

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN
ALLIANCE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES

International Meeting

Switzerland June 11 - 19

2009

Vol II:

Reports from

- International representatives
- The regions
- Commission convenors
- Communications unit

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International representatives

New York

Irini Nike Sarlis

Kay Fraleigh, a former Chair of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women for a decade, has been covering the CSW and CEDAW meetings, and is credited with establishing the closer relationship between the CEDAW Experts and NGOs, by organizing successful lunchtime events during the Sessions. They provided a lively forum for the exchange of ideas and opinions, and created an atmosphere of trust that facilitated that exchange.

Many of the friendships developed during these gatherings have lasted for decades, and have established the IAW as a key, vigilant and knowledgeable NGO on women's issues.

Of the countries that have ratified the Convention, the designated ones for this year's periodic review presented their Reports, with the focus on Violence Against Women, and in particular, Domestic Violence, but also some traditional practices that damage the health and compromise the human rights of women and girls. Equally interesting were the traditional Shadow Reports presented by NGOs, that provided additional insights.

The IAW sponsored or co-sponsored several side events, submitted separately, during the CSW, the Convention on Accessibility of Persons with Disabilities, the Commission on Social Development, and the Commission on Sustainable Development.

The New York team appreciated having so many IAW members and colleagues here for the CSW meeting.

Irini Sarlis has been following HABITAT and Environment issues and has been active in the NGO Committee on Human Settlements (former Chair), the NGO Committee on Sustainable Development, the Climate Change Working Group, and the Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns.

The CSVGC, with the IAW as one of its 20 EcoSoc co-founders, has established the last week in October---October 24 being UN Day---as the Week of Spirituality at the United Nations, and is planning its third year program now. A subcommittee is working on establishing observances of the International Day of Peace, on September 21, with worldwide celebrations and cease-fire in war zones. Another sub-committee is working on Ministries/Departments of Peace, and another on Campus Peace Centers. Ambassador and former Under-Secretary-General Anwarul Karim Chowdhury has been working with us on these issues as Advisor.

We have participated in the DPI NGO Planning Committee for the Annual Conference, "For Peace and Development: Disarm Now!", in Mexico City, in September, and events convened to honor the theme of 2009, The International Year of Reconciliation, as well as the UN Peacebuilding Commission.

Having founded the Science & Technology Caucus at the Earth Summit Prep Com in 1992, this year we will convene the NGO Committee on Science, Technology & Culture, to examine the many issues arising out of their impact on our lifestyles and livelihoods.

We have attended the major meetings organized by ECO/SOC, NGLS, UN-HABITAT, UNEP, UNDP, UNESCO, UNU, GAID (Global Alliance for ICT and Development) Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples, and UN CSD.

The latter, charged with the follow-up of the implementation of Agenda 21, established at the Earth Summit in Rio, in 1992, has been meeting in two-year cycles, on Review, and Policy. This year, CSD 17, is on the thematic cluster for the implementation cycle 2008-2009---policy session, on Agriculture, Rural Development, Land, Drought, Desertification, and Africa.

There are Stakeholders divided in Major Groups, and they are in Dialogues with the Bureau and at the end, the Ministers:

Women, Children & Youth, Scientific & Technological Community, Indigenous Peoples, Local Authorities, Farmers, Workers & Trade Unions, Business & Industry, and NGOs. As women are affected by the status of all of these, the Women's group daily meeting is quite animated.

The issues of access to land, land tenure, access to credit and markets is one we have focused on, and UN Habitat's Security of Tenure Program is one that has been of help. GMOs have been a testy issue, still unresolved, because the text is still being contested. Thankfully, the Chair, the Netherlands Minister of Environment is a very capable woman, or the whole thing would have collapsed, now and at the IPM, earlier in the year.

The High Level Ministerial Session concludes CSD 17 (May 4-15)

The 2nd Conference on Sustainable Urbanization in the Information Age was on the Role of Infrastructure in Metropolitan Development, convened by GAID, UN-HABITAT the Regional Plan Association, and the American Institute of Architects, NY Chapter, today.

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A wonderful surprise was that at the morning Major Groups Strategy/Information meeting, on May 7th, DESA presented its integrated Civil Society System (iCSO) an interactive database of 12,000 organizations, and demonstrated it by using the IAW as a test case, to a packed room. Please, look it up: <http://www.un.org/civilsociety>, and esa.civilsociety@un.org.

Ann Barber taught women Medical Doctors in Uganda last year, and also contributed to community solar cookers there.

Berit Stanton has been an active member of the Women's International Forum, which is composed of Delegates' wives, and organizes monthly programs at the UN, under the S-G's auspices.

Judy Gordon:

I became an IAW Representative at the UN, NYC in January 2009. In consultation with our main representative Kay Fraleigh, my own activities have benefited from her

wisdom which shapes what I do in the context of the existing division of labor among our UN NYC team...This report covers the period from January 1, 2009-May 5, 2009.

1. IAW representative to the Committee of Mental health. As the convener of the working group on Mental Health, Racism and Related Intolerances of the NGO Committee of the NGO Committee on Mental Health. In February, I catalyzed a program entitled Mental Health, Emergency Medicine, and Human Rights: Aging in a World of All ages in co-operation with the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights, UN, NYC and the NGO Committee in Ageing which IAW co-sponsored. This program which took place during the Commission on Social Development was in honor of the memory of Dr. Mila Rainoff, who, as a graduating Yale Medical student, had suggested its focus prior to her tragic death last May. Follow-up papers and recommendations are in process.

2. Activities in conjunction with UN Commissions. In February, I spoke on a panel at the UN during the meeting of the Commission on Social Development organized by Denise Scotto, FIDA in co-operation with the OHCHR, NYC. The panel addressed the UN Convention of Disability. It was co-sponsored by IAW, FIDA and the NYC OHCHR. The program mentioned above was also held during this Commission.

As mentioned in the April Newsletter, the IAW co-sponsored and organized parallel events at this year's meeting of the CSW, two of which addressed the priority theme: Shared responsibility of men and women for care giving, especially in the context of HIV/AIDS. One IAW event which I was asked to moderate directed attention to case studies of HIV/AIDS in African countries. This event provided an opportunity for those who wished to have their say by speaking about case examples from their own countries. All presented benefited from contributions of African participants who raised questions of great importance such as the impact of NGO's not from the country who do not know the community and yet pick a "partner" that funds one project's activities while other similar projects volunteers are neither funded nor recognized. The needs to address the problems of women and men as caregivers in polygamist marriages and in rural villages in the context of the AIDS pandemic were also highlighted. By their interventions, those who spoke challenged stereotypes that turn attention away from the challenges of shared care giving in the context of the AIDS pandemic. The discussion, once begun, provided much for IAW to build upon as it illustrated the wisdom of an International organization such as ours which had national affiliates who knew the realities and possibilities of their countries relevant to the issues the CSW addresses. The gender task force of the NGO Committee on Mental Health to which I belong organized a panel at the CSW meeting. IAW co-sponsored this parallel event. The presentors included a Nigerian member of FIDA. I also attended the IAW session on rural women which our President chaired which contributed to our understandings of the challenges and opportunities for equal responsibilities and equal rights of rural women and men. In addition, I attended the international Sociological Association event which addressed peace making and the implementation of SC 1325 held during the CSW.

3. Human Rights and Durban Review Conference, I am a member of the NGO Committee on Human Rights, and its subcommittee on Racism. In March, I observed the program that subcommittee organized in support of the Duran Review Conference and am continuing to attend related activities that are being held after that conference as an observer. As such events are taking place this month, I will report on what is occurring

following up my report on this issue at our IAW meeting at the CSW.. I very much benefited from my on-line contacts with our Geneva representative Helene Hackstein during the DRC and look forward to our continued collaboration. I continue to work in co-operation with the NYC OHCHR office on issues and programs of joint interest to that office and IAW in consultation with our UN NYC main representative, Secretary General and President.

4. Ageing and older women. As past vice-chair of the NGO Committee on Ageing, I continue a relationship with its current chair. I follow the efforts to shape a CEDAW recommendation on older women taking account of the need to address that issue in all its complexities. taking account of IAW's valuable contributions to the conceptualization of that issue as illustrated in the interventions IAW representatives made at the women's caucus in Paris during the DPI conference commemorating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I note that Kay Fraleigh, as chair of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women and I, the vice chair of the NGO Committee on Ageing, held a consultation on older women which gave rise to a GA resolution subsequently. I have called the resolution to the attention to SCOW as it is relevant to current debates.

5. NGO Committee on the Status of Women, NYC. I am member of the NGO CSW. I will attend the program this month on Women's health on May 20 and look forward to joining the IAW Commission on Health and participating in its work at our coming meeting.

6. Communications. I forward documents of possible interest to IAW and its members to the Secretary General for distribution, if appropriate

In conclusion, I am honored to be an IAW representative and very much appreciated the support I have received during this period from our President and Secretary General. . I thanks all on the NYC team who have welcomed me as a new IAW representative and who, by focusing upon our work together, make it possible for us to maximize the contributions IAW can make to the work of the UN in this Present Now.

Soon- Young Yoon:

The IAW actively participated in the November 19-20, 2008 Workshop on Gender and Climate Change Finance. It was sponsored by the Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the Heinrich Böll Foundation North America (HBF), and marked the first official expert-level meeting on the topic. Drawing together more than 60 experts from governments, civil society, UN organizations, and the private sector, participants came together from all regions of the world to explore the major issues in the area of climate change financing and gender equality; gain knowledge on climate change financing mechanisms; identify key issues that require continuing research; develop guidelines and recommendations; and establish a plan for follow-up activities.

2. During the CSW, the IAW organized a panel on "***The Climate Change Negotiations — an Action Agenda***" as a side event at the 53rd session of the UN CSW

Tuesday, March 3, 4:30 to 6:00 PM Dag Hammarskjöld Library (DHL) Auditorium, United Nations. It was broadcast live (and is on-demand) on UN/TV: <http://www.un.org/webcast>. The event was co-sponsored by the Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA- members include the UNDP, UNEP, IUCN, Women's Environment and Development Organization and more than 20 UN agencies and civil society organizations), the Heinrich Boell Foundation, the Center for Asia-Pacific Women in Politics and the Permanent Mission of Denmark to the UN.

Geneva

Hélène Sackstein

Name: Hélène Sackstein - Geneva

Email: hsack@free.fr

International team: Health Com. And IAW Geneva Rep.

Date: 10 May 2009

Highlights

(Not in order of priority)

1. Justice and human rights
2. Democracy
3. Elimination of violence

NB: my activities for the IAW Health Commission (title: WHO Liaison for IAW) have been thoroughly reported by the Commission Convener Gudrun Haupter.

Have been elected for a second term as member of the Steering Committee of the NGO Forum for Health in Geneva

Context and summary of representation activities

- **UNCTAD:** Have attended and actively participated in the NGO consultations organized by UNCTAD dealing with trade and have promoted a human rights (and women's rights) approach to all relevant issues, particularly relating to better accountability by the private sector.
- **ILO:** Have represented IAW at the ILO for an average of 5 meetings per year other than the Labour Conference
- **WHO:** See above. In addition I have also replaced our colleague Soon Young Soon at meetings related to the monitoring of the Tobacco Convention
- **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights – OHCHR**
As Vice Chair of the NGO Committee on Human Rights (Geneva), I am in frequent direct communication with various OHCHR departments for consultation and to facilitate other NGOs' input
- **Human Rights Council – HRC:**
In order to be actively involved in NGOs' efforts to influence the structure and mission of the new HRC and have joined mainstream Human Rights NGOs to ensure better effectiveness and better visibility for IAW.
As the new HRC now sits practically uninterrupted all year long, the work involved on is very heavy and requires increasing expertise and a vast variety of fields. Statements (attached) have been made, jointly or individually on:
 - o Gender mainstreaming
Participated in the organization of a plenary panel on the issue and follow-up on the related issue of laws that discriminate against women
 - o Human rights education
Where I was involved in the drafting of several statements
 - o Health as a fundamental human rights,
Use of the UN report on maternal mortality as an entry door to women's right to health, education, and other economic, social and cultural rights.

Participated concretely - in collaboration with many other NGOs - in the organization of a plenary panel on maternal mortality and have been actively lobbying Governments for a resolution in the June 2009 session of the HRC on this issue as a means to provide an entry point to action on laws that discriminate against women. A joint statement was also prepared for the NY meeting in March 2009 of the Commission on Population and Development. Further statements are being prepared for the health Assembly later in May and the ECOSOC meeting next July where the main theme is 'Global Health.

Working directly with friendly governments on all these issues.

- Durban Review conference

Participated in the organization of a seminar on 'best practices' in collaboration with OHCHR. For this I ensured the organization of a panel on the multiple discriminations affecting women, and in particular, Roma/Sinti women in Europe with the participation of Roma MEPs

- **CEDAW**

Although it is not among my main activities, I was asked by a NY NGO to present a statement during a consultation with CEDAW experts on the feasibility of preparing a General Comment on women and ageing – Although the statement wasn't on behalf of IAW, I was introduced as IAW representative.

- **NGO networks and working Groups**

Represent IAW and participate actively in the meetings of the NGO/CSW-Geneva; WG on Health; WG on Human Rights Education; WG on violence and girls.

As noted above, I am Vice chair of the NGO Committee on HR

These Groupings are all members of CoNGO.

Again as noted, I am also member of the Steering Committee of the NGO Forum for Health – Not member of CoNGO.

Finally, I collaborate with WILPF on its Peace activities

- **Relations with Governments**

I have been asked to participate in intergovernmental consultations to prepare resolutions on various issues by the following Governments: Chile, Argentine, Brazil (relating to health); Germany, France, New Zealand (relating to gender mainstreaming); Nordic countries led by Norway (related to laws that discriminate against women) The Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (relating to the Durban Review Conference)

IAW Geneva statements

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN Economic, Social and Cultural rights

The need for rights-based approaches to health

Statement delivered to the HRC 6th session

By H  l  ne Sackstein

D day for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, (MDG) has come and gone and the MDGs remain closely related to the national strategies to reduce poverty (PRSP). Less than 10 years remain for all governments to fulfil their development commitment.

Three of the 8 goals, 8 of the 16 targets, and 18 of the 48 indicators for the attainment of the MDGs relate directly to health. Health is also an important component of several other goals. The significance of the MDGs lies in the linkages among them and better health - in all its forms – makes a major contribution to the reduction of poverty.

Development goals as well as effective poverty reduction strategies provide a vision of development in which health and education are placed squarely at the centre.

No one can claim any longer that development is just about economic growth.

However, an essential ingredient is glaringly absent: that is the urgent need to ensure that both outcomes and processes respect the **principles of universality, equality and non discrimination, participation and inclusion, and accountability for all, including the private sector.** In short, a human-rights based approach is absolutely crucial for the attainment of the MDGs and the reduction of poverty.

With regards to *the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, governments need to:*

- Address health within a **broad developmental framework based on equity, social cohesion, social protection, empowerment and participation of the poor, of women and youth in decisions which concern them directly.**
- **Strengthen public health systems.** According to the WHO, **universal access to broad-based health systems** would ensure attainment of 60% to 70% of the MDG goals related to child mortality and 60% to 80% of those related to maternal mortality.
- Support the establishment of **equitable health systems** as prerequisites to meet the goal related to **combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.** Health programmes focusing on specific conditions or diseases can only achieve full coverage and access – and promote equitable outcomes – if they contribute materially to the strengthening of health systems.
- Ensure that **earmarked health funding from private sources**, targeting short-term specific programmes such as immunization, **provide adequate funds for national public health systems** to ensure **sustainability** and to develop **independent mechanisms to monitor accountability.**

- Urgently undertake concerted international action to **curb the drain of trained health professionals from poor countries** - where shortages are increasingly acute - to rich ones with the means to train their own, in order to ensure the adequate delivery of quality health care and services in the countries of origin.
- Ensure that all development and poverty-reduction strategies are informed by an understanding of the disastrous consequences of **gender inequities** – such as early marriage, violence against women and girls, forced or unwanted sex, among others - which take an enormous socioeconomic toll.
- Place **equity concerns at the centre of health strategies and policies**. National statistics can easily hide huge disparities between the health status of different population groups and the MDGs could conceivably be achieved without improving the health of the poorest and most vulnerable who are typically the most onerous to reach.
Addressing these challenges requires a fair distribution of good quality health services which are too often concentrated in urban areas and serve a relatively better-off population.
- **Inequitable health systems could even be a cause of poverty** if health care costs push the poor or near poor into destitution, or if lack of access to care creates life-long disabilities which limit earning power.
- Take into account of the impact of **environmental factors** on human health.
- Finally, address urgently the **10/90 health research gap whereby 90% of health research funding serves the disease burden of only of 10% of the world population**.

Many of the inequities in health research stem from factors such as gender, ability to pay, race or social class.

There is massive under-investment for the needs of low- and middle-income countries as well as for poor and marginalised populations everywhere. Some areas are notoriously **under-funded** such as research on **appropriate retroviral drugs and dosage for children infected by HIV/AIDS**, research on **the social determinants of health, childhood obesity** and new forms of malnutrition, **non-communicable diseases caused by modern diets and lifestyles** and **mental health**.

This list is far from exhaustive but will hopefully provide an overview of the importance of human rights if we want to ensure that development goals are met and poverty reduction strategies effectively implemented.

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

A massive Human Rights Catastrophe: Maternal Mortality

Statement to HRC4

By Hélène Sackstein

In his excellent report on the right to the highest attainable standard of health, Mr. Hunt challenges human rights civil society organizations and health professionals alike to pay more attention to economic, social and cultural rights in general and the right to health in particular. In short, the right to health needs a boost.

One shocking example of this general lack of interest underscored in the report is maternal mortality. The report notes that each year there are 500,000 maternal deaths, or one every minute; 95% of these are in Africa and Asia and most could be avoided. The burden of this scourge falls disproportionately on women in low income countries and on women living in poverty in affluent countries.

There is no single cause of death and disability for men between the ages of 15 and 44 that is close to this magnitude and maternal mortality reveals sharp discrepancies between men and women in their enjoyment of sexual and reproductive health rights.

Maternal mortality exposes profound and multiple inequalities - global ethnic and gender.

It's not just a health issue, argues the report, it is a human rights issue which violates women's rights to life, health, non-discrimination.

Since 1980, the WG on Enforced Disappearances has taken up about 50,000 while cases there have been well over 10 million maternal deaths during the same period.

The report encourages human rights NGOs to campaign against maternal mortality and other egregious health and human rights issues just as vigorously as they taken up the death penalty, torture, or disappearances. This massive human rights catastrophe, has not attracted the attention it deserves. NGOs have now duly taken note of the challenge.

Fighting maternal mortality could become a powerful vehicle for strengthening health systems accessible to all, thus providing a concrete entry point for the implementation of the full scope of the right to health and all related rights on which it is dependant such as the rights to drinking water, to food, to housing, to privacy, to education, to information, to healthy occupational and environmental conditions, etc.

It is also hoped that a concerted effort to fight maternal mortality will serve as an equally powerful vehicle and entry point to better integrate the human rights of women in the implementation of the full range of economic social and cultural rights for all special groups on the Council's agenda such as minorities, indigenous peoples, children, migrants, etc. and as indicator of this integration in the work of the Council.

To the UN Commission on population and development – 16 January 2009

Statement submitted by Action Canada for Population and Development, Amnesty International, Center for Reproductive Rights, Center for Women's Global Leadership, DAWN, Family Care International, Federation for Women and Family Planning, Human Rights Watch, International Alliance of Women, International Planned Parenthood Federation—Western Hemisphere Region, International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAP Asia Pacific), Ipas, and Physicians for Human Rights, all civil society organizations with ECOSOC status.

1. As civil society organizations concerned with women's health and human rights, we welcome the theme for the 42nd session of the Commission on Population and Development on "The contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals."
2. For the past decade and a half, the ICPD Programme of Action has provided guiding principles for a global agenda on family planning, reproductive and sexual health, sustainable development, women's empowerment, and gender equality, as these issues relate to population and development policies. The principles set out in the Programme of Action, which are grounded in international human rights law, are highly relevant to the fulfillment of the commitments made through the United Nations Millennium Development Campaign, which sets out specific goals and indicators in many of the areas covered by the Programme of Action. As a first and general recommendation, the organizations submitting this statement therefore urge UN Member States to renew their focus on non-discrimination and autonomy as human rights. The conception and implementation of all population and development policies should be permeated by a concern for the guarantee of these rights.
3. This statement is specifically concerned with the elimination of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity. The organizations submitting this statement recommend detailed attention to the 15 Principles spelled out in the Programme of Action as relevant to the fulfillment of Millennium Development Goal 5 (MDG 5) on improving maternal health. In this connection, we call particular attention to principles 1, 3, 4, and 8, which reaffirm the interconnections between human dignity and rights; the need to eliminate all kinds of violence against women and to ensure women's ability to control their own fertility; the importance of guaranteeing universal access to reproductive health services; and the fact that lack of development may not be invoked to justify the abridgement of human rights. A human rights-centered approach is imperative to ensure effective, equitable, sustainable, empowering, participatory and adequately resourced programs and policies to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity. Human-rights violations underlie the magnitude and global distribution of preventable maternal morbidity and maternal mortality, which is estimated at half a million annual deaths worldwide.
4. Our experience and research tell us that several factors—beyond those linked to MDG 5 as formal indicators—have contributed to stagnating or deteriorating progress towards reduction of maternal mortality and morbidity. These factors include various forms of social exclusion, discrimination, inadequate human and budgetary resources for health, lack of access to high-quality sexual and reproductive health care and information, armed conflict, violence against women, a failure to adequately train health-care providers to provide safe abortions as allowed by law, and a high HIV burden. All of these factors are recognized in the Programme of Action and the Key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, presented at the 1999 General Assembly review. They should be adequately addressed in the policies and programs aimed at fulfilling MDG 5, and should be highlighted in the outcome document of the Commission's 42nd session.
5. In this connection, we also urge UN Member States to reaffirm their commitment to achieving the MDG target on universal access to reproductive health, which includes,

based on the concept of informed choice, the availability of accessible, affordable, appropriate, and high-quality reproductive health services, particularly in the context of primary health care; appropriate education and information on sexual and reproductive health, including family-planning; focused and effective prenatal care; maternal nutrition programs; control of infectious diseases; adequate delivery assistance that avoids excessive recourse to caesarean sections, episiotomy, administration of oxytocin, and other medical procedures, and provides for obstetric emergencies; referral services for pregnancy, childbirth and abortion complications; and post-natal care and family planning.

6. More specifically, we believe the Commission on Population and Development at this, the 15th Anniversary of the Programme of Action, and considering the special attention to accountability and human rights in the Programme, should include in the outcome for its 42nd session a commitment to the following key components:
 - a. A recognition that maternal mortality and morbidity is a global health emergency and a serious public health problem;
 - b. A recognition that systemic failure to prevent maternal deaths constitutes a failure to respect and protect women's right to life; a reiteration of the understanding that the causes of maternal mortality and morbidity also involve violations of other human rights, including the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and integrity as well as the right to equality and non-discrimination in access to basic health care; and a call to the Human Rights Council to discuss the obligations related to this essential human rights issue before the end of 2009;
 - c. An explicit recognition of the need to close the disparity between maternal mortality and morbidity rates in industrialized and developing countries, and also within countries, including through devoting the maximum available resources to increase the investment to enlarge and improve human resources for health; fulfilling financial commitments on international cooperation, and greater resources; and committing to strengthen comprehensive primary health systems and basic health infrastructure, including allocations for monitoring, supervision, basic national health-system functions, accessibility and affordability of essential drugs, community monitoring and other necessary support functions;
 - d. A reaffirmation of the interdependence between development and population policies, and of the importance of developing programs and policies to address the underlying determinants of health that are essential to prevent maternal mortality and morbidity, such as women's and girls' participation in health-related decision-making processes, information on sexual and reproductive health, including comprehensive sexuality education, literacy, stable livelihoods, nutrition, eradication of violence against women and girls, non-discrimination and gender equality, as well as the need to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women with a view to the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority of the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women;
 - e. An urgent call to all UN Member States to ensure the regular collection of reliable and timely data, disaggregated at least on the basis of age, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status and residence (urban/rural), to guide implementation and evaluation of national action plans and global strategies for addressing all causes of maternal mortality and morbidity; to use established indicators and benchmarks for reducing maternal

- mortality and morbidity; and to ensure reporting on in-country and ODA-based measures to achieve these benchmarks;
- f. An urgent call to all UN member States to guarantee the existence of accessible, transparent and effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms at the national and international level that could lead to a constant improvement of the existing policies and programs to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity;
 - g. An urgent call to all UN member States to adopt and enact policies and legal frameworks to reduce incidence of unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortion, as well as to provide safe and accessible comprehensive abortion services to the fullest extent of the law;
 - h. An urgent call to the international community and to UN agencies to provide cooperation and assistance to Member States to support them in implementing effective and comprehensive programs and policies to combat all causes of maternal mortality and morbidity;
 - i. A recognition that the full implementation of the Millennium Development Goals—and of MDG 5 in particular—requires a more directed and independent accountability and oversight effort at the international level; and
 - j. A request to the Secretary-General that he present a report to the 43rd Commission on Population and Development with a detailed recommendation for such systematic, human rights based, accountability and oversight.

March 2009

Joint NGO Statement

The UN Human Rights Council 10th session (2-27 March, 2009)

Agenda Item 5: Human rights bodies and mechanisms

Draft UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training

Kazunari Fujii on behalf of:

SOKA GAKKAI INTERNATIONAL (SGI)

PAX ROMANA

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND FREEDOM OF EDUCATION (OIDEL)

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN (IFUW)

CIVICUS: WORLD ALLIANCE FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (EAFORD)

WORLDWIDE ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN (WOW)

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN (IAW)

AL-HAKIM FOUNDATION

INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC CHILD BUREAU (BICE)

WORLD FEDERATION OF UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATIONS (WFUNA)

WORLD STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION (WSCF)

Thank you Mr. President,

I speak on behalf of 12 organisations.

We appreciate the progress report on draft UN declaration on human rights education and training presented by the Advisory Committee.

Human rights education contributes to the promotion of gender equality, the rights of the child, women, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, elders, migrants, and all other vulnerable groups.

Human rights education promotes inter-religious and inter-cultural understanding, and acts to eliminate racial discrimination and xenophobia as well as protecting human rights defenders. Sustainable development and the prevention of conflict can also be achieved.

Mr. President,

We would like to draw the attention of the Member States to the NGO written statement A/HRC/10/NGO/112, jointly submitted by 365 organisations, on the UN framework for human rights education and civil society participation.

The statement reflects discussions facilitated by the NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning in Geneva and the Human Rights Education Associates. The NGO Working Group is also facilitating five NGO Panels on human rights education during the present session of the Council.

We call upon the Member States to ensure that the UN declaration on human right education and training incorporates the following:

- A broad definition of human rights education;
- Accountability by reference with duty-bearers and rights-holders;
- Linkages between the declaration and treaty bodies, special procedures and the UPR;
- The state's responsibility for ensuring financial resources for human rights education within the national budgetary policies; and
- The important role of civil society actors and NGOs.

With this in mind, we support Recommendation 2 in the progress report of the Advisory Committee on holding an informal seminar in Geneva.

To conclude, we support the proposed draft resolution prepared by the Platform of four governments for Human Rights Education and Training and hope that it will be adopted by consensus.

Thank you, Mr. President.

UNITED NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr. GENERAL

A/HRC/10/NGO/112 27 February 2009

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL Tenth session Agenda item 5

HUMAN RIGHTS BODIES AND MECHANISMS

Joint written statement* submitted by CIVICUS (World Alliance for Citizen Participation), International Alliance of Women (IAW), International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF), International Council of Women (ICW-CIF), Soroptimist International (SI), World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) & Asian Legal Resource Centre (ALRC), non-governmental organizations in general consultative status, Pax Romana,

International Organization for the Development of Freedom of Education (OIDEL), International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (EAFORD), International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA), Anti-Racism Information Service (ARIS), Equitas-International Centre for Human Rights Education, Pax Christi International, International Federation of University Women (IFUW), World Federation For Mental Health (WFMH), Association Points Coeur, Institut arabe des droits de l'homme, Myochikai (Arigatou Foundation), International Catholic Child Bureau (ICCB), Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Village Suisse ONG, Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem (OSMTH), Planetary Association for Clean Energy, Inc. (PACE), International Council of Jewish Women (ICJW), Al-Hakim Foundation, Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF), Ius Primi Viri International Association (IPV), Worldwide Organization for Women (WOW), World Student Christian Federation (WSCF), Disabled People's International (DPI), International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education & Development-VIDES, Instituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice (IIMA), Netherlands Centre for Indigenous Peoples (NCIV), Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV), Advocates for Human Rights, Latin American Committee for the Defence of Women's Rights (CLADEM), Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS), Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS), Centre for Organization Research & Education (CORE), Dignity International, Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, International Bureau for Children's Rights, SOS-Kinderdorf International (SOS-KDI), Aldet Centre-Saint Lucia & International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), non-governmental organizations in special consultative status, Soka Gakkai International (SGI), Servas International, UNESCO Centre Basque Country (UNESCO Etxea), Association of World Citizens (AWC), Association for World Education (AWE), Institute for Planetary Synthesis (IPS), Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law & Development (APWLD), International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination & Racism (IMADR), non-governmental organizations on the Roster

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[18 February 2009]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s). GE.09-11992

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The UN framework for human rights education and civil society participation:

Draft UN declaration on human rights education and training, the World Programme for Human Rights Education, and Special Procedures¹

This statement reflects discussions among non-governmental organizations (NGOs) facilitated by the NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO), Geneva, and Human Rights Education Associates (HREA). The 365 signatories, 56 organisations in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council and 309 organisations without consultative status including 5 national human rights

institutions are from 88 countries representing every continent sharing the views expressed in this statement.

We, the co-signed organisations, support human rights education as a vital strategy for addressing the root causes of human rights violations and conflict. Human rights education contributes to the prevention of human rights abuses, the promotion of equality and sustainable development and the enhancement of people's participation in decision-making processes within a democratic system, as stated in Commission on Human Rights resolution 2004/71. Human rights education is a lifelong process for all and a common agenda for all nations. It contributes also to the promotion of gender equality, the rights of the child, religious tolerance, elimination of racial discrimination and xenophobia, minority rights, and the rights of other vulnerable groups.

Particularly since the UN Decade for Human Rights Education (1994-2005), awareness of the importance of human rights education has been raised. The United Nations launched the World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE) on 1 January 2005. Promotion of "human rights education and learning as well as advisory services, technical assistance and capacity building (...)" is defined as one of the central concerns of the Human Rights Council (General Assembly resolution 60/251, o.p.5 (a)). Further the Council adopted by consensus resolution A/HRC/RES/6/10 (28 September 2007) on the United Nations declaration on human rights education and training. With this resolution, the Council's Advisory Committee was entrusted with the task of preparing a draft UN declaration on human rights education and training, including submission of a progress report to the Council's main session of March 2009.

It is also noteworthy that during the seventh session of the Council in March 2008, Costa Rica, Italy, Switzerland and Morocco, jointly formed the Informal Platform for Human Rights Education and Training in the Council in order "to keep human rights education and training on the Agenda of the Council."

Focusing on both the United Nations framework for human rights education and civil society participation, we would like to draw the attention of the Member States to the following necessary actions and considerations in order to maintain and develop international strategies and policies for effective implementation of human rights education.

1. Draft UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training

We call upon the Human Rights Council to ensure that when the draft UN declaration is prepared, the following views be fully reflected in the text.

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(1) Concept and definition

The declaration, as a new international human rights standard, should provide a clear definition of human rights education. As human rights education encompasses all human rights, such definition should remain broad so that as specific human rights develop conceptually and new human rights are recognised, they also are comprehended within the definition of human rights education set forth in the declaration. The definition can build upon the provisions of many human rights instruments that are compiled in the OHCHR publication "The Right to Human Rights Education"² and in the section "Context and definition of human rights education" of the Plan of Action³ for the first phase of the WPHRE (paras.1-6).

(2) Accountability / Duty-bearers and rights-holders

Over the course of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education and the WPHRE, the question of accountability has often been raised. The declaration should clarify the concept of duty-bearers and rights-holders regarding implementation of human rights education and training. In this context, it is also important to consider that the duty-bearer in a certain area of human rights may become the rights-holder in another area of human rights education or training. For example, members of the judiciary can be the duty-bearer in implementing the right to human rights education, but they themselves can also be the beneficiary of human rights education.

To date much emphasis has been placed on human rights education in formal education, especially primary and secondary education, in both practice and theory. This tendency is derived from States' obligations to provide for the right to education. Fewer efforts have been undertaken in the training of professional groups such as members of the judiciary, the continuing education of health professionals, and non-formal/informal education in communities and for the general public. At the same time human rights education has historically addressed rights-holders with the aim to educate them about their rights in order to empower them. However, duty-bearers with responsibilities to guarantee or protect human rights, for example law enforcement officials and public servants, often are not beneficiaries of human rights education programmes. The declaration therefore should also include references to international obligations that States have to train government personnel adequately in human rights, including the most recent human rights treaties and the protection of the most vulnerable groups. A human rights-based framework should be part of all human rights education, schooling, learning and training.

(3) Monitoring system

To the maximum degree feasible, the declaration should provide for monitoring to ensure implementation by duty-bearers. Although there have been a number of commitments expressed by governments to human rights education as well as plans of action, the lack of an effective monitoring system has created difficulties for evaluating the implementation of human rights education. In this respect, it is vitally important to explore linkages between the declaration and existing UN mechanisms for monitoring human rights (treaty bodies, special procedures and the UPR). This would also be an opportunity to set and develop benchmarks and indicators.

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(4) Financial resources

The perennial inadequacy of financial resources has been a major obstacle for civil society in its efforts to promote and implement human rights education. The declaration should contain a provision for financial resources. It could, for example, stipulate the responsibility of governments to include human rights education and training in annual national budgetary planning. The declaration could also stipulate such a requisite responsibility within the UN system as a condition of international cooperation and assistance for implementation of the right to human rights education at the global level.

(5) The role of civil society and NGOs

Through all experiences and surveys of the UN Decade and the first phase of the WPHRE, it is evident that civil society actors and NGOs, irrespective of their consultative status with the UN, are the main contributors to the promotion and implementation of human rights education. This significant role must be clearly recognised in the

declaration, and for drafting a truly meaningful United Nations declaration, their views and suggestions are indispensable in the drafting process. In this context, it is imperative that the importance of supporting their involvement and efforts toward the implementation of human rights education and training be clearly stated in the declaration.

2. World Programme for Human Rights Education

The currently ongoing first phase of the WPHRE will conclude at the end of 2009. There are two actions urgently necessary to consider. One is the evaluation process of the first phase. The other is the second phase.

(1) Evaluation process of the first phase

According to the Plan of Action, paras.49-514 on the evaluation process of the first phase, the Member States will be called upon to provide their final national evaluation report that will be eventually submitted to the General Assembly in 2010 through the UN Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee (UNIACC) of the WPHRE.

In order to comply with the steps in preparing for the final national evaluation report, we would like to call upon the Human Rights Council to ensure that all Member States commit to the following actions:

(i) To further assist and collaborate with all stakeholders, particularly NGOs and other civil society actors, for gathering information relevant to the first phase, making transparently accessible for NGOs and other civil society actors the evaluation process at the national level, and provide feedback at the international level.

(ii) To maintain efforts for implementation of human rights education in primary and secondary school systems even after the conclusion of the first phase. While each phase of the WPHRE focuses on a specific sector/area, the end of the phase means a shift of focus to the next sector/area. It does not mean the end of the implementation of human rights education in the previous sector/ area.

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(2) Second phase

The WPHRE is structured in consecutive phases. Although conclusion of the first phase is approaching in less than 9 months, the process of determining the parameters of the second phase has not yet begun. By Human Rights Council resolution 6/24 (28 September 2007) on the World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE), sponsored by Costa Rica, the first phase was extended until the end of 2009. The same resolution states in para.10 that the Council "Decides to consider this issue at its last 2008 session under the same agenda item." However, the resolution doesn't mention the process for initiating the second phase and since then no resolution has been adopted yet on this matter.

We urge the Human Rights Council to take action as soon as possible to determine a sector/area to be focused upon as well as drafting a plan of action for the second phase. We also expect an initiative of the above-mentioned Informal Platform of the four Members States for this action by the Council. Necessary technical assistance by OHCHR should be sought.

Regarding the focus of the second phase, views and suggestions of NGOs and other civil society actors in a wide range must be taken into consideration.

3. Special Procedures of Human Rights Council

Taking into account the role of human rights education in dealing with the root causes of violations and the prevention of further human rights violations, increasing monitoring and advocacy in the area of human rights education by the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council must be considered. At the workshop on this subject organised by the NGO Working Group in September 2006 in close collaboration with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, this approach was unanimously reckoned to create positive effects on the work of mandate holders. Several mandate holders expressed their support and willingness to explore this approach.

We call upon the Member States to consider expanding the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education to formally include human rights education as well as to establish a Special Rapporteur on (the Right to) Human Rights Education.

1 Human Rights Education Associates (HREA), Action for Agro-Pastoral and Rural Development, Action Professionals' Association for the People (APAP), Africa in Democracy and Good Governance (ADG), Alliance for Civic Education, Hong Kong (ACEHK), Alliance for Sustainable Peace and Development (ASPAD), Alliance of Health Workers (AHW), All-Ukrainian Non- Governmental Organization "Women's Consortium of Ukraine", ALTERO-Association for Personal Training, Education, Development and Empowerment, Amnesty International Mauritius Section, Amnesty International Sierra Leone Section, Andes Chinchasuyo del Ecuador, Angikar Bangladesh Foundation, Arab Bureau for Human Rights (ABHR), Arab Foundation for Development and Citizenship (AFDC), Arbeitskreis deutscher Bildungsstätten (AdB)–Association of German Educational Centers, Armenian Constitutional Right-Protective Centre (ACRPC), Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation (AIPP), Asociacion Euroaccion, Asociatia ACCEPT, Asociatia Ambasadorii Prieteniei/The "Friendship Ambassadors" Association, Asociatia Lectura si Scrierea Pentru Dezvoltarea Gandirii Critice Romania (ALSDGC), Association Burkinabe pour la Survie de l'Enfance (ABSE), Association des Amis de Doumelong, Association des Facilitatrices Africaines, Association of Global Humanists & Ethics Pakistan (AGHE), Association pour le Developpement Social/Comite National AIFF (ADES/AIFF), Australian National Committee on Human Rights Education (NCHRE), Azerbaijan Tafakkur Youth Association, Bahrain Human Rights Watch Society (BHRWS), Bahujan

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Foundation, Banglar Manabadhikar Suraksha Mancha (MASUM), Bangsa Adat Alifuru of Maluku (Moluccas), Belarusian Roma Lawyers Group (BRLG), Bosco Reach Out, Bosco Seva Kendra (BSK), Buraku Liberation and Human Rights Research Institute (BLHRRRI), Campaign Against Crime, Immoralities and Social Vices Initiative, Cape Breton University Children's Rights Centre, Center "Children Today", Center for Gender Rights Protection (CGRP), Center for Research and Global Communication (CRGC), Central Educational Service, Centre for Action in Relief and Development (CARD), Centre for Architecture and Human Rights (CAHR), Centre for Citizens' Alliance/ former CEDAW Watch Network Center, Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR), Centre for Healthworks-Development and Research (CHEDRES), Centre for Human Rights-Development & Human Security (CHRDHS), Centre for Human Rights of University of Pretoria, Centre for Information and Action on People's Alternatives (CIAPA), Centre for Peace and Human Rights Culture (CEPAHRC), Centre for Protection of Constitutional Rights (CPCR), Centre for Social Justice, Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Centro de Estudios

de Derecho Justicia y Sociedad (DeJusticia), Centro Diocesano para los Derechos Humanos Fray Juan de Larios AC, Centro Jurídico para los Derechos Humanos (CJDH), Centro studi per l'Evoluzione Umana (CEU), CERDH (Centre d'Etudes et de Recherche des Droits de l'Homme, Démocratie et Justice Transitionnelle), Change Makers, Chaplain's Office of Salem College, Chemchemi Ya Ukweli (CYU), Child Rights and You, Children's Museum for Peace and Human Rights, Civic Education Center-Bacau, Civil Resource Development and Documentation Centre (CIRDDOC), Coimbatore Human Rights Forum, Comite de Droits de l'Homme et Developpement/RDCongo (CODHOD /RDC), Comité de Orientación y Derechos Humanos Miguel Hidalgo AC, Community Initiative Action Group-Kenya(CIAG-K), Conscious Media Forum (CMF), Culture of Afroindigenous Solidarity, De Campagnwinkel (The Campaign Store), Development and Documentation Centre (CIRDDOC) Nigeria, Development Education and Information Centre Berlin, Diakonia-Egypt, Doctrine of Discovery Study Group, Don Bosco Mission, Bonn, Dwa Fanm/Women's Rights, Earth Charter Communities/Nigeria (ECC/N), East-Ukrainian Center for Civic Initiatives "Total Action for the Support of Human Rights and Democracy" (EUCCI), Economic & Social Rights Centre, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights-Asia Inc. (ESCR-Asia), Educación y Capacitación en Derechos Humanos (EDHUCA), Education for Democracy and Human Rights Center (CIVITAS), EIP ITALIA-Associazione Scuola Strumento di Pace, Ekta Parishad, Emory University Institute of Human Rights, Enfants Solidaires d'Afrique et du Monde (ESAM), Engineers Without Borders Cameroon (EWB-C), Equalinrights (EiR), Equitable Quality Upliftment through Integration and Participation (EQUIP), Escuela de Ciencias de la Educación, Universidad Nacional de Rosario, Ethiopian Association for Human Rights (EAHUR), Ethnic Community Development Organization (ECDO), EUROCLIO- European Association of History Educators, EUROGEO: the European Association of Geographers, Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN), European Network of Animation (ENOA), European Roma Grassroots Organisation, European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (ETC) Graz, Euroregional Foundation for Public Initiatives, Fahamu - Networks for Social Justice, Federation of Progressive Thinkers, FGI Finders Group Initiative (FGII), First Peoples Human Rights Coalition, Fond Centar za demokratiju / Center for Democracy Foundation, Fondation Monseigneur Kataliko (FMK), Forum of Voluntary Organisations in Goa, Foundation for Gaia (UK), Foundation for Released Prisoners (FRP), Frontier Law College-University of Peshawar, FUNDACION IDEAS, Georg-Eckert-Institut für Internationale Schulbuchforschung, Global Education and Environment Development (GEED) Foundation, Global Human Rights Defence (GHRD), GOPIO Trinidad & Tobago, Greek Helsinki Monitor (GHM), Grodna Association of Young Intellectuals VIT, Groupe d'étude sur l'éducation en Afrique (GRETAf), Guyana Human Rights Association (GHRA), Habitat Pro Association, HealthNet TPO, HELP OUT, Hong Kong Informal Education Research Centre, Hope for the Disabled Uganda, Hope-Aid Organisation (HAO), Hotline Human Rights Bangladesh (HHRB), Human Rights Agenda Association (HRAA), Human Rights Centre of the University of Prishtina (HRCUP), Human Rights Education and Information Centre, Human Rights Education Institute of Burma (HREIB), Human Rights Education Youth Network (HREYN), Human Rights First Society (HRFS), Human Rights in Democracy Centre (HRDC), Human Rights in Education Mana Tika Tangata, Human Rights Law Resource Centre Ltd, Human Values for Transformative Action (HVTA), Humanist Association of Hong Kong, HumanRightsConsulting Vienna (HRCV), Indian Confederation of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples North East Zone (ICITP-

NEZ), Indigenous Fisher Peoples Network (IFP), Informational Centre LEGEBITRA, Initiative for the Restoration of Youths Values (IRYV), Insgenar Instituto De Genero-Derecho Y Desarrollo, Institute for Human Rights of the Catholic University of Leuven, Institute of Human Rights Education, Instituto de Estudios Democráticos de Lima, International Association for Intercultural Education (IAIE), International Centre for Education for Democratic Citizenship (ICEDC), International Commission of Catholic Prison Pastoral Care, International Debate Education Association (IDEA), International Human Rights Network (IHRN), International Human Rights Observer (IHRO), International Prisons Watch-Ghana Section, International Youth Human Rights Movement (YHRM), Iraqi Centre for Human Rights and Democracy Studies (ICHRDS), Itsekiri Rights Group,
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Jinishian Memorial Foundation (JMF), JONCTION, Journalist Organization of Pakistan (JOP), Justice Development and Peace/Caritas (JDPC), Kaicombey Foundation For Sustainable Development (KAFF), Karimojong Community Child Welfare Initiatives (KACOIC), Kenya Association for Maternal and Neonatal Health (KAMANEH), Khartoum Centre for Human Rights and Environmental Development (KCHRED), Kildare Network of People with Disabilities, Kiran Vidya Kala Association, KITUO CHA SHERIA (The Legal Empowerment Centre), Laboratorio Politiche Pubbliche (Public Policies Workshop), Labour, Health and Human Rights Development Centre (LHAHRDEV), Lawyers Center for Legal Assistance & Human Rights Defense, Inc. (LAWCLAHD), Layari Development Organization (LDO), Legal Information Centre for Human Rights, Lembaga Bantuan Hukum (LBH)/Community Legal Aid Institute, Lietuvos zmogaus teisiu centras (LZTC)/Lithuanian Centre for Human Rights (LCHR), Limerick Citizen Advocacy Project, Loreto Day School Sealdah, Love Africa, Ludwig Boltzmann Institut für Menschenrechte, Mali korak Centre for Culture of Peace and Non-violence, Manna Sudan (MS), Media Centre for Human Rights, Meghalaya Human Rights Organization (MHRO), Meghalaya peoples Human Rights Council (MPHRC), Menneskerettighetsakademiet (MRA), Menneskerettighetsakademiet/Human Rights Academy, Milan Simecka Foundation, Millennium Solidarity (MSGG), Minority Rights Group-Greece (MRG-G), Moldovan Institute for Human Rights (IDOM), Montagnard Foundation Inc. (MFI), Moroccan Association of Teachers of English (MATE), Moscow School of Human Rights, Muslim Aid UK Field Office Pakistan, Nado association, National Adult Education Association of Uganda (NAEAU), National Centre for Education (CNE), National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales (NER), National Organisation for Legal Assistance (NOLA), National Organization for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NOPCAN), Ndugu Zangu Christian Community Charitable Trust, NGO Groupement Tsara Manasoa (GTM), NGO M'ART (Molodizhna Alternatyva), Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE), Organisation de Femmes Pour le Developpement de Thomonde (OFAT), Organization Africaine des Droits de l'Homme (OADH), Organization for Women's Development in Bangladesh (OWDEB), Palestinian Human Rights Organization (PHRO), Partners Bulgaria Foundation, Peace Tree Network (PTN), Peace Youth Association (PYA), People's Action For Rural Awakening (PARA), People's Watch, Persatuan Kesedaran Komuniti Selangor, Philippine Human Rights Information Center (PHILRIGHTS), Ping Pu Lowland Indigenous Peoples of Taiwan, Plantation Community Welfare Trust c/o Council of Human Rights of Deprived Communities of Sri Lanka,

Policing & Human Rights, Prijateljice Tuzla Bosnia and Herzegovina, PRIME (Pakistan Rural Institutional Organization for Socio Economic Growth & Education), Programme for Helpless and Lagged Societies (PHALS), Promo-LEX Association, Public Committee Against Torture in Israel (PCATI), PUSAT KOMAS/Malaysian Human Rights Popular Communications Center, Rad law firm, Research Academy for Rural Enrichment (RARE), RIGHTS, Rural Human Rights Activists Programme (RHRAP), Rural Mother & Child Health Care Society (RMCHCS), SASVIKA SANGATAN (Organization for community based health and development), Saving With Instruments Samples and Soundz (SWISS), School 205 Bucharest, School of Education, University of Leicester, Shikaya, SIQA–Georgian Association of Educational Initiatives, Sisterhood is Global Institute (SIGI/J), Social Development Network (SODNET), Social Empowerment & Economic development Society (SEEDS), Social Reform Centre (SOREC), Society Development and Research Centre-Centre for Peacebuilding and Reconciliation Promotion (SODARC-CPRP), Society for Community Organisation Trust (SOCO Trust), Society for Development & Community Empowerment (SDCE), Society for Psychological Assistance (SPA), Sociologists Without Borders/Sociologos Sin Fronteras (SSF), Solidarity for Social Equality-Human Rights Centre (SSE), South India Cell for Human Rights Education and Monitoring–SICHREM, Stars of Hope Society - SHS /Palestine, Stichting ThirdWay/ThirdWay Human Rights & Development, Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA Network), Street Law South Africa, Street Law Inc., Study Center for Human Rights at the State University of Medan, Sudan Social Development Organization (SUDO), Tallinn Centre for Human Rights Information, Tanzania Poverty Reduction Society (TPRS), TARIH VAKFI (The History Foundation of Turkey), Teacher Creativity Center (TCC), Tewa Women United (TWU), the Advocacy Lab (adLab), the Department of International & Multicultural Education of the University of San Francisco, the Department of Law of the Gauhati University, the Independent Society for Education and Human Rights (SIEDO), the International Association of Young Diplomats, the National Economic and Social Rights Initiative (NESRI), the Union "21 Century", the University of Iowa Center for Human Rights (UICHR), the Way To Happiness Rwanda (TWTH- Rwanda), Tolerance Foundation, Tomorrow's Child Initiative (TCI), TOplum Gönüllüleri - Community Volunteers, Udruženje mladih Monnet Centar Bosanski Petrovac, Uganda Society for Disabled Children (USDC), UNESCO Chair on Education for Human Rights, Democracy and Peace (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki), UNESCO-Lehrstuhl fuer Menschenrechtserziehung (Universitaet Magdeburg), UNIQUE - United Network for Innovation and Quality in Education, United Nations Association of Georgia (UNAG), United Nations Association of the Netherlands, United Nations Association-USA East Bay Chapter, Universal Peace Federation (UPF), Ustanova za zaštitu ljudskih prava 'Independent' (Independent-Zenica),

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Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service Co-operative Limited (VALS), Vigil India Movement, Vimukti Trust, VOICES for Change, VORMEN vzw - expertisecentrum mensenrechten- en kinderrechteneducatie Vlaanderen, Western Kenya Human Rights Watch, Women in Alternative Action, Youth Against War and Fascism, Youth Agency of Civil Education, Youth Agenda Trust Zimbabwe, Youth Ambassadors of Peace, Youth Development Foundation, Youth Education Support (YES), Youth Human Rights Group (YHRG), Youth Net and Counelling (YONECO), Zambia Civic Education Association (ZCEA), Zimbabwe

National Council for the Welfare of Children (ZNCWC), Zo Reunification Organization (ZORO), Zomi Human Rights Foundation (ZHRF), We For Civil Equality, Young Europe International Network, Youth Center for Democratic Initiatives, and National Human Rights Institutions - Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC), Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) Ghana, Commission on Human Rights of the Republic of the Philippines (CHR), Danish Institute for Human Rights and Human Rights Commission of the Maldives (without consultative status) also share the views expressed in this statement.

2 See, The UN Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) No.3 - The Right to Human Rights Education, OHCHR, 1999.

3 A/59/525 Rev.1 (2 March 2005) Revised draft Plan of action for the first phase of the world programme for human rights education and A/59/113B (5 August 2005) on the World Programme for Human Rights Education.

4 Supra, n.3, A/59/525 Rev.1, para.49 "At the conclusion of the first phase (2005-200[9]) of the World Programme, each country will undertake an evaluation of actions implemented under this plan of action. The evaluation will take into consideration progress made in a number of areas, such as legal frameworks and policies, curricula, teaching and learning processes and tools, revision of textbooks, teacher training, improvement of the school environment, etc. The Member States will be called upon to provide their final national evaluation report to the United Nations inter-agency coordinating committee" and para.51 "The report will be submitted to the General Assembly(...)" in 2010.

March 25, 2009

To: African delegations to the United Nations

Your Excellency,

As a diverse coalition of human rights organizations, we write in advance of the 2009 Human Rights Council elections to welcome reports that African states plan to present a competitive slate for election to the Council.

General Assembly resolution 60/251, which established the Council, specifies that Council members shall be elected directly and individually, and that, in casting their ballots, Member States "shall take into account the contribution of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights and their voluntary pledges and commitments." These provisions underline the spirit of the resolution: that UN Member States be given a real choice in the elections to select members that "uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights" and "fully cooperate with the Council."

As organizations that have closely followed and supported the Council's development, we believe it is essential to the Council's success that candidates be assessed on the basis of their human rights records and pledges. "Clean slates," where the same number of candidates is presented as seats available in the region, undermine this principle and permit Council members to effectively be selected on the basis of rotation or reciprocal vote trading agreements. By contrast, competitive slates allow UN Member States to elect the best candidates proposed from each region of the world. We therefore support competitive slates in every region.

In the past three elections, we have been disappointed by the decision of African states to present clean slates. For the 2009 election, we welcome reports that African states will present a competitive slate with more than five candidates for the five available seats in the region. By reversing the trend of clean slates, African states will send a strong signal that they are committed to principled Human Rights Council elections in which candidates can be judged by their dedication to promoting human rights. We firmly believe that a competitive slate will be to the benefit of African states, and the region more generally, and hope to see such an election.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Representatives of the undersigned organizations would be pleased to meet with you to discuss the upcoming elections. Sincerely,

Hannah Forster, Executive Director, African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies

Yap See Seng, Executive Director, Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)

Basil Fernando, Executive Director, Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC).

Bani Dugal, Principal Representative, Baha'i International Community

Nabeel Rajab, President, Bahrain Center for Human Rights

Moataz El Fegiery, Executive Director, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)

Karin Ryan, Director, Human Rights Program, The Carter Center

Francis M. Ssekandi, International Legal Consultant, Center for War/Peace Studies (CWPS)

Ingrid Srinath, Secretary General, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

Juan Carlos Gutiérrez, Executive Director, Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos, A.C. (Mexican Commission for the Defence and Promotion of Human Rights)

Maja Daruwala, Director, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative

Lucia Nader, International Relations Coordinator, Conectas Direitos Humanos

Radwan Ziadeh, Director, Damascus Center for Human Rights Studies in Syria

Dokhi Fassihian, Executive Director, Democracy Coalition Project

Hassan Shire Sheikh, Chairperson, East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Network (EHAHRD-Net)

Souhayr Belhassen, President, FIDH – Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'Homme/International Federation for Human Rights

Dieudonne Zognong, President, Fondation Humanus

Paula Schriefer, Director of Advocacy, Freedom House

Omwumi Asubiaro, Senior Project Officer, Gender and Affirmative Action Issue Based Project in Nigeria

Tad Stahnke, Director of Policy and Programs, Human Rights First

Iain Levine, Program Director, Human Rights Watch

[Hélène Sackstein, Permanent Representative, International Alliance of Women](#)

Dr. Gyarmati István, Ambassador, Professor, President & CEO, International Centre for Democratic Transition (ICDT)

Dr. Lukas Machon, Representative to the United Nations, International Commission of Jurists

Isabelle Scherer, Executive Director, International Service for Human Rights

Jarrett Blanc, Sr. Policy Analyst, Multilateral Affairs, Open Society Institute.

Eric Sottas, Secretary General, Organisation Mondiale contre la Torture/ World Organisation against Torture

Ito Eze-Anaba, Managing Partner, Partnership for Justice

Andrew Albertson, Executive Director, Project on Middle East Democracy

Carlos E. Ponce S., General Coordinator, Red Latinoamericana y del Caribe para la Democracia

Mike Gesa Munabi, President, Students for Global Democracy Uganda

CC:

- Secretary-General of the United Nations
- President of General Assembly

March 25, 2009

To: Latin American and Caribbean delegations to the United Nations

Your Excellency,

As a diverse coalition of human rights organizations, we write in advance of the 2009 Human Rights Council elections to urge Latin American and Caribbean states to present a competitive slate for election to the Council etc- (as above)

INTERNATIONAL
ALLIANCE
OF WOMEN
(IAW)

INTERNATIONAL
FEDERATION
ON AGEING
(IFA)

CEDAW – 6 November 2008

By H elen  Sackstein

As a longtime activist for the rights of children, I am delighted to have an opportunity to cross the sometime intractable generational barrier and I thank you for this.

Today, I represent 2 global organizations, the *International Alliance of Women (IAW)* which has been advocating *Equal rights and equal responsibilities* for women since 1902 and the *International Federation on Ageing (IFA)* which seeks to generate positive change for older men and women worldwide through information on rights, policies and practices that improve the quality of life of all people as they age.

Both organizations strongly believe that all CEDAW articles are relevant to older women and must be interpreted to promote and ensure the enjoyment of all their fundamental rights and freedoms as they face increasingly complex forms of discrimination in the 21st century.

Globalization has sometime accelerated the feminization of poverty and a long history of gender discrimination at the work place as well as blatant wage differentials between men and women, even in the world's most affluent countries; this places older women in particularly precarious financial positions when they stop working.

Similarly, in many countries, lack of access to land ownership and discriminatory inheritance laws has catastrophic consequences for the very survival of rural women.

Health is another thorny area for older women with research frequently neglecting to take adequate account of the different ways in which women and men experience diseases related to ageing.

The discrimination older women face is frequently intersectional, their old age compounding other forms of discrimination. My present work with the *Anti-Racism Information Service (ARIS)* makes me acutely aware of the frequently neglected burden of multiple forms of discrimination which strike disproportionately the women and children of minority, indigenous and other marginalized populations. CEDAW could perhaps lead the way in helping relevant Treaty Bodies address the issue coherently.

At the same time, many older women have important responsibilities. They play an essential role in teaching children values and skills and in keeping families together.

The effect of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, migrations and climate change has blurred traditional intergenerational roles and the contributions of older women have grown vital to societies while all too often they go unrecognized or undervalued.

There is an urgent need to safeguard and protect the human rights of this group; governments need to do a better job at identifying potential discriminatory practices and must develop effective measures to address them.

We are particularly grateful to our colleague from HelpAge for her excellent outline of possible action the Committee could take and we all stand ready to collaborate in any way possible to help it address this issue.

As early as 1991, the United Nations Principles for Older Persons, adopted by the GA and based on the *IFA Declaration of the Rights of Older Persons*, focused on independence, participation, care, self-fulfillment and dignity. They represent an important step toward the recognition of older persons' human rights and still provide a general guideline for action. Seen through a gender lens, they are relevant to the CEDAW Committee's work.

Finally, as an activist on violence prevention, I would like to highlight one issue particularly close to my heart. I am referring to the global scourge of violence against women and in particular to elder abuse. It is all too often either given insufficient attention or is simply reduced to an outright taboo in many societies. There have been many campaigns and excellent in depth studies, however, elder abuse has not yet reached the full radar screen of researchers, although it is surfacing increasingly as a new priority - even at EU level. More needs to be done and we hope that CEDAW will provide an impetus.

The two organizations I represent stand ready to assist you in tackling discrimination against older women, an issue which - I might add - is of immediate concern to all of us as we get older.

Thank you

WHO

Gudrun Haupter

Name: Gudrun HAUPTER Email: haupter@t-online.de Commission on Health/ Rep. at WHO Email: iaw.health@womenalliance.org Date: 25/04/2009

Highlights

1. Following through with women's rights and gender concerns regarding the WHO FCTC
2. Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights, focus on Maternal Mortality (MDG 5)
3. News on Collaboration with WHO

Report:

Ad 1. A rather well defined but nevertheless broad theme is *Women and Tobacco*. The basis for the Commission's activities is the *Frame Convention on Tobacco Control, FCTC*. In 2006 a Convention Secretariat has been established in Geneva, yearly *Conferences of the Parties, COPs*, took place. All 3 were attended by Dr. Soon-Young Yoon, Resource member of the Health Commission, and an NGO expert on gender issues and on relating these issues to women's rights and empowerment as applicable to the FCTC.

The tools:

Briefing government and NGO representatives during the COPs on how they should interpret the gender provisions in the FCTC Preamble and the Guiding Principles (List attached) and making statements (IAW-INWAT Statement at COP 2 attached).

Writing NGO reports on Women and smoking for the sessions of the CEDAW Committee, with country information and statistics, 11 reports up to now. IAW members in New York and Geneva helped with the distribution to NGOs, government delegations, the Committee. We also got some responses from IAW members in the countries under CEDAW review.

Results:

- IAW membership has been made aware of the FCTC and its importance for the human rights of women, including health rights; the NGO reports on countries where IAW has a member society have been forwarded to them for information and reaction.
- After an WHO informal meeting with members of the CEDAW Committee in October 2007 facilitated by IAW, WHO is now in a good position to make a report on Gender and Tobacco for the CEDAW sessions in Geneva.
- The Committee places importance on the issue in the discussion of government reports on the CEDAW.
- The number of countries reporting under CEDAW on Women and Tobacco as a health issue is on the rise.

Attending Meetings: H el ene Sackstein, Geneva Resource member of the Health Commission, represented IAW at a Consultative Meeting 28 January 2009 to which NGOs accredited as observers to the COPs had been invited by the FCTC Secretariat. The purpose: to learn about contributions from Civil Society for the implementation of the FCTC and to gain monetary support.

Ad 2. Following the Roundtable on *Conditions for change in the field of Health and of Violence against Women* at the International Meeting in Paris the Commission kept working on issues of reproductive health rights, on the basis of the **2 IAW resolutions** the New-Delhi Congress adopted in 2007 (www.womenalliance.org , click on Other Issues).

Messages have reached membership via the e-Newsletter and the *International Women's News*.

Moreover:

– Soon-Young made a statement on ***Equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women including care-giving in the context of HIV/AIDS***, at the Expert Group Meeting on this theme convened at the UN Division for the Advancement of Women, Geneva, 6-9 October 2008 (attached).

Hélène Sackstein who also represents IAW at the Human Rights Council, took the lead with

– a statement on ***Maternal Mortality – A Massive Human Rights Catastrophe***, at the HRC session in March 2007 followed by

– a statement on that issue at the WHO General Assembly 2007 (attached).

Key messages: A) Maternal Mortality exposes profound and multiple inequalities – global, ethnic, and gender. B) Besides the well-known medical interventions to bring down the 500.000 plus maternal deaths annually, access to voluntary family planning could reduce this stunning figure by 20 to 35 %. C) Fighting maternal mortality could become a powerful vehicle for strengthening health systems accessible to all.

– At Hélène's suggestion the **first full-day discussion of a human rights issue related to women** at the HRC focussed on maternal mortality (June 2008).

– She further promoted the issue by giving input to a group of prominent civil society organizations for a **statement on Maternal Mortality** presented to the January 2009 session of the Commission on Population and Development at the UN New York.

– The aim of Hélène's ongoing lobbying at the HRC is to **obtain a resolution on maternal mortality as a human rights issue**.

- At the CONGO/NGO Commission on the Status of Women she is a member of the Working Group on *Women's Right to Health*.

– At the 2009 World Health Assembly in May we plan to speak on the agenda point ***Working towards universal coverage of maternal, newborn and child health interventions***.

Ad 3. The role of the Commission Convenor and Main IAW Representative at WHO has mostly been that of a **communicator and coordinator** of the above-mentioned activities and included writing to the Commission members listed below in some instances also that of an **organiser and rapporteur** of the IAW events to fulfil our obligations outlined in the ***Plan of Collaboration*** 2006-2008 with WHO – still valid to date (see www.womenalliance.org).

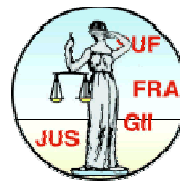
By complying with the WHO request to complete a **detailed questionnaire on IAW** as an international NGO dealing with health issues we are as of April 2009 listed among the civil society organizations in official relations with WHO on <http://nims.who.int>

The IAW relates to the Department Gender, Women and Health, GWH, and our yearly reports go there.

A **Roundtable at WHO** on *Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments with regard to Public Health – esp. Maternal Mortality, HIV/AIDS* – at the end of the *Tour de Suisse Féministe* is currently being prepared, with panelists from IAW and the department Gender, Women and Health.

¹ Chinta Akuretiyagama, SriLanka; Josephine Matare, Zimbabwe; Aninditha Mukherji, India; Clémentine Ouedraogo, Burkina Faso; Mala Pal, Switzerland; Hélène Sackstein, France; Soon-Young Yoon, USA

IAW WHO statements :



A Gender Perspective on Reporting and Exchange of Information

Statement by the International Alliance of Women
And the International Network of Women against Tobacco
Second Conference of the Parties of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco
Control

June 30 to July 6, 2007, Bangkok, Thailand

Distinguished delegates,

We believe that the Preamble of the FCTC referring to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is a critical foundation for the future of tobacco control because it helps establish the principles of human rights and gender equality as central to interpreting all Articles. The International Alliance of Women and the International Network of Women against Tobacco have submitted NGO shadow reports on gender and tobacco to CEDAW that monitors women's "bill of rights." Our reports have reviewed the performance of nearly 100 governments on gender and tobacco. Through this process, NGOs and governments as well as the CEDAW committee have gained new knowledge and awareness of the issue.

Here are recommendations based on our experiences. First, we strongly support the FCA briefing paper entitled "Reporting and exchange of information" and its recommendations that includes establishment of an independent subsidiary body of experts to oversee implementation of the FCTC and posting of government reports on the website. Political transparency is paramount and all reports should be made publicly accessible. In the case of CEDAW, these reports are available many months prior to the meeting of the experts. This allows NGOs to monitor government performance. NGO statements are also posted on the UN website, making them accessible worldwide.

Second, we call on governments to ensure the visibility of gender in all Articles of the FCTC. For example, there should be an indicator on women's leadership such as the gender balance of national tobacco control boards. Some governments may hesitate to include gender information on the grounds that national data is not available. However, we urge them to maintain the highest standards as socio-economic indicators should never be compromised to suit the lowest common denominator. Drawing another lesson from CEDAW, we note that some of the best outcomes come from country reports that reflect both accomplishments and shortcomings. If a tobacco control program shows gaps in implementation, isn't this the best argument for stronger political support and financial aid when delegations return home?

Finally, we recommend that the Conference of the Parties subsidiary body that monitors government reports to include an expert on gender and tobacco because this is a specialization on equal par with others such as trade and advertising. His or her presence would testify that governments are ready to take action. Thank you.

**Statement by
The International Alliance of Women**

**At the Expert Group Meeting on “Equal sharing of responsibilities
between men and women, including care-giving in the context of
HIV/AIDS”**

**UN DAW, Geneva
6-9 October, 2008**

The equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women, including care-giving in the context of HIV/AIDS, raises important legislative and policy issues. We would like to highlight three concerns:

First, an end to psychological, sexual and physical violence against women (actual or threatened) is a prerequisite for equitable sharing of responsibilities between men and women (1, 8). For example, WHO reports that between 6 and 47 % of adult women worldwide have been sexually assaulted by intimate partners in their lifetime. The vulnerability of young women and girls in conflict settings, violence against sex workers and persons infected with HIV, the trafficking of women and girls are examples of how gender violence underlies women’s experiences in the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Second, the diversity of women’s status should be understood in the context of social and economic inequality. Parental leave, “family-friendly” policies as well as labour laws may be effective in increasing men’s share of care work in developed countries such as in Iceland and Japan (2, 3). However, it is uncertain how similar measures can improve the unequal division of labor for families who work in the informal sector (2) or for the majority of the world’s rural women. Similarly, accounting for women’s unpaid (or under paid) care work in national budgets is likely to be more significant in countries where gender-based data and national accounting systems are accurate. The question is—how would this approach affect the women working in the rural areas or informal sectors where data is largely absent? How does it affect different types of families such as women heads of household in Brazil (4) and non-traditional households headed by single parents, orphans and the elderly (5)? It is imperative for developing countries to strengthen the data-base on the wide diversity of women’s work and family situations. Also, a life-cycle approach to research is needed on intrahousehold inequality, time-use surveys and the value of care work.

Third, to address the root causes of the unequal sharing of responsibilities between men and women, it is necessary to see how household economics at the micro-level intersects with macro economic policies. As the Millennium Task Force on Gender Equality noted, there are at least seven interdependent strategies that help to empower women. These include: strengthening opportunities for post-primary education of girls; guaranteeing sexual and reproductive health rights; investing in infrastructure to reduce women’s and girls’ time burdens; guaranteeing women’s property and inheritance rights; reducing gender inequality in employment; increasing women’s representation in political bodies; combating violence against women; gathering data and developing

indicators for monitoring progress; and financing costs of interventions to achieve gender equality. To this list, we would add the importance of adequate access to health services and sex education.

The experience of the emerging industrialized countries illustrates how micro-macro processes are interlinked. In the late 1970's, the Republic of Korea favored investments in social development as a precursor to economic growth. Financing for rural girls' education, reduction of maternal mortality and improved social welfare were all contributors to changing the division of labor within households. Within a decade, rural women's time spent on household work was altered dramatically as labor-saving devices for food storage and preparation, piped water and cheap fuel were provided. Protection of land and property rights through family law reform in the 1990's further empowered women to claim an equal role in private as well as in public spheres.

Sound development policies, in turn, need to be supported through greater participation of men for gender equality. Behaviour change communications strategies such as "Soul City" in South Africa and "Sexto Sentido" in Nicaragua, Men as Partners (South Africa) and Guy-to-Guy project in Brazil are interesting innovations which should be evaluated (1).

Finally, the goal of equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women should be clarified. Some economists may argue that such measures help increase the number of children women are willing to bear while freeing time for salaried work. However, there are more important, and, ultimately, more sound goals. As Amartya Sen would put it, changes in legal and regulatory frameworks of development planning should aim to grant women greater freedoms and liberties (7). Put differently, women should have a more self-determined life. The discourse about equal responsibilities must focus on how changes in the household work towards enabling women to claim their human rights. Strengthening the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in the context of decision-making and sharing of responsibilities should thus be a core recommendation (8).

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INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN **A massive catastrophe: maternal mortality**

Millennium Development Goal 5 aims to improve maternal health by reducing the ratio of maternal mortality by three quarter by 2015.

And yet each year there are still 529.000 maternal deaths(1), or one every minute; 95% of these occur in Africa and Asia and most could be avoided with a few well-known interventions. The burden of this scourge falls disproportionately on women in low income countries and those living in poverty in affluent countries(2).

This is particularly shocking not only because it is preventable but because it exposes grave health inequalities in access to health care and services. The increasing scarcity of coherent family planning programmes, often driven out of health funding to developing countries for ideological reasons, only compounds the problem.

According to UNFPA(3), ensuring skilled attendance in delivery, backed up by emergency obstetric care, would reduce maternal deaths by about 75 per cent. According to the same source ensuring access to voluntary family planning could reduce maternal death by 20 to 35 percent (and child deaths by as much as 20 per cent).

Maternal mortality exposes profound and multiple inequalities - global ethnic and gender.

It's not just a health issue, it is a human rights issue which violates women's rights to life, and is blatantly discriminatory. Unfortunately, although it is a massive catastrophe, it has not attracted the attention it deserves, despite many efforts in the right direction such as the WHO campaign *Make every mother and child count*.

Fighting maternal mortality could become a powerful motor for strengthening health systems accessible to all, thus providing an entry to dealing meaningfully with the related determinants of health such as drinking water, food, housing, healthy occupational and environmental conditions, etc.

These are among the main objectives included in the MDGs to be attained by 2015 and without marked progress in all of them any strategy intended to reduce poverty is doomed to failure. In short, fighting maternal mortality could be pivotal to the attainment of most MDGs.

We are gratified to see that the reduction of maternal mortality with emphasis on access to strengthened health services is among WHO's priority objectives in its strategic plan 2008-2013. Still, WHO and NGOs need to campaign against maternal mortality and all its related health issues just as vigorously as against HIV/AIDS or malaria.

It is indeed among the priorities of the International Alliance of Women.

(1) *2005 World Health Report*

(2) *A/HRC/4/28 -17 January 2007 (Paul Hunt)*

(3) *Message on World Health Day 2007 by Thoraya Obaid, Executive Director*

Hélène Sackstein

WHA-May 2007 – WHA



COPS IAW advocacy sheet

Why the Preamble Matters

How should governments interpret the gender provisions of the FCTC?

Governments are obliged to uphold the principles of the Preamble and Guiding Principles in all Articles of the FCTC. A gender analysis of policies and full participation of women in tobacco control are guaranteed. The following are interpretations of Articles that can apply:

1. Non-discrimination must be applied to the equal access to health services for women and men. For example, paternal smoking should be targeted in MCH programs along with maternal smoking. Women of all ages must have equal access to quitting methods, services for tobacco-related disability and illness.
2. Non-discrimination should be guaranteed in tobacco control legislation. For example, smoking bans should be applied equally to men and women.
3. Protection of women's human rights while implementing tobacco control measure such as equality in decision-making and leadership should be ensured. For example, they should have equal representation on international monitoring bodies such as COPS and national tobacco control committees.
4. Equal protection from exposure to tobacco smoke in private as well as public places. For example, campaigns to protect women and children from male smoking at home should be carried out.
5. Equal access to training programs and health information and education. Appropriate media should be used to reach women concerning gender-specific risks included in health information. Medical students should be trained in gender and tobacco issues.
6. Protection from misleading and false advertising, promotion and sponsorship. Counter advertising should be gender-specific in its messages and methods.
7. Equal access to provision of support for economically viable alternative activities should be guaranteed to women. This applies particularly to women and girls in tobacco production and processing
8. Gender-specific risks should be considered in all warnings related to packaging and labeling and regulation of tobacco product disclosures.
9. Gender-specific data should be collected in national statistics and reported to the COPS.

Preamble and Guidelines of the FCTC

- “Alarmed by the increase in smoking and other forms of tobacco consumption by women and young girls worldwide and keeping in mind the need for full participation of women at all levels of policy-making and implementation and the need for gender-specific tobacco control strategies,
- Emphasizing the special contribution of nongovernmental organizations and other members of civil society not affiliated with the tobacco industry, including health professional bodies, women's, youth, environmental and consumer groups, and academic and health care institutions, to tobacco control efforts nationally and internationally and the vital importance of their participation in national and international tobacco control efforts,

(Recognizing) the need to take measures to address gender-specific risks when developing tobacco control strategies.”

FAO

Bettina Corke

IAW at FAO has been an active member of the AD HOC GROUP of INGOs in liaison with FAO. I, Bettina Corke, IAW's Permanent Representative to FAO had the privilege of once again being elected the Chair of the Women's Working Group (WWG) of the AD HOC GROUP OF INGOs here in Rome...

All the women's organizations present at FAO have agreed that the implementation of gender equality, food security and the well being of rural women cannot be achieved; unless better and more effective domestic agriculture programmes and sustainable rural development schemes are put in place. Sadly, we are of the opinion that many of FAO Member States are failing to take into account in their deliberations on rural women, agriculture and rural development that the rights to water, land, inheritance and property, gender equality and food security are regulated by civic, political, social and economic policies at the national, regional and international levels.

Many INGOs at FAO are expressing the view that national policies to improve the agricultural and rural development sectors cannot be developed in isolation of local social and economic national needs. National governance must be undertaken by national governments not by individual corporations acting in the name of global capital and global economy.

Since the release of the FAO Independent Review Report (IRR) in 2007 and in the light of the recommendations that have been put forward, there has been a great deal of discussion and debate on the need for a review of the policy management of agriculture and rural development within the framework of FAO. This need to review certain policy management approaches by FAO are being openly expressed even by the Chief of FAO, Mr. Diouf. He has said that a new agricultural order must be designed and investment in a rural infrastructure should take place to boost agricultural production and productivity in developing countries.

Statements issued by the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki moon on March 9th – 2009 support many of the comments made by the Independent Review Report of FAO such as *"Food is not just a commodity and agriculture is not just a business. Both are central to survival."* The UN Secretary General also underscored *"the need to scale up efforts to combat hunger and realize the right to food"*, he also said that *"because the number of hungry people around the world is surging amid the current financial crisis and the effects of climate change there was an urgent need to scale up efforts to combat hunger"*

These statements by the UN Secretary General, by the international community re-enforces the work that IAW undertakes at FAO on behalf of agriculture and rural women and the call for the implementation of Article 14 CEDAW on rural women and rural populations. The High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Pillay has also called for stronger institutions with better accountability; sustainable investment in the development of ecologically sound and sustainable development of the rural areas.

Since the holding of the World Food Summit in 1996, the World Bank and the G8 in particular, have pushed for more support for agribusiness, for the sales of fertilizers and genetically modified seeds and they with FAO have followed policies which are tied into an ever greater dependency on imported Food Aid. All these trade policies work against and endanger the livelihoods of small farmers and negate the possibility of increasing the domestic food supply for national food security.

In order to bring these facts to a wider audience, a panel event organized by the women's Working Group (WWG) of the AD HOC GROUP on "What *does Equal Sharing of Responsibilities Mean for Rural Women?*" was held on March 3rd. 2009 on the occasion of the 53rd. Session of the Commission on the Status of Women .

The panel was held in association with FAO, WWG at FAO and five other INGOs :- Soroptomists International (SI), International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts,(WAGGGS), International Alliance of Women, (IAW), & Women's International League for Peace and Freedom ,(WILPF) and it was supported by the AD HOC GROUP OF INGOs to FAO..

The New York Panel Meeting was well attended and very well received. A government delegate from Nigeria said that she appreciated and congratulated the WWG from FAO and IAW for taking the initiative in bringing this issue of the rights and responsibilities of rural women to a wider audience.. The themes chosen for the UN/FAO/ WWG/ panel were. - *" What policy changes are needed and be put in place to promote the advancement of rural women , good governance, ecologically sound agriculture and sustainable rural development and gender equality.."*

In closing, it is quite clear that the questions of hunger and food security cannot be successfully addressed; unless new nationally generated and nationally supported policies are put forward and implemented at the national, regional and international levels...

IAW in a spirit of partnership with FAO has been calling upon the Member States of FAO to shoulder their responsibility to address the question of food security, poverty and hunger- One of the ways to immediately do this would be through the implementation of CEDAW on behalf of rural women, agriculture, food security and rural development.

I would like to request the members of IAW to work with the entire membership and individual members interested in agriculture , rural women and rural areas so that together we can find the most effective ways and means to change the sad and ever worsening condition of rural women. Thank you.

International Criminal Court

Deirdre Exell Pirro

IAW Delegate to the International Criminal Court – The Hague / IAW Representative Italy

Pursuant to the Rome Statute which established the International Criminal Court when it entered into force on 1 July 2002 after ratification by 60 countries, the Prosecutor can initiate an investigation on the basis of a referral from any State Party or from the United Nations Security Council. In addition, the Prosecutor can initiate his own investigations on the basis of information on crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court received from individuals or organisations by means of what are called “communications”.

To date, three States Parties to the Rome Statute – Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic – have referred situations occurring in their territories to the Court. The UN Security Council, in addition to these cases, has referred the situation in Darfur, Sudan – a non-State Party. All these cases are currently under investigation and trial.

In the situation in Uganda, the case *The Prosecutor v. Joseph Kony, Vincent Otti, Okot Odhiambo and Dominic Ongwen* is currently being heard before a Pre-Trial Chamber. In the case, five warrants of arrest have been issued against five most prominent members of the Lords Resistance Army (LRA), the sectarian guerrilla army based in northern Uganda, accused of widespread human rights violations, including murder, abduction, mutilation, sexual enslavement of women and children, and forcing children to participate in hostilities. After the death of Mr Lukwiya, the proceedings against him were terminated whilst the four remaining suspects are still at large.

In the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, three cases are being heard before the relevant Chambers regarding thousands of deaths by mass murder and summary execution in the DRC since 2002, including a pattern of rape, torture, forced displacement and the illegal use of child soldiers: *The Prosecutor v. Thomas Lubanga Dyilo*; *The Prosecutor v. Bosco Ntaganda*; and *The Prosecutor v. Germain Katanga and Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui*. Two of the cases are at the pre-trial stage, while the proceedings against Thomas Lubanga Dyilo are at the trial stage. Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, Germain Katanga and Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui are in the custody of the ICC whilst Bosco Ntaganda remains at large.

In the situation in the Central African Republic, the case *The Prosecutor v. Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo* is at the pre-trial stage of the proceedings and is currently being heard before a Pre-Trial Chamber. This case involves a situation in which the allegations of sexual crimes far outnumber alleged killing in which victims described being raped in public; being attacked by multiple perpetrators; being raped in the presence of family members; and being abused in other ways if they resisted their attackers.

In the situation in Darfur, Sudan, two cases are being heard before a Pre-Trial Chamber based on the collection of thousands of documents and interviews with over 50 independent experts regarding the crimes committed in the area: *The Prosecutor v.*

Ahmad Muhammad Harun (“Ahmad Harun”) and Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman (“Ali Kushayb”); and The Prosecutor v. Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir. All three suspects remain at large.

At the basis of one of the problems at the crux of what some critics see as the ICC's slow progress, especially in relation to gender-based crimes, is the difficulty to identify enough female victims. The stigma of sexual violence can be so huge for women in many communities that it forces them to remain silent.

In other matters regarding, the ICC, on 11 March 2009, five ICC judges were sworn in at a ceremony held at the seat of the Court in the Hague. Elected in January 2009 for nine year terms by the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute, the judges were: Judge Fumiko Saiga (Japan) who sadly passed away on 24 April, 2009, Judge Joyce Aluoch (Kenya), Judge Sanji Mmasenono Monageng (Botswana), Judge Christine van den Wyngaert (Belgium) and, the only male judge of the five, Judge Cuno Tarfusser (Italy).

The Women’s Initiatives for Gender Justice, the international women’s human rights organisation which advocates for gender justice through the ICC and that works with women most affected by the conflict situations under investigation by the ICC has recently presented its Gender Report Card on the International Criminal Court 2009. A separate analysis of this important document is currently underway and will be presented for publication in the IWN.

The First Review Conference of the Rome Statute of the ICC will be held in Kampala, Uganda, in the first half of 2010. This will be an important opportunity for the international community to assess and advance the role of international criminal law.

greenhouse gas by 8% before 2012.) But an industrial company that has too many quotas can sell them to those who don't have enough. So between 1997 and 2007 greenhouse gas was raised by 35 % because industrial countries are not able to lower outputs and in emerging countries there is an explosion of gas production especially as industrials delocalise. With those perspectives the USA have thought of a tax on imported goods that contain carbon but China threatened them of a commercial war if they did so.

As regards Nano-sciences and technology there is no legislation on the measures to take in the places where these types of products are made although they may be dangerous. The techniques that allow working at molecular, supra-molecular and atomic level involve developing devices that have an impact on the environmental and bodily health. They can be toxic and have to be watched out.

In Istanbul a certain number of States have refused to decide that water is a fundamental Human Right

Education to sustainable development in urban areas:

The working group is involved in the objectives of the Millennium especially on health and poverty and for this, they work in close coordination with the other groups.

The working group on Education for All for 2008-2009 has decided over two themes: Literacy and Non formal education. They want a change in the strategy which should be based on Human Rights.

We have projects like the implementation of the right to education or a project with the youth group on Non formal Education. We will try to privilege the role of universities in Africa and we will try to link our projects to the framework of the World Conference on Higher Education to be held on 5th-7th July 2009.

Human rights:

Work themes for the year 2008-2009:

- Obstacles to the use of Human Rights in the fields prospected by UNESCO.
- Fight against racism and discriminations including Human Right education of the youth in urban areas. Priorities will go to the new ethics problems posed to our societies and the new forms of violence and tension that hamper civil peace, democracy and pluralism at the time of globalisation.
- Women's rights: strategy for the mid-term 2008-2013 with "a priority to gender equality"
- 20th anniversary of the International Convention on Children's rights.

Our small working group who had worked on the interactive CD on the Universal Human Rights Declaration (to be used in schools with children aged 13 to 18) has already finished the preparatory documents. Today these documents are in the hands of the UNESCO Human Rights Secretariat. It should be translated into different languages and the rest of our work is to find images and drawings to fit in. We hope that everything will be finished for the next NGO meeting in December 2009.

Dialogue among cultures for peace:

.Initiated by the commission and headed by Catherine Deremble, a booklet exposes our research work. The approach in this booklet consists in trying to spot the conditions of the dialogue and analyse some of them. This booklet will be "a work tool serving dialogues between cultures for peace" and "an invitation to debate"

Invited by the commission, among other very interesting speakers, Mr. Jean Claude Guillebaud pointed out that we are living in a time of radical mutation whose amplitude can be compared to that of the end of the Roman Empire since by the end of the year 1980 three revolutions happened:

An economical revolution due to globalisation

A numeric revolution with the birth of the cyberspace

A genetic revolution: man has discovered means to access to procreation and reproduction. This is a promising revolution but it shakes the parental systems.

Also invited by the commission, Marek Halter, a French Jewish writer who is a militant in favour of Human Rights said that the dialogue with people who are different or who believe they are different from us, is very interesting. The dialogue with others is not necessary because we go to them full of good intentions, but because we want to make an effort to enhance their value. He tried to deliver solutions on how to dialogue with others

Youth:

The working group Education for All and the working group Youth have decided to meet, to prepare a common work for the Youth day on 5th June. The theme will be “non formal education built on human rights: why, for who, with whom and how?”

UNESCO events for 2009.

- April and September: Sessions of the Comity on NGO - in the framework of the Executive Council.
- July 5th-7th - International conference on higher education
- October 6th-23rd 2009 – UNESCO General Conference, with the appointment of a new General Director, and where a session concerning NGO should be held. The Civil Society Forum held in 2007 which was a real success will be renewed under a new name “Partner Summit”. Changing “Civil Society Forum” to “Partner Summit” is a matter of worry to NGOs because they are angry of seeing the words **Civil Society** disappear.
- December 1st-2nd 2009 NGO Conference.

Danielle Levy

Committee on International Non-Governmental Organisations

UNESCO Thursday April 16th-17th

Thursday April 16th was dedicated to a Round Table on "the role of NGOs in the normative process: the example of the Culture Sector".

The Ambassador of Canada described how, since the 1972 Convention, Conventions have become more and more specific until the 2005 Convention on Underwater Cultural Heritage, how they tend to favor relationships between governments and grassroots NGOs more and more, but there are differences in those links especially in countries where UNESCO has no power to legislate, another orator added .

The Representative of Brazil remarked that each NGO must lobby in a different manner since each NGO has specific features.

Mr. **Wim Van Zanten**, Vice-president, Conseil international de la musique traditionnelle gave an example of what he considers as “authentic culture”. For him it is heritage from

generation to generation: Do we call Malaysian or Indonesian, a musical instrument that traveled from Indonesia to Malaysia?" he asked.

The Ambassador of Spain presented the World Heritage Committee and underlined the growing and most necessary cooperation between national and international NGOs with governments. The World Heritage is in danger and a world conference on this topic is necessary in the short run.

The General Secretary of Europa Nostra presented the NGO work: lobbying, EU prize for the countries that best protect culture, campaigns on tangible and intangible heritage, help to more awareness.

NGOs must require a role in the making and in the implementation of the work at grassroots level but also in the making people become aware, since they have that experience on the ground that the texts and theories called conventions don't possess. NGOs also have the role to observe, to watch, to alert

Friday April 17th was dedicated to an open Forum on "UNESCO and NGOs facing a multiple crisis: threats and opportunities" focusing on "the role and Possible actions of development actors, including NGOs and civil society, in the current context of multidimensional global crisis: financial crisis, food crisis, energy crisis, crisis related to climate change and the crisis of growing inequalities.

Mr. **Mario Barbosa**, General Director mentioning the expulsion from Sudan of the 130 NGOs showed the growing involvement of those organizations. Without their help Darfour is at risk of a humanitarian catastrophe. **This is a proof of the irreplaceable character of NGOs in crisis situations.**

For the President of the Committee, Mr. **Lakatos**, the multifold crisis we are experimenting today is a threat but a challenge and a chance as well.

A genuine solution to the crisis requires a new architecture of the structures giving greater voice to emerging and developing countries and needs greater association between governments and NGOs. The world has changed. It has discovered that at least 20 countries are required to speak of financial matters. It is also high time for emerging countries to demand a more democratic, more balanced and more transparent governance. This needs **collective action**. This is where UNESCO can have an important part to play owing to its mandate in education, although education is not regarded with the same interest in all the countries of the world.

If the crisis is something new in the North Countries, it is not really so in Africa, and parceling solutions not taking account of the crisis globally would be a real mistake. The debate which has to take place within the next 20-50 years will have to include the peoples in the debates that will decide of their fates, debates that will have to take place first on the local level, then upgrade to the sub-regions and up to the parliaments so that peoples can be heard (this is what Mali is experimenting today). Culture means a lot in this debate.

The energy, financial, social and climate change crisis is a systemic crisis in a certain number of regions and a few voices (Stiltz for example) have tried to warn that the developed countries could be affected; but who listens to Cassandras? This is why the crisis took us by surprise.

The food crisis concerns 850 Millions of people. There are one billion underfed and 3 billion malnourished. The situation of the poorest is getting worse and worse. There are terrible threats: 2 to 400 000 children will die each year until 2015. Countries in the crisis

may reduce their help to poorer countries (funds for public development have dropped to 27 billion euros for the period 2008-2010). The “changeable geometry” (G 8, G14, G 20) of the places where decisions are taken by rich countries leaves little room to the poorer, powerless countries. Migrants will be less and less welcomed. The feeling of inequality is increasing specially where essential services are not properly answered and where human rights and democratic dignity are affected. The right to food has never been recognized as an international right although it is necessary to think about how to help the poorest countries so that they shouldn't collapse during the crisis.

In many countries the dialogue between governments and NGOs is clearly unsatisfactory so 5 NGO platforms (Chile, India, Brazil, West Africa and the NGO coordination Sud) have launched an international forum of NGOs. 80 NGOs answered and they decided to bring the subjects they had worked on together (often suggestions of solutions to crisis) to the international level.

The links between the crisis and the state of things on the planet are quite clear: Climate changes are going to have an impact on all the regions as well as on the whole of our societies. Now it is necessary to imagine new instruments and efficient measures to safeguard the environment. The financial crisis must offer an opportunity for new ideas on sustainable development, and UNESCO can contribute mainly, especially thanks to the NGOs that work at grassroots level and collaboration with them could be made more strategic:

We could

- Define together which NGOs could work on what.

- Organize dialogues, discussions with philosophers and scientists.

- Make sure that the expertise on the poorest is taken into consideration, consider their efforts with benevolence, support those who help them, allow funds to them and recognize the value of their engagement,

- Insert the notion of sustainable partnership, in which we should include the poorest.

As regards education the crisis is supposed not to be responsible for a cut in the budgets but in fact many countries (not only the South countries) have already restricted the budgets dedicated to education:

- There are heavy cuts in the funds devoted to the learning how to read and write to immigrant children and to the salaries of state employees and teachers.

- Cuts in the number of language teachers.

- Rise in registration fees (universities and some primary School).

- Rise in the number of children in classes.

- Drop in the help from Northern countries to Southern countries.

In Latin America numerous families can no longer keep their children in schools. 50 million people will lose their jobs in 2009. It will be necessary to imagine new jobs and to adapt the professional training systems. Only a collective action will help to get through.

Reaffirming again and again a certain number of values is part of the role of UNESCO this is why **ETHICS** will be at the centre of the debate of the next General assembly.

UNESCO

- Is inquiring on hidden privatization: public-private partnership doesn't seem as promising as announced.

- Has started two surveys on the impact of the crises at six months' interval. A campaign plan was adopted three weeks ago. It included arguments, development of tools, development of relationships with NGOs and with National education partners. If we don't work that way, neither the Millennium goals nor the Dakar ones will ever get a chance to be achieved by 2015.

We don't keep confidence in the G20 any more. For Mrs. **Monique Foulhoux**, Deputy-Secretary General for education UNESCO (one of the pillars on which democracy, peace security, right to education is built) must be the relay team. UNESCO has the potential and must take over the leadership, reaffirm the right to education, the centrality of education and its role in the "recovery" process. We must get mobilized because making choices in education means making choices of the society we want. It is necessary to invest in the next generation Society, and to think of the sort of growth we want to see.

For **Pierre Sané**, acting is having precise opinions and never to yield to panic or urgency. The answer to the crisis must go through the regulation of economical rights by Human Rights. UNESCO has to speak with more strength and audacity for the defense of the Human Rights of those who are the most deprived of them and for the strengthening of democracy. More and more voices are raised to ask that Human Beings should be placed at the centre but most of the plans to boost countries out of the crisis are made for the middle-classes and leave the poorest to charities and help associations. The risk that they should remain there is real and it is necessary to think of the future of the world on other ethics bases.

A few UNESCO initiatives:

- Together with the international network of research on woman and gender, an hearing has been planed to measure if gender equality is making progress
- A round table to reconsider social politics is planned for next month.
- A symposium on the crisis is planned too, with philosophers (moral thoughts)

The forum ended with the examination of statutory issues concerning admissions, reclassifications and renewals of NGOs official relations with UNESCO. If NGOs and observers have had a right to express themselves during the question/ answer period, they were not allowed to participate in the last part of the debate because this committee is a committee **on** NGOs and not a committee **of** NGOs.

The representative of China supported by Cuba, Egypt, and Sri Lanka wanted the exclusion of the NGO **Reporters Without Borders** and said that this NGO had tried to sabotage the journey of the Olympic flame and is used to attacks against China's policy. France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece and Saudi Arabia remarked that the UNESCO Mandate must safeguard the liberty of the press, a position supported by the General Director and the Committee because for UNESCO: "**just one position is clear- Freedom of expression**".

It took two hours to reach consensus not to exclude the NGO, but with the idea uttered by Jamaica to urge the committee to work more rapidly on the accreditation request from developing countries so as to, as the Representative of Cuba said " have a more universal view of things"

European Women's Lobby

- **General Assembly of EWL by Joanna Manganara, IAW representative to the EWL**

A number of 85 delegates were registered during the GA in Lyons in October 2008.

The treasurer pointed out that for the first time the co-financing for EWL for the year 2008 has exceeded the obligatory amount and an effort will be made to see how this can be used to cover possible non-eligible costs.

The Dutch coordination pointed to the importance of fundraising as the EWL should increasingly become more and more independent from the European Commission.

Three new coordinations were accepted as members: The Cyprus Women's Lobby, the Polish Women's Lobby and the Federation of Kale, Manouche, Romany and Sinté women.

The internal rules were revised as there was a need felt that all the changes that happen within EWL should be reflected in them and some of the customs and practices should be clarified and put into rules in particular to ensure better participation of member organizations (wise women, EPAC, external representation, some unclear formulation about alternates, role and responsibilities of the Executive committee, Solidarity Fund, role and agreement on work of Board members, issue groups).

Five issue groups were formed and organized to which delegates participated:

- Women's economic independence
- European security policy, a non-militarist approach
- Who's afraid of gender budgeting
- Sexist discrimination in the media
- Reproductive rights: progress and threats in Europe

A report of activities during 2007 and until August 2008 was presented to the GA: annual report, activities under the Progress core budget, the Nordic Baltic project, the migrant women's project, the EWL 50/50 parity campaign, which has gained excellent political support from 200 very high profile individuals, the Observatory on violence against women which counts 32 members, including neighboring countries. Five national observatories are present up to now and it is aimed that the number reaches to 30.

The number of changes proposed in the new work programme is the following:

- Introduction of key policy priority areas reflecting demands from issue groups.
- Introduction of thematic seminars during Board meetings.
- Introduction of working groups which are very inclusive and are specific to further represent expertise and knowledge.
- Introduction of concrete activities in all areas of the work.

The most important priorities for the 2009 are:

- Women in decision making 50/50 campaign
- European gender equality legislation and lobbying in relation to the anti-discrimination proposals made by the EC in July 2008.

- Women's economic independence gender gap, care, reconciliation, pensions.
- Women's rights in an international context, especially Euromed region and European Neighborhood policy.
- Women and the media.

The emergency motions for 2008 were the following:

- a) Suffering of Roma women in Europe
International Council of Jewish Women
- b) Equal opportunities: forgotten priorities in the new member states
Czech Women's Lobby
- c) World financial and economic crisis: how that would affect women and strategies to combat it.
Hungarian Women's Lobby



Reports of regional coordinators

Arab Region

Horeya Megahed, IAW Vice-president

- Woman of the Year: A 10 year old Yemeni girl received the universal award of Woman of the Year 2008: she was the youngest divorcee in the world after resenting a forced marriage to a 30 years old man who abused her and used to beat her daily; the divorce came according to a Yemeni court decision; she was supported by an activist woman lawyer and since then she has become along with her lawyer active in combating girls early marriage; her book became the best-selling in France, but She was not allowed to travel to Vienna to get the award. It is worth noting that the legal age for girls marriage in Yemen is 15 years old but marriage for young girls takes place in poor areas despite the law. The award was given before to some dignitaries such as Hillary Clinton, Condoliza Rice, Oprah Winfrey, and Bennazeer Botto. (December 2008)
- Dalia Megahed was appointed as the religious consultant of President Obama for Islamic Affairs. She was born in Egypt lived there until she was 5 years old and having an American citizenship. She is veiled and a well-educated researcher. (April 2009)
- In an unprecedented step in Saudi Arabia, King Abdullah appointed a woman in the cabinet as a Vice-Minister of Education for Girls Affairs. (February 2009)
- A nine year old girl got a divorce by a Saudi court decision as a result of an appeal from her mother against a forced registered marriage by her father to an older man. The case was considered as violence against girls. (April 2009)
- The National Project for Women Health Care: for the early discovery of women cancer_ especially breast cancer _took the form of a mobile unit to check women over 45 years old (X-ray, blood analysis....) investigated about 2,000 women yearly since it started in October 2007. The process is going on creating a considerable awareness among women especially in the poor areas.
- The opening of The Regional Center for Women Health and Development in Alexandria, Egypt to provide health care (March 2009).
- The appointment of Eva Kirolos as the first and only Omda (i.e., rural mayor)in a small village in Upper Egypt, a highly conservative area. Her late father and grandfather were previous Omda but she did not inherit it from them. She was appointed according to her merit and qualifications as a lawyer and active in the National Party at the local level. She is 53 years old, nice-looking, Christian, westernized woman, and unveiled. The amendment to the law that restricted the office of rural Omda to men and opens the place for women was passed in 1994 but it took the first Omda all these years to gain the office. (December 2008)
- A new ministry for Family and Population was established in Egypt headed by a woman which raised the female ministers to three representing 9% of the total 33 ministers.
- Fatma El Awani became the first woman Mazoune (marriage registrar) in Abu Dhabi; she is 33 years old and she has become the second mazoune at the level of the Arab and Islamic world after the Egyptian who was pioneer in October last year. (March 2009). Abu Dhabi was also pioneer in the Gulf Area in appointing the first woman judge in the whole history of Emirates.

- Morocco celebrated the appointment of new female judges and the retirement of the older generation: the number reached now 661 female judge representing 20% of the total judges. The first female judge was appointed in 1961 and Morocco was the pioneer in the whole Arab countries in this step. (March 2009)
- Morocco celebrated for the first time the national Moroccan Women Day, March 10th. The celebration took place under the title of “The March Towards Equality.” The new personal code “ Modawana” has been implemented after a wide range of discussions. It is still facing some difficulties because of the strong traditions.
- A Libyan woman parliamentarian was elected as the president of the Arab Parliamentarian Union for the first time in the history of the organization after the resignation of the previous president. (April 2009)
- The adoption of the Quota System by 12 Arab countries has led to a considerable degree of representation of women in the legislative assemblies. The overall representation is about 9%; the highest is in Iraq which is 25%. Egypt which applied the Quota from 79 to 86 is in the process of reapplying a kind of a Quota in the electoral system.
- The American University in Cairo is organizing a training program for free for training 100 businesswomen chosen from different Arab countries including Egypt. The program was launched by Golden Sax (The American Banking Group). The program is for 5 weeks. It is expected to extend for 5 years and to train about 500 businesswomen. (October 2008)
- Mrs Suzane Mubarak is the first international personality to become the guardian of the FAO activities in a step taking for the first time by the Organization since its establishment in 1945 as a sign of appreciation for her active role in Egypt and the Arab countries with regard to women and their economic empowerment and for her establishment of the Peace Movement in the Middle East. The celebration took place on the Universal Food Day on October 16th 2008 in Rome.
- The Palestinian women and children suffered from the extensive force used during the Israeli aggression on Gaza in December/January which lasted for a month and left over 6,500 between dead and badly injured almost half of them were women and children and many of them lost their sight and legs. The tragedy is that the use of White Phosphorous and prohibited weapons is leaving permanent destructive effect on the health and environment in addition to the total destruction of the infrastructure. The irony of the situation is that after less than a month of the aggression the Palestinian women gave birth to 5,000 babies.
- Conferences
- International conference on: “Women and decision-making: Leadership position for Total Justice” took place in Cairo March 16-17, 2009. The main focus was on the issue of are women in leadership position leading differently then men, leadership is for the more efficient.
- The Forum of “Arab Women and the Future” took place in Beirut under the auspices of the Lebanese First Lady (October 23-24 2008)
- “Citizenship and Egyptian Women” a paper presented by Dr. Horeya Megahed in an Arab conference on “Citizenship and National Integration” that took place in Morocco on March 12-15 2009. A female university professor from Sudan gave a paper on “The National Integration in Sudan”. It was a chance to propagate for IAW especially among university professors and young generation of researchers.

Europe

Joanna Manganara, regional coordinator

I will briefly describe the most important actions that the Alliance has supported at the European level.

We have participated in the urgent consultation on the maternity Directive and we have supported the Rapporteur's proposal to include paternity leave of one month fully paid, as it would contribute to the efforts of changing sex role stereotypes and have men undertake more family responsibilities.

Among the many measures that the EWL has been calling concerning the maternity Directive was for more strengthened measures on maternity leave in relation to the duration (24 weeks) with a mandatory period of six weeks and pay based on full salary. The Rapporteur (Edith Estrela PPS Portugal) has been proposing 20 weeks of which eight would be mandatory and payment with a ceiling of 85% of last salary. Moreover, EWL called for equality among women in situations of pregnancy, birth and breast feeding, regardless of women's professional status.

In view of the European Parliament elections in 2009 we have circulated the Gender Audit Form, designed by the 50/50 Campaign of the EWL, in order to evaluate national political parties commitment to gender equality, both in terms of women's quantitative presence on the electoral lists and in terms of the quantitative content of the program in view of the European Parliament elections 2009.

The Audit will provide a tool for the EWL and its member organizations throughout Europe to encourage voters to be involved in European politics and to give visibility for gender equality issues amongst the political parties.

We have also circulated:

- A briefing of the EWL regarding the situation of human rights and the EU explaining and informing about relevant legislation, policy and the institutional context. According to the briefing, the development and expansion of the human rights agenda at EU level is an outward looking policy focusing primarily on foreign affairs.

Recent developments such as the Charter and its legal status following the Lisbon treaty, the creation of the Fundamental Rights Agency and the accession of the EU to the ECHR will increase the aspect of human rights within the EU. A strong gender equality perspective should be mainstreamed in these activities. The EWL will work in this direction.

- A motion by the Lobby of Hungarian Women concerning the financial crisis and the world economy which was adopted by the last General Assembly of the EWL and was supported by the IAW.

At the request of Gudrun Haupter, the Convener of the Health Commission, I have forwarded to the President of the EWL, Brigitte Triems, a statement issued by the President of the Center for Reproductive Rights on the occasion of the inauguration of President Obama as the 44th President of the United States. The statement urges President Obama for decisive action to reverse Bush's damaging reproductive health policies, but also to advance women's reproductive rights as basic human rights.

At the request of Helene Sachstein, our representative at the UN in Geneva, I have forwarded to Brigitte Triems a statement submitted by among others IAW for

the session of the Commission on Population and Development. The statement is specifically concerned with the elimination of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity.

- The December Newsletter of the European Year of Intercultural dialogue (2008), which gives a window on the latest news and upcoming events, debates and projects related to intercultural dialogue at European and national level.

2009 has been designated the European Year of creativity and innovation. The year will help unlock Europe's creative and innovative potential, a task that has become even more important in times of economic crisis.

- A Declaration of the Conference of INGOS in the context of the Council of Europe, concerning the need to set up a legally binding European Convention to combat and prevent violence against women.
- A list of subjects under discussion by the CDEG (Council of Europe) and documents under preparation by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe with a possible gender equality aspect to which we can contribute.
- A call for proposals under the Progress program of the European Commission.
- The amendments of the European Caucus to the Agreed Conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women of the UN.
- A press release of the Wide Annual Conference 2008 entitled "Feminist Visions for a Just Europe", which was held in the Hague, Netherlands, between October 9th to 11th and to which I participated. The Conference focused on development policy trade, migration, peacekeeping, feminization of labor and decent work policy.

The aim of the Conference was to strengthen synergies amongst feminist individuals and organizations struggling for gender equality and social justice for women in, within and outside, Europe.

- Monthly Newsletter of the EWL.

Justice and Human Rights

Margret Steinarsdottir

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION ON JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

A. The Commission on Justice and Human Rights (JHR) was i.a. concerned with the CEDAW Committee and countries that are up for examination. The Icelandic shadow report and the Committee's comments and recommendations were distributed through the IAW mailing list. Banning religious practices harmful to women and the UNIFEM campaign, „Say NO to violence against women“ were looked into by the Commission Conveynor and promoted in Iceland.

B. The Cconvenor for JHR was a member of a Government appointed Committee on devising an action plan against trafficking. The plan has already been adopted by the Icelandic Government. One of the proposals in the action plan was to criminalize the buying of sex and a law to this effect has already entered into force in Iceland.

C. The Convenor has also been active with All the Women of the World, a co-operation group aimed at assisting immigrant and migrant women with integration into society, have their credentials (education) recognized, to free themselves from abusive relationships etc. This model would undoubtedly be of use to many countries around the world.

D. At IAW's Nordic meeting, April 29th, we discussed the possibility of JHR to prepare a questionnaire to be sent to all IAW organizations in order to find out what is the IAW position on prostitution and the clients. The purpose would be to find out what the position is in the different organizations in IAW. It is not thought to be a suggestion for a political position but a way of finding out how our memberships regard these issues. The conveynor has sent an e-mail to other Commission members asking their opinion and if agreed upon, a questionnaire will be prepared and sent to members for approval and then mailed to our member organizations through the IAW website.

E. The JHR convenor will be monitoring which countries will be up for examination by the CEDAW committee, and will be sending member organizations in those countries reminders and helpful data.



Communications unit

Report IAW Newsletter 2009

Joke Sebus

The IAW electronic newsletter reaches by e-mail more than 400 IAW members and friends in 60 countries. Some of our members forward the IAW newsletter also to their own friends.

The newsletter is always put up promptly on the IAW website by the webmaster, which is appreciated very much. It makes our e-publications available for a wide public!

The IAW newsletter has been mailed once a month by a team of Priscilla Todd (editing), Pat Richardson (administration) and yours truly (composing).

We try to compose an actual and concise newsletter with short articles. We also try to keep it to 6 pages, but sometimes we need more space when describing the background of a difficult situation, or to explain procedures, etc. We keep the lay-out very simple so the newsletter can be easily opened.

This year we mailed around three Action Sheets:

- * on several campaigns (UNIFEM - Say No to Violence; 50/50, an Action of the European Women's Lobby; in solidarity of Zimbabwean women; etc.) in October 2008;
- * on the Taliban, who have ordered the closure of all girls' schools in the war-ravaged Swat district of Pakistan, in January 2009;
- * on the extremist interpretation of Sharia law that "*education for girls is against Islamic teachings*", in April 2009.

We are still thinking of mailing the electronic IAW Flash for sudden developments, and Talking Point as an extension of IWNNews. In Talking Point we have more space for one actual subject. It would be great if the discussion will be continued by IAW members on the IAW website.

During 2008 we closely followed several items:

- * The news of the United Nations: on *CEDAW - CSW - the Human Rights Council - Architecture at the UN - and the discussion in the UN General Assembly*.
- * *On Women in Politics*: the number of seats for women in parliamentary chambers is slowly and steadily rising, although women are still marginalised in the global economy.
- * *On Health*, with the fight against HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and the resistance of some countries and organisations against reproductive health and reproductive rights for women.
- * *On Peace*, and the role of women in conflict areas, with article 1325 and 1820 in mind. The fight of IANSA against the sale and use of small arms has also been closely followed.

* A leading role of women in *environment and sustainable development* is still not clear, but we are expecting improvement. We got a lot of attention after the IAW side-event on *Climate Change Negotiations* at CSW.

* We covered as well as we could the news on *the Millennium Development Goals*. In particular, Goal 3, promoting gender equality and empowerment of women; Goal 4, reducing child mortality by two thirds and Goal 5, reducing by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio.

* We are worried because the *economic crisis* has entrenched and even reinforced gender gaps. The consequences for women can be dramatic.

Priscilla Todd has again done a marvellous job editing all the (many) drafts I mail her. She corrects my Dutchy English, and has also put in some poignant headers.

Pat Richardson has been very patient this year when I put all the e-mail addresses in EXCEL, to mail them around in Bcc. We have a better overview now of members, friends, and bouncers. Pat always deals with all the bouncers, after I have tried to contact them three times. So I cordially thank my team mates Priscilla and Pat for their support during this year. And a lot of thanks as well to all the IAW members, who have been sending us interesting articles and actual news.

Website

Alison Brown

Since the Board Meeting in the fall of 2008 we have tried to keep the website interesting and to make it a tool for communication among our membership. One great new improvement (suggested and implemented by our wonderful webmaster, Trevor Bennett) is a search function that allows us to find relevant text on the main site, although not the Blog, as that is actually housed on another server - WordPress.

The home page is changed regularly, the latest change having taken place in March to advertise the International Meeting. By the time you are meeting in Switzerland, I hope to have a new President's letter posted. A poll was added to the front page, but has garnered only 18 answers, so the usage of the website seems to be lower than we had hoped. If only the International Committee (Board and Presidents of our Affiliates and Associates) went to the site and answered the question, we would have some 50 answers and encouragement to update the layout of the site.

Newsletters and Newsflashes are submitted by Joke directly to Trevor and he puts them up in very short order. At this point I want to say what a great help we have in him and what an invaluable but discrete player he is in the IAW communications team.

The Book Nook has not been updated recently – my fault, as you know, I have been much involved in the process of moving from Europe to the USA. I would welcome a rotation of items relevant to IAW members and the Action Programme, for which I need a short text and a picture of the book cover.

The IWA Blog has one general page and 28 entries. Actual comments by members of the IAW, which I had hoped would be elicited by the blog have not been submitted on-line for posting. That which can be read as a comment is usually an e-mail on the topic which may have inspired the entry in the first place. I am glad to receive items that I can turn into a blog post. One drawback is that with each succeeding post the previous ones move down the page and sometimes quite pressing issues are not as easy to locate as I might wish.

The blog is available for Commission Members and International Representatives to use to express their opinions and observations. Please send me your essays, thoughts etc. so that IWA (International Woman Activist) is not just Arachnae.

What still has not taken place is the enlargement of the Membership list. The link list to member organisations' websites is unchanged and my call to organisational members without websites to send the makings of one web page for them (a text about the organisation and what it stands for plus a picture or two) was answered by the Bali Women's Union of Farming Groups and the Women's Rights Movement of Philippines. No one else and I did not want to start the project without contributions from other important member organisations like the Hoda Chawari Association, Union of Kuwaiti Women's Association, Sri Lanka Women's Conference, CILAF-LFDF, Ligue Hellénique pour le Droits des Femmes, Egyptian Society for the Development of Local Communities, Mmabatho Foundation Women's Development, and so on.

I have not yet abandoned my goal of also posting projects by our member organisations in search of funding and other support. For that I do need to have better contact with the treasurer, because this is not a service to organisations in arrears with their dues.

The list of mailing addresses for the IWN/NFI is stored on-line in a secret part of our website and the printer thus has immediate access to the most recent list. We believe that this is reducing the number of returns and the number of members not getting their IWN.

The lack of comments on the Blog has caused me to abandon my search for a way to install a forum on the website for the time being.

The direct chat possibility offered by Network Solutions for all officers with a womenalliance.org e-mail address (and I can give anyone who wants one such an address – we have plenty of inboxes to spare) has not seen much use. If there is a computer with internet connection, I would be happy to give a demonstration of that feature. We have a provider who offers a lot of "bells and whistles" for our annual fee and we are not using them nearly enough.

A final word on web presence: there is an entry about the IAW on Wikipedia. A few days after it was posted I discovered it had been edited, even rewritten, in what I assume is "Wiki-Style". [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International Alliance of Women](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Alliance_of_Women) The layout was so much more sophisticated than what I had been able to accomplish, so that I was then discouraged from trying to duplicate it in French. I would be grateful for any help there. Our presence in the French Wikipedia would be mandated by virtue of the fact that we are officially a bi-lingual organisation.



IAW Membership Officer Pat Richardson

It gives me great pleasure to present my thirteenth 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 and homes at different ends of the earth...At the moment, our President, Rosy Weiss, lives in Austria and our Secretary-General, Lene Pind, in Denmark, and our Treasurer, Rakesh Dhawan in India; Joke Sebus, the Editor of the monthly email newsletter, in the Netherlands and Priscilla Todd, the editor of 'The International Women's News' in Melbourne in Australia.

My duties keep me busy for many hours every week, and I view myself as the International switchboard, contacting and answering people, mainly by e-mail, ...I endeavour to reply immediately to inquiries as I am 'on-line' all day.

My duties also involve keeping the master files up-to-date on my computer, plus I keep extra files for the use of the Regional Directors, lists of our libraries, life members and 'freebees'. As you can imagine, all this keeps me busy...**I would like to thank all those IAW members, who let me know their changes of address, (not only postal, but email), and, especially those members who act as the Collectors in various countries, who keep me up to date on our individual members whereabouts and payments...** I e-mail copies of the updated master files to the President, Secretary and Treasurer after every major update for their information and use. I also send a back-up copy to Priscilla Todd in Melbourne as an extra safety precaution.

For the last two years, I have taken back the task of looking after and updating the names and addresses of our members for our Printers in Switzerland to post out 'The International Women's News'. Alison Brown, our Web content manager, has devised a new system for this part of the administration. Our journal goes to 448 postal addresses...and, as Affiliates, Board members, Collectors and UN reps get extra copies, an extra 332 copies are mailed out to them...**making a total of 780 copies of the IWN being posted.**

Since 1998, I have worked very closely with Joke Sebus, the Editor of our very successful monthly email newsletter, in searching the world for our member's email addresses. We are in almost daily contact with each other. **From a handful of email addresses in 1998, we now have hundreds of email addresses for our members, kept on a confidential list.**

One of my other hats is as the Individual members Representative on the IAW Board, and last year on my way to The Hague, I organised an afternoon tea in London for our Associated societies and individual members to meet Rosy...this was hosted by our Associated society in the UK, the Sri Lankan Womens Assoc. of the UK...for which I thank them very much...and as a result of this gathering, we now have Ann Higginson as our individual members' Collector in the UK...

I enjoy the work I am doing and hope it is meeting the needs of the IAW.

Secretary General Lene Pind

Name: Lene Pind	Email: iawsec@womenalliance.org
IAW position: Secretary General	
Date: May 2009	
Issues for discussion	
1. How to improve communications between members and secretariat	
2. How to organize meetings, so that we profit more from them	
3. How to move forward and become a modern organization	

Daily routine

Being secretary of the IAW has now become part of my daily routine. Most days I spend several hours at my computer answering emails, distributing material and information, trying to think of what to do with people whose email boxes are overloaded and who consequently don't get my messages, keeping track of email addresses in close collaboration with Joke Sebus and Pat Richardson etc

The information I try to distribute comes from Rosy Weiss, from international organizations, from IAW international representatives, from the editor of the e-newsletter, our IWN editor, and a number of other sources.

Membership and the secretariat

I regret that so little information comes to the secretary from member organizations. I often send out information, material that may be useful, suggestions etc, and in most cases I don't get any response. Fortunately I have from some response. Some members – very few- , send me encouraging greetings, which I am really grateful for, but I wish we could think of ways in which to improve communications between the secretariat, member organizations, individual members, the E-newsletter and International Women's News. It would be good for IAW as an organization to have news on a regular basis from our membership.

Campaigns

Without having counted, I believe we have been involved in more campaigns this last year than the year before: Taleban in the Swat Valley of Afghanistan is one example. But again – I would like to hear more from our membership about what they actually do in connection with these campaigns.

Planning the next meeting

Planning the next meeting is another duty that the secretary has. It involves working in close contact with the organization that is going to host the meeting - this year adf/svf headed by Jessika Kehl-Lauff. Together we set the process going and together we try to balance the different interests: business>< pleasure, IAW business>< promoting the hosting affiliate, regular meetings >< time for informal discussions etc.

This is an interesting, but not an easy task. And it also makes the secretary worry/ think about the way in which we spend the precious little time that we have together at our meetings

Improving procedures

As a way of preparing the Board meeting last year in The Hague, I asked the board members to send me their reports in writing, so that I could have everything printed out for the Board, and so that everybody had the opportunity of reading all the reports before the meeting. It was my impression that the Board members looked upon this as an improvement on former procedures.

This is why this year I asked everybody to send in their reports, so that all the reports could be printed and in that way get a wider readership and be a better testimony of the good work that we are doing. Also it will give us more time for discussion.

I am glad that so many organizations, international representatives, office bearers etc responded positively to my request. I know that I have been pestering you with my constant reminders that it was time to write and send a report.

Respecting each other's time, money and efforts

For each of us, going to IAW meetings means spending a lot of time and money. I am sure we all enjoy it, but still it costs money and takes time. This is a fact, and I think it calls for respect for each other's money, time, and not least efforts. We owe this to each other. One way of showing respect for ourselves and each other is by find procedures that ensure that we get the most out of the precious time we have together. This again means, for example, that we should not spend time at the meetings doing what could easily have been done before coming. It is better to discuss the reports than to have them read out, provided we have read them before the meeting. The time we have together should primarily be used - on the basis of all the reports and more generally current events - to discuss future policies and strategies.