

2012

# INTERNATIONAL MEETING REPORTS



Compiled by  
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## *President Lyda Verstegen's report*

### *Iawomen.ning.com*

Since we have Ning there doesn't seem to be much news that is not common knowledge. That is exactly the purpose of IAWomen.Ning. Lene Pind and I decided to write on it regularly. I have 'reported' also in IWN and on the web site.

The hospitality in Iceland was overwhelming, and we had a fruitful Board Meeting there. In November I visited New York to meet with Johanna Sterbin, Irini Salis and Natalia Kostus. After the Board Meeting we started to prepare for the 56<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women. We had a large delegation, around 20 women, with whom I had dinner one night. It was clear that the rural women would be left out in the cold, but we had a side event celebrating their way of making land out of chicken droppings, even though Elizabeth Nkwah didn't get a visa. I complained about that to CSW.

Natalia Kostus came to visit me around Christmas, we discussed Rio+20, where she was going to be very active as a member of the Women's Major Group. Esther Velasco came to see me, she lives in Cambodia and is a friend of my son. Esther can go to the ESCAP meetings in Bangkok, she is a gender and development expert.

I spend every afternoon at my laptop or iPad. It is very time consuming to read all the news from the UN, forwarding some to people who may be interested: Judy Gordon on aging and social development, Joanna Manganara on poverty and the social floor, Gudrun and Seema about WHO, Rosy and Bettina about FAO. Priscilla about the energetic preparations she is making for Melbourne 2012. I am of course in constant contact with Lene, she came to Amsterdam to talk to the people of the archives, Aletta.

We skype frequently about the agenda for the International Meeting.

Our constant worry is of course the bank. Barclays has not yet recognized Inga, although we went there in May, Inga, Rosy, Bashan, Helen Self and myself. When Bashan inquired after a few weeks the mandate change people hadn't got the stamped and signed papers. It appeared that the branch office had forgotten to send them. My daughter was going to help me write a letter to the CEO, but he resigned due to a scandal. So, instead Inga and I went to Geneva in July to open an account at Postfinance. We'll hear from them shortly, I hope.

We took advantage of our presence in Geneva to have lunch with H  l  ne Sackstein and Seema Uplekar. It is so good to meet face to face once in a while, it makes one feel how much we have in common with our worries and advocacy about women's rights and human rights. That's also why I signed a lot of petitions, about reproductive rights and the safety of human rights advocates. And of course about the Women's Library in London, that is threatened with losing its funding.

I went to England again in June to the conference on Women and Leadership of the Lucy Cavendish College in Cambridge. I stayed with Jocelynn Scutt and Bashan came over to discuss Congress, for which she has exciting ideas.

Here in Holland we had several NGO meetings about the 5<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women. We shared the results with Soon-Young in New York, and on Ning of course.

The most constructive and yet cautious results are in a resolution circulating around the world. We'll discuss that in Melbourne. It is attached here.

Let's hope that all this effort will one day make the world a better place for women.

## **REPORTS FROM REGIONS, AFFILIATES, AND ASSOCIATES**

### **AFRICA**

#### **Arab Region**

##### **Horeya T. Megahed, IAW Regional Vice president**

Though women have played crucial role in protest movements in Arab countries that witnessed revolutions, women's conditions have not been improved, but rather deteriorated due to the overwhelming rising influence of conservative and reactionary forces. The state feminism which has developed before in several Arab States was replaced by a process of marginalization of women. Accordingly, it is difficult to predict or pass judgments about women's status politically and economically in the near future, especially that the Arab region is still in a state of flux and liberal forces are still struggling.

- **Algeria:** The draft organic law determined the principle of quota for women, accordingly the number of women candidates must not be less than one-third of the total candidates in each list for elections at all levels.
- Accordingly, the result of the parliamentary election of 2012 revealed that women occupied 145 of the 462 seats in the National People's Assembly i.e. 31.38%, which is a quantum leap for women and political parties compared to the 2007 elections, where women earned 31 of the 389 seats, or about 8%.

Algeria now has by far the highest representation of women in the Arab region; they mostly belong to liberal parties, which represent the majority, while Islamists became now a minority.

On the other hand, Ms. Naima Salehi, became the head of the Party of Justice and Development. Also, Maya Sahili- the human rights activist- was elected as a member in the Human Rights Commission of the African Union.

A civilian body was established to ensure the rights of women subjected to violence by notifying the authorities of violations of women's rights in order to take the necessary measures.

- **Egypt:** After the repeal of women's quota, which enabled women to get 12% in the short-lived National Council of December 2010, the amendment of the election law in 2011, which introduced party lists for 2/3 of the seats, claims that each list should include at least one woman, without specifying the ranking of women in it. This was considered a satisfactory measure to replace the quota. However, the election that followed at the end of the year has seen a significant progress for women as candidates and voters; women competed for 984 seats out of the total of 8415 candidates, yet, only 9 women won the election and became parliamentarians, in addition to two appointed women. The different parties refrained from giving women an advanced place in their lists. Therefore, in the first People's Council after the revolution the number of female MPs dropped to less than 2%; and most of them belonged to the majority Islamist Freedom and Justice Party. There were several alarming draft laws related to women's rights -such as minimizing marriage age for females from 18 to 12 years and abolishing the punishment for harassment of women (a

draft law that was surprisingly proposed by a woman MP!!!). Yet, soon in June 2012 the People's Assembly was dissolved by a decision of the Constitutional Court for being unconstitutional on the basis of inequality between party lists and individual candidates. Women's representation in the Shoura Council is limited as well; it has just four women out of 180 members.

- More crucial is that women's participation in the Constituent Assembly, which is tasked with drafting the country's new constitution, is very limited with only 6 women out of 100 members, who are mostly Islamists chosen by the majority party. It is worth noting that the first panel, created after the January 25 revolution to prepare some draft amendments of the 1971 Constitution, did not include any woman.
- While on top of the executive power, women's participation has not exceeded 3 in all the governments that were formed after the revolution, the situation was the same during the former regime. Today, the government which came to power in July 2012, despite the fact that the total number increased from 30 to 36, female ministers dropped to only two (Social Affairs and Scientific Research). A big loss for women is the exclusion of the most efficient and powerful Minister of Planning and Economic Cooperation- former Ambassador Faiza Aboul Naga - who was a minister for 10 years and the spokesperson of the government-as a pioneer woman in that respect.

Concerning the National Council for Women which was headed by the former First Lady and was the dynamic force behind women's empowerment, it was reformed in March 2012 to maintain its mission of defending women's rights. The newly-appointed head is the former Minister of Social Affairs and former Ambassador Mervat el Talawi. On the other side, the units of equal opportunities that were established by the initiative of the Council since the end of nineties, extended to most of the ministries to identify the problems faced by women at work.

It is worth noting that in the electoral program of the two presidential candidates, there was a stress on the appointment of a female vice-president, but this was not yet fulfilled.

However, the newly-appointed presidential team, composed of 21 members, includes one woman as Assistant President for Political Affairs in addition to two advisors.

- Away from politics, in the election of the new Coptic Orthodox Pope next November, for the first time in history women will be allowed to participate: the 2700 participants who will vote to choose the new Pope include 139 women, mostly nuns, with some public figures including 12 present and former women MPs and Ministers.
- On the level of academic achievements, Dr. Wafaa Haggag, the scientific researcher in the Department of Plants Diseases of the National Research Center was awarded five international prizes from among 150 competing inventors from all over the world, in addition to her selection as a member of the European Jury for Innovations and Inventions. Furthermore, Dr. Bushra Salem, Professor at the Department of Environmental Sciences, at the Faculty of Science, Alexandria University, was elected as the Head of the International Coordinating Council of the UNESCO's Man and Biosphere Programme and she is the first woman around the world to assume this responsibility
- **Iraq:** The State Ministry for Women's Affairs discussed the national strategy of women and set a plan of action to enable Iraqi women to participate in sustainable development and to empower them. The strategy includes the targets of legislative process, economic participation, and institutions providing equal rights and opportunities for both sexes, putting an end to violence against women, improving health and educational services provided, and effective participation in peace building.

The representation of women in the Legislative Assembly is 25.2%. It is worth noting that this rate was somehow constant throughout the years, therefore, Iraqi women had the highest representation in the Arab region before the war on Iraq which disrupted everything except the insistence of women on assuming an active role in politics. The most significant

suffering and continuous complaints of women are mostly the lack of security and the consequent harassments which violate their basic human rights.

- **Jordan:** The Elections Law for the year 2012 approved that parties must have 10% women of their founding members. Importantly, it raises the number of seats allocated to the quota of women from 12 to 15 seats in the House of Representatives. Furthermore, the Ministry of State for Women's Affairs was founded.
  - Due to the low performance of women MPs in former councils, there is a stress on quality and training to improve the performance and image of women in practice.
  - The percentage of Jordanian women who hold positions of leadership and supervisory roles increased by about 20% since 2009, and the percentage of women working in governmental bodies reached 44.9%.
  - The National Council for Family Affairs introduced a project to develop electronic tracking system for cases of household violence through a network linking all institutions providing the service to domestic violence cases.
  - **Libya:** The Elections Law stressed on the condition of the consecutive order between men and women in every party list in order to be accepted, in an effort to guarantee equal opportunities. In the election of June 2012 the percentage of women registered in voting lists was 55%; while 450 women competed for a total of 200 seats, only one woman won in the single-member constituencies, while 32 won seats through party lists. Therefore, women became represented by 16% in the National Council.
  - There are three women ministers -for the Ministries of Health, Culture & Media, and Social Affairs- which has replaced the Ministry for Family, Women and Childhood that existed before the revolution. There was just one woman in the National Transitional Council of Libya.
  - At the level of municipalities, women have difficulties of playing a significant role at the grassroot level because of the strong sense of tribalism that emerged after the revolution.
- Lebanon:** The National Commission for Lebanese Women launched the "National Strategy for Women in Lebanon 2011 - 2021", which identified 12 goals including; maintaining citizenship on the basis of full equality between men and women in all laws and enhancing opportunities for girls and women in all different fields.

- There is a call for the adoption of a quota of 30% to be applied in the election of 2013.
- The National Commission for Lebanese Women drafted a bill amending the Nationality Law in order to recognize the right of Lebanese women to pass their citizenship to their children.
- Without any rationalization, the House of Representatives on November 24, 2011, passed the Act No. 186 which declared March 8 to be the "Day of the Alphabet", this action was strongly resented by women's rights movements for the fact that this day is celebrated since 1948 in all countries as the "International Women's Day".

**Palestine:** The Secretariat of the General Union of Palestinian Women and women's organizations called for adopting quota for women of up to 30% in the National Council. Furthermore, the Federation of Women and women's organizations held a meeting to discuss the role of women within the framework of the Palestine Liberation Organization. They called for including this quota and promoting the status and role of women in the Palestinian society.

Female activists participated in the hunger strike in April 2012 in solidarity with Palestinian prisoners in Israel. They protested against the brutal treatment the Palestinian prisoners are facing and their deprivation of basic rights guaranteed by international conventions and norms, particularly by the Fourth Geneva Convention.



**Sudan**: In the process of improving conditions of women in rural areas -a prerequisite for advocating empowerment and development- the Fund of Rural Women was established by the Union of Sudanese Women's Development, and other government bodies as well, to provide funds to implement the national project for development in this respect.

The government in cooperation with the UN Women held a forum to discuss gender responsive budgets and consequently adopted a strategy for women to enable them to perform their role in family and community building, with the establishment of mechanisms at all levels to enable women in rural areas to face challenges, through coordination and partnership of various NGOs.

- On the other side, the Child Act of 2004 was replaced with the 2010 Act which criminalizes FGM. And the Council of Child Care was established after the dissolution of the Council of Family Affairs.
- **Tunisia**: The Elections Law claimed that women must be represented by 50% in all electoral lists, therefore there were more than 11,000 candidates and 7% of all candidate lists headed by a female candidate. Among the 49 women who have succeeded in the elections of the Constituent Assembly, 42 members belong to the majority Islamist Ennahda Party (Renaissance Party). As a result of the election held in October 2011, there are 58 women MPs in the Legislative Assembly representing 26.7% of the total members. Women's participation in government is limited; as there are female ministers for the Ministry of Women and Family Affairs, Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of State for Housing.
- Tunisian women are currently protesting against the drafting of the new constitution which includes possible aspects of inequality and which represents a setback for their accomplishments. Women threatened to hold demonstrations against the extremist religious views calling for imposing the veil on all women and reducing their role in the public life to managing households.

[There is a query about the spring roses that women in the Arab region are aspiring for.](#)

## ***Arab League***

**Horeya Megahed**

There is a considerable awareness in the Arab League of women's empowerment and their vital role in development.

- On March 29, 2012, Arab Leaders in the twenty-third session of the Arab League Summit in Baghdad adopted the Declaration of Baghdad that tackles issues related to women and youth. There is a special focus on women, this can be obvious from the following articles:
- "30- Developing the paths of development to be more related to sustainability and social justice..., and taking the side of poor people, youth and women to enhance their potentials to participate in the political, economical, social and cultural life".
- "36- Emphasizing on the respect for human rights...; and we stress on ensuring women's rights, and empowering and protecting them from all types of discrimination".
- In April 2012, the Department of Social Affairs, at the Women's Sector of the Secretariat of the Arab League, launched the Encyclopedia on "The Status of Women in Arab Legislations".
- In April 2012, the Women's Department of the League, in cooperation with the Arab Women's Union (an NGO), organized the Arab Forum to advocate the role of women in the "Arab Spring," under the theme "Towards Effective Participation of Arab Women in the Path of Democratic Transformation". This Forum attracted civil society organizations and

professional associations, along with the active participation of the Arab Women Organization-AWO: a body affiliated with the Arab League. It focused on the current status of Arab women in the light of political changes, and the role of the new governments in promoting and advocating for the rights of Arab women.

- From January 8-12, 2012, the AWO held the training of trainers' course on the subject of "The Principles of Management and Evaluation of Gender-orientated Projects".
- The Organization participated in the Forum of "Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Women in the Arab World: Leadership and Development" which was held in March 2012 in Tunisia. It discussed how small and medium industries can provide employment opportunities for youth and women and the means for promoting women's integration in economic activity in order to reduce unemployment, fight poverty, and advance the process of sustainable development.
- The AWO held the Fourth Training Course in the field of awareness and acculturation about women's participation in political life in Cairo on June 24-28, 2012. It aims to activate the participation of women in the various political institutions both quantitatively and qualitatively.
- The Fourth Conference of the AWO will be held in Algeria at the end of this year, the main theme is "Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Women in the Arab World: the Leadership and Development". It aims to assess the implementation of previous recommendations in this vital field from a gender approach and to develop a strategy to ensure the empowerment of women.
- In June 2012, the Arab League appointed a woman - Dr Maryam Matar- from the United Arab Emirates, as Goodwill Ambassador for Women and Children.

### ***Hoda Shaarawi Association***

#### **Horeya T. Megahed, IAW Regional Vice President**

The Hoda Sharaawi Association focused during the year on two main dimensions in addition to its usual activities in the social, political and economic spheres.

On the one hand, it took an important constituent and institutional step in conjunction with the 15 oldest women's associations in Egypt to establish "The Egyptian Women's Union (EWU)", to revive what started by Hoda Sharaawi since 1923, when she joined the International Alliance of Women, and established the "The Egyptian Feminist Union (EFU)" or the Hoda Sharaawi Society as an umbrella for feminist organizations. The new Union aims to strengthen the status of women's organizations to defend women's rights in the light of the challenges they face, especially after the revolution. The importance of this step is manifested by the special participation of UN Women Executive Director Ms. Michelle Bachelet in the celebration of the launching of the EWU in Cairo on Oct. 15, 2011. She gave an important speech commending the initiative which strengthens women's efforts in defending their rights and their quest for empowerment. It was promotional and supportive of Egyptian women and their efforts.

The idea of uniting women's organizations was always the preoccupation of Hoda Sharaawi and her association. Yet, it was crystallized during the National Conference which brought together more than 4,000 participants from civil societies from all over the country to discuss the theme: "Egyptian Women: Partners in the Revolution - What is after January 25." The Alliance for Arab Women played an important organizational role and its president, Dr. Huda Badran, assumed the presidency of EWU after its official establishment in December. Also, Ms. Layla El Alfy, the vice-president of the Hoda Sharaawi Society (EFU) became secretary general. EWU has expanded to include 42 members and the target is to have two hundred members in two years.



The second dimension of the activity of the Hoda Sharaawi Society is playing a positive role during the parliamentary and presidential elections in the campaign of the candidate who stood for the civil state. The aim was to support and move about five million women in the election. The Hoda Sharaawi Society participated in the expanded national conference held in May, 2012 under the title "She and the President." The conference was organized by the National Council for Women in June, ahead of the presidential election. It brought together a number of presidential candidates and public figures and discussed their platforms and suggested policies related to women. Finally, the Hoda Sharaawi Society continues its awareness campaigns and mobilization efforts for the upcoming elections and the referendum on the new constitution.

## ***Mmabatho Foundation for Women's Development, South Africa***

### ***1. Completion of Gombana Project***



Mmabatho Foundation has completed the houses it was building at Gombana in the rural village of Limpopo. The women who are received the first phase of the houses were very emotional as they were officially handed their houses. The proud owners of the houses who were staying in the rondavels on the left above were elated as they will now have separate rooms for their activities as they were all staying in this one room before with children. The children will now have their separate bedroom and the bigger ones can also sleep on the sleeper couch in the lounge, something that would not have happened without the intervention of our Foundation.

The women in the village are continuing with the project building houses for each other and after



the completion of the houses of the women belonging to the Cooperative, they will then build houses for the community as business for their Cooperative. They have already being given a project of building 20 units by Government which will sustain their business and improve their quality of life. Below, right, the Deputy Minister Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu, officially opens the completed and furnished house and hand over the house to its beneficiary.



## *2. Commission on the Status of Women*



Mmabatho Foundation for Women's Development organised a roundtable that addresses issues of rural women at the Commission on the Status of Women at the Church Centre in New York. The round table was a success with participation of women from all over the world. The speakers of the roundtable were the Chairperson of the Foundation Ms Mmabatho Ramagoshi and the President of the All India Women's conference Ms Bina Jain. The third speaker, Ms Nkwah Elizabeth Ndibabonga could not attend because she was not granted a visa by the American embassy in her country. This made the participants very angry as the denial of her visa has robbed the participants the opportunity to interact with her and learning from her too. It was resolved that a letter be written to the American government signed by the President of IAW to raise our dissatisfaction with the refusal of visas for our members. Below are participants who attended the roundtable that was moderated by Ms Mapula Ncanywa, the Vice President of IAW.



### ***Remember my name campaign***

Addressing the scourge of violence against women and children, the MFWD had adopted the 365 days campaign against gender based violence. It continues to advise and support victims and survivors of gender based violence to ensure that they receive treatment and care in the health system and justice from the criminal justice system. The Mmabatho Foundation has developed a campaign to commemorate the victims of gender based violence and the campaign. The campaign was launched during 16 days of activism against gender based violence in 2011 and it is a 365 days campaign.

The campaign aims at raising awareness at the scourge of domestic violence and honours those who did not survive the violence and died in the hands of their loved ones. The campaign was launched in a church to ensure that we have the support of the congregation but also of the clergy as some of the perpetrators of domestic violence use the bible to justify their abusive actions.

After the launch, the campaign has been travelling to different provinces to raise awareness and to speak out when they experience the abuse as victims but also to speak out when they witness abuse in their communities.

We have also gone to funerals of women who were killed by their partners and spoke against violence and abuse at the funeral service representing the Foundation. This has seen the increase in people requiring our support and services and we will continue to provide that much required services in partnership with other NGO's and CBO's in the rural areas. The Foundation is compiling a database of victims of Femicide and will produce this annually to indicate the women and men who have been killed due to domestic violence and to track the case so that there is justice for the victims.

The Foundation has formed partnership with Local Municipalities and churches and will be having the campaign nationally with these partners and asking them to assist with collecting the names of the victims in their areas for the database.





### ***3. Orphanage games***

Mmabatho Foundation for Women's Development has initiated the first games of children in orphanages and have adopted four new orphanages which has increases the number to five of orphanages in the Tshwane municipality. The games were an astounding success.

The children played mini soccer, sang and danced, poetry, and their faces were painted. After long and tiring games, winners received medals and trophies. The participating orphanages received TV sets, games and musical instruments. Each child received a blanket as it was winter including the house mother. They were further spoiled by receiving body massage to relax them before they start again in managing their orphanages. The teenagers and adolescents had a workshop conducted by UNICEF and WHO to address their emotional issues.

#### 4. Orphanage Christmas party



#### 5. Nelson Mandela day

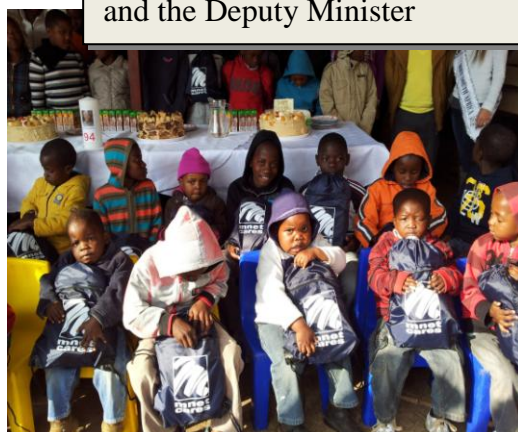
The Foundation celebrated the Nelson Mandela day by dedicating two days to the five orphanages and the homeless people in Pretoria. The children were given gifts and shared the birthday cake with the Deputy Minister, members of the Foundation, and other partners who brought gifts to the children. The homeless people were given soup and blankets to keep them warm in the cold winter and they were also given cake to celebrate Mandela's 94<sup>th</sup> birthday



The children receiving presents from the Foundation and the Deputy Minister

Leamogetswe children with their gifts

Pauline with the homeless women





## ***6. Computer training at Ukuthula Advice Desk***

The Mmabatho Foundation for Women's Development organised computer training for women and young people in Mpumalanga. The training took place for five days where they were given basic computer literacy, internet training and making of business cards so that they could make business for themselves.

## ***ZAMBIA ALLIANCE OF WOMEN***

### **INTRODUCTION**

This report elaborates the operations of Zambia Alliance of Women (ZAW) during the period January 2011- December 2011 highlighting achievements made and challenges encountered. Further it provides an overview of the programmes implemented.

The main focus of the activities in January 2011- December 2011 mainly involved further strengthening of organisation through sustainability. The construction of the Tukuule women's training centre by Zambia Alliance of Women (ZAW) at our headquarters is part of an investment plan that intends to make the organization self sustaining. ZAW is a non-governmental, non-profit making, non-partisan service organisation. Activities implemented during the period under review were focused on programme areas which included organisational development, research on women's land rights, promoting food security at household level through sustainable agriculture, awareness and sensitization of communities and organisations on human rights, gender, ecological conservation, HIV&AIDS, lobby and advocacy.

The cooperating partners and donors that supported ZAW during the period under review included Netherlands Institute of Southern Africa (NIZA), Global fund for Women, NORAD through basket funding, Democracy and human rights fund and Action Aid

ZAW was founded in 1978 to promote the themes of equality, development and peace, in recognition that without true gender equality peace would remain an illusion in a state. It was registered under the Societies Act in March 1982. In March 1993 ZAW was subsequently registered as a corporate body under the name of Zambia Alliance of Women Registered Trustees in terms of Act CAP 288.

### **2.0 Vision of ZAW**

Have a Zambia in which women, children and men have an improved standard of living as a minimum requirement for human dignity.

### **3.0 Mission Statement**

To empower people to take charge of their lives through gender environmental and social justice so that the right to a healthy life is enjoyed by the now and future generations

### **4.0 Operational Objectives**

**Gender and Civic-** under this operational objective the main activities are to promote the enhancement of the position of women's rights, women and inheritance, women and education, women and development and access to credit, advocacy for good governance and the promotion of peace.

**Environment and Sustainable Development:** under this project objective the organization conducts sensitization and training workshops in environment management, networks with CBOs in environment, educate communities on waste management, disposal, train communities on environmental conservation and tree planting for sustainable livelihoods.

**Social and Economic:-** Under this operational objective the organization works in the area of poverty eradication through food security programmes and other potential income generating



activities through sustainable agriculture. It also conducts research in socio-economic issues, gender, land and inheritance, HIV&AIDS and environmental issues promote culture and family values that positively enhance the position of women and the girl child.

ZAW is affiliated to:

- The International Alliance of Women
- The Zambia Council for Social Development
- The Non-Governmental Organization Co-coordinating Committee
- RIOD, the international association of NGOs involved in the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

The objectives of ZAW are to improve the welfare of women and children in Zambia through the following:

- To secure all such reforms as are necessary to establish real equality of liberties, status and opportunities between men and women
- To urge women to accept their responsibilities and use their rights and influence in the public life to ensure that the status of every individual, without distinction of gender, race, color or creed shall be based on respect for the human-person, the only guarantee for individual freedom.
- To instill in members of rural communities a sense of self-reliance through constructive work for the welfare of the nation and human kind.
- To increase awareness of environmental issues, teach skills and knowledge for conservation and train in skills of applying traditional and scientific knowledge of the use of the environment.
- To teach rural people in sustainable income generating ventures such as sustainable small scale agriculture, basketry, pottery, sewing and other cottage sustainable industries.

## **5.0 BACKGROUND**

Zambia Alliance of Women has been operating for the last 28 years and has over 15,000 members across the country in the 7 provinces of Zambia namely North Western- Solwezi and Mwinilunga, Western- in Kaoma, Central -Kabwe and Mumbwa, Southern- Monze and Choma, Lusaka and Kafue, Eastern -Petauke and Chipata, Northern -Serenje and Kasama.

Membership to ZAW is through affiliation to ZAW through the Community Based Organisations and individual membership. ZAW has been building capacity in its members through training and sensitization on gender and women's rights, sustainable agriculture, sustainable use of environment, HIV and AIDS and communication, networking, lobby an

## **6. ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW**

In 2009 ZAW prepared a three year strategic plan to run from 2009 -2011.

The central statistics office (CSO) economic statistics indicate that during the year under review, Zambia as a nation witnessed improvements on the economic front, recording a 17% growth in gross domestic product from 2008 -2009. The improvements could be attributed to the steady recovery in metal prices on the international market, and additional fresh investment in mining.

## **OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES IN 2011**

### **7.1 SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE**

Zambia Alliance of Women targeted to train 5,000 members in conservation farming in all its operational areas. However only 3,000 members were trained. All the members trained were provided with means for conservation farming through provision of inputs and out of these 1,500 households have attained food security at household level.



Women receiving organic fertilizer



Harvesting time after hard work



Our executive director and member in her field



Members displaying their produce



Vegetables grown using goat droppings as fertilizer



Water retention mechanism through mulching in vegetable growing (All these are interventions been promoted by ZAW)



## 6.2 INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY



ZAW has been grappling with the issue of self sustainability for a long time now. In 2008 the organization embarked on the sustainable building initiative called the Tukuule women's training centre project worth ZMK 2,100,000,000.00 supported by NORAD through basket funding under Non Governmental Organization Coordinating Council (NGOCC). The project is nearing completion with a few final touches to be executed by the contractor.

### ***REPORTS FROM THE NIGER DELTA WOMEN'S MOVEMENT FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT (NDWPD)***

**Niger Delta Women's movement for Peace and Development (NDWPD)** is a women Non-Governmental Organization in Special Consultative Status with the United Nations ECOSOC based in Delta State and has been in existence since 2005 with a vision to empower the Niger Delta Women and the most vulnerable people in the region.

After being hit by rising poverty levels, environmental degradation, corporate exploitation and the debilitating impact of HIV/AIDS, our primary mission is to promote enduring peace in the Niger Delta, with a strong focus on women's empowerment, conflict mediation, peace building, gender and climate change issues, girl-child education, ecological imperatives, HIV/AIDS prevention, caring for orphans and vulnerable children, economic and social advancement of the women and people in the rural areas of the Niger Delta region.

As an organization determined to provide quality humane services that will ensure sustainable development in our rural communities, NDWPD is poised to allow people, especially women have access to safe and healthy environment and making sure that the environmental resources are managed in the most sustainable way to achieve socio-economic development.

In 2011 NDWPD focused on two major areas, women empowerment and environmental justice.

### **Climate change in the Niger Delta.**

#### **NDWPD fighting against climate change, empowering women in Niger Delta 2011**

NDWPD facilitated **NIGER DELTA WOMEN TRIBUNAL WOMEN AND CLIMATE JUSTICE HEARING TO STRENGTHEN VOICES, SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS IN THE NIGER DELTA, NIGERIA** 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 in Ughelli, Delta State.

In partnership with the GCAP Feminist taskforce and support from green peace international and interpress service, NDWPD organized a climate justice tribunal on October, 15, 2011. 5 women testified to the impact climate change, and proffered solutions to mitigate and adapt with a call to action for government and relevant stakeholders to act now.

## Focus on Women Empowerment through Training



Trainees at a training section

In October, 2009, the NDWPD formally opened the Niger Delta Women resource centre at Ughelli, Delta State which is leased for 7 years and fully equipped for the training of women / Youth in vocations and skills Like ICT /Computer, Tailoring, Catering and Home Mgt., Hair and Beauty, Business, and Production of Soaps and Detergents, as a self help project of the organization.

Niger Delta women resource centre has been the basis for women empowerment in the Nigeria.

Women and girls from rural communities has been engaged and empowered with various skills of choice for self reliance a total number of 200 women has been trained between 2011 and 2012 in 3 batches with the support of shell and NDDC skills development training and individual women empowerment schemes.

## WOMEN & LEADERSHIP

In July 2012, NDWPD had a capacity building workshop for it's Graduate trainees "Building Blocks Of Leadership, to equip participants on communicative learning and building communication skills in a learning society.



## International

NDWPD has been on the lead in the ongoing climate change and sustainable development debates.

## International Rural women 2011.



Rural women gathered in Orogun, Delta state Nigeria to celebrate the international day of rural women, where they had opportunities to share their stories and also been from the counterparts in other communities.

NDWPD led a women's delegation of the Niger Delta, a grassroots and rural community, to the 54th, and 55<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York, USA February 2010 and 2011 where we made presentations on women waging peace in the Niger Delta, as well as on HIV/AIDS discrimination and stigmatization, respectively.



Ambassador Mrs. Caroline Usikpedo – Omoniye with Former President of Ireland and Chief Mrs. Betty Ubeku, MFR at the Women Leadership Summit in Rio De Janeiro,

NDWPD also participated as a Climate Witnesses from the Niger Delta at the UNFCCC Summit on Climate Change in December, Durban South Africa 2011 and to RIO+20 Conference in Brazil 2012. **Niger Delta Women** Takes the lead of Grassroots women at the Conference on sustainable development, in Rio. Caroline presented among other panelist at the UN Women Leadership Summit and the Leadership Forum.

## ASIA

### South East Asia Region by Regional Vice President Asha Deshpande

#### REPORT ON ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD JULY 11 TO JUNE 12

IT is my pleasure to submit the report on the activities performed by me related with IAW aims and objectives.

I could not attend last board meeting as I was out of country and hence I could not get visa to come to Ireland. I came back to India in Nov. 11.

With the efforts of our permanent representative SUDHA ACHARYA at NEWYORK CSW AIWC had got the opportunity to present a workshop jointly with INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SETTLEMENT [IFS] at UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN CSW56 on 29<sup>th</sup> FEB.12

*“On EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN IN SOUTH ASIA” THE NGO EXPERIENCE.*



6 delegates with leadership of our President Mrs Bina Jain attended the session.

And I was one of the delegates. We had Ashwini Kshirsagar the Head of the Panchayat from a very small village known as Shivari She spoke in her own language her experiences as SURPANCH how she faced the problems and also how she suffered for gender discrimination etc. It was a great experience.

Ashwini Kshirsagar to the left

On powerpoint I presented my work in the field of village adoption and socio-economic projects run by AIWC specially for Empowerment of Rural Women.

IAW was also having round table discussion in which President of AIWC was one of the member who share her experience. We attended that roundtable session.



After coming back from the CSW56 it was decided by AIWC President that we should run some special programs for economic development of Rural Women and also good health and sanitation. In addition to this we should also have projects under Sustainable Energy which will help women for their economic growth. Hence she has directed me to study and make two Projects.

1] Manufacturing of SANITARY NAPKIN which should be available in subsidised rates and we should see that women would make the habit to use the same. There are 4 states in India who are doing these projects. Hence with proper study of these projects and actual working of the units I presented this project in Half Yearly meeting to the members.

In case of sustainable energy I made a project on use of Solar Dryer and solar energy. Drying about 100 type's products and sale those in the market which are fully hygienic and easy to handle and it can be used at any time.

Both these projects are under socio-economic activities.

It is regular feature in India that, children who are physically challenged they do not get admission in regular school but with the grate efforts of one of our branch in Gujarat state i.e. Rajkot branch could do this for their street children child. It is really an honourable issue. I visited the place and also met the child.

I tried to contact other organization in south Asia but sorry to mention that nobody replied to my mails. Hence I cannot submit the report on their activities. I would like to discuss this issue in the meeting.

### ***ALL INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE***

We are giving below a Report on the activities of AIWC during the year June, 2011 to July 2012 on the major MDGs.

#### **Goal 1- Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger-**

Under the above Goal, AIWC provided Vocational Training to 10000 women, who are now engaged in economic activities.

2800 Self Help Groups for women have been formed to make the women economically independent, by engaging themselves in sustainable income generation activities,

The following income generation units for women have been established:

- Saree Weaving and coconut oil extraction
- Coir products preparation
- Tailoring and embroidery
- Solar drying of fruits and vegetables
- Food Processing (masala, pickle, jam etc.)
- Catering services
- Sanitary Napkin making
- Umbrella making
- Pottery making
- Floriculture
- Agriculture
- Cattle Rearing and Dairy Farming
-



## **Goal 2 – Achieve universal primary education**

Education being the primary goal of AIWC we have prepared a special module which gives skill training to women and at the same time make them literate. It also covers school dropout children who are given supportive education and help them enter the mainstream schools.

Under the scheme approximately 2500 children were brought into the mainstream by supportive education in schools and 1400 women were made literate while learning skills that ensured that they become financially independent.

## **Goal 3 Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women**

Awareness programmes covering the entire country are conducted on various issues like female feticide, legal awareness, etc. AIWC runs short stay homes for women in distress and also a 24 hour women's helpline to provide immediate assistance to needy women. Family counseling centres run by AIWC take care of cases requiring intervention to lead a harmonious family life.

A major programme on Violence against women – whose concern? Is being conducted all over the country to understand the reasons for the increase in the incidence of violence and ways to stop it. We will put forward the recommendations arising out of outcome from these programmes to the CSW57 in 2013.

Leadership Programme for the Rural Women is being conducted for the educated rural women, who otherwise do not have any resources to come to the forefront. The objective of these training programmes is to help these young women recognize their strength and attain success right from home making to nation building.

We also train our own Members to become Trainers in Retail business, with assistance from Wal-Mart. Our Members in turn train needy young women to gain employment in the growing retail sector..

## **Goal 5 – Improve Maternal Health**

Programmes are regularly conducted to ensure that pregnant women register with hospitals for safe delivery, To educate women about balanced diet and simple low cost recipes from locally available food items, To provide basic information on immunization and vaccination, To help create an anemia free society

- Mother and Child Care Units in villages have been started to help pregnant and nursing mothers and 0-6 year old children
- Providing health services in rural and urban slums through Mobile Health Vans
- 650 Health Camps were conducted and benefitted approx. 40,000 community people
- 130 anemia detection camps were held. Out of approx 10,000 anemic patients 1400 were cured through medicines and monitoring

## **Goal 7 – Ensure Environmental Sustainability**

To work towards preserving green environment, to promote solar energy and to make it as an income generation opportunity, women are given training in repair and maintenance of solar equipments. Solar Energy fairs were organized to bring awareness. Eco-Club was set up in the campus to bring awareness of our environment to the children of community college.

- Promotion and Implementation of New & Renewable Energy Sources like solar dryer, solar cookers, solar lanterns, smokeless chulhas, biogas usage
- Promotion, preparation and usage of vermicompost and organic manure

- Awareness programmes on environment protection, waste management, water, sanitation were conducted
- A project is being planned in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, to promote Herbal Nurseries as a means of livelihood for rural women,

AIWC Public Charitable Trusts for Education, Old Age and Health provide support for education of needy children, and to take care of needs of elderly

We regularly celebrate the following activities in support of Global Principles:

- International Women's Day
- AIDS Day
- No Tobacco Day
- Family Education Day
- Environment Day
- Water Day
- Human Rights Day

## **EUROPE**

*The European Region by Joanna Manganara, Regional Vice President for Europe*

### **Women and the Arab Spring**

Following our initiative for an **Emergency Motion on Women and the Arab Spring** that was unanimously adopted by the EWL GA in Brussels in May 2011, I participated in the **WIDE Annual Conference 2011** that took place in Brussels in 27- 28 October 2011.

The subject of the Conference was *"Women's Rights and gender equality amidst the Arab Springs. Challenges and lessons learnt across regions"*.

What has been known as the Arab Spring has started in December 2010 in Tunisia. This has had a dramatic ripple effect all over the region. Women have participated to various degrees in these revolutions and have played leading roles in breaking gender stereotypes and reclaiming the public sphere. This said, retaliation against women has been brutal and across the board ranging from rapes to virginity tests to imprisonment and torture. Simultaneously the Arab Springs have also been a fertile ground for the emergence of organised religious fundamentalist groups of all kinds.

The rationale for the Conference was the need to listen to the analysis of feminists and women representatives from the Mena region. To compare and learn from previous revolutions and the paths these have taken in relation to women's rights and gender equality. To formulate informed political demands as well as assess opportunities and challenges for strategic action.

### **Violence against women**

We have signed the petition of the Global Fund for Women which has launched a campaign to demand a UN Commission of Inquiry on the use of rape and sexual violence as a weapon of war in Burma.

### **Coalition for an EU Year to end violence against Women**

We have submitted a broad European advocacy movement initiated by the EWL, gathering NGOs and decision makers lobbying for comprehensive EU action on violence against women and for a European Year on combating and preventing violence against women. To date the EU has no binding legislation in place to deal with this most pervasive human rights abuse within its borders. However

violence against women affects approximately 45% of all women across Europe. The European Commission has committed to elaborate an EU policy framework on combating violence against women by 2012

### **Promoting Gender Equality in Economic Policies**

Reaching the Europe 2020 objectives is unrealistic without strengthened commitment to gender equality in all economic and financial decisions. The EWL has voiced its clear discontent with the fact that gender equality is not mainstreamed in the flagships or the Europe 2020 strategy as a whole. The

flagships are new engines that the EU has identified to boost growth and jobs. This is a crucial moment in our history where things can take a turn for the worse or the better. Now it is time to ensure parity democracy across the spectrum of private and political life. Legally binding measures are crucial to

increase women's share in decision-making in the economic architecture including on corporate boards, science, research, politics and public administration.

Macroeconomic policies and sustainable solutions to the deepening crisis must include women at every level of decision-making. Gender blind austerity measures undermine recovery.

The EWL has joined forces with the European Greens/EFA Group, trade unions and other NGO'S to advocate a strong gender perspective in this year's Country Specific Recommendations. Recommendations are one of the Commission's tools to directly influence how employment and other important socioeconomic policies develop in individual Member States. These are recommendations for Member State's action on issues in relation to stability, growth and jobs. EWL members were asked to submit ideas for alternative recommendations. Marion Boeker who is alternate to me in the Board submitted ideas based on the concluding observations of CEDAW for each member state.

This is a time of strategic importance for the future of the European Social Model due to the European recession. According to the EWL it is paramount that the direction taken is guided by a life cycle perspective on the needs of women and men in the EU. To that effect the EWL adopted a **Manifesto on Women's socio-economic rights and gender equality from a life cycle perspective.**

### ***EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY***

***Joanna Manganara, Member of the EWL Board IAW***

#### **REPORT**

**General Assembly of the European Women's Lobby  
Budapest, 11-13 May 2012**

#### **EWL Conference**

**Her future-Intergenerational solidarity from a gender equality perspective**

The President of the EWL, **Brigitte Triems**, said that we should use the commemoration of the European Year 2012 of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations to engender policies and to look at women's rights, and gender equality from a life cycle perspective.

The Conference provided a life cycle perspective on two main issues: Economic independence and the transmission of values, expertise and knowledge which previous generations have used to pave the way in securing women's rights, and gender equality for diverse groups of women.

#### **Keynote speech**

**Diane Elson**, Economist at the University of Essex specialized in care economics. Elson introduced the concept of gender sensitive life-cycle approach from an economic perspective and the economic impact of care on women's life-cycle.

Elson said that care needs differ across life-cycle/care providing differs across life-cycle. Care can be paid (employee in public, private sector, employee in household, self-employed), care can be unpaid (family members, neighbours, friends, volunteers). Care is gendered. Women provide more of it than do men. There are differences between countries. The longest time on unpaid care on average per day is in Italy: 5h20 min. women, 1h35 min. men, and the smaller in Sweden: 3h20 min. women, 1h20 min. men.

Lack of care services leads women to take part-time paid work or not to enter the labour market at all. In old age women are poorer than men. The average gender pension gap for EU 15 ranges from 16,8% to 46,4%.

Life expectancy has increased but also frailty in old age has increased. Relatives provide twice as many hours of unpaid care as 30 years ago. Women are 3 times more likely to provide the care than men.

### **Unpaid care work and public policy**

Provide care allowances and pension credits. Invest in paid care services. Get men to do a bigger share of care responsibilities.

### **Austerity, care and gender equality**

Widespread cuts to public expenditure on care services lead us to the following questions:

- Will women's unpaid care work rise? Will EU abandon the de facto goal of increasing women's labour force participation? Will women be forced into short-term decisions to leave the labour force that will lead them to poverty in old age?

We need therefore to engage in growth policies. Encourage small business to employ women. Invest in care services for children.

### **Panel one**

#### **The mirror of our lives: from pay to pensions**

**Katalin Kevehaz**: of the EWL Hungarian coordination, spoke about the urgency of closing the gender pay gap.

Concerning the **definition** of the gender pay gap the data is unadjusted without age, education, number of children, job tenure, occupation and work place characteristics.

Concerning the **legal framework** there exists one that considers discrimination against women at work and concerning pay, illegal.

**Facts show** that there is a gender pay gap that persists.

Gender differences lie behind the gender pay gap. Women do more housework, interrupt career, work part-time, work in helping and support professions, invest less in training, suffer from stereotypes. The traditional division of domestic tasks, maintains economic inequalities between women and men.

### **Platon Tinios: From pay to pensions.**

Older women's interests are frequently taken for granted while they are insufficiently presented in decision-making. Economic changes are shaping pensions. Older women are increasing in numbers, have less children, while their social ties are looser.

Older people today have lived and worked under one system and receive benefits under another. We should try to measure the pension gap by elaborating an indicator which should be easily understood, be available on an annual basis and comparable across member states.

### **Panel two**

#### **Her future: Solidarity between generations**

##### **European Disability Forum: Ana Pelaez Narvaez.**

There are no policies, neither social movements, in favour of women with disabilities. There is a lack of perspective of their human diversity.

The main subjects traditionally linked with women with disabilities are the following: girl's education, lack of sexual and reproductive rights, access to training and the labour market, elder women's institutionalisation, lack of human rights and benefits, negative social representation in the population, real and effective limitation of their roles.

##### **European Network of Migrant Women: Monica Cristea.**

The Network provides information programs to support migrant women to become partners in the community.

##### **KVINFO's mentor Network: Margit Vildlyng.**

Information programs to refugee and migrant women to support them to make changes and build confidence.

The General Assembly adopted unanimously a **Manifesto on Women's Socio-Economic Rights and Gender Equality from a life-cycle perspective.**

### **General Assembly**

In her welcoming speech, Mrs. Brigitte Triems, said that the economic crisis is gendered. Equality is our right. It is not a luxury in times of welfare but also in times of crisis. We should contribute to the solution of the crisis.

The standing orders were approved unanimously. The draft agenda also. The draft minutes of 2011 were approved with 4 abstentions.

### **Financial matters**

The WG on finances worked on how the EWL can improve its income through fundraising. It also elaborated guidelines concerning relations with the corporate sector without becoming dependent. The problem is that the EWL is facing a deficit of about 92,000 Euros which has accumulated over the last 20 years. Starting with 2014 the European Commission will adopt a new financial framework and will not support financially organisations with a deficit.

The only way to cover the deficit is with more revenue through relations with foundations, promoting different types of activities, events, merchandising the EWL expertise, promoting friends of the EWL.

Italy said that austerity is not the solution to the problem. Austria said that some of the money of the EWL should be used for activities that are of interest to our donors, as well as for advocacy and lobbying.

The GA adopted the accounts of 2011, by unanimity.

The 2012 budget was adopted with 1 vote against and 8 abstentions.

The continuation of the mandate of the financial group was adopted with 5 abstentions.

### **Membership Committee**

The membership fee for the National coordinations and the European organisations will continue to be the same.

The European Network of Migrant Women which was given associate membership in 2009 was accepted as full member

### **Structures and governance**

WG on governance and structure: Proposals of adaptation of EWL structures to address current challenges.

**The GA** remains the sovereign body of the EWL where all organisations are represented but it should meet physically every two years. There will be a yearly electronic meeting to fulfil legal requirements. Delegates to the GA should have a mandate of 4 years.

**The steering group** is the new name of the Board. The functions of this body would be to give political guidance to the EWL, strategic leadership, to be a forum for political input, networking and thematic discussions. The mandate would be extended to four years. It would meet once a year for two full days. Working Groups will be established that would meet during the meeting of the steering group and continue the work virtually. Such WG would be either thematic, on policy issues/ on internal/functional aspects/ or geographic.

**Management Committee** would be the new name of the executive. It would have as functions regular political leadership and input, representation, financial management, support and fundraising activities. It would meet about four times a year.

A number of delegations did not agree with the change of the name of the Board which they consider powerful as well as with the mandate of four years which they found a too long commitment.

The new structures have to be adopted by February 2013. The WG on governance will continue its work on it.

### **Work Programme**

#### **General Theme 2013:**

Moving forward with women's rights to fight the current backlash.

#### **Strategic objective 1: Contribute to/Influence EU-level policies relating to equality between women and men.**

- Advocacy for a European year against violence and strategy to end violence. Monitoring of EU activities.
- Continue to work on prostitution and trafficking.
- Publish barometer on sexual violence together with Observatory on Violence.
- Adopt a revised position paper on women's sexual health and rights.
- Support the work of the EWL observatory on violence.
- Work at International level: UN Rapporteur, CoE Convention, UNSCR 1325, CSW.
- Continue to work on women in decision making.
- Monitor European legislation on parity on boards of administration.
- Start activities within the EWL 50/50 campaign especially in the framework of the European Year on citizenship 2013.
- Lead the EWL project on minority women and the European elections.
- Participate in the European network of women in decision making.



- Follow up of maternity Directive including paternity leave.
- Monitor EC proposals on “carers leave” and the pay gap.
- Link with the European Institute for gender equality and the Fundamental Rights Agency.
- Monitor the post 2014 EU Budget.
- Link with the Irish and Lithuanian Presidency.
- Board seminar on feminist economics beyond GDP.
- Influence the EU 2020 strategy (Annual growth survey, National Reform Programs, employment package, poverty target).
- Follow up on funding for women’s rights.
- Lead a project on women asylum seekers.
- Cooperation with European network of migrant women and Roma women on integration issues.

### **Strategic objective 2: Effective alliances, networks, outreach.**

- Continue links with European and international decision makers and institutions.
- Be part of the coalition of NGOs for the European Year on citizenship
- Work in coalitions concerning sexual rights, antidiscrimination and other topics as relevant.

### **Strategic objective 3: Strengthen the EWL membership**

- Develop and harvest the talents and capacities of the membership base and encourage networking among members.
- Provide brief and lobbying tools for members.
- Implement strategy to reach out members at the national level.
- Produce one issue of the European women’s voice on fighting the backlash.

### **Strategic objective 4: Ensure best practices of governance based on feminist principles.**

- Adopt revised statutes and internal rules and start implementing them.
- Organise GA and Board meetings.
- External evaluation 2013.

### **Strategic objective 5: An autonomous and sustainable EWL.**

- Human resources and financial management.
- Raise funds for co-funding.
- Support members in their fundraising efforts.
- Recruit friends of the EWL and continue working for long term financial sustainability.

## **Emergency Motions**

### **Motion 1**

Proposing organisation: Cyprus Women’s Lobby, seconded by Malta Confederation of Women’s Organisations, Portuguese Platform for Women’s Rights, Lithuanian Women’s Lobby, EWL Coordination in Turkey, WILPF. The motion was adopted with 7 abstentions. The text has as follows: *“The EWL condemns the detainment of Maria Alekhina, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Ekaterina Samucevich by the Russian authorities for allegedly performing a protest song in a cathedral as a part of a feminist punk group “Pussy riot”. The three young women have been charged with “hooliganism”, have been remanded in jail, facing up to 7 years criminal punishment. The EWL calls on the Russian authorities to drop the charges of hooliganism and immediately and unconditionally release the detainees ensuring their protection and that of their families”.*

### **Motion 2**

Universalism and Olympics. Proposing Organisation: French Coordination for EWL, seconded by Deutsche Frauenrat, Luxembourg Coordination, Cyprus Women’s Lobby, Coordination of Greek

Women NGO's for the EWL, Coordinamento Italiano della Lobby Europea delle Donne. The text was adopted with 6 votes against and has as follows: *"On 25 July in conjunction with the opening of the London Olympics, a protest will be organised against the Olympic Committee's failure to respect the principles of equality and neutrality. The presence of the presidents or delegates from the EWL and from National Coordinations would be of major importance. The aim of the protest is to ask for a strict implementation of the Olympic Charter based on universal principles"*.

### **Motion 3**

Proposing Organisation: National Coordination of Belgium, seconded by Deutsche Frauenrat, Malta Confederation of Women's Organisations, Portuguese Platform for Women's Rights, Nederlandse Vrouwenraad, University Women of Europe. The motion was adopted with 3 abstentions. The text has as follows: *"In light of the increasing world wide attacks on women's rights and gender equality and after the failure of the 56 CSW session to reach agreed conclusions the EWL must take a very strong stand towards EU institutions, EU member states and the UN to renew their commitments without any reservation to the full implementation of the Beijing PFA and other international agreements on gender equality and women's human rights. Therefore we say no to any Conference that would reopen negotiations on agreed language at this time and believe it is crucial to stop all attempts by members and observers on earlier commitments to women's rights"*.

### **Issue Groups**

Apart the issue group the IAW organised on the effects of the economic crisis on women in Europe, three others were also organised on the following subjects:

2. The concept of green economy as a provision for gender equality and intergenerational solidarity.
3. You get what you pay for: human security not military security.
4. New challenges for women's sexual rights.

### **Elections**

On May 12, 2012 I was elected to the Board of the EWL as representative of the IAW. The new President of the EWL is Sonja Lokar (Slovenia).

**Joanna Manganara**  
*Regional Vice President – Europe*

### **Issue Group: Effects of the economic and financial crisis on women in Europe**

#### **Introduction**

During the last General Assembly of the EWL, the IAW took the initiative to organize an Issue Group on the effects of the economic crisis on women in Europe, in collaboration with the Greek and French National Coordinations.

The IAW (Joanna Manganara) made a presentation on the gender dimension of the crisis as well as its effects on women in Greece. Mika Ioannidou (Greek Coordination) made a presentation about the Greek situation and Françoise Morvan (French Coordination) made a presentation about poverty in France.

Presentations were also made by Jacqueline Healy (Irish Coordination), Alexandra Sofia de Moura Teixeira da Silva (Portuguese Coordination), Maria Ludovica Bottarelli-Tranquilli Leali (Italian

Coordination), and Marion Boeker (IAW alternate). A number of delegations from the North and the South of Europe also intervened during the discussion.

The main points of the presentations were the following:

The financial crisis is the result of a failure in the governance of finance. Finance has been allowed to grow too large in comparison with the real economy. This governance is gendered because there is a large under-representation of women in financial decision making and as a result the goals prioritized have been the requirements of finance capital at the expense of the paid and domestic economies.

The role of gender inequality in creating the crisis should be recognised.

We have therefore to try to find solutions to the current and ongoing crisis that take into account the gender perspective, with the direct involvement of women.

### **The economic impact of the crisis on women in Greece**

Greece has been the first country in Europe to be severely hit by the financial crisis which exacerbated its problems of high public indebtedness and led to the activation of two EU-IMF bail-out packages accompanied by severe austerity measures. In March 2012 Greece negotiated a landmark debt restructuring deal with the vast majority of its private sector lenders.

The main objectives of the Economic Adjustment programmes agreed with creditors are:

Improve competitiveness. Drastic reductions of labour costs through radical labour market reforms. Collective agreements are now legally forbidden in practice.

Fiscal consolidation. Through cuts in public spending, erosion of the welfare state, great reduction in public sector wages and employment, successive cuts in pensions and huge rises in taxes. At the same time fiscal consolidation has caused a severe and persistent recession, a debt trap, a vicious circle of austerity – recession – more austerity.

Wage cuts. Public sector incomes were cut first, followed by wage cuts in the private sector. The private sector gender based wage gap is approximately 20%, while the gender gap in wages is smaller but still exists in the public sector. The minimum wage in Greece was reduced 22% and 32% for the young people and is now 486 and 426 euros respectively. It is a myth that Greek workers are working less hours than the European ones. According to Eurostat the hours Greek women and men work are above the EU average.

Unemployment. The total unemployment rate in February 2012 reached 21,7% while in 2/2012 it was 15,2%, in 2/2010 11,5%, and in 2/2009 8,9%. Last year 35% of small and medium enterprises closed. Women's unemployment has also dramatically increased during the same period (2009 12,5%, 2010 15%, 2011 18,8% and 2012 25,7%).

The unemployment rate in ages 15-24 reached 53,8%, the highest in the European Union.

Taxation. The value added tax (VAT) rates hit the poor and women harder than the better off as a large percentage of their incomes is spent on consumption.

Social welfare. In terms of social welfare the main ingredients of the IMF's regime include the drastic reduction of current and future pension incomes and social assistance benefits (which have been quite low anyway). Significant cuts in social services, introduction of a flat so called ticket payment for health services and drastic cuts in expenditures by merging/closing down hospitals.

Due to austerity measures there has also taken place a reduction of state budget allocations to municipalities. As a result there is a great lack of staff in social care services and closing down of municipal crèches and nurseries.

The lack of affordable and quality crèches, the shortage of public health services, the fact that private care services are too expensive, the reduced affordability of families to hire migrant women as helpers and the eradication of early retirement for women have created a looming care crisis for individual women and families and for Greek society as a whole.

Violence against women is also increasing as testified in the number of calls to help lines. Economic vulnerability is also causing more women to turn to prostitution. Also women's NGO's offering vital services to women are experiencing heavy difficulties due to cuts in funding.

Pension changes. The official retirement age has been raised and equalised at 65 for women and men. There are heavy penalties for early retirement. Along with age there has been extension of the minimum contribution period for retirement on a full pension and calculation of the pensionable earnings on the basis of the entire lifetime earnings. As a result women have been more penalised due to shorter or irregular working patterns.

Significant reductions in pensions were effected through the immediate abolition of part of yearly pension income that was provided in the form of Christmas, Easter and summer benefits and its replacement by a meagre means tested social assistance benefit.

A special tax on pensions was introduced too, ranging from 3% to 9% depending on the level of pension income.

### **Italy**

In Italy most of the burden of the crisis and of the austerity measures are falling on women's shoulders. Women's activity rate amounts to 50%, the employment rate amounts to 46,4%, while unemployment rate for both women and young people amounts to 30%.

It is in Central and Southern Italy that there is endemic unemployment due to poor infrastructure, transport and lack of industrialization, while the North is industrialized.

Most employed women work part-time mainly due to scarcity of public child care and other reconciliation facilities.

In the service sector part-time and other atypical contracts are usually not renewed. Small and medium enterprises are closing down due to difficulties in getting bank credits and not being paid by the public sector for work performed for it. Those that are not indebted close down in Italy and open up in countries offering incentives related to labour and social security costs.

In Italy there is a high percentage of well-educated women who due to difficulties in finding decent work prefer to stay at home and study.

Austerity measures targeted on private home ownership, pensions and salaries increase poverty among women and men in Italy.

### **Ireland**

In Ireland the national budget deficit amounted to 18 billion euro in 2011. The government has committed to a budget adjustment of at least 3.6 billions in its memo of understanding for financial support with the EV/ECB/IMF. As part of this adjustment the government has committed to

specific tax changes and to reductions in capital and programme expenditure including cuts to social expenditure.

Past three budgets have left women with significantly reduced incomes through cuts to child benefits, cuts to earnings and indiscriminate increases in taxes.

The rate of employment for women has fallen from 60% in 2008 to 46% in 2010. Women's unemployment has increased by 10% in comparison with 6.8% for men. Women's poverty is growing, in particular lone parent households reported higher levels of deprivation. 98% of lone parents, are women.

There are increases in domestic violence and sexual assault coupled with severe cuts in service provision. Locally based women projects saw their funding cut by 16%.

### **Poverty in France**

The percentage of women living in poverty is higher than that of men (73,8% of women to 12,2% of men). In 2009 29.9% of women and 6% of men worked part-time. Among wage earners working part-time 81,9% are women.

Despite a high activity rate 66,9% women in France work in sectors of activity that are traditionally considered female: secretaries, employees in the public sector, the medical and social sector etc. The gender pay gap is 27%. 17% of women are at the head of enterprises. In France the glass ceiling is a reality concerning careers and remuneration.

Because wages and salaries of women are less than those of men and their patterns of work shorter or irregular, the pensions they receive are less than those of men despite the fact that they receive them for longer time, due to their longevity. The gender gap is 44%.

30% of women with 7 years of work experience and children are unemployed or not active. 36,9% of lone parent families, in the majority women-headed, are poor, in particular those receiving the revenue of active solidarity or part-time wages.

After 75 years old more than 70% of the poor are women. They have very often been inactive during their whole life and receive very low pensions.

**Portugal** presented examples of categories of women who suffer particularly from the effects of the economic crisis like disabled, uneducated women with children, as a result of cuts in benefits they receive (social insertion benefits, unemployment benefits etc.).

**Germany** put emphasis on the need for a gender impact assessment of all policies and measures adopted to deal with the crisis as well as on gender budgeting.

On the basis of the discussion's conclusions the Group adopted a Manifesto on the effects of the economic crisis on women in Europe:

### **MANIFESTO**

#### **The effects of the economic and financial crisis on women in Europe**

We women, members of the EWL recall that the ongoing financial and economic crisis has a much higher and differentiated impact on women in Europe especially women in the South of Europe, in particular on Greek, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, as well as Irish women.

Recovery plans and structural adjustment programs have not integrated a gender perspective while austerity measures do not offer sustainable solutions to the crisis with disastrous effects on people's lives, especially women's lives.

In light of the above considerations we call on the European Commission, the European Parliament and national governments to implement the following measures in order to rectify the gender impact of the crisis.

- Reassess that another vision of the world is possible in which the core values of the EU are inherent encompassing equality between women and men and in which human beings will find their lost place in the hierarchy of values.
- Systematic gender sensitive analysis of the impact of the crisis and the responses thereof. The Lobby could create an observatory to analyse relevant data and propose measures.
- Gender budgeting as a standard methodology of all public budget processes.
- Creating jobs especially in the public sector by investing in social infrastructure (education, health, child and dependent persons care) which would also ease the disproportionate burden on women to enable them to participate in the labour market.
- Commitment to work around the deconstruction of the stereotyping of women in education, work, the family and society in general.
- The guarantee of the individualisation of social security and taxation rights in order to break women's dependency on their partners and/or the state.
- Cooperation with EU based trade unions to support/enforce gender equality.
- Address the gender pay gap.
- Implement measures to combat the ongoing process of feminization of poverty which is exacerbated by the recession.
- Development of alternative accounting measures to ensure that women's unpaid care work is recognised in systems of national accounts.
- Implementation of all directives and policies developed on gender equality issues.
- Proposal of a resolution similar to the Security Council Resolution 1325 concerning the participation of women in decision making in the economic and financial sector, private companies as well as the political sector in order to engender better governance, particularly financial governance.
- Set up a liaison among EWL and Civil Society Organisations involved in the G20 process and meetings in order to ensure that gender equality is duly taken into account.
- Take stronger measures to combat gender based violence including the financing of support services for women victims of violence.
- Produce an alternative report of the EWL not only to CEDAW but to other UN Conventions.
- Women of Europe should become more vocal on the need for an immediate reform of the global financial architecture that would fully integrate gender equality and women's rights, and would put an end to the constant search for unlimited growth and maximising profits to the detriment of the survival of humanity in a human way.

***COUNCIL OF EUROPE***

***Anje Wiersinga, IAW representative to the Council of Europe***

**REPORT TO INGO CONFERENCE**



on  
UN COMMISSION ON STATUS OF WOMEN - NEW YORK 26 FEBRUARY-9 MARCH 2012  
by  
**RENÉE GÉRARD AND ANJE WIERSINGA.**

As decided by the INGO Conference in January 2012 Rénee Gérard and Anje Wiersinga should represent the interests of the INGO Conference and promote the Council of Europe values during the 56<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 56<sup>th</sup>).

The themes of the 56th CSW session were

- **Priority Theme: The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges**
- **Emerging Issue: Engaging women and men, girls and boys to advance gender equality**
- **Review Theme: Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women**

Delegations of Member States regrouped for discussions and negotiations, which were not accessible to NGOs. NGOs with Consultative Status complained that in this situation they could not function properly.

More than 2000 NGOs coming from all parts of the world participated in a Forum parallel to the Main Session. Among those a large number of rural women from developing countries, who expected to meet their governments delegates and to lobby them. This was made impossible.

With special passes – one per accredited NGO, distributed every day – some women could enter the restricted area, only to attend parallel events organized by Member States, UN agencies, Council of Europe and the World Bank.

Due to the remodelling of UN buildings NGOs had to organize their own events, workshops and discussion groups in buildings scattered around New York City. In spite of the problems a lot of innovative workshops and caucuses took place. However NGOs could not attend the negotiation sessions and could hardly communicate with government representatives, which marginalised their contribution. Many expressed their indignation particularly when the negotiations were blocked, leading to the failure of the Session.

**Anje Wiersinga** attended the NGO forum Consultation day, prior to the official Session, useful for briefing and networking. She participated actively in the NGO European/North American Caucus and facilitated the statement presented by the Caucus to the official governmental UN CSW Session. As the Caucus delegate she participated in the Consultation Meeting organised by Michelle Bachelet, UN First Under Secretary General and Executive Director UN-Women. NGOs were consulted on UN-Women's plan to set up Regional and National Advisory Committees. The Caucus presented a list of important issues for UN-Women to take up.

**Renée Gérard** attended the official CSW Session, being included in the governmental French delegation. During the second week she even had to act as a substitute for government members and took part in the negotiations and meetings with the European Union and groups of Member States. She also participated in the meeting of the Interparliamentary Union where Mr Mignon presented the Council of Europe (CoE) Istanbul Convention on Violence against women as an example to inspire other countries. She met Mrs Quintinilla-Barba, who represented the CoE Parliamentary Commission on Equality and Non-Discrimination.

The **shocking outcome** of the session is that **no agreed conclusions could be reached** in spite of night working sessions. It was the second time this happened in the 60 years' history of CSW's

yearly sessions. Conservative governments whose number is increasing year after year opposed women's rights in the name of "traditions" They even contested the universality of human rights as opposed to traditional values and to religious law.

Norway delivered a statement naming as **"moral hazards"** that dangerous approach. It concluded that

*"Norway fully respects and protects religious freedom and cultural diversity. But we cannot accept that religious, cultural and so-called moral arguments are being used to block decisions and avoid obligations we all know would give millions of women freedom and save hundreds of lives every year. All countries and cultures have their traditions and hold them dear. But in 2012, with the knowledge we now have with regard to women's rights, opportunities and health, we also know that certain perspectives and practices are harmful - and dangerous - to women. This means we have to compromise"*

The EU also made a statement along the same lines *"rejecting strongly the attempts to dilute the international agreements to protect gender equality and women's rights"*.

The NGOs' recent statement reminds Governments of International Agreements, particularly CEDAW and the 1993 Vienna Declaration: that women's rights are human rights, are universal and inalienable.

An International NGO network has been set up to combat this dangerous development eroding women's universal rights.

On International Women's Day – 8 March – UN SG Ban Ki Moon announced that he intended to propose to the UN GA a 5<sup>th</sup> World Women Conference in 2015.

### **Report on June Session**

13 July 2012

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thanks to all of you who assisted in including gender equality in the Council of Europe June Session.

This is a preliminary report on the results.

First. The INGO Committee on Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges spent about 40 minutes discussing and adopting the resolution and the recommendation "Gender Perspectives – a Condition for the success of the Arab Spring", which was prepared by the Taskforce Including Gender Perspectives in political and democratic processes. As enclosed.

The website of the INGO Conference mentions some of this. See [www.coe.int/t/ngo](http://www.coe.int/t/ngo)

The preliminary report on specific demands and priorities formulated by Women's Organisations in the MENA Region has also been distributed. After some editing and corrections in the translation I will send this to you.

Second. The INGO Conference adopted a recommendation on "Gender equality: a universal value, principle and human right to be respected and promoted in all fields"

From the discussion it was clear that many if not most NGO's present were not aware on the present threats to women's rights at international and specifically at UN level or ignorant about the specifics (including the main invited speaker)

The members of the Freely Constituted Equality Group made several essential amendments which were all adopted, mostly if not all unanimously.

Third. The Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) discussed and adopted a Resolution on "Political Transition in Tunisia". The taskforce proposed 8 amendments for which 26 signatures were

collected. We found Mr Mendes Botha Portuguese Parliamentarian willing to submit these. In the Political Affairs Committee and in the full Assembly only one amendment passed and adopted. However in the Assembly debate many parliamentarians spoke up for women's rights in the presence of the Tunisian President. Which in turn led the Tunisian President to take up the issue and explain his position on women's rights: he supported these fully.

Although it cannot be proven, we think that our action contributed to this debate. The more so since in the Parliamentary debate under urgent procedure on "The crisis of democracy in Egypt" women were not mentioned. The full attention went to the situation of the Christian Copts.

Fourth. The PACE elected Gabriella Battani-Dragoni (Italy), a woman, as the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

Fifth. The Freely Constituted Equality Group had its customary meeting on Tuesday night, followed by dinner. Report will soon be sent. The taskforce "Including Gender perspectives in political and democratic processes" also met.

Sixth. The proposed Working Group on Violence against Women has been approved by the Standing Co. and has started its work.

The Chair of the PACE working group on the subject has been given by me a copy of the Draft AWEPA publication "Guidelines for Parliamentarians" on "Abandoning Female Genital Mutilation". We attended their meetings.

This report will be followed up by a report on "what went wrong" "lessons learned" and "proposals for the next sessions"

Friendly greetings to all of you,  
Anje Wiersinga, IAW Representative

### ***Overview of activities: Gender Equality Expert (GEE)***

At the Standing Committee of the International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGO) Conference at the Council of Europe (COE), Strasbourg, France.

#### ***Report by Betty Doornenbal, Amsterdam, The Netherlands***

##### 1. Introduction

In January 2012, I was elected as gender equality expert to the Standing Committee of the INGO Conference of the council of Europe for a period of 3 years. The position I have undertaken is a voluntary one, which I will fulfil in addition to my other employment.

This report provides an outline of my activities from January to August 2012.

##### 2. Council of Europe & the INGO Conference

The INGO Conference is also referred to as the 4<sup>th</sup> pillar of the COE.

The first pillar: the Council of Ministers (47 member States);

The second pillar: the Members of the General Assembly;

The third pillar: the Congress of local and regional authorities.

Every pillar has a gender equality expert.

Link: [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)

##### 3. Activities

###### February

**Guest speaker at a conference organised by Gender Concerns International (GCI)**

Location: The Hague, The Netherlands.

Subject: One year on; the Arab Spring, Gender Agenda 2012.

Link: [www.genderconcerns.org](http://www.genderconcerns.org)

Summary of contribution as GEE:

- An introduction of the role of the COE.
- Emphasizing the importance of women working together in order to increase strength by cooperating with and asking for support from other INGOs (ie- human rights organisations, unions, education organisations). The bottom line is: work together with everybody who supports human rights. Women's rights are human rights.

An example: our resolution [CONF/PLEN(2012)RES2] and recommendation [CONF/PLEN(2012)REC4] "*Gender perspectives in political and democratic processes in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region*" were adopted by the INGO Conference at the COE, January 2012. Thanks to all the INGOs who have supported it.

For more information, please read the report prepared by Anje Wiersinga.

### March

#### **Guest speaker at the House of Europe**

(organised by the Dutch Institute of Political Education)

Location: The Hague

Summary of contribution as GEE:

- Power point presentation about the COE and my work as a GEE.
- Preparing for the April Standing Committee Meetings and writing the proposal for establishing a new Working Group (see April).

### April

Attending the **meetings of the Standing Committee of the INGO Conference of the COE**, Strasbourg

Summary of contribution as GEE:

- Preparing for and attending the meetings.
- Lobbying for the establishment of a Working Group on preventing and combating violence against women, domestic violence and trafficking in human beings within the Human Rights Committee of the INGO Conference.

#### **Member of the Steering Committee of the Euro-Med Network for the empowerment of women of the North-South Centre of the COE, Strasbourg (first meeting)**

Summary of contribution as GEE:

- Discussing the role, working methods of the Network and deciding upon the subject for our Conference in Istanbul, Turkey, November 2012.

Subject: "The Political and Socio-economical Empowerment of Women based on Women's Stories".

Link: [www.nswomennetwork.org](http://www.nswomennetwork.org)

### May

#### **Meeting of the permanent representatives of the Council of Ministers of the COE**

Location: Strasbourg.

Subject: cooperation between the four pillars of the COE.

Summary of contribution as GEE:

- Joining the INGO delegation.

- To meet with the GEE of the 3rd pillar (Congress of local & regional authorities).

## June

### 6-8 June

#### **Participant of the Gender Equality Commission (GEC) of the Committee of Ministers of the COE, Strasbourg (First meeting).**

General goal of the GEC: to advise the Committee of Ministers on a Council of Europe Strategy on Gender Equality (2014-2017)

Summary of contribution as GEE:

Stressing the importance of:

- The implementation of treaties and policies through working with INGOs.
- Establishing sustainable gender equality by focussing on constructing “self working mechanisms” in treaties and laws etc..
- The ratification of the COE Convention on “preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (2011, Istanbul, Turkey).
- It has been signed by 21 countries and Turkey has become the first country to ratify the Convention till today: 13 September 2012.

### 25-28 June

Attending the **meetings of the Standing Committee of the INGO Conference of the COE, Strasbourg**

- The proposal of the Working Group on preventing and combating violence against women, domestic violence and trafficking in human beings was adopted.

Attending **the Commission of Human Rights of the INGO Conference**

- The proposal of the Working Group on Preventing and combating violence against women, domestic violence and trafficking in human beings was adopted.
- The Working Group will be a part of this Human Rights Commission.

Attending the **Freely Constituted Equality Group meeting;**

- Planning and carrying out an effective lobby strategy with group members.  
(see report Anje Wiersinga)

## July

Attending a **Council Committee of the City Council of Amsterdam.**

Subject: the concept new national law on prostitution.

Main subjects:

1. Increasing the age of prostitutes from 18 to 21 years of age.
2. Sentencing the clients of illegal prostitutes.
3. Registration of prostitutes.

### 4. The work in general

The work conducted involves a number of activities including preparing for meetings \*1, brainstorming, discussions with colleagues, writing, organising travel and logistics to Strasbourg, and travelling itself.

\*1) Attending the meetings of a.o.:

The Standing Committee of the INGO Conference,

The INGO Conference and its Committees,

The Gender Equality Commission (GEC) of the Committee of Ministers of the COE,

The Steering Committee of the Euro-Med Network for the empowerment of women of the North-South Centre of the COE,  
The Working Group on preventing and combating violence against women, domestic violence and trafficking in human beings,  
The Freely Constituted Equality Group,  
Experts on violence against women and children, as much as possible,  
The Parliamentary Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, as much as possible.

#### 5. Special thanks

I would like to give a special thanks to the International Alliance of Women (IAW), my colleague IAW representatives Anje Wiersinga, Monique Bouchet and IAW president Lyda Verstegen in addition to the Members of the Freely Constituted Equality Group, women's organisations and civil society organisations for their support.

Also I like to thank Marion Minis, Saskia Loos, Eileen Focke and Audrey Kühler for their support. Furthermore I would like to thank my colleagues at the Standing Committee and at the Council of Europe.

And last but not least, Melanie Hyde, who translated my Dutchy English into English.

*adf-svf suisse -  
our activities in the past and our projects  
Ursula Nakamura-Stoecklin  
Co-President adf-svf-Suisse*

One never can forget, what happened in June 2009 in Appenzell Switzerland. adf-svf the Swiss section of IAW was solemnly celebrating its 100-year anniversary. It was partly thanks to the initiative of Jessica Kehl, former President of adf-svf-Suisse that IAW actually chose this peaceful place for its International Meeting. Unforgettable! In the morning the adf-svf Suisse delegates were about to decide to dissolve adf-svf-Suisse because the future would not look very bright. Then thanks to the quite spontaneous initiative of some members, mostly the delegates of the adf Neuchâtel one had a break – giving the chance to everybody to think it over again. At lunchtime we met so many IAW-members from around the globe. When talking together they expressed their concern that “Switzerland would give up”.

Then obviously many Swiss delegates realized that we all are bound together in an international community committed to promote women rights. We simply felt that we cannot abandon such an engagement. Thanks a lot to the IAW-delegates who were present at this important moment! In fact afterwards one decided to give a new chance to adf-svf Suisse. The delegates of adf Neuchâtel with Josiane Greub as their President had good ideas how to work efficiently with very simple formal structures.

So during 2010 and 2011 adf Neuchâtel was in charge of adf-svf Suisse as presidential section, which did a lot of networking on the national level. This was particularly important in 2011, when we were celebrating the 40 year anniversary of women voting rights in Switzerland! Yes, Swiss women had to wait a very long time. But thinking that it needed a popular vote where all male citizens could voice their opinion, it is not so surprising. Actually in most other countries that step had been taken simply by some parliamentary decision, which was of course much easier.

On June 14th 2011 the day of a well-known women's strike in Switzerland adf-svf Suisse and the section of Basel went to the national parliament building in Berne and offered to all members of both chambers a book edited by adf-svf Suisse in 1987 describing the struggle for the women rights.

Anita Fetz, upper chamber, and Maria Roth-Bernasconi, lower chamber, both members of adf-svf Suisse spoke shortly to their parliament-colleagues and recalled this part of women's history. At the same time the new book by adf-svf Suisse "the struggle for equal rights" (le combat pour les droits égaux) first presented in June 2009 in Berne) was again being promoted.

Our colleagues from Neuchâtel also organized an open discussion about women rights today and in future, inviting well-known women being members of regional, national or international parliaments. During 2010 and 2011 this small group of women from Neuchâtel actually has succeeded in giving new hope to so many feminist people in this country. We are very happy about our Neuchâtel colleagues for their great commitment. All our thanks go to them.

According to the new regulations being enacted in January 2010 the presidency of adf-svf Suisse is rotating. So starting January 2012 frauenrechte beider basel, the section of Basel, has taken over the presidency. [www.frauenrechtebasel.ch](http://www.frauenrechtebasel.ch)

So the assembly of delegates adf-svf Suisse took place in Basel on June 2nd. Besides of the statutory charges it is always a chance to exchange ideas. In Switzerland it is very important that women from different linguistic regions (French, German etc.) and cultural background can communicate with each other. We had a wonderful day together, and we all were convinced that we want to go on working together within adf-svf Suisse. In the afternoon Ursa Krattiger historian and Co-President of adf-svf Suisse introduced our guests into the Basel history of women's right. Later on everybody enjoyed being near the Rhine. We also wanted to intensify our contacts with IAW. In spring we heard about the disastrous outcome of the 56th CSW-session in New York and read the excellent comments of Lydia Versteegen, President of IAW. We also supported an international petition "Say NO to safeguarding 'traditional values' over women's human rights!" and we are following closely the developments around an eventual 5th world conference of women. We are hoping that women rights will not be endangered.

This is also our concern in Switzerland. This is the reason we are planning a conference on fundamentalism versus women's rights in 2013. At the moment we have to fight against a popular initiative which will exclude abortions from payment by the health-insurance. In fact the liberal abortion-law which has been adopted by a great majority (75%!) in 2002 is now endangered. adf-svf Suisse is working closely together with other national women's organizations plus political parties. Of course we also have to deal with other problems e.g. insufficient political participation of women, barriers for women careers, salary gender-gap, lack of facilities for day-care (children and elderly people), increase of precarious women jobs etc.

So we all have a lot of work ahead of us. We think especially about our IAW- colleagues in the developing countries, who are facing enormous challenges.

We are wishing to you all a highly interesting and pleasant conference in Melbourne. Please, come and visit us one of these days in Switzerland or at least on our website [www.feminism.ch](http://www.feminism.ch)

**UK ALL PAKISTAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION**  
***Bashan Rafique***  
***Executive Vice President - IAW***

The UK All Pakistan Women's Association, is a part of The All Pakistan women's Association National Head Quarters in Pakistan. The UK APWA was set up as a Charity



In May 2010. And comes under the jurisdiction of the Charity Commission in England and Wales. This makes our organisation and the work it does, under the guidelines of the Charity Commission and our Constitution.

Our aims in setting up the Charity was to create a platform for women in the United Kingdom, especially The Women of Pakistani origin who have made The UK their home.

Since the second World war the British Government had opened it's borders to immigrant workers from the Commonwealth. Pakistani workers came in large numbers, now we have a million People of Pakistani Origin. The men and children have been integrated in the mainstream because of their work and education, sadly our first generation of women have Not been woven into the fibre of this society. They are still marginalised and left to live in The ghettos which are a sad reminder of their lives in the villages from where they had come. This has caused the communities to live separate lives, and it is not a homogenous Situation.

The UK APWA aims to create a platform for Women of Pakistani Origin in Britain, to bring them out to take part in the mainstream and to be a part of British Life and to contribute To the community to which they belong. It is a difficult task for a new organisation with limited funds and small membership. But since our inception we have raised,, Funds for our Association in Pakistan and managed to run the Offices here. We are here, and also working with other women's Groups in the UK on issues that concern us.

Our main thrust is Sharia Law as it affects the life of Women in Britain, we are also looking into issues of Forced Marriages and Honour Killings. The organizations we will work with Are The National Council Of Women Great Britain, and The Jan Trust , we are also in touch with The Asian Women's Resource Centre and now as the Government is cutting Back in funding of such organisations we hope to help through our Fund Raising efforts.

The UK APWA aims to raise funds to support the work being done by these charities and Trusts for the Empowerment of our women and for their human rights.

## ***DANISH WOMEN'S SOCIETY***

### **The Mathilde Award 2012**

Every year Danish Women's Society celebrates the Mathilde Award, which is given to person(s) or organizations that have made an extraordinary effort in relation to furthering sex equality. This year's theme was 'Global Women's Rights – seen from an international perspective' and the award was given to Pakistani-born TV reporter, Simi Jan, and the organization KULU that works with women's rights in less developed countries.

In her nomination speech, Lisa Holmfjord, Chairwoman, especially mentioned Simi Jan's involvement in connection with a shelter in Kabul, Afghanistan. At that time Jan was working as a war correspondent for Danish newspaper 'Politiken', and when she learned that the shelter was about to shutdown, because of a lack of funding, she immediately contacted the newspaper and convinced the editor that action was needed. With Jan's articles 'Politiken' launched a campaign to raise money for the shelter. A few weeks later, the readers had donated 2 million dkr. and the shelter was able to continue its work.

KULU received the award as a recognition of their sustained work to improve the living conditions for women in the third world. The Chairwoman stressed the importance of their project in Mali called 'Give a Girl her Right'. The project has been running since 2008 and has helped women achieve their basic rights, through obtaining personal identity papers, such as birth certificates etc. Papers that are needed for women to improve their own living conditions. Until this moment 'Give a

Girl her Right' has helped 500 women in Mali.

### **Child Birth Policy as a New Focus Area**

Extensive cuts within the child birth area has made it clear to Danish Women's Society, that it is necessary to focus on the conditions for pregnant women. The cuts have been introduced gradually over the last five years or so, meaning that the consequences have only started to show. The most radical change is probably, that women, who are not bearing their first child, are expected to leave the hospital the same day they have delivered the the child. This has resulted in a high frequency of new-born children being readmitted to the hospital because of dehydration, amongst other things. A problem that could have been avoided, if only the mothers were given the opportunity to stay at the hospital until the breastfeeding process was properly established.

In order to throw light on this problem, Danish Women's Society has been working on different levels. For instance, we have written a statement for the new instructions concerning the child birth area. We have also arranged debates on the subject together with the Danish Association of Midwives and the Danish Nurses' Organization, just as we have written articles for the newspapers to raise awareness. People are only beginning to understand what has happened, but we will continue to work in this field, as it is a subject that concerns most women and therefore also the rest of the family.

### **The Social Media in the Work for Equality**

During the last year Danish Women's Society has developed a new strategy in order to include the use of social media in our work for women's rights. We started out with a profile on Facebook and it has been a great success, in the sense that it has attracted the attention of people who would not otherwise be interested in our work. The next step will now be to launch a blog, called 'The F-Frequency' (F for Feminist) whose aim will be to shed a new light on gender issues. If possible, with a modern and humorous twist. A number of people, with very different backgrounds, have already agreed to contribute to the blog and we are looking forward to the release in September this year

## ***DEUTSCHER FRAUENRING***

***Marion Böker***

### **DFR Conferences and Seminars**

- ☐ Media- The First Power in Germany? National Seminar (21.10. – 22.10.2011)
- ☐ Reception of the DFR in Berlin (16.03.2012)
- ☐ Seminar for multipliers: "Together in communication – Strengthening the DFR by effective cooperation"(17.03. – 18.03.2012)
- ☐ Fundraising for the International Seminar organized in cooperation with the DFR International Committee (DFR-IC): "Processes of Reconciliation after War and Human Rights Crimes Against Women" first scheduled for Nov. 2012, now postponed to July 2013 [*it will cover the so called cases of 'Comfort Women'*]
- ☐ "Green Economy- Intelligence for the future", National Seminar (19./20.10.2012)
- ☐ Evening Talk "Processes of Reconciliation after War and Human Rights Crimes Against Women", European Academy Berlin, 28. Nov. 2012 in cooperation with DFR-IC (as a pre-event to the International Seminar in July 2013)
- ☐ Integra Expert Conference on the Elimination of FGM, Berlin (27.11.2012)

### **1. Main Contents - Main Issues of the DFR**

#### **1.1. Gender Equality, Elimination of Discrimination, CEDAW**

The de-facto gender equality is the overall objective which the DFR deals with in all events, position papers, statements and publications.

In 2/2009 the UN CEDAW asked **Germany** to submit an **interim state report in 2011** on three urgent issues for which CEDAW wanted to see quickly installed effective measures: for the elimination of the Gender-Pay-Gap of 23% average and human rights violations against transgender und intersex people and the non existing direct dialogue of the Government with their NGOs. The DFR participated in 8/2011 in the submission of an **Interim Alternative Report to CEDAW** on the Interim State Report.

In occasion of the 30th anniversary when CEDAW went into force in Germany the DFR requested the German government on the 03. 09. 2011 to **fulfill all their obligations under the CEDAW Convention and its Optional Protocol "without delay"** and to make CEDAW known more widely in the public. DFR joint a national panel discussion as a CEDAW 30. anniversary celebration with a speaker on the panel and in the audience.

In cooperation with the DFR-International Committee the DFR submitted the following resolutions to the German government:

- The DFR supports the demands of aliened intersex people's NGOs and CEDAW on behalf of **intersex peoples human rights**. DFR demanded the German government **to stop forced surgery of minor intersex children without their informed consent** to enforce their one-sex (and gender) habitual and social appearance which is an ongoing human rights violation as CEDAW, CESCR and CAT confirmed. The DFR wrote a letter in support and urgently demanded the German Ethic Council which facilitated a national dialogue and published recommendations. The DFR requested the GEC's support to end immediately forced surgeries against (minor) intersex people.

- To create a **central Internet Portal** with all available information on gender equality policies and **access to all documents on gender equality and women's and human rights levels (local, national, regional and international esp. UN) which shall provided the documents in German language and other relevant languages** for women and men living in Germany which includes esp. documents of CEDAW and other Human Rights Treaties an e.g. UN-World Conferences on Women, CSW. The DFR recommended for this purpose to use mutual capacities/resources of other EU member states with German language as of Austria, Luxemburg, and Switzerland. [This actually was a claim by the participants of the International Seminar of the DFR in 2010 in Königswinter]

## 1.2. Media- The First Power in Germany?- How to understand and make better use of it

Next to very general inputs, all by professional media experts the media education scientist Marie-Kristin Hess demonstrated with examples the mechanisms of media impact and use of media. She advised the audience to **better learn to use the media as a cultural technique** to avoid and recognize manipulation. The publisher of the feminist Missy-Magazine gave her input about cultural and social impacts of the digitalization of the media by internet, e-mail, blogs, posting of videos and social media. Her advice was to use the speed and the huge amount of global **access and networking as a great potential to make ones voice heard** and led people know ones (the DFRs) messages and issues. The consequence was that the DFR decided to use some of this new tools. (*a related item to IAW's discussion on social media and communication*)

## 1.3. To increase the share of women in decision making positions

The DFR published a position paper which was adopted by other NGOs national and regional, which was distributed widely and used in several coalitions and dialogues with the government, unions, and other stakeholder;

## 1.4. Integration (as inclusion -> CRPD)

Responsible for the issues of migration and integration within the DFR is the Committee for Sociopolitical Education. This Committee has developed **concepts for sociopolitical seminars for integration** which are run **by women for migrant women**. The DFR published a brochure which is a compilation of information and recommends to multiply this seminars.

#### 1.5. International Day "No to Violence Against Women" (22.11.2011)

The DFR published a press release demanding effective measures for the **elimination of forced marriage** and serious **domestic violence against migrant women as a violation of human rights**

#### 1.6. International Women's Day ( 8.3.2012)

Press release of the DFR including digital distribution of the DFR- designed comics „Hello sisters“ with central demands:

- ☐ **100% de-facto and effective implementation of the UN-CEDAW-Convention 'without delay'** and all recommendations of the First National Gender Equality Report of the German Government (2011)
- ☐ Measure for a **de-facto balance between family life and work life**
- ☐ **Equal pay for equal work**
- ☐ **A quota for women in decision making positions** (in the private sector)
- ☐ A throughout **gender perspective in the Green Economy theory and practice**

#### 1.7. Nationwide DFR-Day (8.10.2011)

Remembrance of DFR pioneers '**Herstory**' (Beijing +5) of activism for women's rights with the slogan: „Whatever level of gender equality reality is achieved never came true without her activism!“. In 2011 many of the local branches of the DFR organized commemoration events about **Freda Wuesthoff** who was especially active for **peace**.

#### 1.8. CSW56

The Chair of DFR-International Committee and IAW board member, M. Böker, took part in the national Prep.-and Follow up meeting and for IAW in the UN CSW 56. She served as speaker and moderator of the American/European Caucus, wrote the Caucus Statement on the **future of UN WOMEN** and established for better and **sustainable networking the A/E Caucus** mailing list together with Daniela Jauk (Austria, recently USA: and a new IAW IM) which is discussing next CSW 57 and 5WCW. This activities included Lobbying for the document, speeches in side events of the Swedish Women's Lobby and of the ICW on Gender Budgeting. As for the Human Rights Commission of IAW she supported the participation of a representative of Rural Women's Movement (RWM- South Africa) to join the CSW56, to speak in a main Forum of Rural Women and the AWID meeting in Istanbul. She was invited several times to **report back about CSW56** and consequences always **trying to get new members and motivate for participation**.

#### 1.9. Fight to end Female genital mutilation (FGM)

The DFR is active member of the network **INTEGRA** represented by Gudrun Haupter Co-Chair of the DFR-International Committee. Currently DFR in INTEGRA is involved in preparing an expert meeting on 27. November, in Berlin. The network is nationally lobbying for better legal and other measures in various dialogues with the governmental ministries and entities. It demands effective legal and tsm measures (CEDAW 4.1) for the **elimination of FGM** in a) Germany and b) internationally: Practically the DFR is active in Burkina Faso by the DFR's cooperation with its partner project.

Since 2011 **DFR's updated exhibition is on tour** presented by local groups. Title: ***Female Genital Mutilation – What does this have to do with us?*** It gives a broad picture of this persistent violation

of the right to health and other human rights that are denied to girls in the name of tradition – last not least that of controlling women's sexuality. It flags positive examples of shrinking social acceptability and of empowerment of women in African countries. Our own project in Burkina Faso



is a good example. AFD, the African project partner, follows recognised best practices and uses both old and modern tools for their work with village populations. A strong focus is on local women's clubs. The IEC subjects include facts on puberty, family planning and women's rights. The exhibition also deals with **the legal and de facto situation re FGM within Germany**. Like in other Northern countries immigrant communities that are difficult to reach carry the tradition on. Some of the boards can be viewed at

<http://www.deutscher-frauenring.de/aktivitaeten/ausstellungen/weibliche-genitalverstuemmung/tafeln>

#### 1.11. DFRs International Project Partners in Burkina Faso and Togo

a) IAW's Charitable trust, DFR and Entr'aide Féminine Burkinabè, EFB, (our project partner in Burkina Faso since 1980) joined hands to finance the **repair of long time sanitary problems in the Students' Home in Ouagadougou** owned by EFB. Good hygienic conditions were re-established for the c. 100 female students who share the 25 rooms of the *FOYER BRIGITTE PROSS*. They are Burkinabè, some come from neighbouring African countries. In April 2012 our two interns brought back the results of their **inquiry answered by 43 students**.

Questions concerned subjects studied, career expectations, payment of their rent, advantages and disadvantages of living at the Foyer, the situation of women in Burkina Faso, their everyday problems and changes the students requested from politicians.

#### 1.12. Visiting the partner projects of DFR in West Africa

The DFR organized a **visit of our partner project in Burkina Faso** in the framework of an internship (Feb./March 2012). The student, Hanna Theis, and Jennifer Pross worked for two NGOs: "Entraide Féminine Burkinabé" in Ouagadougou, and: "Association Féminine Songmanégré pour le Développement" bei Kongoussi. The report is accessible in German at: <http://www.deutscher-frauenring.de/aktuelles/pdf/praktikumsbericht-theiss-pross-fotos>. The DFR continues by tremendous work of Gudrun Haupter the support for the future development of the projects in Burkina Faso and Togo through an information campaign and fundraising.

#### 1.13. Promotion and implementation of women's human rights on health - IAW Inquiry of the Status of the Father's Responsibilities for the Welfare of all his children

The DFR is among the IAW members who answered the **IAW Inquiry of the Status of the Father's Responsibility for the Welfare of all his Children**. Reference to the questionnaire that went to all IAW member organisations and many individual members is on

<http://www.womenalliance.org/issues.html> Keywords are: Economic status of marital and non marital children; Young unwed mothers; Free legal aid; Paternity complaints; Effective mechanisms to make the father pay if paternity has been proved. (See also the report of the IAW Commission on Health)

#### 1.14. UN WSC-Res. 1325

The DFR is **active represented in the coalition of German NGOs in support of the UN WSC Res. 1325** which to its implementation demands a **national action plan** for the implementation

1.15. The fight to end impunity & establish women's human rights of the enslaved and in forced prostitution exploited women during Asia-Pacific War in the Asia-Pacific-Region

To build a **new NGO coalition** for the support of the fight of the activist and victims the DFR joint the ***COURAGE KIM HAK-soon coalition for Reconciliation in the Asia-Pacific Region*** represented by the Chair of DFR-IC. The coalition's resolution can be signed and it is looking for a broad variety of NGO and individuals as members in support of the still unsolved cause. At the day of the Berlin picket in occasion of the *Project 1035* (08.08. 2012) the coalition's webpage went online: <http://www.buendnis-kimhaksoon.de/> [in German]

#### 1.16. Many local ambitious projects and activities- Best practice current project in Celle

Although within DFR local groups there exists a variety of ambitious projects and activities we want to highlight one best practice example with a two folded objective and impact for the IAW report. The local group in Celle started an **exchange project with Kurdish migrant women in Celle and DFR women of Celle together with women from Batman (Turkey)** from where most of the Kurdish migrant women's families in Celle derive. In Celle and in Batman women had taken **photographs of the daily lives of women**. A matched **photo exhibition** will accompanied by a group of women each from Celle and Batman be displayed in Celle and in Batman in a framework of workshops and dialogues. The objective is to make women in Celle of two cultural communities more familiar with each other (integration) and reaches out for better international understanding especially of the impact of **female migration**.

### 2. Publishing and media work of the DFR

#### 2.1. „DFR-Kurz gesagt „ (\"DFR in brief\")

Since July 2012 every two weeks this electronic info newsletter is send out by the DFR.

#### 2.2. Social Media Activities: DFR Young Women at *Facebook* - the DFR at *Twitter*

The DFR is on Twitter as @DFR49. One can access the „Bertha Middelhaue Club\" for young women in the DFR under <http://www.facebook.com/DeutscherFrauenring> at facebook. The young women in the DFR take care on the steady communication and development of this online presence. DFR members and other German individual members of IAW have been motivated to use IAWs social internal network NING.

#### 2.3. The DFR International Committee updates regularly the DFR-Webpage

For to speed up and keep the section 'International activities more updated the chair of the DFR-IC collects information and updates the section in close cooperation with the DFR board of presidents. Now, you can find short introductions into IAW's and ICW's work, links to IAW and ICW as well as hints or links to selected IAW or ICW documents and events <http://www.deutscher-frauenring.de/aktivitaeten/internationale-arbeit> [in German only].

#### 2.4. Four information sheets about the DFR's focus theme: **Green Economy**

These papers shall support the discussion of the DFR's focus theme. Fundamental socioeconomically changes throughout the society are urgently needed especially in the light of the finance and economical crisis. During the process of Rio+20 and its follow up many global initiatives of women raised their voices defining progressively urgent economical, social and ecological objectives in the framework of the Rio-process and its implementation. The DFR will join the discussions on the strengths and weaknesses of the concept of the Green Economy and bring forward alternative concepts which are gender responsive and integrate women's objectives and demands.[papers: in German; an English presentation was tabled at EWL GA]





## ***FRAUENNETZWERK FÜR FRIEDEN/ WOMEN'S NETWORK FOR PEACE***

***Heide Schütz, president***

The "Women's Network for Peace"/ **Frauennetzwerk für Frieden e.V., Germany** has been working in different fields during the previous period, cooperation and networking being important principles of its work.

The national and international priority of the organisation is the **ongoing advocacy for the implementation of UN RES 1325** by spreading knowledge among politicians, peace NGOs, civil society and the media, especially putting pressure on the German government to work out a National Action Plan (NAP) together with civil society as nearly thirty countries have done so already. An Alliance of 15 mainly women's organisations has been founded in Germany to see a German NAP come true.

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) has launched two international workshops in Berlin this year on the topic of "Promoting Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations". The results were excellent based on the contributions of the expertise of the international participants. Heide Schuetz, the president of The Women's Network for Peace, Germany was invited to take part.

**On September 21st 2011 a peace boat on the Rhine** was organised highlighting the visit of the famous peace museum "**Remagen Bridge**". Since 2002 September 21st is the **International Day of Peace**. It was proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Since then this day has been celebrated by many peace activities of the civil society worldwide. However, the demand that all weapons around the globe should be silent at least this one day has not been fulfilled yet.

In 2012 the "Women's Network for Peace" has become a **member of the German network of the campaign "Outcry - Stop the Arms Trade"** which concentrates on the horrendous German arms trade (third on the ranking list worldwide). Related activities will be our focus on UN Peace Day this year.

The importance of the gender lense in peace issues and processes of peace building and reconstruction as well as women's needs in times of armed conflict and gender based violence has not been taken into account well enough even among peace organisations. Therefore the founding of a **working group on "Gender and Peace"** by a German umbrella organisation is a very good step forward towards more **gender sensitivity**. Heide Schuetz was among the initiators. She is also a member of the VENRO Working Group on Gender. VENRO is a big German NGO umbrella organisation in the field of development.

The setting up of a **modern sculpture on the Bertha von Suttner Square** in Bonn to honour **Bertha von Suttner**, the **first woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1905** has continuously been a focus of Women's Network for Peace. We have been working hard to convince the local politicians that this sculpture would be very special for Bonn and to motivate the population to help financing the project. This great peace woman is hardly known in our times - in Bonn and probably elsewhere. The Finnish artist Sirpa Masalin has worked out a wonderful design.

In **peace education** we started **regional** meetings of those who are engaged in **conflict peer mediation in schools**. This peace tool is widely spread in Germany but is not always given the appreciation that it deserves. We invited teachers and students to exchange their experiences, their success stories as well as their challenges. Further training on specific sectors such as intercultural mediation or body language was offered. In 2013 the meeting will take place for the third time since there is a strong interest. We are convinced that peer mediation by boys and girls for their peers is an experience that leads to an expertise in peaceful conflict solving which young people will be able to use throughout their lives.

## ***Fredrika Bremer Association 2011-2012***



**Hertha** magazine has been published once a year in 2009, 2011 and 2012 (see picture) with Anne Jalakas as managing editor and Helena Lunding Hultqvist respondents for cover and layout. Hertha has been launched at a release breakfast on International Women's Day March 8. The magazine, which is printed in 2500 copies, has received much attention. We have professional writers who Barbro Hedvall, Susanna Strömquist, Monica Gunne, Ingemar Young, Ebba Witt-Brattström, Karin Thorsell, Kajsa Eki Ekman, Ulrika Kärnborg, Asa Mattssonför to name a few. The material is of such quality that the journal can be used throughout the year. A reviewer named Hertha to feminism union newspaper.

An important part of our activities is the annual **seminar at Apelryd** in Bastad in southern Sweden. In August 2012 it was organized for the fourth consecutive year, with about 170 participants and the entire two-day seminar will be shown on Swedish television in early September. This year's theme was "Power and Equality." The photograph shows Maria Wetterstrand, Gudrun

Schyman, Tove Lifvendahl and Karin Ahrlund in a panel discussion from 2012. The seminar has now found its form, where we strive to achieve an overall experience of the amazing environment that Apelryd offer while presenting the latest in the field of gender equality. The contributors are prominent



scholars, opinion leaders and politicians - young and old - men and women. Participants are gender-conscious women and men of all ages and from all over the country. The teachers at the School of Apelryd participate in a day, which means that gender issues and Fredrika Bremer operations become more relevant for them. Some items on the agenda of this year's seminar was "The power of the body," "The legislative power and equality" and "Feminist in the world and in Europe."



In 2011 we had **two evening seminars at the Historical Museum** in Stockholm. In February it was entitled "Dads, boys and gender equality." Now arose male role from their different perspectives and participants examined the man's role's strengths and weaknesses. Actor Kalle Westerdahl began with a monologue about his father-son relationship. Torbjorn Messing, gender equality officer at Mälardalen University and Christopher Järkeborn, MP, were among those who participated in the panel. The seminar in October called "Equality is worthwhile - even financially." We examined the obstacles and opportunities there are in Sweden - and the world - for men and women to a greater extent than today to share responsibility for the economy, their own, businesses and the nation. Investment, employment, pensions and jobs, to name a few. Participants included Carina Lundberg Markow, head of responsible ownership and corporate governance at Folksam, Sophie Nachemson-Ekwall researching on corporate governance and Annika Creutzer, private financial expert.

Our "**power breakfasts**" have become successful and well attended. We want to show that women



leaders have different profiles and different backgrounds. By getting the opportunity to meet and discuss with a female leader in her environment becomes the insights and experience of leadership understandable and attainable. The road to the "fantastic job" turns out not usually be straightforward. Professional experience mixed with the personal. With great clarity shows that Swedish women are the leaders of society, from the captain and the mayor to fashion icons and professional board. The breakfast is held on the leader company or, if the speakers' work is too far from the center,

the pastry Wheat cat. Participants oscillate between 20-40 people. At a coffee and sandwich exchanged opinions, provided tips and linked contacts, also created informal mentoring relationships. Some of those who stayed breakfast seminars in 2012 are Filippa Jennersjö, IT Manager at ICA (see picture), Eva Eriksson, County Governor of Värmland and conductor Kerstin Nerbe.

We also enjoyed the **Literary Salons** 2-4 times a year where we meet and discuss authors and their works - the salons has been a success with up to 90 participants. Some of lecturers are Marianne Enge, who spoke about Elin Wagner, Erik Helmersson about his book "The unnecessary man" and Asa Mattson about her book "The days with Kerstin" about Kerstin Thorvall.

We cooperate with **UN Women**, this year in a project where we map out how local governments relate to UN Women's Convention and the Swedish international commitment to achieve gender regionally and locally. The survey is partly based on a survey in the spring of 2012 reached 1,000 officials and politicians in all municipalities and counties. It is clear that we need more knowledge about what the legally binding Convention really means for Sweden - both within local government as the government and parliament. The presentation of the results was initiated in Almedalen last summer and is gathered in the report Sweden + Women's Convention = true? In autumn 2012, we are implementing a nationwide dialogue on UN Women's Convention importance for municipalities and counties through six seminars in different municipalities.



We cooperate with the **Swedish Women's Lobby**, this year with 15:51-movement (see picture). Women earn on average 14.3 per cent less than men. Converted in time for a day 08:00 to 17:00, it means that women are basically working for free in one hour and nine minutes - every day - and should go home 15:51. The movement involved a large number of organizations, women's organizations and trade unions in the fight against the gender pay gap. On March 8, the International Women's Day, held a seminar on Culture in Stockholm with 18 participants in the panel as well as a campaign on the internet.

Fredrika Bremer GOOD Prize 2011 was awarded to the County Police Carin Götblad the ground: Carin Götblad have as head of the Police Authority in Stockholm since 2003 promoted diversity among its employees, promoted gender equality, safety issues and ethics. Actively she countered young men recruitment to criminal networks by highlighting gender perspective. In addition, she has committed to the fight for women's right to a life without violence.

The Fredrika of the year 2011 was chosen Gunnel Stenqvist. As chairman of Årsta Society for Fredrika Bremer studies have Gunnel involved worked to make Fredrika Bremer deed and writings known to a wider circle.

We have **ten local sections** in Sweden, from Örnsköldsvik in the north to Landskrona in the south. Each section have programs with activities 6-8 times per year with various lecturers. The topics range from how to combat criminal groups to what the law says about women's rights in Iran.

**Association annual meeting** in 2012 was held in May in Stockholm, where elected a Board of Directors consisting of eight women and three men. Birgitta Wistrand elected on as chairman. "Talk about it - pension" is one of this autumn's project where we want to raise awareness of pension for young women and men. Plans option of writing a piece on the subject and to open a website with information, checklists, etc.

*Wendela Zetterberg/Fredrika Bremer Association/August 2012*

## **GREEK LEAGUE FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

***Lili Kourakou, President***

### **Activities Report 2011-2012**

*1 .Legislation for the elimination of discrimination against women in all sectors of political, social and economic life (IAW Action Programme – Democracy and Art. 2,3 & 7 of CESAW)*

#### **i. Political Life**

##### **a)Municipal and district elections**

In November 2010 municipal and district elections were held, under a new electoral law (KALIKRATIS). This law introduced a new way of calculating the number of women candidates in the electoral lists, i.e. instead of providing at least 1/3 women on the total number of candidates in the list, as dictates the law that introduced the quotas, Kalicratis law dictates that women candidates should be 1/3 on the number of members of the municipal or district council. This provision reduces the number of women candidates by approx. 15%. The GLWR together with the Marangopoulos Foundation for Human Rights and 20 other Women organizations immediately protested in writing to the competent Ministry of Interior and to the Leaders of Political Parties, asking for their urgent intervention in order to protect the true meaning of the positive measures (quotas) instituted by the Constitution and CEDAW, and correct the calculation of the number of women candidates on the total number of candidates in each electoral list. Our protest was at no avail. All 13 District Leaders elected were male. Among the 325 elected Mayors, there were only 8 women. We support a woman candidate from an up-county Municipality who appealed at the Supreme Administrative Court for the wrong implementation of the quotas. We intend to continue fighting for this issue.

##### **b) National Elections**

The present economic crisis brought forward the national elections. Two consecutive early elections were held, the first on May 6 and the second on June 17, 2012, the focal point being, as it is natural, the debt crisis, the austerity measures imposed on the country and the repercussions.

Short before the May elections we addressed letters to political party leaders reminding them of their obligation to implement quotas in their electoral lists.

In the June 17<sup>th</sup> elections women gained 63 seats out of a total of 300, a percentage of 21% (slightly better than the 18,7% of the May elections and 17,3% of those of 2009). The new Government has a total of 39 members, with only two women, a mere 5%!

#### **ii. Social Life**

-As early as June 20, 2011, recognizing how serious the crisis can be for the Greek society, especially for women, we invited 12 other feminist-women organizations to a meeting in our Offices, to exchange views and decide on how we can best react in view of the far-reaching repercussions on families and especially on women. The Agenda included discussion on unemployment, salary reductions, unequal pay for women, drastic restrictions on social relief programmes (nurseries, care services for the old etc.). We adopted a Resolution titled “Women claim to be part of the **solution**”, which was sent to the Government, Political Parties, the media etc, in which we recorded our views on the above problems and ask all parties responsible to act accordingly.

-The Declaration for “Reinforcing social rights in order to exit the economic crisis”, which was prepared in 2010 by the GLWR and AFEM (Association of Women of Southern Europe) and submitted to MEPs etc., was brought up to date in 2011 by the Marangopoulos Foundation for Human Rights and the GLWR, was signed by many women’s organizations of Greece and other

European countries as well as from Labour Organisations, and was forwarded to European Functionaries for support.

**-Law Preparing Committees**

The General Secretariat for Gender Equality constituted Law Making Committees to revise certain articles of (a) the family law and (b) of the Law on violence against women. GLWR President Soula Panaretou was a member of the committee on the revision of the family law. The proposals of these Committees were not brought to the Parliament for voting. Their legal adoption remains pending.

**-KE.TE.ME\_** is the “Centre for the documentation and study of women’s problems” of the GLWR. It was established in 1982, and ever since collects, classifies and elaborates (a) clippings with articles and news from newspapers and magazines (b) research papers, books, book reviews, laws, legal precedents etc., pertaining on women. KE.TE.ME. is every day at the disposal of students, researchers and any interested party at our Offices. League members work for KE.TE.ME. on a voluntary basis

**-Board members** are often invited to address different audiences at events organized by other NGOs, municipalities, cultural centers, the Parliament etc. We take advantage of every opportunity to voice feminist views.

**-Acknowledging woman’s social achievement:** The 8<sup>th</sup> of March (International Woman’s Day) each year, is dedicated to women who voluntarily and disinterestedly have given themselves to social work, extending to many sectors of social life (relief to orphan, neglected or in special need children, drugs fighting, social welfare, road safety, education and many others). The prize, of moral value only, is given in the name of the GLWR’s Honorary President Alice Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos, and serves as a means for making known and rewarding the excellent work of such women, and as an example to other women.

**-In 2010 the GLWR completed 90 years in existence (1920-2010).** A significant anniversary, since the League during these 90 years was constantly in the forefront of struggle for gender equality. Major achievements like political rights for women, reform of the Family Law, access of women to all professions, constitutional guarantee of substantive equality, are only a few of the landmarks of this course. In our wish to celebrate this anniversary, bring to memory the great protagonists of this course, from Avra Theodoropoulou, founder of the League, onwards to all great ladies who succeeded her in leading the League, and at the same time pay tribute to our Honorary President Alice Yotopoulos Marangopoulos, who stood at the helm of the League for 40 years, we organized a celebration in Athens on the 17<sup>th</sup> of December 2010. During the event Alice was presented with an honorary publication titled “The Greek League or Women’s Rights: its 90 years and Alice Yotopoulos Marangopoulos”, containing the positions of the League on all major problems with which women are faced, as Alice herself has presented them orally or in writing in various occasions. This book, which could serve as a code for all major equality issues and a useful guide for future generations of feminists, also presents the chronicle of the awards for “major social achievements of women” given each years on the International Woman’s Day (8<sup>th</sup> March) in Alice’s name. The celebration in fact proved to be a feast for equality, democracy, justice, human rights. Distinguished speakers emphasized the importance of these values, especially in the context of the difficult times we are going through, stressing on the contribution of the League, and in particular of Alice, to the strengthening of the principles of gender equality, their prevalence and their vindication

### **iii. Economic Life**

**-For the third consecutive year** Greece is in the middle of an economic crisis that bears heavily on all citizens, and all aspects of life. Extensive and increasing unemployment, income reductions and

other developments that follow depression have made things difficult for individuals and organizations alike

In times of crisis, like the present, all our concerns, priorities for action and programmes are determined by the economic conditions. In all public discussions we organize, in every occasion, we refer to the conditions prevailing, which influence all aspects of gender equality, and we try to defend women's interests. Special and detailed presentations of our concerns were made at the New Year Gathering and at the International Woman's Day, with special reference to national problems (national sovereignty loss by Loan Agreements and Memoranda, nation's wealth not put to use, disposal of public property, violation of the Constitution), to social rights (expanding poverty, social infrastructure being destroyed, labour law violated, collective agreement not respected, fundamental social rights violated). On the feminist front: unemployment is galloping, since women and the younger generation are hit harder, with the unemployment rate reaching 26,5% for the former, 54,1 for the latter, and an all inclusive average of 23,1%.

-A 350 pages book was issued in 1911 titled "Discriminations against women in the labour market and the EU policy on combating them". The book was issued with financial support from the European Council and the Greek Ministry for Labour. A similar book was issued in 2010 in French. Both books are based on presentations made in the course of a Programme which the GLWR executed in 2007-2008. Responsible for the Programme, which placed particular emphasis on sexual harassment, as well as for the book in Greek, was the member of the IAW Board Mrs. Joanna Manganara.

#### **iv. Elimination of prejudices and stereotypes (article 5 of CEDAW).**

-The General Secretariat for Gender Equality, executing a programme for District Development financed by the European Council, has invited feminist/women's organizations to submit proposals for carrying out a programme promoting gender equality. The GLWR has chosen to work on "Fighting gender stereotypes as these appear on mass media", a programme to be materialized in two years. Four members of the Board specializing on sociology, finance etc. have worked intensively for months to prepare a well documented plan of action extending not only in Athens but also in other major cities of the country. Our programme provides for seminars to target groups (journalists, media owners and managers, students, interested public), as well as for the production of a printed guide on fighting gender stereotypes and other printed material useful for the purpose. Our proposed plan has already passed successfully the first screening for typical qualifications, and we are expecting (and hoping) it will obtain final approval for its substance. If approved, we expect this programme to have a serious effect on fighting gender stereotypes.

-On the question whether a Beijing +20 Conference (so called 5<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women) was necessary to be convened in 2015, we took a negative stand. For this purpose the GLWR has adopted and co-signed a declaration prepared by the "Marangopoulos Foundation for Human Rights" titled "Human Rights and particularly Women's Rights in serious danger in the United Nations". This stand was taken on the grounds that there is urgent need to oppose the new trend arising in UN and other international organizations, aiming at abolishing the prevailing principle of supremacy of human rights rules over conflicting customs and practices, and the need to protect the principles and laws of human rights.

-“The Struggle of Woman”, is our journal published twice a year, totally dedicated to promoting gender equality, safeguarding and advancing women's rights, fighting gender stereotypes and prejudices and disseminating news and information on women, their successes and progress in Greece and all over the world. This journal is published since 1923, is the only solely feminist publication in the country, and endeavors to present the views, news and activities not only of the GLWR, and other Greek women's organizations, but also those of IAW, EWL, AFEM, EU,



Council of Europe and the UN. In every issue we carry columns on Legal, International and European matters, news from everywhere in the world concerning women, suggested feminist reading, and cinema.

-Of similar contents is our web site [www.leaguewomenrights.gr](http://www.leaguewomenrights.gr), in constant operation since 2008.

-Each year, during a special award giving ceremony, we present awards to journalists of printed and electronic media, who consistently during the previous year supported and promoted gender equality.

-National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR): Two Board members of the GLWR sit on this Commission, one as a regular members and one as a substitute. The NCHR is the official consultative organ of the Greek Government on what concerns human rights, including women's rights. Our representative is often called to prepare memoranda and drafts for laws concerning women's rights, which in all cases have received unanimous approval

#### **v. Elimination of violence (IAW Action Programme and Art. 6 of CEDAW)**

-Since 1980, a "Free Legal Counseling and Social Support Service" is made available not only to GLWR members, but to any woman in need for such support. This important function is operated by two Board members of the League, specialists on the matter, on a weekly basis, and addresses all matters of domestic violence, divorce, child abuse, child custody, alimony and other problems involving family conflict.

-The Special Permanent Committee of the Greek Parliament for Equality, Youth and Human Rights held an extra session on November 2011 to discuss "The elimination of discrimination against women and the end of gender violence". Two Board members of the GLWR took part and intervened at this discussion.

- Two Board members presented the GLWR views at a discussion the Greek Parliament held in plenary on the subject of violence against women.

-A Board member of the League attended a EWL Conference held in Brussels on the subject of prostitution and took part at the discussion.

-Following the unacceptable treatment by the Police of women prostitutes, carriers of AIDS, working in the streets of Athens, who were arrested, detained and had their names and photos appear on television and the press, the GLWR issued a strong statement of protest in a press release. In it we stated that, in spite of the fact that the League is by principle opposing to prostitution, it nevertheless believes that these women are human beings and should not be pilloried and deprived of their basic human rights.

#### **vi. Resolutions, Press Releases, Announcements, Letters of Protest**

On any instance that women's rights need to be defended (social or economic meters to the detriment of women, violence, poverty, political rights etc.) the League expresses its stand, alone or together with other NGOs, issuing resolutions, Press Releases, Announcements or addressing letters to competent government officials.

#### **vii. Local developments**

-The depression and its aftermaths have hit hard not only the general economy and the individuals, but also the economic standing of organizations. The GLWR is no exception to the rule. We are deprived of our main source of income that was the rent of two apartments (donations of Alice Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos ), now evacuated. The loss of income of our members leaves little if at

all possibility for contributions. The Board members often have to support financially the functioning of the League as well as our activities out of their shrinking personal income. This "Activities Report" should be read in the light of our financial possibilities under such developments. This, however, does not mean we give up the fight for women's rights. Now that with the crisis women's achievements are in jeopardy, we are determined to continue our struggle even stronger.

-On December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2011 President Soula Panaretou announced her wish to resign from her post as League hope and believe her absence from the feministic scene will not be for long. The Board unanimously elected as new President of the GLWR Lili Kourakou, until then Vice President.

## ***THE JOSEPHINE BUTLER SOCIETY***

***Valerie Gore, President***

The Josephine Butler Society has continued throughout 2011/12 to try to keep abreast of current thinking around the issues and problems of prostitution.

At our Annual Lecture 2011, our speaker was Dr. Timothy Brain, the retired Chief Constable of Gloucestershire, UK. In it, he recalled recent history during the time when he was chairman of The Police Vice Conferences, and spokesman for Vice and Prostitution for the Association of Chief Police Officers [ACPO].

He recalled the important changes which had occurred during his 'watch'. There was the enormous change of attitude towards children found in prostitution, which led to the Home Office recommending that children should be treated as abused instead of being cautioned twice for soliciting, like adults, and then given the label 'common prostitute'. This was a lifetime label and of course, had employment implications which helped to keep such children in prostitution for life.

Several months prior to this, ACPO had recommended that children should not be criminalised with this label. To prevent this criminalisation, Dr. Brain had 'simply' applied police procedures for abused children, to children found in prostitution. This removal of arrest and cautioning and labelling was a very big step forward, one which we at JBS greatly rejoiced over. The next big step was the removal of the label 'common prostitute' in the Policing and Crime Act 2009, for which JBS had been campaigning for many years.

This Lecture helped to set the scene for our Seminar in March 2012. Together with the Terence Higgins Trust and SW5 Projects, we held this meeting at their premises in London. Our keynote speaker was the Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioner, Simon Byrne who succeeded Dr. Brain as ACPO spokesman for prostitution. He brought to the Seminar his concerns, as did Rosie Campbell and Georgina Perry from the UK Network of Sex Work Projects. The aim of this Seminar was to discuss the best way forward. Rosie and Georgina have been instrumental in starting the Ugly Mugs Scheme, which was launched in July this year, which JBS supported. Now, 6 weeks later, research shows that it is being used and promises to be of much help in reducing violent crime against prostitutes.

JBS continues to write to Members of Parliament, newspapers, and individuals about matters pertaining to prostitution. Our annual magazine has just been published and we will continue to monitor, as much as we can, issues and ideas concerning prostitution, especially the idea which is circulating at present, that to make prostitution illegal would help stop the trafficking for sexual purposes. Surely, this would devolve upon the person 'freely' prostituting and make them criminals again? All prostitution would become a criminal offence and all police work in this area would have to be covert because even more of the activity would go underground. There seems little good reason for this proposed change in the law, one which would mostly affect freely prostituting

women. We need to increase the covert operations of the police to discover those in sexual slavery. Every police force should have a specialist unit, as does the Metropolitan Police in London, for this difficult task.

## ***LITHUANIAN WOMEN'S SOCIETY***

***Nijolė Steponkutė, president***



For 20 years the Lithuanian Women's Society ([www.lmd.lt](http://www.lmd.lt)) has been working on various projects the goal of which is to improve the quality of women's lives, to ensure economic freedom for women and help them become leaders.

We have completed several projects for training women. Some big projects included trainings, seminars and consulting. Activities were organized in different regions of our country. These projects helped us in acquiring useful experience such as team work, time planning, organizational skills, etc. The project participants could get free legal advice, psychological and social support. It is extremely important for rural women who often do not have access to such counselling.

Since unemployment among women is one of the major problems in Lithuania so over the past three years we completed some projects which were funded from the European Social Funds. The target group of these projects were unemployed women. In 2007-2008 we completed the project "Developing Women's Knowledge and Skills in Order to Increase Their Participation and Influence in the Labour Market". In 2009 -2011 m. we completed the project „Integration of Women into the Labor Market by Forming the Skills of Success“. Trainings of unemployed women were carried out in Alytus, Joniškis, Marijampolė, Utena, Šalčininkai, Švenčionys, Tauragė, Visaginas. The participants got legal, psychological and employment counselling. More than 300 women participated in the project. They got the necessary knowledge, more than half of them found jobs or changed the present job for a better one or started their own business.

Now we are working at 3 new projects:

1. Together with the Polish Audio-Psycho-Phonological Centre in Warsaw we are starting education for the parents of attention deficit disorder having children for integrating these children into the society. We shall try to develop the impaired children's ability to concentrate, to read, speak and write, to improve their motoric skills. This will enhance their self-confidence, improve their communication skills, have a positive impact on psychological well-being of their families. We are paying a lot of attention to this problem since it is usually women who have all the responsibility for their children and if children have health problems the mother's life becomes very complicated.

We applied to the Vilnius municipality with a project „Public Health through Raising the competence of Specialists, Teachers and Parents and Providing Assistance to Children with Behavioral and Emotional Disorders and Children with Special Needs“. We got financing for this project. Its goal is to develop public expertise in working with the pre-school and school-age children with special needs, encourage recognition of behavioral and emotional problems and their elimination. Both specialists and parents will participate in this project. They will study the following problems:

- Preventing children's activity and attention disorders (September, 2012)
- Recognising children's autism, social integration of autistic children and assistance to the families (October, 2012)
- Children's depressions and composure disorders (October, 2012)

- Fear of school and how to overcome it (November, 2012)
  - Agressiveness in children and how to deal with it (November, 2012)
  - Assistance to children who have experienced sexual abuse (December, 2012)
2. We are waiting for the financing of our project „Integration of Young People into the Insurance Labour Market through Voluntary Programs and Education of the Society“ . We shall tackle two problems in this projects – ranks of people providing additional insurance services as the society needs such specialists. We shall also help in solving the problem of unemployment among the young people.  
An informal education system will be created for upgrading skills in the field of insurance. During voluntary practice the young people will provide counselling services on the questions of financial literacy. At the same time they will acquire experience which will be appreciated by their future employers. Trainings will be organized all over Lithuania. At the same time our Women’s Society will be advertised.
  3. In June 2012 we met a representative of the KUN (Centre for Gender Equality) operated by the Northern Feminist University. We discussed our future co-operation and a future project the goal of which is to prepare training programs for women leaders so as they could recognise what main traits of character they have to develop. We are planning to form groups of women. Before that their personality, competence and motivation will be evaluated. We shall discuss the goals of every woman taking into consideration her family duties and career aspirations. Then we shall prepare courses and seminars for them. They will study via Internet but individual counselling and meetings with mentors will be arranged. At the end of the project we shall sum up the results and prepare methodology on how women can become leaders and improve the quality of their lives without losing the connection with their families. We plan to organise distance learning courses for women leaders which is new in Lithuania. We expect to get methodological support from the Norwegian organization.

.We are in good touch with the neighbouring countries. In June we participated in the International conference „The Influence of an Active Woman and Her Importance to the Cultural Tourism in the Baltic Region“. We shall co-operate with the women’s organization from the Kaliningrad region (Russia). In October we shall participate in a conference which is organized by the Union of Russian Women and we shall make a report about our work with rural women. We shall also discuss the possibilities of a common project. We also have good relations with the women’s organizations in Belarus where we spread ideas of democracy, equal rights and equal opportunities.

Now times are hard for women’s organizations in Lithuania. Neither the Government nor other state institutions take into account such organizations. Still the Lithuanian Women’s Society is looking for ways to survive and accomplish our mission. We take an active part in the public actions, events and discussions when they are about women’s equality.

***NED.VER.V VROUWENBELNGEN***  
***Leonie van Gils***



Twenty years ago, after the ratification of the CEDAW by the Netherlands, the Dutch Government submitted and Parliament adopted a specific policy programme comprising about twenty measures to reach equal participation of men and women in politics in 2010. These targets have not been reached by far.

### **Publication *Women in Election Results 2009 – 2011* and new elections 2012**

Between June 2009 and May 2011 general elections were held for the European Parliament (EP), municipal councils, provincial legislatures and the Second Chamber of Parliament. The percentages of elected women vary from 27% in municipal councils to 44% in EP, without showing much progress towards equal representation in recent years. Progress is hindered especially by the tendency of most political parties to place less women than men on their lists of candidates and place them lower as well.

Vrouwenbelangen published a report about this, called ‘Results of women in elections in 2009-2011’. In the report Vrouwenbelangen claims that the **over**representation of men cannot not be justified and suggests that the electoral law can be changed to realise equal participation by giving men and women each 50% of the seats and giving every citizen two ballot-papers, one with all male candidates to vote for a man and one with all female candidates to vote for a woman.

Vrouwenbelangen sent this report to political parties, parliamentarians and women’s organisations. We did not get any response yet on our invitation to comment to this proposal.

### **Choice for Balance? Vote for a Women!**

In April 2012 the government fell. At 12 September 2012 new parliamentary elections will be held. Vrouwenbelangen together with sister organizations will be active in the campaign *Vote for a Women*. We will also write an advise on our website on which positioned woman to vote for in order to get more women in parliament effectively. Furthermore we will again question political parties about specific statements regarding gender equality in a debate organized together with sister organizations.



### **Seminar on Political Participation of Women in light of CEDAW**

A special occasion was the inspiring seminar on political participation of women in the light of the CEDAW in November 2012 in the Meeting Room of the Senate organised by Vrouwenbelangen and two other organisations. The practice concerning articles 7 & 8 of CEDAW were discussed. We further discussed the experiences with quota in Belgium and the impact of the electoral system and regulations in the Netherlands.

### **ECHR on discrimination by Dutch Christian political party**

The case of NGO’s Clara Wichmann Institute, Vrouwenbelangen and other organisations against the State for subsidizing a political party (SGP) for discrimination of women came to an end.

Today the SGP still excludes women from standing for election for general representative bodies. In April 2010 the Dutch Supreme Court ruled that the exclusion of women by this party on religious grounds conflicts with article 7 CEDAW and articles 2 and 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the State has to take measures that actually lead to the SGP granting women the right to stand for election.

In October 2010 the SGP appealed to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). In its ruling on July 10th 2012 the ECHR confirms the decision of the Dutch Supreme Court. We are waiting for a response of the Dutch government to take “a measure that is at the same time effective and impinges as little as possible on the basic rights of the members of the SGP”. A change of the electoral system might be the beginning of a solution.



## ***NORWEGIAN ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS (NKF)***

***Torild Skard, president***

***Janicke Solheim,***

### **Highlights:**

- 1) Privileged but not equal**
- 2) Fighting for effective equality**
- 3) Violence against women**
- 4) Devaluation of maternity**
- 5) Visibility and recognition**

#### **1) Privileged but not equal**

Norway is one of the most privileged countries in the world with high average income, long life expectancy and extensive education. And so far, the country has not been hit by the recent economic crises like other European countries. Universal suffrage was adopted relatively early, in 1913, and Norway is among the forerunners with 40 percent women in Parliament and 50 percent in the Cabinet, though the prime minister is a man. The Government also has an explicit policy of promoting gender equality. Recently, the CEDAW was incorporated in the human rights law, thereby taking precedence over other legislation.

Nevertheless, the NKF finds itself not infrequently in a challenging situation, not only trying to make rhetoric become reality, but also trying to prevent backlash. Patriarchal traditions still make themselves felt. For example: Though more women obtain leading positions, only 1 out of 3 is a woman, and among top leaders the ratio is 1 out of 5.

One of NKF's main preoccupations in 2011 was the NGO Shadow Report to the UN dealing with Norway's follow-up to the CEDAW. The Shadow Report was a joint initiative by 29 Norwegian NGOs pointing out weaknesses in the Government's efforts to promote gender equality. The Shadow Report focused particularly on the gap between formal and substantial equality and the limits of gender mainstreaming as the overarching strategy, as it weakens the focus on women and restrains the use of affirmative action, allowing gender justice to be flawed in a number of areas.

#### **2) Fighting for effective equality**

NKF succeeded in its protests against the proposed overall bill against all forms of discrimination, which - if adopted - would have weakened the efforts to prevent unfair treatment of women. The proposal was shelved by the Government. But Parliament is planning to revise the Constitution in 2014 to include basic human rights. The proposals have no reference to CEDAW nor the discrimination of women. And the main clause: "*All are equal before the law. No human being must be exposed to non-objective or disproportionate differential treatment*" can be used to prevent affirmative action for women. So NKF is again fighting to prevent a backlash against the efforts to achieve substantial, not only formal, equality between women and men.

In the economy, there are marked inequalities between women and men. Men have more paid work, earn more and get larger pensions than women. The total workrelated income of women is on the average only around 60 percent of the income of men. And the average hides considerable differences. Many minority women, for example, experience difficulties even entering the labor market. They are given inadequate information and training, and experience discrimination and exclusion when they try to get a job.

Though equal pay for women and men was a central theme in the Government's policy, and there was broad mobilization supporting the policy, the extensive wage settlements in the public and

private sectors during recent years did not reduce the wage gap between women and men. Affirmative measures, such as an equality pot, were not implemented.

Women now dominate in higher education, and they generally achieve better grades than men in upper secondary school. But with the same education, women earn less than men. And in academia, women's share of professorships is below the EU average, only one in five. Affirmative action to try to increase the women's share has entailed indignant opposition. Also, the funding of women's research is being reduced, because women's perspectives are supposed to be integrated in all research, though it is not clear how this actually will happen.

### **3) Violence against women**

There is increasing concern about violence against women, among others rape. Some researchers and practitioners believe that both the occurrence and severity of sexual violence is on the increase in Norway. The women's movement has brought the problems to the attention of the authorities and supported Government action.

But NKF has expressed great concern about the adopted act on shelters. The shelters (crisis centers or safe houses) for women and children were created by the women's movement, with financial support from the state, and have benefitted numerous women exposed to violence. With the good intention of expanding the service, the act on shelters gives the municipalities the responsibility for an adapted service for both men and women. NKF is concerned, because the municipalities often lack money and do not give priority to the shelters. In addition, there is little understanding of this kind of work. Municipalities locate centers for men and women together, so women do not dare to come. Centers are centralized, so that women and children cannot continue their daily activities in kindergarten, in school and at work if they want refuge in the center. Shelters also lack both expertise and capacity to attend to women with mental health problems, disabilities or problems involving abuse. Finally, employees of the centers can now no longer freely address the public about violence against women, but must pass via the municipalities..

### **4) Devaluation of maternity**

In addition to economic discrimination in the workplace, women to a great extent also experience that they are passed over or excluded in connection with pregnancy and parental leave.

In spite of Norway's wealth and well established welfare state NKF has repeatedly protested against rationalization and financial cuts in the health services leading to deterioration of mother and child care. For many years, the women's movement has been struggling to prevent a centralization of hospitals and maternity wards that makes the traveling distance for mothers giving birth too long. Now newborn babies are sent home with their mothers much sooner than before, at the same time as the health services in the municipalities often lack capacity to support and follow up mother and child. The consequences are unnecessary problems, difficulties with breast-feeding, insecurity and even depression. The father can provide support, but not replace qualified health personnel.

Compared to many Western countries, Norway has a generous paid parental leave. But how should it be distributed? NKF is in favor of leave for the father in addition to the mother, but not at the expense of the mother. Now the mother has 3 weeks before birth. Then both parents each have 12 weeks after birth, and finally they can share the remaining 20 weeks as they wish. The aim of the Government is that the parents should share the leave equally, but NKF disagrees, as the needs of the child and the special situation of the mother are disregarded.

## 5) Visibility and recognition



*Former leader Siri Hangeland honors Tove Smaadahl for her pioneering work for women's shelters on behalf of NKF. Behind a portrait of Gina Krog, driving force for women's suffrage in Norway.*

In 2014, Norway will celebrate 200 years of our constitution. The celebrations are prepared by a large, prestigious, solidly male dominated Parliamentary committee. Women's organisations objected that the centenary of women's suffrage in 2013 was being overlooked. As a result, there will be a celebration of women's right to vote in 2013, albeit with far less resources than for the 2014 celebrations. NKF has called upon authors and researchers to write about pioneer women of the past, as very few biographies exist. NKF has organized seminars with pioneer women of the present, spanning from Norway's first woman Minister of Finance and the first female leader of the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions to the first woman film photographer and the first Moslem woman to receive a high status award from the "Freedom of Speech Foundation". More meetings and manifestations will be organized around the country in 2012 and 2013.

The present NKF leader, Torild Skard, was in 2012 recognized for her work for women and children by our Head of State, King Harald, as she was designated Commandor of the Order of St.



Olav, received by very few women. Shortly after, Torild launched her book on "Maktens kvinner" (Women in Power Worldwide), describing the 73 Women Heads of State and Government in 53 countries during the period from 1960 to 2010. The former Icelandic president Vigdis Finnbogadóttir and the former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland participated in a seminar to launch the book, which now is being translated into English

*22 May in Oslo: From the left former president in Iceland Vigdis Finnbogadóttir, former prime minister in Norway Gro Harlem Brundtland and the leader of NKF Torild Skard launching Skard's book "Women in Power Worldwide".*

## THE PACIFIC

### THE PACIFIC REGION

*Sheila Byard*

*Regional coordinator for The Pacific*

**Are things getting better for the women of the region?**

Asia Pacific Women's Watch

(<http://www.apww-slwn.org/>) remains a key mechanism for tracking information about situation of women in the region(s). There appears to be some progress reaching targets set for example through the Millennium Development Goals system. But in other settings, things seem to

be going backwards. Some examples: The MDG emphasis on the target of all children completing primary school has had the result of skewing schools funding away from secondary provision. How then will the next generation of tertiary students be adequately prepared? And what beneficial impact can we see as the result of decades of UN and agency involvement in a country like East Timor? Dr. Lia Kent's new book 'The Dynamics of Transitional Justice: International Models and local realities' demonstrates in relation to East Timorese disillusionment with the official justice processes of their government and the UN, there have been many negative impacts and many local factors at work that can impede post-conflict recovery and peaceful development. Elizabeth Cox veteran UNIFEM field officer, in Brisbane for the UNAA 2012 national conference, spoke positively of the benefits of local markets reform for example in Fiji that provide safe access for women bring their wares for sale, but stresses that the uncontrolled spread of guns and ammunition in PNG – with women caught up in the supply chain - as producing a situation where UN workers can no longer go because of the cost of providing armed guards.

**Busan Joint Action Plan for Gender Equality and Development.** UN Women and OECD GenderNet should be recognised for their work in developing this document. The outcome document, the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, will encourage the establishment of targets and indicators to promote accountability for the Busan commitments reflecting gender considerations. The Joint Action Plan should assist in intensifying and accelerating efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment; to improve development outcomes; and to help progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Certainly Australia as a partner is committed sharing knowledge and developing new approaches based on the work that Australia is delivering through its development assistance program with three key areas: improving sex disaggregated data; setting targets for gender equality work; and ensuring gender is considered as part of all aspects of development.

**The Violence against Women in Melanesia and Timor-Leste Report.** This report launched in Fiji was prepared by the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW), led by Mary Ellsberg, with involvement from many around the region and funding from the Australian Government. It highlights progress in East Timor and Melanesia since the 2008 AusAID Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE) report on Violence against Women in the region strengthening of NGOs and funding to combat violence against women; research on the prevalence of violence against women; major victories in improving the laws relating to domestic violence; and the establishment of a number of centres to support victims of violence. But problems remain including the need for further work with the police and judicial systems; support services for more women, especially in rural areas; and recognition that many citizens in East Timor and Melanesia still consider violence against women a normal occurrence. The Fiji Women's Crisis Centre has done outstanding work in engaging men and boys on violence against women since it began courses for Male Advocates in 2000, and this approach has spread across the region and their work with the Fiji Women's Rights Movement, and other groups is to be commended

### **Action program 2008-15 'Women Peace and Security'**

Since the time of the IAW Action Sheet August 2009, that brought us the IAW Peace Commission's news of the Open Letter for the debate on Res.1820 at the UN Security Council, IAW members and supporters have worked hard with partner organizations including WILPF on issues to do with attempts to reduce adverse impacts on women across the region of armed violence. In my previous report I referred to the release of the Australian draft National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. Following the public consultation, an interdepartmental working group developed the final plan including the development of a performance framework to measure actions against the plan, and an outline of the ways in which NGOs can partner in implementing the NAP.

Thanks to strong leadership by WILPF with cross-sector support, the Australian NAP was launched at the Civil Military Centre in Sydney on IWD 2012; Vice Chief of the Australian Defence Force, Air Marshal Mark Binskin, has commented in relation to ADF's commitment to the National Action Plan, that 'Australia's experiences in places such as Afghanistan, Solomon Islands, Bougainville and East Timor have shown us the power of women as advocates of change...' and that 'Women are vital stakeholders in their communities and their participation as leaders in the peace process is one that needs to be promoted' <http://acmc.gov.au/2012/09/centre-contributes-to-implementation-of-national-action-plan-for-women-peace-and-security/>

**What is the future role of IAW in the region?** IAW does have observer status with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, with its 58 members and 9 associates including Cook Islands, China Hong Kong, Macau, Guam, Nuie, New Caledonia and American Samoa. The 68<sup>th</sup> ESCAP session was held in Bangkok from 17 to 23 May 2012. The ESCAP 2012 Commission session comprised two parts: the senior officials segment, and the ministerial segment. A ministerial round table was held on the theme of the sixty-eighth session, namely "Growing Together: Economic Integration for an Inclusive and Sustainable Asia-Pacific Century", and a high-level panel was held on "Steering inclusive development amidst global turbulence and volatility".

However despite the interest in IAW from the time of first Pan Pacific international women's gathering in Honolulu in 1930, there has been a decline in IAW membership from the region and little prospect of growth given the high level of contestation for membership and affiliation between gender based and human rights oriented international agencies. Many now claim for themselves the right of being NGOs relegating to member based groups the title of mere CSOs – civil society organisations.

It is crucial for those interested in this question to analyse what has been happening recently with UN Women in the region and make a study of the UN Women Strategic Plan [http://www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/UNW-2011-9-StrategicPlan2011-2013\\_advance-unedited\\_20110517.pdf](http://www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/UNW-2011-9-StrategicPlan2011-2013_advance-unedited_20110517.pdf)

## ***LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERES OF VICTORIA***

### ***Dr Deborah Towns, President***

The past year has been a busy one for members of the League. Several members are involved research and writing for the funded ARC Linkage project *Women and Leadership in a Century of Australian Democracy*, and took part in the December 2012 *Women, Leadership and Democracy in Australia* conference held at the Museum of Australian Democracy in Canberra. Another involvement has been with the Australasian Study of Parliament Group (ASPG), a politically non-partisan body which aims to encourage and stimulate research, writing, teaching and discussion about parliamentary institutions, particularly those in Australasia and the South Pacific. The League has been actively involved in preparations for the visit to Melbourne of the IAW Board for its 2012 International Meeting, and Asia Pacific Regional conference. Members have also had discussions about the potential for the new social media to advance the causes about which we are concerned and how best to reduce the incidence of violence against women.

### **Towards equality of representation in local government**

While Australia has a woman Prime Minister, women were actually the biggest losers in the last Federal election. The number of women MPs dropped to 24 per cent, and Australia went from 33<sup>rd</sup> in the world to 43<sup>rd</sup> in the percentage of women Members of Parliament. In business 10 per cent of board directors are women, but only four of the top 200 companies have a women CEO. In Local Government where nearly 2/3rds of the work force are women the issue is that nationally just 30% of councillors, 20% of senior managers and 7% of CEOs are women. In Victoria the figures are not



so bad: according to ALWA (Victoria) 29 per cent of councillors are women, 18 of our 79 mayors are female and 14 of the Victorian CEOs are women, about 20%. Local Government is the first level of government in Australia set the target of 50:50 for election and appointments of men and women. <http://5050vision.com.au/> As a result of a partnership between the Australian Government, ALGWA and the Local Government Managers Association, 2010 was the year of Women in Local Government, bringing half a million dollars to the work for gender equity in Local Government. <http://women.viga.org.au/> The newly created Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government at UTS Sydney will collate data, and trial a number of initiatives including council accreditation, and awards for outstanding work for gender equity. This builds on work done in Victoria by the Women's Participation in Local Government Coalition with State funding to encourage Councils to endorse or re-endorse the Women's Charter. The Charter recognises the need for more women in decision making forums, that men and women have equal rights to be local government representatives, and that diversity and active citizenship is important. More than half the Victorian Councils have done this.

The Victorian Local Governance Association received a \$200,000 State grant for 2010/12 to increase the diversity and numbers of women candidates at the 2012 elections. The VLGA works in partnership with a large number of other groups, including the Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition, ALGWA, NCW, YWCA.

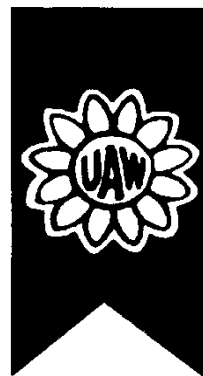
During 2011-12 the League with the help of Cr Coral Ross, Co-President and other members of the ALGWA Victoria, has held several events with the ALGWA. Looking at on the low number of women in local government, the Charter, the 50:50 vision, and the need to encourage the younger generation to take an interest in representative government, based on the premise that if you get the young thinking about public life early you can't expect to increase the numbers standing in later life.

LWVV's 2011 schools project **Future Voters Future Voices** looked at Local Government, young people's needs & women's participation. On November 16 2011 as part of the celebration the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women voting for the first time in elections for the Parliament of Victoria, brought student participants from country and city schools - Brauer SC, Buckley Park SC, Caroline Springs SC- Creekside Campus, Elwood SC, Preston Girls SC and Melton SC -to the Parliament of Victoria to present their findings. Students, Councillors, MPs, Guests and the Audience all engaged in lively discussion. Hon. Mary Wooldridge MP Minister for Women's Affairs opened the event. Melton SC students, Kaelli Voigt, Lesieli Chand & Joanna Wright launched the LWVV's latest publication, the second edition of *Early Women Candidates for the Parliament of Victoria*, written by Mary Allinson. Chairs for the day and panel members included Hon Rosemary Varty First woman. Parliamentary Secretary of Cabinet 1992-1999. and the Hon Judy Maddigan, First woman Speaker in the Legislative Assembly 2003-2005, Councillors Stefani Perri and Micaela Drieberg, Monash Council, with Karen Purser, Program Coordinator, Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government and Women in Local Government, UTS, Sydney.

## ***UNION OF AUSTRALIAN WOMEN (VICTORIA)*** ***Anne Sgro, President 2012***

A major context for activity in 2011 was the centenary of International Women's Day – it was a time of celebration, reflection and re-assessment. During 2012 the UAW has continued to join with other organisations to campaign and to lobby governments on a number of issues.

- The UAW supported the successful union and community campaign for pay equity for community workers, the majority of whom are women



- We have lobbied the Australian Government to request that the Future Fund divest itself of investments in both the armaments industry and in the manufacture of nuclear weapons, supporting only ethical investment
- We have continued to campaign, with others, for the humane treatment of asylum seekers, with particular emphasis on removing children from detention, and demanding that Australia meet its international obligations. We have also lobbied for the release of Indonesian minors, crew on asylum boats, from adult jails.
- We are affiliated with Australians for Affordable Housing and are particularly alarmed at the precariousness of housing for older, single women who are too often on the edge of homelessness. We recognize that housing, health and the ability to participate in society are closely linked.
- We continue to support the campaign to eliminate violence against women and girls both in Australia and overseas.
- We continue to campaign for world peace.

The UAW collaborates and networks with other women's groups and organisations that support peace and human rights. We publish a monthly newsletter that covers a broad range of topics and we hold regular public discussion meetings with speakers to inform ourselves and possibly take action. We are in the process of updating our wonderful publication *Taking Time: A Women's Historical Data Kit*, compiled and edited by Yvonne Smith which is an introduction to the history of the social and political integration of women into Australian society. It is an invaluable reference and resource document.

## ***WOMEN'S ELECTORAL LOBBY (WEL)***

***Josefa Green***

WEL's focus in the past year has been on influencing social and economic policy and law reform. A major Policy Statement was released on 27 February 2012 to coincide with WEL's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, covering areas such as employment, affordable housing and tax reform and superannuation, and considerable follow up lobbying has been done on these policies. Major positive Federal government announcements have been made during the year on aged care, National Disabilities Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and children's services – all issues covered in WEL's Policy Statement.

To maximise effectiveness, and given limited resources, WEL has been working closely with other feminist organisations, particularly Equality Rights Alliance, Economic Security for Women, the Older Women's Network, National Foundation for Women and WAVE. The Equality Rights Alliance (ERA) is a national non government network of women's organisations and advocates which brings together over 50 organisations. It is Australia's largest network advocating for women's equality, women's leadership and recognition of women's diversity, one of six National Women's Alliances, funded by the Federal Office for Women.

Over the past year, WEL has made a range of submissions and representations in relation to Government enquiries and reviews dealing with issues of relevance to women. These include: Productivity Commission's Early Childhood Development Workforce Study; National Human Rights Action Plan for Australia; Inquiry into the Commonwealth's contribution to former forced adoption policies and practices, and Fair Work Australia's Equal Remuneration Case.

In addition, WEL had input into or endorsed ERA submissions in areas such as: Family Law act amendments re family violence; consolidation of anti-discrimination acts; Productivity

Commission's report on disability long term care and commentary on the implications of the Federal Budget.

In late 2011, WEL collaborated with Women's Equality Think Tank and the National Pay Equity Coalition to produce a final submission for the Equal Pay case for social and community service workers being heard by Fair Work Australia. WEL was very pleased at the announcement by the PM that the Federal Government would fund wage increases as determined by Fair Work Australia on 1 February 2012. Adequate funding at the State Government level however remains an issue of concern.

In March 2012, WEL welcomed the introduction by Julie Collins, Minister for the Status of Women, of the Commonwealth Government's bill to amend its workplace equal opportunity legislation. WEL then made submissions to the Senate Committee which reviewed the draft bill and was invited to address the Senate Committee's Hearing in Melbourne on 18 April.

WEL's website has been updated and includes active use of networking tools such as Facebook and Twitter. Our weekly *e-Update*, covering feminist news, events and actions, has a rapidly growing subscriber list.

The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of WEL's establishment is providing an opportunity for us to not only celebrate the progress which has been made in improving the status of women in Australia, but also to galvanise further support for our advocacy work and to increase our profile with key decision makers such as Federal and State politicians. Celebrations have been held or are being organised in most States, including lunches or dinners hosted in the various State Parliament Houses.

WEL NSW has been focusing on two priority issues: reproductive rights and pay equity, particularly in relation to the Equal Pay case for social and community service workers. In the lead up to the State elections in March 2011, candidates from 20 marginal electorates were canvassed on their views on abortion law reform, and their responses were presented to voters. This is part of an ongoing campaign by WEL, together with other women's organisations, to seek the decriminalisation of abortion.

In preparation for the State elections, WEL NSW prepared a comprehensive Position Statement which focused on key areas in which women and girls experience disadvantage, and which recommended specific measures to address these issues. It was circulated to key decision makers and used in face to face discussions with the Minister and Shadow Ministers for Women. Before the elections, WEL NSW held a State Election Forum at Parliament House involving a diverse coalition of women's organisations and responsible politicians.

The International Alliance of Women (IAW) is holding its International Meeting in Melbourne from 7-12 October 2012. WEL has provided assistance to the Steering Committee in the form of a \$6,000 advance and banking facilities and WEL Vic has been working hard to ensure a successful Meeting.

## ***COMMISSIONS***

### ***HEALTH COMMISSION/ WHO***

***GUDRUN HAUPTER, commission convenor and main representative at WHO***

1. Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
2. Enquiry taking up Resolution 1 of the IAW Boksburg Congress
3. Collaboration with WHO

#### 4. Communication within IAW

##### **Report:**

The Commission's activities during the reporting period were in line with its *Program of Work for the triennium 2011-2013*. We focused on the agreed IAW positions on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights and on the Need for Harmonization of Traditional and Customary norm with Legal norms derived from International conventions, International standards and decisions.

**Ad 1.** In her capacity as the IAW focal point for HIV/AIDS the convener helped to produce the **Talking Point** with the themes "Health of Women and Girls; UNAIDS agenda for women and girls; implications of HIV/AIDS of violence against women and girls" (March 2011).

Input to the Civil Society update consultation of the OHCHR on Effective practices in adopting a human rights based approach to eliminating preventable maternal mortality and morbidity (March 2011). The input titled **Aunties for reproductive and sexual health and non-violence**, integrates clarifications and comments received from Georgette Arrey Taku, RENATA, Cameroon, and can be viewed at [http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/women/docs/InternationalAlliance\\_of\\_Women.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/women/docs/InternationalAlliance_of_Women.pdf)

**Oral statements** written for the General Assembly of WHO: One on HIV/AIDS (2011) –asking i.a. countries to remove structural barriers for adolescents to access prevention services and calling for broad alliances to reach out of school adolescents with unbiased and accurate messages. One on Early marriages and pregnancies (2012) –underscoring some of the socio-economic realities adolescent mothers face. Both statements are attached.

**Ad 2.** IAW **enquiry** into the status of a man's responsibility for the maintenance of all his children drafted in English and French and sent out by the Commission in September 2011. Mailing lists included both Affiliates/Associates and Individual members. Answers from both the Global South and the Global North were scarce. Therefore, no general conclusions could be drawn on questions like: "If customary and/or religious law is concurring with modern law, are there harmonization efforts under way with a view to introduce internationally agreed Conventions and legal norms?" Or: "In your view, are paternity complaints an efficient instrument to make men refrain from fathering non marital children?" Yet, the answers received show that the greatest need for action and change exists in the Global South. Interesting comments were received.

##### **Examples:**

The Executive Secretary of RENATA, the National network of Aunties Associations in Cameroon, wrote: *"I just would like to congratulate you for choosing this issue of the father's responsibility and making us to share our point of view. The situation in my country is deplorable. In effect, this is something that has preoccupied me for so many years. I have always longed to take actions towards this but I still haven't really figured out how. Am planning to launch an advocacy campaign together with my organization next year on this issue where we will go to the media and share our different experiences and stories and advocate for a change."*

Answer from Femmes Juristes du Tchad to the question why men force adolescents into sexual relations, often without protection. *"Generally forced sexual relationship is encountered in two situations: In times of conflicts it is considered to be a weapon against the ennemy regardless whether perpetrated by groups of civilists or of military out of control. For times of peace it is to be stated that unprotected sexual relations or rape occur by sexually ill men abusing the physical weakness of adolescents who, for example, travel from one area to another as small-traders and are often raped by the "buyers" of their*

*products. For fear of being surprised these do not use a condom. There exist HIV infected men who have made to believe that sleeping with a virgin will heal them."*

In a number of countries the laws are there to hold men accountable for their non marital and their marital children alike. However, they lack effective mechanisms for enforcing the law.

We had several comments on the viability of implicating village authorities in abolishing men's license to seduce adolescents. A personal view from UNFPA Zimbabwe is "yes, if a lot is invested in capacity building and supporting legislation disseminated to the village level." APWA, the IAW Pakistani Affiliate, affirms: "This NGO does not trust any village judge or authority." La Colombe, our Associate in Togo, comments that currently the Women's Ministry is leading a national campaign against gender violence.

### **Ad 3. Collaboration with WHO**

- a) Following the Commission's Triennial **Report to WHO** IAW's Official Status was confirmed, and our work was recognized with thanks.
  - b) A separate **Report went to TFI**, Tobacco-free initiative, on our advocacy and communication activities re the *WHO Frame Convention on Tobacco Control, FCTC*. IAW has Observer Status at the *Conferences of the Parties, COPs*, that deal with priority areas of the FCTC and is listed on the FCTC data base.
  - c) Deplorably *Gender, Women and Health* ceased to exist as a separate department. However, the foundations have been laid to integrate Gender at all WHO levels down to the country level. IAW has been assigned to the Cluster **Family, Women's and Children's Health**, under Assistant Director General Flavia Bustreo who asked Islene Araujo from the cluster's Gender, Equity and Human Rights Team to act as our Designated Technical Officer.
- Seema Uplekar who has very aptly represented IAW at WHO since May 2011, is keeping contacts.

### **Ad 4. Communication within IAW**

- a) Using [www.iawomen.ning.com](http://www.iawomen.ning.com) The **Talking Point on HIV/AIDS** (2011) and remarks on the 2012 World Health Assembly including the IAW statement, as well as other women's health issues have been posted. The Ning Health Group currently has 7 members.
- b) Networking with other IAW Officers, to name Judith Gordon re Elder Women and re Mental Health. Several commission members helped to clarify our position re the **NGO Draft resolution** on commemorating the 20th anniversary of the 4WCW (attached).
- c) Using the IAW communication tools International Women's News, IWNews, (French items) and the E-Newsletter, the Commission sent messages on various health and rights issues of girls and women.
- d) With francophone and bilingual African individual members from organizations such as Les Femmes Juristes du Chad and RENATA from Cameroun.

### **Statement submitted by the International Alliance of Women, IAW**



### **WHA 64, agenda item 13.6 - Oral statement**

The International Alliance of Women, IAW, welcomes the *Draft WHO HIV/AIDS Strategy* and notes with appreciation the collaboration with a wide range of partners at UN level such as UNFPA and UNAIDS but also with Civil Society organizations like ours.



HIV/AIDS affects girls and women of all ages. Globally, for women of reproductive age the leading cause of death, with 19.2 %, is HIV/AIDS. This cause of death is followed in rank by another significant percentage, that for maternal conditions, 14.6 %. HIV/AIDS is also an issue with older women who are often victim of multiple discrimination in trying to access care, for example exclusion from sources of knowledge about HIV/AIDS. They are a group facing institutional and domestic abuse, and are often forgotten as a special and increasingly large vulnerable population.

The WHO Strategy emphasizes the need to remove structural barriers in access to prevention services. It also calls for sexuality education of adolescents and services that meet their needs. IAW advocates a comprehensive approach to sexuality education that conveys full and accurate information including the dual protection the condom offers: it prevents both HIV infection and unwanted pregnancy.

For the globally 75 million adolescents who are either unable to go to school or chose not to do so, sources of information are, inter alia, friends, the broader community, mass media and popular culture. To reach these adolescents with unbiased and accurate messages there is a need to build broad coalitions including health personnel, peer educators and pop idols are needed on country levels.

For years we have requested stronger linkages between HIV services and sexual and reproductive health services, the latter to include access to family planning services as a woman's right that needs to be funded, and a proven means to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity.

We also advocate stronger linkages for dealing with gender-based violence and discrimination. Violence against women has been a priority issue of IAW for decades, and the devastating effects of sexual violence and abuse on women's physical and mental health, definitely demand integrated efforts, particularly on country levels.

High levels of non-consensual sexual relations with adolescent girls and young women point to unbalanced power relations. Customary norms often leave women defenceless when they need to oppose male desires or negotiate condom use. These women are at high risk of becoming infected and/or involuntarily pregnant. IAW therefore holds that where this is the case such norms or traditions must be urgently harmonized with legal norms derived from International conventions, International standards and decisions. Legal institutions and mechanisms must be strengthened to influence and counter traditions and customs that abuse and exploit women.

The International Alliance of Women stands ready to work within the scope of the WHO Strategic objective 7 for enhancing health equity through gender-responsive and human rights-based approaches.



#### **Agenda item 13.4**

IAW, an international women rights organization, welcomes WHO's excellent report on Early marriages, adolescent and young pregnancies.

A global reduction of the percentage of adolescent women who become pregnant at an age when, according to MDG 3, they should be in school, sounds promising. However, a closer look at absolute country figures and the reasons why adolescents cannot make decisions, is sobering.

The risks of physical harm related to early pregnancy, within or outside marriage, are well established. To better illustrate the plight of an estimated 14 million women between age 15 and 19 who gave birth in 2008 in the developing world <sup>1</sup>, we wish to underscore some of the socio-economic realities adolescent mothers face.

- 1) In societies where early marriage is frequent or considered normal, decisions are generally based on agreements benefiting the families involved rather than the wishes or welfare of the adolescent.
- 2) Countless adolescents have no power of decision because they grow up in patriarchal societies where obedience to men is the norm. As a result they dare not refuse non-consensual sex with the risks of getting pregnant.
- 3) Adolescent girls lack the knowledge that they have choices because they do not benefit from effective sexuality education. Awareness of choices does not help if they are barred from access to contraception, and if in stable partnerships men see no need to use a condom.
- 4) How can adolescents make rights-based decisions if no one tells them about their human rights including health rights.
- 5) All too often desperate adolescents decide on their own to have an abortion, with ensuing risks it entails. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health's report to the UN General Assembly in October 2011<sup>2</sup> recommended that States decriminalize abortion and facilitate access to a full range of modern contraceptive methods and full, complete and accurate information on SRH. Implementing these recommendations would benefit women's health by removing barriers created by national criminal law or other legal restrictions.

## ***COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, JUSTICE, AND GOOD GOVERNANCE***

***Marion Böker, commission convenor, board member***

### **1. Commission members**

If there are women who would like to join this commission by active work they are very welcome!

Still, the members don't represent all regions. Especially the commission would need a member of The Americas esp. Latin America. Still the members and their ranking of issues is valid as it was listed in the annex 1 to the Iceland board meeting report (9/2011) which will be send on request.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/FB-Adolescents-SRH.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/66/254](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/66/254)

All members were advised to closely follow the information of the WUNRN network's mailing list and the CEDAW4change mailing list which both inform very well about CEDAW and other UN Treaty Bodies UN on gender/women's issues. All members can communicate in NING's Commissions section.

## **2. Program of the Commission for Human Rights, Justice and Good Governance**

The commission operates under the Action Program of IAW 2008-10, reaffirmed until 2013. The activities of this commission in the last half year focused on some of the activities proposed of those members who pro active responded. It was important for to take action to be in active dialogue with commissions members. This activities are following up Boksburg's resolution on harmful practices and presentations made during our Congress there and A/HRC/AC/9/2 on understanding traditional values opposing inter/national legal norms and to support in this and CEDAWs (and CSW57) context concrete needs and activities of IAW members.

## **3. Concrete activities: CEDAW's upcoming Gen. Rec. on Harmful Practices- HRC- CSW**

In advance of CSW56 the convener supported Sizani Ngubane of RWM- Rural Women's Movement (South Africa) to get funded by the GWF for her participation in the 56. CSW and which allowed her as well to take part in the AWID summit in Istanbul. In NCY she got her into contact with the organizers of the main NGO forum RURAL WOMEN SPEAK OUT so that she could participate in fact & recommendation finding on rural women and connect to CSW.

In late 2011 RENATA was informed by the convener of the call for the next Gen. Rec. CEDAW in the making on harmful practices. RENATA submitted an information on "breast ironing" including a link to their rich reports, statistics and materials on RENATA's websites:

[www.tantines.org](http://www.tantines.org) or [www.sosviolcameroun.org](http://www.sosviolcameroun.org) RENATA's contribution is listed under <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/JointCEDAW-CRC-GeneralRecommendation.htm>

Sizani Ngubane (RWM, ZA) later submitted her information to CEDAW about to end the cruel practice and form of VAW of abduction for rape and forced marriage of girls and young women (Ukuthwala) which was as well published by the WUNRN list. Since it seems to have missed the deadline of CEDAW's call it is no listed on CEDAWs webpage.

The Commission welcomes the renewed call for applications for the [Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes](#) (extended by Council's resolution A/HRC/RES/18/11). The convener and Jocelyne Scutt like IAW to support this and like to make sure that this SR's work will implement the gender perspective (Gender mainstreaming approach of Beijing and B+5-+15) as well in the context of climate change. Both included aspects about this in the CSW56 statement of the American/European NGO CSW Caucus before the CSW and which were consent in this Caucus. (see the issue and plans mentioned in the ANNEX 1, Iceland report). Work on this shall be continued as this commissions focus.

## **4. Next activities: CEDAW-Keep Eyes on NGO participation- IAW Communication**

- A follow up action to take would be on the long run to e.g. submit information about both issues (breast ironing/ Ukuthwala) to CEDAW as a communication under **CEDAW OP Art 8-** so that CEDAW could start an inquiry: this does not need necessarily full exhausted national remedies by the victims. One should send such information in CC: to CAT AND CRC.  
IAW could submit such a communication together with RWM and RENATA if they wish to.

This is welcomed by the Committee and a NGO obligation and option under CEDAW and is strengthening its work and our human rights enshrined. This commission could draft it in direct cooperation with RENATA and RWM. CEDAW needs OP-cases forwarded. During CSW56 the convener asked a CEDAW expert directly about this. The CEDAW expert said, such communications would be welcome as a chance for inquiries to end such forms of (cruel) VAW.

- Following Geneva HRC discussions and resolutions there was an real opening (including opposition) to LGBTI issues esp. with the focus on trans and intersex people following A/HRC/19/41-Report HCHR on "Discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity", 17.11.11). For this commission it is planned to send a questionnaire to IAW members to give country information on the LGBTI situation esp. of minor lesbian/gay, trans and intersex to report to the HCHR, Spec. Rap. VAW (HRC) and TBs (CEDAW, CAT, CRC).
- During the 54. session of CEDAW in Feb. 2013 a NGO side event on age discrimination, and divorced women (cases) with a CEDAW expert is planned: hopefully with a contribution by IAW (e.g. J. Gordon; or identified victims to be invited by IAW).
- The commission supports Hélène Sackstein's call to carefully observe the UN process on "Strengthening the Treaty Bodies System" or the critical "Delivering in ONE" approach emerging in the GA (thanks to Lyda for having forwarded): Since Iceland shall chair the GA process on this behalf we should work closely with our IAW Iceland members as lobbying the Iceland governments delegations or get information about their activities.
- The tendency to weaken NGO participation and NGOs rights and obligations as provided in the ECOSOC Res. E 1996/96 as of the consultative status and as it was extended and wished by the UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies is as well visible over the years in the CSW processes: Even here we want IAW to take a lead with likeminded other NGOs to monitor and stop this, moreover to re-establish NGOs full role and rights.

#### **4.a. Suggestion to board meeting: improve communication with mailing lists**

##### **Better communication through easier & systematic means: Mailing list instead of individual selected mailing (*Board/Geneva/NYC related, issue related, open for all with functions & members*)**

Since CSW56 the direct contact to the NYC Rep on CSW items is well established. The contact to the Rep in Geneva lacks. Whatever NING is good for: it does not guarantee a regular info flow TO ALL on this important issues to exchange. Instead it is observed that many still are likely to rarely select single persons to individually forward information and not even include all who are in charge or interested.

The convener suggests to establish more systematic and transparent information flow by mailings lists. Often communication is just forwarded to selected e-mail-adresses not including those who are in charge or interested members related to the issues. Mailing list (e.g. though Google, yahoo) would allow the president, board members , REPs, conveners and all members do their job more regular and easy.

May be Soon Yoon-young can do the same as to NYC 5WCW info, Judy Gordon can do this as well for the information of the sub-committee on aging. etc.

This does not touch the content of the IAW newsletter from Joke who compiles general information for another targeted group. But the newsletter is not designed to led quickly and in time flow info, reports, hints from inside UN processes, NGO meetings (e.g. many of the WUNRN info included are 2 weeks old; and WUNRN only sends official info not IAW observations or with an IAW evaluation or monitoring perspective).

24.08.2012



Marion Böker

## **PEACE COMMISSION**

**Rosy Weiss**

*The Peace Commission sent out the questionnaire below through International Women's News. No one answered.*

### **Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security<sup>3</sup>**

Message from the IAW Peace Commission to the IAW membership

The 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this resolution in October 2010 highlighted the increasing demand for accountability. In fact, women are still underrepresented, if not totally absent, in most official peace negotiations. And this despite the fact the Security Council Resolution is legally binding.

The members of the Peace Commission are interested in gathering from IAW membership information on the implementation of this resolution at national level, in particular through the establishment of National Action Plans. This is why we ask you to please copy the questionnaire below, to fill it out and to send your answers to the Commission Convenor, Honorary President Rosy Weiss, at your earliest convenience, but not later than April, 2012. The Peace Commission intends to publish an analysis of your replies in the International Women's News no 2/2012.

The three main aspects of SCR 1325:

- the necessity for increased participation of women in all decision making processes in conflict prevention, peace negotiations, post-conflict peace building, etc.
- the necessity to take special measures against gender-based and sexual violence, particularly when used a weapon of war
- the necessity to incorporate a gender perspective in all peace and security policies and processes.

SCR1325 was followed by four other resolutions<sup>4</sup> which the Peace Commission plans to deal with in one of the coming editions. Both the UN Secretary-General and the EU Council have developed indicators<sup>5</sup>. These indicators to track 1325 implementation will also be discussed at a later stage.

*Questionnaire:*

*1) Do you know of the existence of SCR1325 and its main aspects?*

*2) What was your country's reaction to this legally binding resolution?*

*3) Do you know if your country has produced a national action plan<sup>6</sup> to implement SCR1325?*

*If yes: Has your organisation been invited to participate in the drafting of this plan? Have you formed a national coalition of women NGOs or have you been member of such a coalition? Has the procedure been satisfactory to your organisation? Are you satisfied with the implementation of your national action plan?*

*If no: Why not?*

*Have you been putting pressure on your government in order to establish such a plan?*

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<sup>3</sup> S/RES/1325 (2000)

<sup>4</sup> UNSCR 1820 (2008), UNSCR 1888 (2009), UNSCR 1889 (2009), UNSCR 1960

<sup>5</sup> Global indicators (S/2010/498; EU indicators Doc. 11948/10

<sup>6</sup> List of National Action Plans already operational, see page.....



*Are you engaging in a national campaign?  
What would you expect from IAW to support your endeavours?*

We thank you very much for responding to this short questionnaire and sending your replies to [rosy.weiss@gmx.at](mailto:rosy.weiss@gmx.at) or Rosy Weiss, Strohgasse 25/15, 1030 Wien, Austria, Europe.

## ***REPRESENTATIVES TO INTERNATIONAL BODIES***

### ***FAO***

Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations  
Conference, thirty-seventh session Rome, 25 June – 2 July 2011

Statement presented by the International Alliance of Women, Equal Rights – Equal  
Responsibilities

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates and Observers,

We would like to thank the organisers of this Conference for this kind invitation to address this distinguished audience. We do so with humility but also with a sense of confidence and responsibility of the great role that organisations, such as ours, have played and will continue to play in this great struggle to alleviate hunger and poverty. The membership of INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN is vast and varied. We are an International Women's non-governmental organisation and we have Observer Status throughout the entire UN system.

International Alliance of Women welcomes FAO's excellent, comprehensive 2010-2011 THE STATE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE REPORT prepared for this Conference "with its special emphasis on "Women in Agriculture – Closing the Gender Gap". FAO in its commitment towards the implementation of its own programme and the MDGs, in particular Goal 3 recognises the importance of promoting the full and equal participation of rural women and men in all its efforts to improve food security and to ensure a reduction of poverty. Furthermore, the Organisation states that it champions the elimination of all obstacles that prevent the equal participation of rural women in decision-making processes, in the obtaining of decent employment opportunities, access to, and control of resources such as land, water, training, credit, and technology.

The key factors to be noted of the worth and value of women's activities in Agriculture and Rural Development are provided in FAO's fact sheet on its commitment to the implementation of **Millennium Development Goal 3**. There is no need to repeat this. But, what does need to be stated is that this "theoretical" acceptance of the worth and value of women in Agriculture and Rural Development, receives very little practical programme support by FAO. Whenever help and assistance is offered to this poor women's farming and rural development sector, it often takes the form of short-lived, experimental, or pilot projects. These limited in scope kinds of projects do not have the capability of moving into medium term and long term planning national schemes to alleviate hunger and poverty. We note that any help given to this, up to now, poorly served agricultural sector of the society will improve the gross domestic economic growth figures in most societies.

In fact. What women **do not see** happening, in any substantive manner. are the ways and means to implement that commitment in any of the proposed FAO's Action Plans for Food Security, although this firm and stated commitment by FAO to implement MDG 3 is in line with the

Convention to End All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) – and Article 14 on Rural Women.

On the basis of the above and in the light of FAO's commitment to women's full participation in agriculture and rural sustainable development IAW would like to propose the following:-

- That relevant FAO Committees set up a special working group to design a priority programme on the basis and experience of the Brasilien Zero Hunger Programme to ensure the best involvement and use of women's farming and rural development activities in its food security programme
- That the division for Gender equality be included in this process.

Why are we making this suggestion to the Conference?

The need for decisive progress on the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger as addressed in Goal 1 of the MDGs is critical for the achievement of progress in other MDGs.

We must all face the stark reality that very little progress to alleviate hunger and poverty has been achieved since the World Food Summit – and the fact that since that World Food Summit, the absolute number of people living in extreme poverty has increased worldwide future strategies must incorporate alternative development thinking. A type of agriculture which would encourage small farmers- women and men- and farming communities – to become independent and self-reliant in the production of stable foods for themselves and for their local and regional markets.

In any strategies produced by FAO there has to be recognition of the fact that the majority of people living in extreme poverty in the rural areas are women and their families. As stated in UNIDO's publication Agribusiness for Africa's Prosperity “a key first step (may be) in exploiting and recognizing small holder farms as agribusinesses regardless of their size and scale”.....”so they may no longer remain trapped in a cycle of subsistence”.

Therefore, any attempt by FAO to alleviate poverty and hunger must address gender discrimination and violence against women. This attempt must be geared towards poor women living in the rural areas to have full participation in sustainable rural development in the exercise of their Human Rights.

In conclusion, the rising cost of food will inevitably increase the number of hungry people- and people living in extreme poverty. IAW would like to see FAO approaching this problem of hunger and poverty and raising food prices with a sense of urgency and responsibility.

Thank you again for your kind invitation to speak to you today. In doing so, you are not only honouring the work and activities of our Alliance but you are paying homage to the millions of women who everyday feed their families from their labour and work in the rural areas of the world.

**GENEVA**

**MEETINGS ATTENDED BY SEEMA UPLEKAR, UN  
REPRESENTATIVE, INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN**

1. The Universal Periodic Review: How it works and how to contribute, 8 June 2011

2. World Vision Geneva seminars by Professor Alan Fowler:
  - Managing for Complexity / Leading for Resilience, 14 June, 2011
  - The Dilemma of NGO Identity, 14 June, 2011
  - Capacity Development, 15 June, 2011
3. NGO Committee on Development: Development Education: Changing the Paradigm 21 June 2011
4. The Human Rights Council for Newcomers, 14th September 2011
5. Special Rapporteur on water and sanitation, Ms Catarina de Albuquerque, 15 Sept 2011
6. Sexual Violence and Accountabilities, WILPF, 29 Sept 2011.
7. Integrating Mental Health and NCDs , NGO forum for health, 11 October 2011
8. [Human rights education and learning](#), 17 November 2011
9. 9th Anniversary of the International Day on Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation 6 February 2012
10. White ribbon campaign, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2012
11. International Policies on Human Rights Education, 14 March 2012
12. Violence Against Women and Remedies, NGO CSW, 21 March 2012
13. Supporting Humanitarian Workers: Lessons from Research and Practice, NGO Forum for health, 21 Mar 2012
14. Celebration of United Nations World Social Work Day, 26 March 2012
15. International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda, UN, 10 April 2012
16. Geneva Health Forum 18 – 20 April 2012 (International Conference Volunteer)
17. Psychosocial support for vulnerable children: Lessons from the field, Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development, 24 April 2012
18. ICT's role in poverty eradication, ILO, 15 May 2012
19. How to make leprosy history? Innovative stakeholder solutions to tackle the last mile, Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development, 31 May 2012
20. Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women 26 June 2012

## **VIENNA**

### ***The 21st Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice***

(CCPCJ) met in April 2012 to have, inter alia, a thematic discussion on “Violence against migrants, migrant workers and their families” and to set the Agenda of the Thirteenth Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to be held 2015 in Doha.

The thematic discussion touched on victimization and exploitation of migrants, migrant workers and their families, where it occurs and best practices to address their vulnerabilities, taking into account the special needs of migrant women and children; improvements in reporting and collecting crime and victimization data to better understand trends, forms, causes and consequences of violence against migrants, migrant workers and their families; and crime prevention strategies, measures, mechanisms and tools, including raising awareness of violence against migrants, migrant workers and their families and the role of coordination between law enforcement, labour, immigration and consular officials, health and social welfare agencies and civil society under the umbrella of prevention, as well as implementation of legislative, including criminal law, and operational, including law enforcement, strategies to prevent and respond to xenophobia, racism and other related forms of intolerance and violence against migrants, migrant workers and their families, including undocumented migrants; Measures aimed at assisting and protecting migrants, migrant workers and their families, including the promotion and protection of their rights regardless of their migratory status; and international cooperation, extradition and mutual legal assistance, including legal assistance for cases involving labour migrants looking for possible responses.

On day 3 they moved on to the ever present topic of integration and coordination of efforts by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Member States in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice (with much attention paid to the ratification and implementation of the relevant conventions and protocols). The afternoon agenda of day 4 encompassed world crime trends and emerging issues and responses in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, during which economic fraud, identity-related crime, cybercrime, and criminal offences against cultural property were to be discussed.

Then they addressed the follow-up to the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. This topic caused the most heat, as there were competing agendas proposed by various regional groups and Russia. In the end an amended regional agenda won out, but on the way much damage was done. The largest casualty was the concept of “good governance” as a topic of discussion and desirable goal for Member States to achieve. While the lay person might think things like transparency, accountability of officials as well as elimination of corruption as fitting under that category, a number of governments protested that “good governance” was new and undefined. Even when the text of the Bangkok resolution from 2006 was read with the exact wording suggested for the 13<sup>th</sup> Congress, the fact that the term had not reappeared in a similar context in the Salvador Declaration lead to its eradication for the coming Congress. We are left with “Integrating crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider United Nations agenda to address social and economic challenges and to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and public participation”. While “public participation” survived criticism from some governments, the image of the governments of the world forswearing “good governance” is dismal indeed.

The INGOs organized side events, like the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Cross Societies and the International Catholic Migration Commission’s “Ensuring Dignity and Safety of Migrants Smuggled at Sea” [in short: no new conventions are needed, just cooperative implementation since smuggling people is now more lucrative than the illicit drug trade] and the Vienna NGO Committee on the Status of Women’s “Violence against Migrant Women and (their) Children in Prison and Detention” [which utterly abandoned the topic for an hour on the situation of women in Austrian prisons, including examples of best practices].

Many relevant side events were presented in close cooperation with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. The most promising was entitled “Building Better Responses: Human Trafficking In The Context Of Tourism”, organized by the UNODC Organized Crime Branch, Implementation Support Section, Anti-Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Unit and the United Nations World Tourism Organization but it turned out to be a presentation on how airline and hotel personnel should be sensitized and sensitive to trafficked **children** – somehow women were excluded from the category “Human”. “Preventing Trafficking in People: From UN Concepts to E-Teaching and Training for the Rule of Law” organized by the Academic Council on the United Nations System in cooperation with the UNODC Drug Prevention and Health Branch, demonstrated some on-line training programs, possibly available internationally without travel costs, which show promise, but the preventative aspect is exhausted in some issue papers.

The twelve resolutions coming out of the Committee of the Whole, which can be found in all the official UN languages here: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CCPCJ/session/21-draft-resolutions.html> , were standard fare and nothing for a feminist to get excited about. At the CCPCJ women’s issues are running in place, if not losing ground.

*Alison Brown*

## **CSWconnect! Report 2012 by Daniela Reiter [daniela.reiter@diereiter.at](mailto:daniela.reiter@diereiter.at)**

CSWconnect! (former Mentoring@CSW) was founded in 2011 for the 55<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) by me together with Catharina Grau (International Federation of University Women/IFUW) and Julia Günther (Women in Development Europe/WIDE)

The program is designed to encourage networking between NGO participants to share knowledge in order to enhance effective advocacy at the CSW. Intergenerational dialogue, women's networks and motivation of new participants are promoted.

At the 56<sup>th</sup> session of the CSW in 2012 the founding team was joined by Kati Hellwagner (Socialist International Women/SIW) and Natalie Phlak (Women in Development Europe/WIDE).

CSWconnect! was presented at the orientation session for new participants at the NGO Consultation Day a day before the beginning of CSW.

A very successful hands-on workshop on "How to start a Mentoring Programme in your own Organization" with over 30 participants was held as a side event by IAW together with IFUW at the Salvation Army on March 5<sup>th</sup> 2012. Catharina Grau, Kati Hellwagner and me gave input and practical advice on the implementation of mentoring programs in NGOs as well as in other professional contexts. Irene Boeckmann ([University of Massachusetts Amherst](#)) joined us as a facilitator. Women from all over the world and all walks of life, with rural and urban background, including delegates from member states of the CSW, exchanged and discussed best-practice examples and developed strategies for networking to empower women. A manual on how to start a mentoring program was its big outcome and has been prepared and distributed among the workshop participants by the CSWconnect!-team.

Five mentoring caucuses took place despite unforeseen accessibility issues. Women from all continents connected and exchanged information, ideas and knowledge.

Brochures with guidelines on how to connect and mentor each other were distributed along with green ribbons signaling participation in the CSWconnect! program. At the same time, regular information on meetings was shared on the social media platform Facebook to keep participants as well as non-participants updated on CSWconnect!.

It was planned, that the program will be continued and expanded at the 57<sup>th</sup> session of the CSW. Following an active involvement at the NGO consultation day, caucuses should be held daily after the NGO morning briefings, preferably at the same venue. The focus would be put on exchanging information, networking, developing advocacy strategies with one's own as well as other State delegations and giving substantial input for the agreed conclusions. Unfortunately it now seems unsure if any of us five team members will be able to attend next year's session of the CSW. Therefore we would be happy if you share your ideas of how we can continue the program; new team members are also very welcome!

## **WASHINGTON WORKING GROUP ON THE ICC (WICC).**

***Dr. Susanne Riveles, IAW Board Member***

Greetings to the International Meeting Participants in Melbourne, I wish you successful deliberations and apologize for not being able to join you this year.



All year round I represented the IAW at the meetings of the Washington Working Group on the ICC (WICC). The WICC meets bi monthly, updating court developments and issues relevant to the ICC. The group works closely with the genocide prevention program at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, follows US foreign policy and legislative developments such as Sudan Peace and stability Act 2010, independent oversight mechanisms being established and the cases before the court, such as Taylor and Lubanga. I am part of the WICC Advocacy Subcommittee and participated in Congressional and Senate Advocacy days raising the awareness about the development at the court and advocating the US greater involvement with the ICC. The IAW signed onto a number of letters condemning gender based violence as a war weapon and the use of child soldiers joining citizens for global solutions, Amnesty International, the Save Darfur coalition, the Genocide Prevention Program, the American NGO Coalition for the ICC among other. The IAW is now a known entity in these circles and I am always asked to comment. When the US senate debates the Resolution on Joseph Kony (LRA), who is still at large our group commented on the failure to implement the arrest warrant.

The WICC is hoping to welcome the new prosecutor of the ICC, Md. Fatou Bensouda, as a speaker at one of the WICC next meetings in DC and congratulated her recent appointment of Brigid Inder as executive Director of the Women's Initiative for Gender Justice. AS a member of the Gender Justice Team of the ICC I am keeping track of the developments in this regard. While in The Hague during our membership meeting I have joined that group, representing the IAW since 2007.

For the last year I taught a human rights course and the UN, history and purpose at a Baltimore Middle and High school and led the kids to participate in a model UN daylong session simulation the work and functions of the UN. The work with IAW and its purpose take a good portion of this course.

In July and August I gave two public lectures titled Women's Role as Peace Makers. One in the Baltimore Ethical Society, May 6, 2011 and June 21, 2012 at Northern Michigan College, in Traverse city Michigan. I had a large audience and there was much interest to learn about the work of the IAW.

I participated in this year's CSW and will be again in 2013. The Chair of the American NGO Coalition for the ICC, John Washburn, has agreed to be a speaker in a workshop I am organizing for the IAW relating to next year's theme of gender based violence. Exact organization and speakers I will send to Lyda and Lene by mid November, 2012 for review.

## **NEW YORK**

### ***Soon - Young Yoon, head of delegation***

The New York IAW members participated actively in events related to gender equality and human rights, sustainable development, health including non-communicable diseases, climate change, rural women and girls. The UN Women expert group meeting held in preparation for CSW 56 was held in Accra, Ghana. For this meeting, the IAW submitted a statement (attached) highlighting the importance of CEDAW and rural women related to climate change. Members also attended Rio Plus 20 and submitted an extensive report, noting that the achievements and setbacks of that conference. Vigilance is needed to safeguard gains made and the lack of acknowledgement of women's sexual and reproductive rights disappointed many women activists. During the High-level Meeting of the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of non-communicable Diseases, the IAW spoke concerning the importance of gender and tobacco as a development issue. If women smoke like men, they will die like men—and that result could have devastating effects on the poor. Other important events included CSW 56 (included in other reports), the CSD, as well as events related to ageing and youth participation.

**Commission on the Status of Women**  
**Fifty-sixth session**  
27 February - 9 March 2012

**Statement submitted by the Global Gender Climate Alliance, International Alliance of Women,  
International Council of Women (ICW-CIF) and Women's Environment and Development  
Organization--**

non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

**INTRODUCTION**

Urgent action is needed to mainstream gender equality and rural women's empowerment into climate change policies and programs. No action would be more strategic to accelerate action and ensure effective implementation. Among the international instruments that can play a powerful role in this endeavour is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Although Article 14 is specifically about rural women, all Articles are relevant. The provisions of CEDAW related to gender equality and climate change are presented here.

Ratified by 186 countries (2009), CEDAW is often described as an international bill of rights for women. The Convention protects women from discrimination and all forms of political, social, cultural and economic inequality based on gender. It is the only human rights treaty that affirms the reproductive rights of women.

A statement by the CEDAW Committee issued at its 44<sup>th</sup> session noted that gender equality is essential to the successful implementation, monitoring and evaluation of climate change policies.<sup>i</sup> Therefore, women's human rights should be included as an overarching guiding principle (e.g. "Shared Vision" or Preamble) in the climate change treaty. CEDAW affects the legal interpretation of treaty articles and it provides a moral compass for their practical application. It is also an important tool to plan for gender and women's empowerment in the Rio+20 process.

**ARTICLE 2**

Women's invisibility in national statistics constitutes a violation of CEDAW provisions, as lack of information affects a government's ability to prevent discrimination. Examples are found in sectors such as forestry, energy, transport, construction and infrastructure which typically do not collect gender-disaggregated data. Yet preliminary research indicates that when gender-blind policies in these sectors persist, women's contributions are undervalued and technology innovations fail to reach women.

Financial mechanisms associated with climate change such as the Adaptation Fund, the Clean Development Mechanism, REDD and the future Green Climate Fund should be monitored and gender should be mainstreamed into their policies. This would comply with Article 2 of CEDAW that obliges States Parties to embody the principle of the equality of men and women to ensure that public authorities and institutions, organizations or enterprises take actions to remedy discrimination against women.

The treaty further addresses root causes. As discrimination is embedded in wider social inequalities, States Parties must take necessary steps to combat prejudices and customary practices based on stereotyped roles. One stereotype that is typically projected among scientists is that rural and indigenous women do not offer scientific knowledge even though, in many communities, they often maintain and promote biodiversity and are experts in medicinal plants. Other traditional knowledge can include management of forests, water conservation and food storage.

### **ARTICLES 7 AND 8**

States Parties must ensure women have equal decision-making power at all levels including in international processes such as the climate change treaty negotiations (Article 7). However, only 14 percent of heads of delegation to the Conference of the Parties 16 in Cancun (2010) were women. There is reason to be concerned, as women are poorly represented in bodies that will implement the treaty at national and local levels-- notably technical advisory bodies, parliaments/congresses, business councils and courts.

One hopeful sign is that several of the National Adaptation Programmes for Action (NAPA) have made reference to gender. In these plans, it is important to emphasize women's right to equal decision-making in public life, including the design of NAPAs and the medium to long-term adaptation plans (National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)). Policy-makers have yet to tap the potential of international women's movements. The "win-win" scenario is one that creates synergy between women's empowerment, and mitigation and adaptation policies.

### **ARTICLE 14**

Article 14 of CEDAW further strengthens provisions for rural women, including pastoralists, nomads, hunters and gatherers, in diverse occupations (e.g. fishing, wage labor, and swidden agriculture). Recognizing the diversity of rural women is critical in rural communities experiencing food insecurity and environmental devastation. Of particular concern is the feminization of agriculture and rise in numbers of older women and female heads of households due to out migration of men. In many communities, women must add work in fields and animal husbandry to existing responsibilities in cooking, gathering wood and water.

The *2010-2011 State of Food and Agriculture* by FAO states that because women in rural areas have less access to productive resources and opportunities than men, there is a productivity gap causing women farmers to produce less than men farmers.<sup>ii</sup> If the gender gap closes between women and men productivity yields will increase on the women's farms by 20-30 percent, which potentially reduces the number of hungry people in the world by 12-17 percent.

CEDAW notes that rural women should be empowered to manage the environment through equal access to productive resources. Article 14 guarantees rural women equal access to water and sanitation, agricultural credit and loans and appropriate technology. One strategic use of credit would be to use clean energy burning stoves. However, this must happen rapidly and on a massive scale because Black Carbon produced by biofuel stoves is not only detrimental to women's health but also a main contributor to global warming. If poor women are to change cooking technologies, they must be given better access to financing options such as micro-credit, rent and collective schemes.

Safety nets and insurance for social protection are considered essential to national adaptation plans as part of poverty reduction strategies. And improving the ability of women to cope with ecological stresses strengthens the entire family's adaptive resilience. However, rural and indigenous women rarely have access to adequate health care facilities and social security. And while CEDAW recognizes that rural women have the right to adequate standards of living, housing and communications, these are seldom considered in climate change discussions.

### **ARTICLES 11.1, 13 and 15.1**

The climate change crisis potentially opens new financing, business and employment opportunities for women living in cities as well as in the countryside. The climate change treaty will set new directions for carbon trading markets and businesses for green technologies. In developing countries, renewable energy technologies promise to create more income-generating projects such as making lamps and repairing devices using solar voltaic cells.

Diversification of income sources can help cushion the negative impact of climate change on agricultural livelihoods. The question is: Will rural women benefit equally from these entrepreneurial opportunities? Articles 11, 13 and 15 in CEDAW hold States Parties responsible to guarantee that women will have equal economic and employment rights. Governments should also promote child-care facilities to enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities.

Article 15 affords women the same legal capacity as men to conclude contracts, administer property and mortgages, and in all other areas of economic life. Women employed in sectors that are traditionally male-biased must be afforded equal remuneration, including benefits, and granted equal treatment in the value of their work. They also need to be better represented in management and social audits of wage employment schemes.

### **ARTICLE 12.1**

Women's rights to health are found in Articles 12 and the General Recommendation 24 of CEDAW. These recognize the importance of gender equality to the quality of family life and the need for governments to improve health statistics, as well as allocate adequate resources for women's health care throughout their life cycle. The CEDAW Committee has noted that women's health status and ability to access health services, including family planning, are intricately linked to gender-specific roles.

Some research indicates that women are disproportionately affected by natural disasters such as drought, floods and heat waves. For example, according to the WHO, adverse reproductive

outcomes follow disasters, including early pregnancy loss, premature delivery, stillbirths, delivery-related complications and infertility.<sup>iii</sup> One study on a 1991 cyclone in Bangladesh noted that many women perished with their children at home as they had to wait for their husbands to return and make an evacuation decision.<sup>iv</sup>

Climate change will further burden poor women through increases in malnutrition, floods, storms and fires, increased diarrheal diseases and changes in the distribution of some infectious diseases vectors. The whole family suffers if women die or cannot carry out care giving roles.

## **ARTICLE 10**

Rural women's access, use and control over science and technology, including formal and informal education and training, are vital to a community's ability to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Gender equality in education is guaranteed by Article 10. CEDAW identifies the need for women's equal access to technical and professional education, remuneration, and support for social services to combine family responsibilities with work.

Article 10 reiterates that educational information to help improve the health and wellbeing of families, including information and advice on family planning, is a woman's right.

### ***Irini Nike Sarlis, member of the NY team***

Followed Sustainable Development issues at NGO and UN meetings, during the CSD and Intersessionals for Rio+20, attended some of the CSW and CEDAW programs, as well as other meetings that covered key areas of concern for the IAW

Participated in interactive science and policy dialogues, especially on the management of Natural Resources, renewable and non-renewable, over full life-cycles, which is becoming a critical area for scientific assessments of ecosystems inventories now (International Resource Panel), and on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, especially in regards to buildings (women expected to be the majority of purchasers soon)

Added some items to the NGO text regarding chemicals, the toxification of the earth and atmosphere, and thus of food and water supply, and the 'toxic burden' to human progeny, of particular interest to women

Observed that at GA or EcoSoc meetings attended, on Terrorism, or Drugs and Crime, Trafficking et al, there has been a constant of relating the cost of these to development, and therefore also, to MDGs like poverty eradication, and women's welfare

Participated in sustainable human settlements/urbanization events, in Rio+20 preparatories and in view of World Urban Forum VI, where gender perspectives highlight Safer Cities, access to land, credit, property programs (UN Habitat has a Land Tool Kit, and gender perspective infrastructure--water, sanitation, transportation--programs)

Followed some of the Peace events, as during the School 'Cultura de Paz' (Culture of Peace) visit here from Spain, Peace Women and other Peace celebrations



### ***IAW report on activities as the Co-Chair of Young Professionals***

IAW members have been active in the NGO CSW Committee for Young Professionals, a network for professional development and an outlet to engage and empower young professionals in the discussion of women's issues globally. The highlight of activities of the Committee was the preparation for and participation in the NGO CSW Consultation Day and Forum, where young professionals learned about the international women's movement and the United Nations, participated in advocacy training for youth and shared ideal about international issues, such as rural women and economic empowerment, human rights, peace and security, and health. During the NGO CSW Forum, Young Professionals participated in daily meetings of the Mentoring Caucus, led by IAW. Actively involved in the committee, IAW members organized a program meeting on rural girls, women and climate change and participated in various NGO CSW meetings and events.

*For more information on NGO CSW Young Professionals, contact **Natalia Kostus**, Representative to the United Nations, IAW and Co-Chair of NGO CSW Young Professionals at [kostusn@gmail.com](mailto:kostusn@gmail.com)*

### ***IAW report on Rio+20***

#### ***Natalia Kostus, member of the NY team***

IAW members attended the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and participated in the advocacy initiatives, side events, and drafting of statements of the Women's Major Group, the main channel for the women's movement contributions.

The outcome of Rio+20 "The Future We Want" was a historic achievement that renewed political commitment and launched a process to establish the post 2015 development framework focused on sustainable development. One of the most important deliverables of Rio+20 was a process to draft an agreed set of universal Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will build on the advances under the MDGs. Another crucial result of Rio+20 was strengthening of the institutional framework by launching a process establishing a universal intergovernmental high-level political forum on sustainable development, building on the Commission on Sustainable Development and subsequently replacing the Commission. On financing for sustainable development, the outcome initiated an intergovernmental process to assess financing needs and consider the effectiveness, consistency and synergies of existing instruments and frameworks, with a view to prepare a report proposing options on an effective financing strategy to facilitate the mobilization of resources and their effective use in achieving sustainable development objectives.

At Rio+20, Member States agreed on the importance of gender equality, women's empowerment, and the participation of women for effective action on all aspects of sustainable development; emphasizing commitments to women's equal rights, access and opportunities for full and equal participation and leadership in all areas of sustainable development, the economy, society, and political decision making. Gender equality and the empowerment of women was recognized as one the thematic areas and a cross-sectoral issue. Furthermore, gender language and focus on women were included throughout the Rio +20 outcome document with a total of 84 references, including 26 references to gender and 58 references to women. Rio+20 outcome addressed women's sexual and reproductive health, and ensuring universal access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable modern methods of family planning; however did not recognize women's reproductive rights.

After Rio, much will depend now on the future processes under the General Assembly on SDGs, high level political forum, and financing, including their modalities, how are women and gender incorporated, and the results of work of those processes in the coming years.

Our work is not over. IAW members and the Women's Major Group will continue to follow the process closely to make sure that gender equality targets are reflected in the goals and sex-disaggregated data and gender specific indicators and tools for measuring progress are used. It is imperative that women's groups are included in drafting the national inputs for the SDGs process. Furthermore, there is a need for transparency and participation of the women's major group, as observer to the SDG open working group, as well as, gender parity in the working group composition. There may be an opportunity to consider clearer linkages between the high-level political forum on sustainable development and the work of the Commission on the Status of Women, and more explicitly involving the national Ministries of Women in the national sustainable development policymaking and implementation.

*For more information on Rio+20 outcome or to get involved in the advocacy on post 2015 development framework process, contact Natalia Kostus, Representative to the United Nations, IAW at kostusn@gmail.com*

***REPORT SEPT. 2010-AUGUST 2012 by Judy Gordon, member of the IAW NY team***

**IAW ACTION PLAN.**

- 1 I contributed to the writing of the IAW oral statement on poverty alleviation submitted by our President and Vice President to the 2012 Commission on Social Development. This statement was accepted by the Commission on Social Development in and was read at that meeting. This statement is directly related to the IAW plan of Action.
2. I attended meetings held in conjunction with Eco-Soc which called attention to violence, organized crime and illicit drug use as impediments to social and economic development whose reports and staff are relevant to the IAW action plan and the work of Its Commissions.
3. I attended the expert group meetings of the open ended high level GA working group on the protection of the human rights on older persons in 2011 and 2012 at UNHQ . I attended the 2nd meeting of this WG in at UN HQ in August 2011 and represented IAW which officially sent me as a representative to it at the 3rd meeting of this WG in August 2012. The mandate and considerations of this committee, which is available on line are also related to the *IAW Action Plan and the Work of its Commissions*
4. As a member of large of the NGO Committee on Mental health and co-convenor of the Working group on Mental health, Racism and Related Intolerance's, I have contributed to the development of programs and events of this committee including those held in co-operation with the NY OHCHR office and at the NGO CSW..
5. I attended the briefings of the NY OHCHR which address issues of concern in the IAW Action Plan as they arise in the course of the year as well as those of the NGO Committee on Human Rights in whose subcommittee on Racism I participate..
6. I spoke at the parallel events organized by IAW at the CSW in 2011 and 2012 linking the words and actions of our predecessors to the priority issues and themes before the CSW.
7. I represent IAW on the Subcommittee on Older Women which, as of March 2012, now housed in the NGO Committee on Ageing. This subcommittee addresses issues directed related to the IAW Action plan. report).
8. I have attended paid events of the NGO CSW such as the celebration of its Anniversary in December 2011 and the reception for CEDAW in July 2013. I also attend membership meetings of

this Committee as a member of our team. The main IAW rep to this committee is Soon-Young, its chair.

9. I attended IAW CSW events and NGO caucuses chaired by IAW members in 2010, 2011 and 2012. The chairs of these Caucuses have reported on their activities whose accomplishments and recommendations also furthers the IAW action plan.

10. I very much appreciate the input into my activities by the chairs of our Commissions, members of the IAW Board, IAW Representatives at CSW and other members of our UN teams past and present.. I look forward to the results of our explorations of ways to improve our communications and knowledge of each others activities as we work together to implement the IAW Plan of Action in an era in which new technologies provide us opportunities to work together in the 21st century not available to us in the past..

## **CEDAW**

1. Consultations. In the November of 2010, the out-going main representative of IAW, Kay Fraleigh met with me, Denise and Johanna to discuss whether or not we will propose a parallel event for the 2011 CSW similar to those we had done in the past.. Kay suggested that, given the number of NGO parallel events at the CSW., IAW instead develop consultations with CEDAW during its session in NYC that would focus attention on the implementation of Articles of the treaty and General Recommendations adopted by the CEDAW Committee.. Given our contributions to the development of the CEDAW General Recommendation 27 on Older Women, (2010) Kay and I suggested that the first IAW consultation turn attention to the implementation of this GR recommendation and its relationships to the CEDAW treaty and other General Recommendations as appropriate. Given the work of our Commissions, a suggestion grew out of our discussion that our second consultation call attention to the role CEDAW can play in monitoring the implementation of SC 1325 and related SC resolutions., we also suggested that it would be appropriate for IAW to plan a special event to be held during the 30th Anniversary of CEDAW which CEDAW would celebrate during its meeting at UN HQ in the summer of 2012. .Since 2012 is also the 110th anniversary of the meeting held in Washington DC in 1902 that gave birth to the International Woman Suffrage Alliance we proposed IAW turn attention to the past, present and future of both organizations in this celebratory year . Irini was also briefed by Kay in regard to our suggestions. In February, 2011, I met with our main representative, Soon-Young and shared our ideas about the development of such consultations and special events with CEDAW with her. She was very supportive of the idea of consultations, two of which have been held: one on climate change and the other on small arms. The development of these consultations were done by other members of our team. and related NGO's.. Soon-Young has submitted the outcome documents related to the consultations that were held as well as 2\

3.. Celebration of CEDAW's 30th Anniversary.. I attended the CEDAW event celebrating this occasion. I also attended the reception for CEDAW experts on this occasion organized by the NY NGO CSW which Soon-Young chaired.

3. The review and evaluation of Treaty Bodies. The implementation of CEDAW's GR 27 on Older Women has been of interest to GA Open Ended Working Group For The Purpose Of Strengthening the Protectionn of The Human Rights of Older Persons as it illustrates how a treaty body can address such rights in terms of its own mandate. Therefore the, consultation we proposed still would be of value..However, the context has changed since 2011 since the treaty body system as a whole is now being considered and will be on the agenda of the 2012 GA. The reporting forms that will be submitted to the treaty bodies may also be altered. The outcome of these deliberations and decisions will impact all treaty bodies including CEDAW. I have followed these deliberations as they also have impact for IAW as it considers its own role and possibilities in relationship to

CEDAW. The recommendations of the Commission on Human Rights and related documents are on line.

4.. CEDAW and Protection Project of John Hopkins University Event.. I attended this event which an IAW member Denise Scotto helped CEDAW organize to address the implementation of Article 6 of the CEDAW Treaty. This Article directs attention to the need to end the trafficking of women.. Denise also was a member of the panel. who spoke. This event was at the UN. The consultation on small arms, which Soo-Young helped develop was held at UN Women. Unfortunately,. both these events met at the same time and on the same day.. CEDAW members made sure that there were CEDAW members present at each.. Our team did the same.

Irini and I attended the consultation on the implementation of Article 6 of the CEDAW Convention as members of our IAW team. Information about this event is on line.

I thank Soon-Young for her report on behalf of IAW members and have supplemented this report, as she proposed, by giving more information about my own

### ***Second report by Judy Gordon***

The purpose of this second report (First report attached) is to lay out recommendations for steps we can take during the next year to address the situations of both younger and older women within and without of the IAW taking account of current social contexts, not all of which are not in our control. During the past year IAW has contributed to on-going activities that call attention to the need to protect the human rights of older persons in general and older women in particular.. Building on the discussion of last year's meeting in Iceland,.we have done so in our own practices as illustrated by the wonderful intergenerational caucus on mentoring developed by IAW which took place at the CSW. We have done so by alerting the chair of the high level GA working group on the protection of the Human rights of older persons and members of its Secretariat at DESA and the OHCHR that IAW wished to send a representative to the 3rd meeting of this WG group. I was honored to be that representative.. This important GA working group continues to address matters before it that illustrate the complexity of protecting human rights of men and women of all ages equally in all UN member states.. As I mentioned in my first report, one proposed means to protect the human rights of older persons has been to advocate for a new convention on the rights of older person. The Latin American Region in particular, has done much to move thinking on this possibility forward and a new instrument is being considered by the OAS. However, that is not the only way of going about it. The mandate of this working group also turns attention to the discussion of the use of existing instruments instead.. For example,. CEDAW's General Recommendation 27 has been cited as an illustration of how an existing treaty body created to eliminate discrimination on the basis of sex can also turn its attention to the elimination of discrimination on the basis of age .Special Rapporteurs such as the rapporteurs on health, violence against women and poverty have also illustrated ability to address the existence of discrimination on the basis of age by taking age into account in their own mandates and reports. The Human Rights Council has also been turning attention to this issue. UN Women will publish a book on older women this fall as will UNFPA. And this Fall the review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing will call attention to additional ideas and concerns.

IAW's organizational structure has facilitated our contribution to these considerations as our past statements and collaboration with CEDAW experts on the development of GR 27 illustrates.. Attention to older women human rights is also evidenced by speakers at events in Melbourne, Australia next month. Our commissions too within their mandates have and can continue to contribute to our thinking about the impact of the predicted increase of older women in the world's population to come. In the coming year,. IAW. its affiliates and members have the possibility once again of developing statements, position papers, expert group meetings and parallel events that turn attention to older women in the nations large and small in which they age, live and die.. Given the many places and organizations in which IAW has voice, the suggestion that we

create a working group made up of older and younger members I made last year may or may not be the best way of going about what has to be done now.. As the UN itself, we too must consider what we do and how we do it in a period of social time when the organizational ways to secure peace, security and universal human rights in all regions of the world require the attention of us all.. Who would have thought that in the 21st century not all citizens would have universal suffrage in the countries in which they live? Clearly, there is still work to be done and women of all ages in IAW can contribute to how we do it. I therefore recommend the following: .

1. The Board continue to facilitate and publicize IAW, affiliates and members intergenerational activities such as the mentoring caucus at the CSW which provides an excellent example of how women of all ages can be treated with respect and dignity for the good of all..
2. The Board request that a letter from IAW be sent to the President of the GA and the chair of the 3<sup>rd</sup> committee copied to the SG thanking the chair of this WG and the member states that participate in its work for developing a structure that has permitted interchanges between NGO's and member states that led to consideration of proposals and ideas before us in all their diversity. IAW, should also in this letter request the continuation of the open ended GA high level working group addressing the protection of the human rights of older persons as it has important work yet to do needed to fulfill its mandate.
3. The Board recommends that IAW develops a consultation with CEDAW the implementation of GR 27. The timing of this consultation should take into account the review and evaluation of the human rights treaty bodies system currently taking place especially in regard to future reporting procedures that CEDAW and other treaty bodies may use to collect the data that CEDAW considers which are needed in both country and NGO shadow reports.
4. Subcommittee on Older Women. The NGO subcommittee on older women (SCOW) as the New York NGO CSW wanted is now housed in the NY Committee on Ageing. I represent IAW on it. SCOW with the support of the NGO COA EC intends to develop a parallel event on violence against older women at the CSW which IAW has been asked to co-sponsor. I recommend we do so as we will be at the table when the plans for this event and the choice of speakers takes place..
5. Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. Given the attention that will be paid to the review and implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, in this year, . IAW ask its affiliates and members to take note of their country reports, research and recommendations as the 10 year review and evaluation process takes place.. Regional UN member state meetings, and NGO forums are also being held to which IAW is sending representatives. IAW will also send representatives to the Madrid meeting as well as to the meetings that will take place at UN HQ in conjunction with the Commission on Social Development. We therefore have the opportunity to observe diversity as well as similarity in the way in which the ageing of women is given meaning during this process and to develop, if we chose, our own IAW plan of action on Ageing for consideration at next year's Board and membership meeting..
6. IAW develop parallel events and caucuses at the Commission on Social Development similar to those held at the Commission on Women. As our statement to the 2012 Commission on Social Development illustrates, this Commission turns attention to issues of great interest and an IAW proposal for a parallel event at it would be welcomed by the co-chair of the NGO forum who is also co-chair of SCOW..
7. IAW consider developing its own expert group meeting to address the issues before us re older women in the coming year.

In closing, I would like to thank our President, past President and Secretariat for the consideration and support they have given me. . I look forward to the comments and contributions of all of you as



we work together to address the complex issues before us. I deeply regret that I cannot be with you due to circumstances beyond my control and send you all my best wishes

### ***Written statement for the high level session of ECOSOC, July 2012***

One way to promote productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth at all levels for achieving the MDG's is by investing in women and girls.

It is generally accepted that the majority of poor people across the world are women. Poor women are particularly disadvantaged even in relation to poor men in their own societies because of inequalities in power between the two sexes which help create and perpetuate women's poverty. Poverty means ill health and premature death, social exclusion, lack of access to basic services, having no say to basic decisions that affect them, vulnerability to violence. Poor people have no choices with what they can do with their lives. But on top of all that women have to contend with systematic discrimination against them. Discrimination against women causes vast poverty and perpetuates it.

Empowerment of women is therefore part of the solution to the problem. To that effect we have to work hard to change gender stereotypes so that women's rights are established/do not only exist on paper.

Unfortunately economic recession has had a disproportionate negative effect on women's right to work. In the formal sector women were already facing greater job insecurity and lower wages and as a result they were harder hit.

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Unfortunately economic recession has had a disproportionate negative effect on women's right to work. In the formal sector women were already facing greater job insecurity and lower wages and as a result they were harder hit.

Women have also emerged as the flexible labour force by excellence for the highly competitive labour intensive sector of the global economy. Flexible labour can be drawn upon or dropped depending on market conditions, relegating these jobs to the informal sector without any job security or benefits.

As a result of the economic crisis a major decline in the trade and manufacturing sector took place resulting from reduced consumption. The effect on women's vulnerable jobs was tremendous. Millions of women lost their jobs.

Increasing unemployment and decreasing household incomes increases unpaid work including care-giving mostly done by women and girls, and forces women to turn to or remain in informal employment.

Women also tend to be most affected by cuts in public spending which affect sectors like education, health, food subsidies and sanitation which are essential services to households and families and can provide the support women need. Social spending enables well being and opportunities and can play a fundamental role in combating poverty, in particular women's poverty.

There is also a need to support women's rights to work by recognizing and making more visible unpaid work performed by women. We should reduce its burden on them by promoting equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women in care-giving.

As a response to the crisis countries must work to enhance women's productive capacity, support income generating activities and ensure that microfinance goes to women.

Women need to participate fully in the decision making processes in order to ensure attention to gender perspectives in policy responses to the financial crisis. States should take measures to ensure a gender approach in the design and implementation of recovery measures. Recovery measures should prioritize investments in education and skills development for women provide investments

in sectors where women make up a considerable proportion of the labour force and undertake budgeting to ensure that women benefit equally from public investments.

Investing in women and girls is fundamental not only to gender equality and women's empowerment but essential to poverty reduction, development and the achievement of the MDG's. The crisis is an opportunity to rethink the economic order. We need to move towards an order that would have as its function the survival of humanity in a human way. Solidarity based and justice oriented economic order that would promote gender equality and human rights for women and men, and that would give preference to provision for all and cooperation over unlimited growth and maximizing profit contributes to the durability of society.

We don't know at this moment what the outcome of Rio+20 will be, we strongly oppose all language that goes back on human rights. We know and regret that the CSW did not come to agreed conclusions due to references to gender-equality and reproductive health and rights. We think that, as well as our future, the future of the United Nations is at stake when we cannot rely on it to protect agreed language and binding conventions.

***L.C. Versteegen, president.***

### **Feminization of Poverty and the Financial/Economic Crisis**

**Statement submitted by *INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN (IAW)* in consultative  
status with ECOSOC**

**to the 50<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission for Social Development  
New York 1. – 12. February 2012**

It is generally accepted that the majority of poor people across the world are women. Of the estimated 1.1 billion poor people in the world 60-70% is women.

Poverty means ill health and premature death, social exclusion, lack of access to basic services, having no say to basic decisions that affect them, vulnerability to violence. Poor people have no choices with what they can do with their lives. But on top of all that women have to contend with systematic discrimination against them. Discrimination against women causes vast poverty and perpetuates it.

For example in many countries women are prevented by traditional custom and law from owning land which deprives them of applying for loans using the land as collateral. This makes it harder for them to climb out of the poverty trap.

Poor women are particularly disadvantaged even in relation to poor men in their own societies. But why is this so. Inequalities in power between women and men help create and perpetuate women's poverty.

If poor women's deprivation is a matter of grossly unequal power relations than the process of empowerment of women is part of the solution to the problem. How can this empowerment can take place? By enabling poor women to exercise their human rights as a legal and political tool to bring about social justice.

As an example we can refer to poor black women in South Africa who marched against the poor laws and participated in the struggle against apartheid and racism. In the US black women were very active in poor black churches in urban areas and played a role and continue to do so in advocacy for social development policies.

Taking a rights perspective on women's poverty we see poor women as claimants of justice, as economic agents, agents of positive change and not helpless charity cases.

However the problem is that very often women's rights are invisible. They may exist on paper but they mean little if the behavior and attitudes that so often underlie women's human rights abuses are ignored. We have to work hard to change gender stereotypes within the family, in schools, in work, in politics, in the economy.

Unfortunately, women, particularly poor women, are experiencing further violations of their human rights as a result of the current crisis which itself combines multiple crises, that is a global economic recession, the devastating effects of climate change and an ongoing food and energy crisis.

Because of ingrained discrimination and structural disadvantage women have restricted access to services and social protection which help to deal with the shocks of such crises and are thus exposed to increased risk with the result that they fall further into disadvantage, exclusion and non respect of their human rights.

Economic recession in many developed and developing countries has a disproportionate negative effect on women's right to work. In the formal sector women were already facing discrimination with greater job insecurity and lower wages than men and as a result were the first to lose their jobs when the crisis hit.

Increasing unemployment and decreasing household incomes increases unpaid work, including care-giving mostly done by women and girls, and forces women to turn to vulnerable and informal employment. The over-presentation of women in insecure forms of work undermines women's rights, perpetuates gender inequalities in societies and limits the prospects for sustainable economic progress.

Moreover, economic recession is putting pressure on families and creates conditions associated with increased domestic/intimate relationship violence. Migrant women also face a heightening sense of job insecurity thus making them more vulnerable to abuse.

Women need to participate fully in the decision making processes in order to ensure attention to gender perspectives in policy responses to the financial crisis. States should take measures to ensure a gender approach in the design and implementation of recovery measures.

There is a need to support women's right to work by recognizing and making more visible unpaid work performed by women. We should reduce its burden on them by promoting equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women in care-giving.

Recovery measures should promote women's economic and social rights by prioritizing investments in education and skills development for women, enhancing women's productive activity, ensuring that microfinance goes to them, providing investments in sectors where women make up a considerable proportion of the labour force and undertaking gender budgeting to ensure that women benefit equally from public investments.

The crisis is an opportunity to rethink the economic order. We need to move towards an order that would have as its function the survival of humanity in a human way. Solidarity based and justice oriented economic order that would promote gender equality and human rights for women and men, and that would give preference to provision for all and cooperation over unlimited growth and maximizing profit

**Lyda VERSTEGEN**  
**IAW President**

**Joanna MANGANARA**

## **UNESCO**

### **Monique Bouaziz and Danielle Levy, IAW representatives to UNESCO**

#### **Meeting of the Committee on Non-Governmental Partners (NGPs) of the Executive Board of UNESCO - February 28, 2012**

In the new architecture of UNESCO, Non Governmental Organisations are not any longer called NGOs but NGPs, Non-Governmental Partners.

Instead of belonging to three categories (operational, formal consultative and formal associate) they now fall into two categories namely consultative partnership and associate partnership. IAW maintains its consultative status.

The morning of this meeting was devoted to a discussion on the implementation of the new directives and the afternoon to the presentations of projects in relation with UNESCO and to the recommendations of the committee of the Executive Board.

At the start of the meeting France made a declaration. They declared that the Syrian authorities should not be allowed to participate to the work of this committee devoted to NGOs, because of their violence against civilians. They were glad to see that the delegation was absent. When the delegation arrived, in the afternoon they left the room. Italy, Belgium and Austria agreed with France.

Mr. Eric Falt, Secretary General of UNESCO, explained, on behalf of Mrs Bokova Director General, that the relation with NGOs had been thought of, and had led to another partnership strategy to make the partnership « more accessible, more representative and more visible ». It was mostly focused on a reconstruction which reclassified the about 350 associations in relation with UNESCO. 283 had been admitted to consultative status and the rest were recommended to associative status, « with greater geographic regionalization, of these groups to widen the scope and make them more instrumental ».

Mr. Bernard Loing, the current president of the Liaison Committee added that a new agenda and a new set of rules will be established and submitted to UNESCO and to NGPs and then posted on the website.

As was the case during the last years, China backed by Venezuela and Peru argued on NGOs. They said that they « should base on mutual respect and support rights and duties to enable them to fulfill their roles. They have to stand by their set up, and comply with the member states, with the resolutions and decisions of the organisation, which should choose more competent and influential partners to strengthen the role of the states. » There should be a greater consultation of member states in the choice of NGPs. In fact, as at the previous sessions they had done their best to try to see the NGO Reporter without Borders excluded. Mr. Falt answered to them, that Reporters without Borders had been reclassified in the associative status because they belonged to the group of NGOs that had been working with UNESCO for many long years, but that he will keep them in consultative status which is their current status, and will transmit these reservations to the Plenary Conference which shall decide.

During the debate that followed Monique reminded that our INGOs work on fundamental rights; that our associations don't have much money and consequently try to choose representatives who live near international bodies headquarters and that they represent NGOs from all over the world.

In the afternoon the Presidents of different Joint Committees as well as some other Partners from the private sector and civil Society presented their projects for the biennium or at least until the new Liaison Committee is elected.

Some ideas came out :

Education is a priority at UNESCO  
Education is not the same as schooling  
Women must have access to literacy  
The focus on the family literacy is an important development  
Importance of non-formal education  
The necessary quality of learning and the need to invest in education  
We need to Integrate the culture of peace, of respect and diversity in the curricula  
agenda  
A Wish for global citizenship, understanding tolerance and environment.

The new generation of learners is facing a more difficult learning issue than the preceding one since  
There is more movements of population on an international basis.  
The problems of town suburbs has led to new questionings in the field of education. Will EFA  
(Education For All) answer them?

*The Challenge is inclusion.*

Mr. El Zahabi, Ambassador for Egypt, that was at the head of the Committee on NGOs before the  
change of Government in his country added that in this debate we are speaking of education but  
we didn't insist enough on two things:  
The objective of this debate which was to think of the way to reinforce cooperation between the  
sectors and NGOs  
How UNESCO can help reaching the Dakar objectives.  
So he asked that EFA should start a plan for the future including the work of NGOs on education, to  
try and see how to reach the Dakar objectives even after 2015. We need this type of mapping at  
regional as well as at local levels. He hopes to discuss on this at the next Executive Committee.

### **Mrs. Michelle Bachelet , UN Women Executive Director's visit to France .**

**On May 24th 2012** we have been invited at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where Mrs. Michelle  
Bachelet, on a tour to ask states to sign the Convention on Violence  
Against Women, had wanted to meet a few NGOs. Only a few NGO  
Presidents had been invited such as those of La Clef, Amnesty  
International and the Ligue des Droits de l'homme, but thanks to  
Monique Afem was included. There, Mrs. Bachelet explained to us  
that she had neither the power nor the funds « to build a human  
standard », but that she had an ADVOCACY ROLE.



NGOs were invited to ask questions, from which came out that

217 M women don't have access to contraceptives and lots of mothers  
die from child infection.

Education is very important for girls in the present as well as for the future generations.

It is necessary to fight against any resolution excluding women from their rights , their inheritance  
and their land's rights.

We must refuse any legislation, everywhere, that excludes women. Mrs Bachelet is arguing for  
sensitivity about migration in Europe at the moment, specially in the Northern countries, where to  
get a visa, a married woman needs to stay three years in the country, with the same man, in the  
same house. She can't leave him, even if he hits her, without running the risk of being expelled  
from the country



No cultural relativism is acceptable

Another challenge, includes grassroots women's access to the internet. We also need simple ways to get near the little people who need us more

The problem of "sexual Apartheid" at the London Olympics was also raised, since the covered woman athletes have little chance to win. This is contrary to the Olympic Charter that puts every athlete on the same footing. To combat this, a demonstration will take place in front of the Olympic Committee headquarters in London, on July 25<sup>th</sup>. There The Charter will be burnt in front of all. This will be followed by a concert in defense of the rights of these women athletes. Mrs. Bachelet was offered a book on these problems by one of its authors Annie Sugier. The problem of the trafficking of prostitutes to the London Olympic site was also raised.

## ***EXECUTIVE – AUXILIARY OFFICERS***

### **Secretary General Lene Pind**



#### **Communications in IAW**

The secretariat is the centre of communications in IAW together with IWN and the Newsletter, of course. I still think that there is too little communication with our members, individuals as well as organizations. We need to improve in this respect, and I need the help of this meeting to find ways how to do it. What can we do to make it interesting for members and organizations to inform us of their activities and to tell us about their main concerns.

I attach the document "Who must communicate with whom about what" to my report, hoping that members will follow the general ideas of that document.

[www.iawomen.ning.com](http://www.iawomen.ning.com)

With technical and financial assistance from Heleen Kist, IAW now has a social network for members only. The whole idea of having such a network is to improve communications in IAW, to involve more members in discussions, to have better contact with individual members, and to raise the level of information among members.

Iawomen.ning.com had a very slow start, but things have started to improve over the past months. More members have signed up, and we have had a lively discussion especially about 5WC. I encourage every member that I am in contact with to sign up for iawomen.ning.com. But we can do a lot better.

Lyda and I decided to put news on iawomen on a regular basis, and we will continue to do so, so here is the possibility of following what is going on among the members of the executive, and it particular to follow what initiatives are taken or supported and what statements signed.

#### **Other social networks**

On one occasion when I was working with Arina Angerman we discovered that many of our member organizations and individual members have a facebook profile. Some also have a twitter account. Our Australian hostesses have established a blog, a twitter account and a facebook profile as part of the preparations for this meeting.

Using these social networks is a very good way of marketing IAW. The Danish Women's Society has a very active facebook profile, and this has attracted a lot of attention. I myself use facebook to give information about IAW among other things. It creates response.

I am setting up a facebook page for IAW. When I finish it, I'll invite you to "like" it and contribute to it.

### The booklet

Getting the booklet ready for our annual meetings is one of my jobs. It is a favourite job because I think it is important. Every year the booklet tells us who we are and what we do. And it is amazing how many places we are active from grassroots level to the UN. However, I wish that more organizations as well as would want individuals to contribute and I ask the advice of this meeting about how to do that. What would make it interesting for members, individuals as well as organizations, to send a report of their activities?

### The daily routine

My daily routine is answering emails, distributing news, accrediting members for meetings at the UN or other places, reading the news on iawomen.ning.com , preparing for our next meeting, reminding people of deadlines, trying to involve people in work , in short – keeping the lines of communication open.

### Thanks

Finally I wish to thank Danielle Levy for her good cooperation in translating important documents into French.



### Who has to communicate with whom about what and how – internal communication

<b>Who</b>	<b>With whom</b>	<b>About what</b>	<b>How</b>
The executive committee	The executive The Board Members who Committees	Decisions Preparations for meetings Actions Problems/ challenges	Email with an IAW signature Ning - group
President	Secretary Executive Reps Convenors (Regional) Vice presidents Committee s	Decisions Preparations for meetings Actions New initiatives?	Email lawomen.ning.com
Secretary	Executive President Reps Convenors Members/ contacts pers Board members	Preparations for and follow-up on meetings Calls for action Sharing of information Asking for information	Email  Email and ning  Ning group
	Everybody	Final programmes for meetings, events	Ning
International reps	Convenors Secretary President Executive vice president Members via secretary Other NGOs	Statements Cooperation Information Issues	Email Ning group

	Editors		
Commission convenors	Commission members International reps Secretary President Executive vice president Other NGOs Members via secretary Editors	Statements Cooperation Information Issues Resolutions	Email Ning group
The Board	The Board The secretary	Follow – up on the outcome of meetings Information about board member activities	Ning
The Treasurer	President Friends of the Treasurer Auditor Members / invoices National collectors		Email
Regional vice presidents and coordinators	Regional members Other NGOs in their region President Secretary Editors	Activities in the region Regional issues IAW initiatives in the region	Ning
Editors	Internal reps Convenors Members Membership officer Executive	Information Contributions to the publication	Email
Membership officer	The Board Secretary Members	Information about members	Email
Members	Congress Board Membership officer	Activities Change of email, presidency etc	Email / comments / blog posts at iawomen.ning Reports

Lene , Lyda, Arina

Changes: Tuesday, 27 October 2009, 30/10/09, **29/03/2012**

**Good practice about using emails (from Alison):**

1. When you forward an e-mail, DELETE all the other addresses that appear in the body of the message (at the top). That's right, DELETE them.
2. Whenever you send an e-mail to more than one person, do NOT use the To or Cc fields for adding e-mail addresses. Always use the BCC blind carbon copy field for listing the e-mail addresses. This way the people you send to will only see their own e-mail address.
3. Remove any 'FW' in the subject line. You can re-name the subject.

## ***IAW MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT 2012.***

***Pat Richardson*** [law.membership@womenalliance.org](mailto:law.membership@womenalliance.org)

**It gives me great pleasure to present my sixteenth Annual Report as Membership Secretary.**

As most of you know, the administration of the IAW is done by volunteers working from their own computers, photocopiers, scanners and homes at different ends of the earth. Our President, Lyda Verstegen is in The Netherlands, our Secretary General, Lene Pind, is in Denmark, & our Treasurer Inge Jonsdottir is in Iceland.. I work very closely with our email newsletter editor, Joke Sebus in The Netherlands and Priscilla Todd, the editor of our Journal, 'The International Womens News' in Melbourne. My duties keep me very busy, answering requests and enquiries, mainly by email. As I am online all the time, I endeavour to answer requests immediately.

I keep the IAW master files, plus the printers Excel address files and endeavour to keep them up to date...I send copies of them to the executive at regular intervals for their information and for their work. I send back-up copies to Priscilla Todd as well... and also to my own Hotmail address. I have just installed a new backup external disk with a larger capacity on my new computer.

I would like to thank all those individual members and the Collectors in countries with a large number of members, who keep me up to date on who has paid and also any changes of address of our members or organisations...I like the journals to reach their new homes safely and also, Joke and I see it as our business to keep the lines of communication open, especially in the delivery of our monthly email newsletter. We have worked together since the inception of the monthly email newsletter in 1998 following our Board meeting in Malmo...we had a handful of email addresses then, but now reach all around the planet with hundreds of email addresses...which are kept on a very confidential basis..

I would like to thank Alison Brown, our wonderful web content manager, who stores the backup Excel Printers file...Also, to Rosy Weiss, my heartfelt thanks for her help and advice over many years. I will be updating my auxiliary reports on membership status for the Board...but FYI, we are mailing out 750 copies of the journal three times a year...

Also, I would like to thank my new assistant Membership Secretary & IAW Board member, Sheila Deaves, for taking over the administration of our Subscription libraries...although there are not many of them, they are reasonably complicated...as they pay through Subscription agencies and involve a lot of paperwork.

Also, **as I am also the representative for individual IAW members**, I will be hoping to meet as many individual members as possible in Melbourne...we have new members in Australia who will be attending for the first time.

### ***Report IAW Newsletter July 2011- September 2012*** ***Joke Sebus***



The electronic newsletter reaches more than 500 IAW members and IAW friends in 60 countries. It is put up promptly on the IAW website on [www.womenalliance.org](http://www.womenalliance.org) by web-master Sanja Scharf, which is appreciated very much. The latest newsletter is always to be found in a yellow rectangle with 'Recent updates' on the IAW website. Maybe that rectangle can be moved **Equal Rights** upward a bit, so it will be more visible.

#### **IAW Newsletters**

We have mailed a newsletter nearly every month and sometimes one extra on special occasions. A team that consists of Priscilla Todd (editing), Pat Richardson (administration) and myself (composing) is taking care of the process. We keep the lay-out very simple in black and white, so it will be easy to open for all.

This year we started mailing the newsletter in .pdf instead of .doc, because .pdf carries less kilobytes. The original idea was that news from .doc was easy to copy for national websites and newsletters. We got no complaints on those .pdf newsletters, so we can consider this experiment as successful. The .doc version we keep available, just in case.



The next experiment can be adding colour and pictures. We already did so in the Talking Point: 'Analysis of the outcome of Rio+20,' by Natalia Kostus (*see picture*). There were no comments like: "I could not open it". Or: "It was not possible to print it in black and white". Even so, we try to keep the content of the IAW newsletter as actual and concise as possible, and on six pages or less, depending on the news.

### Talking Points

We have sent around four Talking Points and kindly thank the IAW contributors. On:

- \* Feminization of Poverty and the Financial/Economic Crisis - November 2011
- \* Feminization of Poverty and the Financial/Economic Crisis and MDG 1, 3 and 5 - April 2012
- \* Analysis of the Outcome of Rio+20 - July 2012
- \* Women's Human Rights: The Arms Trade Treaty and CEDAW - Panel Discussion - July 2012

### Content

In six pages we cover the news in short summaries, always starting with news of IAW itself.

We try to focus on:

- \* *CEDAW - the Commission on the Status of Women - the Human Rights Council - the Security Council - the UN and UN Women - actions of the women's movement*
- \* *women in parliamentary chambers and in leadership positions*
- \* *climate change, the role of women in the environment and in sustainable development*
- \* *poverty, the MDGs and in particular Goal 1, 3 and 5*
- \* *resolution 1325 of the Security Council, peace and security processes*
- \* *violence against women, in its many forms*
- \* *health, the fight against HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, polio etc.*

Priscilla Todd has again done a marvellous job editing all the newsletters I mail her. She edits my Dutchy English and puts in poignant headers. Pat Richardson has been patiently writing members whose e-mails are suddenly bouncing. E-mail addresses can change, quota's can get exceeded and computers can crash. So, many thanks for both my team mates for their support during 2011/2012. I also kindly thank all the IAW members who have been sending interesting articles, issues for Talking Points and actual news. In particular I like to mention Anjana Basu from India, who is sending me several articles every month!

## **Report of the Web Content Manager to the IAW International Meeting 2012**

### **Alison Brown**

The upkeep of the website has been relatively easy this period, as we have suffered no hackers recently (just an occasional empty comment on the blog, which cannot be deleted because it is empty!)

The list of organizational members needs to be updated by the Treasurer (the Membership Officer is also dependant on her for current information about who has paid their dues and, hence, is a member in good standing) and deadbeats cut from our rolls as they appear to the world. I might mention that information on the current heads of the member organizations would also be useful to the Secretary General and Treasurer of the IAW as well as to any national collectors.

A large number of communiqués from the Society of Women of Ashraf are coming to [arachnae@womenalliance.org](mailto:arachnae@womenalliance.org). Their plight is disturbing and their need for assistance is undoubted. However, as the editorial policy of the IAW website is to publicize the activities of the IAW itself and to be a platform for news from our affiliates and associates, I am not, in good conscience, able



to place them all. Our website is our face to the world and it should not be taken over by a non-member organization which is providing masses of content. If they were an affiliate member, I would have, in collaboration with our excellent webwizard, Sanja Scharf, set up a special page for their organization and published their releases regularly. As it is, I sincerely wish that our actual member organizations, especially those without their own web presence, would be so communicative.

I repeat my offer to set up sub-sites on the IAW website for member organizations which do not yet have their own web presence. A page of information: short history, purposes, projects and a few pictures will be cheerfully posted and maintained as a benefit of membership. I would be grateful for updates from our organizational members if they change the URL (web address) of their websites and for new URLs from members whose websites I do not know about.

Finally a word about the blog: IWA (international woman activist) has been in hibernation recently. Responses to her posts have been limited to spam and my attempts to give fellow IAW members a platform for their ideas have been met with silence. The discussion function of IWA's Blog is being filled at iawomen.ning.com, although comment would be more open at the blog, since reactions can be spontaneous and no registration is required.

At the Congress, the IAW president expressed the desire to have the domain of our website changed to iawomen.org. While that alone would mean a great deal of work for me and cause some confusion, it might be a good idea to acquire that domain and either hold it in reserve OR have both URLs pointing to the same website until we are ready to make a decision of either, or. The US account currently has sufficient funds to support such an action.

I close with many thanks to Sanja Scharf, webwizard with intelligence and foresight. Our website would not be possible without her.

#### **REPORT OF AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBER**

SNIGDHA NARAIN , NEW DELHI , INDIA

Women with a mission – women on the march . God helps those who help themselves .It is now time that we the women , creation of God almighty ceased to suffer in silence , suffer and live in agony forever . Women are the natural preserver of life , which grows from within them ..

There is something radically wrong with the entire structure of human relationship . We underestimate our moral strength and power . Once we realize our inner strength and power ,freedom from suffering would end ., light will come and dark clouds will vanish .

Communications procedure of the commission , on the status of women in every organisation round the world , is to fight injustice , discrimination for gender , unethical and corrupt practices . Delhi Womens League , oldest non govt organization ( N G O ) Of which I am a life member . Also affiliated to All Indian Womens Confrence , Guild of Service , a very old NGO , is in consultation status with The Department of Public information and Economic , Social Council of United Nations .

I am also Member of the Complaints Committee of The Parliament of India ( Lok Sabha ) . Our first lady Speaker is MRS MEIRA KUMAR , is a guiding beacon for the good of society and ever ready to promote the cause of women . I am steadfast to do my very best for this cause . Effort in this direction is aimed at the correcting following wrongs . – To fight injustice for the neglected sections of our society by following these guide lines .

A Abuse of the elders in their old age , at the eve of their life , by their own kith and kin , particularly the old ladies , their mothers .

B Physical torture .

C Psychological , emotional accusations by ridiculing of elder people verbally , or showing total disrespected .

D Fraudelently and by forcibly obtaining power of attorney and throwing them out of their own house by force , making them languish on the street , as beggars .This the unfortunate stigma of our society in some of the states ..

E Thus totally abandoned , with unimaginable plight that these elderly have to go through penniless , without shelter , left to stagnate and decay to die without even a hope of last rites

Mission partially successful , taken by us is in whatever possible way we can emiolrate their misery by providing ; -

A Provide shelter , however simple it may be . which they feel is their home with both love and care .

B Provide medical care hygiene , also clean surrounding and train them to take care of themselves ..

C Constant counselling for psychological and emotional well being .

D Provide miniscule financial help , by way of pocket money .Good healthy food and meals , dal , rice, chappatis with fresh green vegetables, etc .

E Lot of emphasis is also given to the spiritual aspect , prayers , divine singing , what we call BHAJAN in India .Singing of hymns , meditation and yoga .

F Keep them busy in self help activities in the premises like cooking , gardening , making small items , like incense sticks to keep them engaged , while making small pocket money .

G Primary education , simple letters in own language , minor sums and ability to read letters etc .

H Rather than idle and brood over their sorrows , bring a little meaning in their life .

Besides providing and looking after the old and sick elders , also take care of younger generation by providing them vocational training and good education .. Besides normal studies in middle and higher secondary level to proper high school and helping them for self employment .

A Computer training with certificate rendered after six months .

B Cutting , stiching , tailoring , making sanitary napkins and bandages by selling them to make good money . Also making siple garments like pyjamas .Those elderly can also join this activity . Also helps them to pay for material like cloth , needles etc for further help to meet their own requirement .jamas .

C Give them basic education upto class twelve , or secondary education .

D Nursing training and first aid , including a certificate course .

E Skill training like nursery , gardening and learning ecological aspects .

F Teach elders how to fill a money order form , used in India to remit small amounts through our post office .Also to read and write .

To fulfill the above mission , Guild of Service a very old N G O , is doing most commendable work at VRINDAVAN in UTTAR PRADESH STATE in INDIA . Approximately 100 widows who were abandoned by their own kith and kin to starve on the streets are given , not only shelter , but also a meaning to their life . Recently Madam Ophrah Winfry , from U S A visited VRINDAVAN and showed her empathy for the plight of widows ..

Besides taking full care and look after the sick elderly people we have also taken care of the younger generation , specially the girl child , because discrimination against child begins even before her birth .It starts with sex determination , abortion or female feticide , leading to falling child sex ratio , which is evident from census data for 0 – 6 years .. Infant mortality rate is higher amongst girls than boys .. Another reason is because of malnutrition , poor hygiene and lack of proper treatment – thus mortality rate for females is much higher compared to male child ..

We are trying our best to stop this sort of cruelty .We are trying our best to provide equal right and status by giving them training and empowering them .. Some of our girls are doing better than boys academically and all round activities . Bringing lot of joy and happiness to their old parents , N G O S and work shown by our teachers fraternity .

Our Indian scriptures have highlighted over the ages , the concept of SHAKTI ( Strength ) and LOVE being the forte of womanhood , without whom the creation is not possible . Ladies young or old should be treated with utmost love , care and respect

When there is expression of love and reverence for the LORD , in the work we do , then there is JOY in the HEART . The Bhagwat Gita , most revered scripture of India .

With warm regards and good wishes for success of the MEETING at MELBOURNE , submitting this brief report .

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