and Rita Mbatha, are busy preparing for a fruitful meeting

#### President's Letters:

In her [August President's Letter](#) Joanna Manganara analyses why FGM is a violation of women's human rights.



Gudrun Haupter, Convener of the IAW Health Commission has [added information](#) to the President's Letter.

Joanna Manganara's [September Newsletter](#) deals with the situation of refugee women and girls.

#### More on FGM:

##### Publications:

[Evidence to End FGM/C: Research to Help Women Thrive](#)

[The first ever recorded figures for female genital mutilation \(FGM\) show that between April 2015 and March 2016 there were 5,702 new cases in England](#)

### International Representatives

#### New York



IAW main representative, Soon-Young Yoon, was given the global Circle of Courage award. (See: <http://winaction.org/events/wed.html>) The ceremony took place during an all day event celebrating Women's Equality Day, August 27, 2016 in Los Angeles. In her remarks, she noted that the feminist and women's movements brought life into CEDAW, now ratified by 189 States Parties. She hoped that city officials and NGOs would join the Cities for CEDAW campaign (see [www.citiesforcedaw.org](http://www.citiesforcedaw.org)).

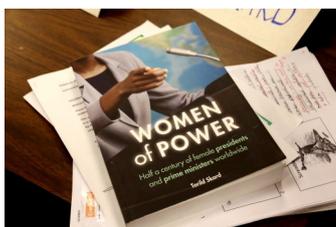
#### Human Rights Council



Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein

**Lyda Verstegen**, IAW representative to the Human Rights Council, calls the opening statement of Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, president of the HRC, both brave and bold. Ten years ago when the HRC was created, it was designed to be more relevant than its predecessor, more credible, more impartial, and more focused on the rights and voices of victims. On each of those points the Council has achieved important successes. And yet the UNHCHR is concerned about a growing polarisation within the council, as well as by increasing and clear attempts to block or evade human rights scrutiny. The speech of the UNHCHR is a warning what HR defenders and people (women in particular) might lose if this trend continues.

[Read the whole statement](#)



Universal Periodic Review

## IAW side event October 3 during session of Human Rights Council, Geneva Co-sponsored by World Council of Churches:

Guest lecture by **Torild Skard**, Norwegian politician, researcher and author of *Women in Power*, followed by a panel.

Torild Skard's book *Women of Power* has now been [reviewed in India also](#).

### Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

At the Board Meeting in Switzerland in 2014 the Board was given a comprehensive introduction to the workings of the UPR process.

The third cycle of UPRs is approaching, and on that occasion information has been sent out calling on states to ensure an effective cycle. According to UPR—Info, two elements of the UPR process must be prioritised by States: **implementation** and **reporting**. Firstly, implementation of recommendations is the ultimate aim of the UPR process; to improve human rights in all countries. The area of implementation has to be strengthened and sustained. Secondly, reporting comprehensively on human rights developments is the only way States can be held to account. It is through effective reporting that assessments can be carried out and that new, specific, and tailored recommendations can be made.

NGOs such as members of IAW may submit their own report on the human rights situation in their country and/or they can lobby to be involved in producing the state report

[UPR –info](#)  
[Calender](#)



**Lyda Verstege**n, Honorary President of IAW and main representative to the Human Rights Council for IAW has written an article on CEDAW for [Nederlandse Vereniging voor de Verenigde Naties](#). The article is also published on the [IAW website](#)

### The Istanbul Convention—or Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence .

**Lyda Verstege**n has sent this article on the Istanbul Convention:

The Istanbul Convention is the name under which the Convention of the Council of Europe on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence is known. For the Netherlands it entered into force on March 1 2016. On the whole it entered into force on 1/08/2014.

The Convention is directly applicable. That means that one can invoke it before a judge and before the government.

It is very emphatically a human rights treaty, in which existing texts from other treaties, like CEDAW, The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the UN Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural (UNCESCR), other regional treaties such as the Maputo Protocol, and of course the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are incorporated.

The rulings of the Committees of CEDAW, CRC and UNCESCR become juridically enforceable when they are incorporated in this Convention.

The Convention also has a clear gender angle. It recognizes that violence against women is a symptom of the historically unequal power relations



Photo:Coe.int



Lyda Verstegen

between men and women, which lead to the domination and discrimination of women by men.

This follows also from the definitions:

‘Violence against women’ is understood as a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women and shall mean all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

“Gender-based violence against women’ shall mean violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately.

Parties shall undertake to include a gender perspective in the implementation and evaluation of the impact of the provisions of this Convention and promote and effectively implement policies of equality between women and men and the empowerment of women.

**For NGOs and civil society (also for IAW) it is important that there should be enough financial and human resources for the adequate implementation of integrated measures and programmes to prevent and combat all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention.**

Parties have to see that there is cooperation between all relevant bodies of the state, including the judiciary, public prosecutor, bodies that maintain the law, local and regional authorities as well as NGOs and other relevant organizations protecting victims and witnesses of the violence. (It is incredibly complicated to organize this cooperation.)

For the prevention of violence it is important that parties take measures with the aim of changing ideas and prejudices about the supposed inferiority of women, and include men and boys in those campaigns.

Awareness raising campaigns, education, training of professionals, training of perpetrators in non violent conduct, are all obligations under the Convention.

In this regard there is a task for local authorities.

To establish the prevalence of VAW it is necessary to collect data.

The Convention has provisions about safe havens, that should be sufficient and easy to reach, about free telephone helplines, about information to victims in a language they can understand. This also is a task for local authorities.

There are special provisions on FGM, so called ‘honour-related’ crimes, forced marriage, forced abortion and sterilisation, and stalking.

For women whose residence permit depends on that of the spouse parties must ensure the necessary legislative and other measures, to make it possible to obtain an autonomous residence permit.

**It is not necessary to file or maintain a complaint in order to receive help and to prosecute the perpetrator.**

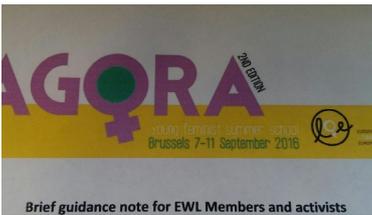
The mechanism that monitors the implementation of the Convention is called GREVIO. It is a group of experts, who send questionnaires to the parties and does research on the basis of the answers. Contribution of NGOs and civil society is possible.

**After the entry into force of the Convention the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe may, after consultation of the parties to this Convention and obtaining their unanimous consent, invite any non-member State to accede to this Convention.**

This is just a short description of the contents of this Convention.

[Link to the text](#)  
[Link to more information](#)

**Arina Angerman**, IAW representative on the Board of European Women's Lobby, has sent this personal letter, first sent to The Young Feminist Summer School of EWL:



### **Intergenerational exchange & financial independence for women**

As a feminist activist for 37 years, I spend 8 hours a week of my personal time to promote women's rights & gender equality at local, regional, national or European level. I have worked together with hundreds or thousands of feminists who had different backgrounds, interests and ages. I shared my experiences in a personal letter with 50 participants of the Young Feminist Summer School of the European Women's Lobby (EWL) in September 2016 as a small step in developing an intergenerational exchange process and strengthening our knowledge and skills in order to build bigger and better campaigns to fight for women's rights and gender equality. [At the website of EWL you can read blogs by Claire, a women of colour representing Scotland.](#)

I want to share with you – readers F/M of IAW Newsletter – the most challenging experience in my life.

### **Financial independence for women**

My most challenging experience was always and still is to be financially independent as a woman. I have earned money for more than 20 years as a project (programme) manager or managing director (1988-2010) by working four days a week. I have had ten different jobs by means of which I contributed to my personal pension. In 2015 I learned that I have a state pension gap of two years! That's why I now have different types of income: a personal pension, work as an entrepreneur and a part time job as a telemarketer. In hindsight I was able to end my love relationship with a man when I was 30+ and another man when I was 40+ because I was a feminist and financially independent.



Arina Angerman

What I know now and what I couldn't have known when I was 25 years old: one out of three women have experienced sexual and/or physical violence in the EU. Lifelong learning of new skills can play a great role to improve women's economic rights and independence.

More information at <http://chunrichoupaal.org/the-code-to-change-leaders/>

My biggest insights (wisdom) I want to share with you are:  
Enjoy your life and be happy now;  
Become your own financial manager;  
Have as your learning style learning by doing!

EWL informed me later that my letter "was very well received".

United Nations



## UN Decade of Action on Nutrition from 2016 to 2025

On April 1 2016 the United Nations General Assembly agreed a resolution proclaiming the [UN Decade of Action on Nutrition from 2016 to 2025](#).

Nearly 800 million people remain chronically undernourished and 159 million children under 5 years of age are stunted. Approximately 50 million children under 5 years are wasted, over two billion people suffer from micronutrient deficiencies and 1.9 billion people are affected by overweight of which over 600 million are obese.

Women are in a unique position to reduce malnutrition. Nevertheless malnutrition takes an uneven toll on poor women and children.

[Read this fact sheet from FAO](#)

## Habitat III

Habitat III is the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development to take place in Quito, Ecuador, from 17 – 20 October 2016.

[Learn what this has to do with gender](#)

## UNWomen

Data and statistics are indispensable tools for devising evidence-based policies to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, assessing their impact, and promoting accountability

11 out of the 14 indicators in SDG5 do not have accepted international standards for measurement and/or data collection by most countries is irregular.

[UN Women launches a programme](#) to help remedy this.

Around the world

## Around the World

### UNFPA—United Nations Population Fund

[Health, Women and Gender Equality](#) a publication from UNFPA, seeks to inform Member States, civil society organizations, including Faith-based Organizations (FBOs) and the UN, among others, about the context and the nature of debates and different perspectives related to some particularly sensitive issues around sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. Its aim is indeed the sustainability of efforts and the achievement of common ground among different actors to move forward gender equality and women's human rights.

The publication is available [online](#)

## Human Development

A new report finds economic and social discrimination against women is costing Africa more than \$100 billion a year. [The U.N. Development Program's 2016 Africa Human Development Report](#) argues closing the gender gap would be a boon for the Continent's economic and social prospects.

The report finds African women across the board are denied the same kind of economic, social and political opportunities men enjoy. It says women lose out when it comes to education, work and health.

It notes fewer girls than boys go to school, women earn less money than men for paid labour, harmful traditional practices affect their health, and certain cultural norms act as a hindrance to women moving ahead in society.



### South Africa

**Black school girls are protesting racist practices**, which, according to school guidelines, force black girls to straighten their afro hair and impose penalties against black girls socializing together in groups

[Read more](#)

### India

In West Bengal, India, [acid attacks](#) have suddenly increased.

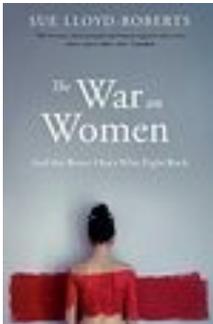
[Read also](#) about a young woman from Calcutta challenging the norms of her society and about the film that inspired her: [Pink](#), directed by [Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury](#)

### Sweden

These [facts about Sweden](#) might be interesting for our readers. Sweden has come a long way when it comes to equality, but there are still things to be done.

### About Forced Marriages in the US

[Read the text, watch the video](#)



### Book Review

#### Sue Lloyd Roberts: The War on Women / Simon and Schuster 2015

From the gender pay gap in Britain to forced marriage in Kashmir and from rape as a weapon of war to honour killings, Sue Lloyd Roberts has examined humankind's history and takes us on a journey to analyse the state of women's lives today. Most importantly she acts as a mouthpiece for the brave ones; the ones who challenge wrongdoing; the ones who show courage no matter how afraid they are; the ones who are combatting violence across the globe; the ones who are fighting back.

[Watch this video](#), where Sue Lloyd Roberts daughter talks about her mother's book.

IAW is financed by membership fees and private donations.

Support our work for equal rights—equal responsibilities for women all over the world

[DONATE NOW](#)

IAW Editorial group: [lenepind@gmail.com](mailto:lenepind@gmail.com)

International women's News: [iawiwn@womenalliance.org](mailto:iawiwn@womenalliance.org)

Membership Officer: [iaw.membership@womenalliance.org](mailto:iaw.membership@womenalliance.org)