



International Women's NEWS NOUVELLES Féministes Internationales

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Journal of the International Alliance of Women



BREAKING THE BOUNDARIES

IAW GOES VIRTUAL IN 2020 FOR ITS 38TH CONGRESS

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IAW 38th Congress

Theme: "CARING ECONOMY: PUTTING PEOPLE OVER PROFITS"

In 2004 IAW celebrated its Centenary in Berlin and Freiburg. President Patricia Giles could not be present and part of her message stated: *Since 1906, the journal of the Alliance has kept contact with members, particularly those who have limited capacity to travel to meetings, which has allowed them to feel a valued part of the Alliance. Members' commitment and loyalty to our causes, and the generosity of their time and skills have kept the Alliance functioning. We recognise and treasure them with much gratitude. We cover a wide range of ages and backgrounds. There are veterans amongst us and young women whom we welcome. We all come with an understanding of and commitment to the many causes that bring women together.*

November 24-26 2020, the IAW 38th Congress was held virtually – an historic occasion for the Alliance which gave members the opportunity to be present for some or all sessions and to see and talk to each other.

Careful planning and preparation was initiated, professional support was organised, a trial meeting was held followed by pre-Congress Board meetings. Hours for Congress sessions were limited to 4 hours with delegates linked in from 6am West Coast USA to midnight in Eastern Australia. A series of post-Congress meetings followed.

Virtual meetings have been in use for some time, mostly in the business world, but the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 thrust this technology into homes all around the world. We all agree that the benefits of meeting up with old and new friends and colleagues at face-to-face meetings are irreplaceable and provide invaluable opportunities to discuss informally issues under consideration. Virtual meetings, however, open windows to so many more people, including those who can't travel or don't have the time, not to mention the costs involved.

Attending meetings early in my career I learned the 3 most important things are: Communication, Communication and Communication! Successful international organisations include this as part of their mantra to make sure that all their members and others involved, who are scattered around the world, speaking different languages, can be kept clearly informed – 'in the loop', 'aware' / 'au courant' – which encourages more involvement

and friendships, more activism, more members. Virtual meetings can be a productive way to do this, whether big with an agenda or in small groups discussing a specific topic or project.

A warm Welcome to the new Board Members and Officers

In this edition you'll find photographs, an interview with President Cheryl Hayles and more.

IWNews

The focus of this edition is on the Congress and it also records Resolutions and Press Releases. The current Action Programme (2018-2020) will continue for the next Triennium. This and other information is accessible via the IAW website www.womenalliance.org Apology from Editor for delay in producing this edition.

If you have any ideas or suggestions about themes, topics, news, articles, poems, etc, I'd be delighted to hear from you iawpmt@mail.com

Vale Sizani Ngubane (1946 – 2020)

This is a sad loss to so many people around the world of an amazing, brave woman who founded the Rural Women's Movement (RWM) in the province of KwaZulu Natal in South Africa. RWM invited people to meet virtually on 30 January 2021 to celebrate and remember the wonderful and impressive life of Sizani.

Awards: NGO CSW/NY Woman of Distinction Awardee 2018; African Women Innovation & Entrepreneurship Forum (AWIEF) Award 2019; Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders 2019.

Sizani was a speaker on the panel at an IAW Parallel Event in 2018 at CSW62– Empowering Rural Women and Girls. You can read her presentation in our 2018 Journal Vol 113 No 1.

www.womenalliance.org/Publications/Journal



by Joanna Manganara, Honorary President IAW



At the end of December 2020 I received an email from Richard, a young American volunteer with the Women's Rural Movement, the organization that Sizani Ngubane created in the '90s in South Africa. He gave me the very sad news that Sizani had passed away due to COVID-19. It was a real shock because I consider Sizani one of the most fantastic personalities I have met in my life, for many reasons. The most important one is that she succeeded in becoming a leader in her society torn apart by apartheid, by helping women, in particular women from her group, indigenous and rural, to deal with serious violations of their rights which included inheritance rights, rights to land and property, rights against gender-based violence and many other rights.

Members of the RWM not only became aware of these rights, they learned how to fight to promote them.

Sizani led intensive campaigns against abduction, torture and rape of young girls 13-20 years old, to be brides of men they did not choose and she succeeded in eliminating this practice from a number of villages where it was taking place. Sizani became well-known because she questioned the ownership of communal land in rural areas and the role of traditional chiefs.

Many of the local leaders have a practice of not allowing women to represent themselves in court, or to testify before the court and it is all too common that they take land away from women whose spouses or fathers have died, to give it to men who then throw the women off the land they have long worked to support their families.

The RWM, led by Sizani, was the leader of the successful lawsuit against the Communal Land Rights Act of 2004, declared unconstitutional because it was unfair and enshrined gender bias. The RWM has also played an active role in exposing mining deals that failed to benefit rural citizens. It has contested the illicit leasing of land in the former homelands for mining and other projects without the informed consent of the rights holders.

As I started following the work of Sizani more closely, I realized she was an outstanding individual who inspired innovative public policies and strategies that make for a real lasting difference in the lives of people living in poverty, in particular women.

It was then I had the idea to propose to her, if she wanted, that IAW would nominate her for the Woman of Distinction Award given by the NGO/CSW New York. She thanked me a lot but said she did not have the qualifications for the award as she had not gone to university and after one year, had dropped out of high school in order to take care of her siblings and help her mother, who travelled a long way to work every day. I explained that her achievements were internationally acknowledged, which

was why she had been awarded many prizes and invited by universities and other institutions to speak all over the world about her work with RWM. Sizani was a very humble person, who did not pretend she was an expert but was sticking close to her roots. She finally accepted IAW's nomination and won the award. This made her very happy because it gave more visibility to her work. We were also happy because it gave visibility to the IAW as well.

The RWM is the only grassroots women's movement in South Africa actively involved in policy making processes.

Sizani and her organization made a lot of friends but also a lot of enemies because she was a woman, human rights defender, and there were many people who did not want things to change. She was physically attacked many times and her home was regularly broken into and looted. In one of the attacks, her brother was killed. In 2018, after receiving her award in New York, she returned home to find 12 people staying in her house and a lot of unpaid bills. Quite recently, Sizani's home and the RWM office were destroyed.

What has been deeply surprising to me are the organizational principles on the basis of which RWM works which demonstrate deep belief in democracy. None of the people involved have ever had any experience with democracy, yet it is the basic value of their movement. **The following principles of the RWM** have to do with amplifying the voices of indigenous women/girls to articulate, advance and defend the rights of indigenous rural citizens, particularly women/girls and to promote democracy:

- Ensure gender parity of representation at all levels of the movement.
- Demonstrate practical commitment to deepen democracy, innovative communication and consensus decision making.
- Support transparent professional management, accounting of funds raised and disbursed through the movement.

Other principles I find important are:

- Contesting undemocratic and corrupt practices that impact on rural citizens' lives.
- Monitoring the institutions of traditional governance and their impacts on indigenous citizens' rights.
- Mobilizing against policies and laws that dilute the rights of people and render them as second-class citizens.

The RWM mission is to promote the social, educational, economic and political development of indigenous women and girls, including advocating for women's rights, eliminating discrimination against women, and GBV, advancing women's capacity and leadership skills, promoting their participation in decisions that affect their lives and amplifying their voices for peace and security, at provincial and national levels.

I'm sure that IAW members will join with me in a call for the Rural Women's Movement to continue strongly on with the work started by Sizani and that this remarkable woman will be recognized in the history of rights for women and girls in South Africa and beyond.

Having described in detail the values on which the RWM is based, I would like to propose that IAW establishes an award for outstanding and exceptional individuals who, with their work, have inspired policies and strategies that made for a real lasting difference in the lives of people. The award should be in the name of Sizani Ngubane.

compiled by Lea Börgerding, Jessica Orban and Holly Herbert

ONGOING PROTESTS IN MEXICO TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



©Photograph: Alexander Schimneck on Unsplash

"Enough! Who Loves Does not Kill, does not humiliate, does not mistreat! Time to educate with equity", reads a protest sign in Oaxaca, Mexico.

In Mexico, women have recently taken to the streets (again) to protest against the ongoing epidemic of violence against them. Since 2019, the intensity of protests has grown across the country--and so has the rate of femicides and gender-based violence. Official figures show that last year, 3,825 women met violent deaths in Mexico, amounting to a sharp rise of 7% since 2018. When feminists protested against the killing of Bianca Alejandrina Lorenzana, a 20-year old woman who was raped and murdered in her hometown Cancun in early November, they were met with police violence. So on 25 Nov, the UN's International Day of Elimination of Violence Against Women, many across the country joined demonstrations again to raise awareness. To find out more about the situation in Mexico, go to: www.opendemocracy.net/en/democraciaabierta/polic%C3%ADa-abre-fuego-sobre-protesta-contra-el-feminic%C3%ADo-en-cancun-en/.

COVID-19 WORSENS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND TRAFFICKING RISK FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

In late November 2020, the head of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Ghada Waly, warned that "with the COVID-19 pandemic heightening the dangers of gender-based violence and human trafficking, action on these two fronts is needed now more than ever." The reasons for this are complex, but among others, women and girls are being pushed into extreme poverty because of COVID-19, making them especially vulnerable to traffickers. What is more, governments were simply distracted: COVID-19 was both hindering criminal justice responses and reducing support to victims. The UN itself has called the strong rise in gender-based violence a "shadow pandemic". Find out more at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/11/1078812>.



©Photograph: Risk Management Magazine

BELARUS' OPPOSITION LEADER SVETLANA TIKHANOVSKAYA WINS "WOMAN IN POWER" AWARD BY EMI AND EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY

While protests against the illegitimate Lukashenko regime continue in Belarus, one of the main opposition leaders, Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, just won the "Woman in Power" award. Tikhanovskaya ran against Lukashenko in the rigged August 2020 elections and fled the country in its aftermath, as violence escalated and members of the opposition were arrested. "It belongs to every brave woman in Belarus who fights for freedom and dignity", Tikhanovskaya said upon receiving the



award, which is given out annually by both the European Movement International (EMI) and the European Women's Lobby. Women have been at the forefront of the protests in Belarus over the past months. To find out more about the Tikhonovskaya's award and response, visit <https://www.neweurope.eu/article/belarus-opposition-leader-tikhonovskaya-wins-woman-in-power-award/>. Or check out our co-editor Lea Börgerding's interview with Belarusian activist Elena Kachanovich on the current situation for protesters, and especially women, in Belarus: <https://centreforforeignpolicy.org/interviews/2020/10/06/elena-kachanovich-shlyk>.



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ABORTION BANS IN POLAND SPARK NATIONWIDE STRIKES

©Photograph: Omar Marques via getty images



In Poland, women have taken to the streets in protest of new restrictions on reproductive rights that were already almost non-existent. On the busiest days of the protests as many as 430,000 women and their supporters joined.

The protests are occurring not just in large cities but also small towns and villages. It is estimated that protests have occurred in more than 400 communities across the country. The protests have mobilised young people in particular who have expressed great anger at what they view as a further assault on their reproductive rights. As on the 27th of November 2020, abortion has been banned in Poland, except for in the following circumstances: when the woman's life or health is endangered by the continuation of the pregnancy, when the pregnancy is a result of a criminal act, and when there is a high probability of

a severe and irreversible fetal impairment.

To find out more, listen to this The Guardian podcast: "Three women on their fight for abortion rights in Poland"

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/audio/2020/dec/03/three-women-on-their-fight-for-abortion-rights-in-poland-podcast>

"Why I risked my safety to protest against anti-abortion laws as a black Polish woman" <https://gal-dem.com/why-i-risked-my-safety-to-protest-against-anti-abortion-laws-as-a-black-polish-woman-poland/>

SCOTLAND BECOMES THE FIRST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD TO MAKE PERIOD PRODUCTS FREE FOR ALL

In late November, members of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) passed the Period Products Bill unanimously. The bill was first proposed back in 2017 by Scottish MP Monica Lennon. The estimated cost of the nationwide scheme is around 24 millions pounds per year. It will allow anyone who needs period products to get them free of charge while compensating the providers. Period products will be made readily available in places like community centres, youth clubs and pharmacies. The legislation also obliges that universities, secondary schools and colleges ensure that the products are available in all relevant bathrooms. The bill aims to reduce Scotland's 'period poverty', a situation that people who menstruate face, when they can't afford period products which results in them using things like socks

or old newspapers as a substitution. Though Scotland currently stands alone on this initiative, there are other countries that have made progress on supporting the end of period poverty. For example, in the US a number of states now mandate free period products that are distributed to schools, there is a growing campaign to eliminate sales taxes on these products. In Australia, since January 2019 tax has not been applied to period products. In Kenya, taxes on period products stopped being applied in 2004 and since 2011, the Kenyan government has been budgeting about 3 million per year to distribute free period products in schools in low income communities. Let's hope Scotland's new policies to help eradicate period poverty are a driving force for other countries to follow suit. Access to menstrual products is a right. Period.

Information on the IAW's Water and Pads for Schoolgirls project can be found here: <https://womenalliance.org/water-and-pads-for-schoolgirls-empowerment-for-life/>.



©Photograph: Getty Images

©Photograph: CNN



IN NAMIBIA, TOO, ACTIVISTS ARE DEMANDING REFORM TO ABORTION LEGISLATION

In Namibia today, abortion is largely criminalized except in cases involving incest, rape, or when the mother or child's life is in danger. The law dates back to apartheid South Africa, from which Namibia inherited the legislation. Because of ongoing protests both for and against the practise, Esther Muinjangu, Namibia's deputy minister of health and social services, has now suggested moving the debate to the level of parliament. Feminists and activists across the country are lobbying to repeal the law, with thousands already having signed a petition and raising awareness about the dangers

associated with legal, unsafe abortions. To find out more about the situation in Namibia, read: <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/11/26/africa/namibia-abortion-reform-intl/index.html>

SUDAN SETS TO BAN CHILD MARRIAGES AND FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Sudanese authorities have announced they will end child marriage and enforce the country's ban on female genital mutilation (FGM), in a major step forward for the rights of women and girls.

Police officers in Sudan are now informing local communities that FGM is illegal following new laws passed back in July that make it punishable by up to three years in gaol. Ezzeldin El Sheikh, the director general of police stated that it will be a major responsibility of police officers to intervene and curb this crime against humanity. He also added that religious leaders in the largely Muslim country would need to play a major role in ending the practices as well. According to the UN, 87% of Sudanese woman have undergone FGM, which involves the partial or total removal of the female external genitalia for non-medical reasons. Girls are typically cut between the ages of 5 and 14.

The Sudanese government has also announced this week that it will end child marriage and adopt all articles of the African charter on the rights and welfare of the child, which came into force in 1999. Sudan has resisted moves to ban marriage before the age of 18, despite supporting UN human rights council resolutions. In Sudan, about a third of young girls are married before they turn 18.

©Photograph: Getty Images



CHILEANS VOTED IN FAVOUR OF A NEW CONSTITUTION WRITTEN BY CHILEAN CITIZENS, HALF OF WHICH WILL BE WOMEN



On October 25 2020, 79% of voters in Chile voted in favour of a new constitution written solely by fellow Chilean citizens in a popular referendum and a particularly important vote since the country transitioned to democracy in 1990 after 17 years of dictatorship under Pinochet. The constitutional convention will reserve seats for Indigenous peoples like the Mapuche, who make up about 13% of the Chile population yet are neither recognised nor even acknowledged in the current constitution. In December 2019, whilst protests had erupted throughout the country, it was decided women would make up half of the new constitutional

convention. The October 2020 vote came one year after Chileans took to the streets to ask for socio-economic equality, redistribution of wealth, health care, equal access to higher education as well as gender equality and an end to violence against women. During these 2019 protests, a choreographed protest dance condemning violence against women "Un violador en tu camino" was led by the Las Tesis collective and has since inspired feminist protesters around the world: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aB7r6hdo3W4&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=ColectivoRegistroCallejero

Find out more : "Never again without women: Chile just voted to rewrite constitution": <https://womensagenda.com.au/latest/never-again-without-women-chile-just-voted-to-rewrite-constitution/>

"Chile's Largest Indigenous Group Sees Opportunity in a New Constitution": <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/16/world/americas/chile-mapuche-constitution.html>

KIM NG BREAKS THE BASEBALL GENDER BARRIER IN THE US

After 30 years in the game, Kim Ng is named general manager of the Miami Marlins baseball team and in doing so becomes the first woman to be a general manager in any of the major men's sports leagues in North America. In addition, she is also the first Asian American general manager of the Major League Baseball (MLB). Kim Ng will undoubtedly be paving the way for younger generations of girls interested in working in a traditionally very male-dominated sector.

Find out more about Kim Ng at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/13/sports/baseball/kim-ng-miami-marlins.html> and https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/kim-ngs-hiring-could-be-the-start-of-something-special-in-miami/?ex_cid=538twitter



OFELIA FERNÁNDEZ, LATIN AMERICA'S YOUNGEST LAWMAKER AND ONE OF ARGENTINA'S ICONS OF THE GREEN-WAVE PRO-CHOICE MOVEMENT

Ofelia Fernández was elected to the legislature of Buenos Aires in October 2019 at the age of 19. For several years now, she has been an important figure in Argentina's "green-wave" movement, which refers to the green scarf symbolising the pro-choice movement was worn by protesters who supported the passing of the 2018 bill that would legalize abortion in the first 14 weeks of pregnancy. While that bill was rejected by the Senate at the time, on 11 December 2020 Argentina's lower house (i.e. the Chamber of Deputies) approved a very similar bill sponsored by President Alberto Fernández, who was elected



in 2019 and pledged to place LGBTQ and women's rights at the heart of his administration. The Senate is expected to vote on this bill by the end of December.

To read more about the bill: "Argentina's lower house passes bill to allow abortion" <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/dec/11/argentina-lower-house-approves-abortion-bill-legal>

And about Ofelia Fernández: "Latin America's Youngest Lawmaker Is Fighting to Expand Abortion Access—While Working Out of Her Mom's Living Room" <https://time.com/collection-post/5896373/ofelia-fernandez-next-generation-leaders/>

"Argentinian MP Ofelia Fernandez: Being a feminist means being on the side of history": <https://www.france24.com/en/tv-shows/the-interview/20201208-argentinian-mp-ofelia-fernandez-being-a-feminist-means-being-on-the-side-of-history>

FILM RECOMMENDATION: "WITHOUT A WHISPER-KONNÓN: KWE"

The film "Without a Whisper-Konnón:Kwe" presents the untold story of how Indigenous women influenced the early suffragists in their fight for freedom and equality. Mohawk Clan Mother Louise Herne and Professor Sally Roesch Wagner shake the foundation of the established history of the women's rights movement in the United States. They join forces on a journey to shed light on the hidden history of the influence of Haudenosaunee Women on the women's rights movement, possibly changing this historical narrative forever. Find all information on the film here: <https://www.withoutawhisperfilm.com/about>.



INTERVIEW RECOMMENDATION: CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN RENOWNED FEMINISTS AT THE "LES CRÉATIVES" FESTIVAL

End of November 2020, the Swiss annual festival "Les créatives" brought together feminist artists, musicians, dancers, poets, performers, authors, professors, journalists for a special online edition. The conversations were compelling. To name a few, French writer, filmmaker, journalist and contributing writer for the Washington Post Rokhaya Diallo interviews American writer and professor Roxane Gay for a discussion on intersectionality, being Black in the feminist movement, facing trauma, body positivity, colonialism and the scrutiny currently faced by Muslim women in Europe. French journalist Lauren Bastide interviews American philosopher and professor Judith Butler on queer feminist theory, gender performativity, social practices around sex and gender, the failures and evolution of the feminist movement and non-violent mobilisation.

Find all the interviews and performances from "Les créatives" festival at: <https://www.youtube.com/c/FestivalLesCr%C3%A9atives/videos>

Roxane Gay
and Rokhaya Diallo



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odNs2wmePF8&t=3346s&ab_channel=FestivalLesCr%C3%A9atives

Judith Butler and
Lauren Bastide



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cy4dAq6jOnM&list=PLInskKkCt76YOATEF3EpvAXpre3ycgTlp&index=2&t=459s&ab_channel=FestivalLesCr%C3%A9atives



Newly elected IAW Board members

Meet Cheryl Hayles, IAW President

Interview by Lea Börgerding

President



Cheryl Hayles | Canada

Executive Vice President



Manju Kak | India

Executive Vice President



Marion Boeker | Germany

Secretary-General



Olufunmi Oluyedei | Nigeria

Treasurer



Antonia Lavine | USA



Muyuwa Anuarite Siiriwabo | DR Congo



Anne Pelagie | Cameroon



Camilla Wagner | Sweden



Catherine Dimitroulias | France



Charmaine Hidayatullah | Pakistan



Esther R. Suter | Switzerland



Hege Elisabeth Løvbak | Norway



Holly Herbert | Australia



Miranda Ruzario | South Africa



Irene Smeraidou | Cyprus



Laoura Alipranti-Maratou | Greece



Munira Jauad Ribeiro | Guiné-Bissau



Signe Gissel Schmidt | Denmark

"I am the dream of resilient, unrelenting, committed Black women who, without the title, are human rights defenders and advocates. In that lineage of matriarchs, my current placement in time happens to be in the era of the Black Lives Matter clarion call, the Me Too Movement and a global pandemic. Tragically, all three fall under the violence against women umbrella. A trifecta that is so devastating to women and cannot be dismissed as the consequences will be devastating for humanity."

Question: When did you first become active in promoting gender equality?

I was born with an acute sensitivity toward justice. In any situation I am always empathetic to the mistreated, marginalized and undervalued. It is a gut feeling that informs the brain when things are unbalanced. I've always felt I need to address and redress the injury. That's how I landed in the field of education. Education uplifts. It confirms what one is capable of. Education also never gives one a pass on civic engagement. When you know, you must respond.

Question: What topics and injustices drive your activism today?

At the beginning of the pandemic people said "This is it, people will have time to reflect and change their behaviors." Other than the hyper onboarding of individual virtual engagement, one year later I don't see a significant shift in how systems process violence against women. Systemic racism, lack of health opportunities and precarious economic wellbeing are still barriers for women.

Question: In addition to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, your IAW presidency starts at a particularly challenging time: anti-feminist groups are gaining strength, conservative governments are clamping down on women's rights, and women are suffering disproportionately from global warming. What is your vision for the IAW to address some of those challenges?

The pivot in how society relates to women and their human rights is interconnected with how society understands and reacts to climate change. It's a simple equation. If we do not take care of climate change, we will die. If we do not take care of women's human rights, we will also accelerate the spiritual, emotional, economic and physical death of women globally. The urgency to reconcile both injustices cannot be delayed or denied. If women and the planet are not in a healthy place there will be no peace. Human rights are about justice for all. Climate health is about justice for the planet. No justice no peace. The sooner conservative governments and right-wing influencers understand this, the faster we will achieve peace.

NGOs like the International Alliance of Women is a beacon of hope. It is a space women own. We gather to listen, learn and share. It's also the organization women gravitate to for support. Despite the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns, health impact to our members and friends, and disruption to in person meetings, IAW is fundraising to provide some essential support for women through Project 211.

*Caring economy: putting people and the planet
before profits*

This moment, this Triennium, provides the International Alliance of Women with the opportunity to work collaboratively and meaningfully with each other. While we have a support network of human rights defenders there exists a challenge network that trolls and creates distractions. However, I am inspired because I know we are more resilient than the distractions. Our members understand that justice needs committed champions.

A wise person once said “no one cares what you know until they know that you care”. Given that we discussed the care economy during our 38th Congress I am holding our organization to the concept of “caring” in every aspect of our work. For example, Project 21.1 focusses on women’s empowerment by providing bursaries for women to start a project in their local community. I recently sent a letter to our associates, affiliates and individual members to request financial support for Project 21.1. I am encouraged to see that the response has been positive. Each contribution builds our capacity to empower a woman in their journey to self-actualize.

Caring is more than just a discussion it is kind actions that make a difference in someone’s experience. It is inclusion, it is valuing diversity, it is welcoming others, it is mentoring, it is being vigilant not to become comfortable with the way things are. It’s also understanding that we have to ever evolve to address the present-day challenges women face. That awareness expands the emotional range of an organization and makes us relevant.

One impact the pandemic had was to usher the world into the 21st century wherein people are more than ever reliant on technology to assist in a virtual lifestyle. Virtual travel is quicker and less expensive which means as President, I can engage with our associates, affiliates and individual members in a fiscally responsible manner. All of our member travel expenditures for IAW meetings can now be directed to Project 21.1.

Question: What do you believe are areas for growth in the organization and do you have a plan to move the organization forward?

We are still fighting century old issues which prompted the creation of the International Alliance of Women. We now understand that all ethnic groups share common goals and inclusion is important for organizational health and strength. In this new virtual context, we must also look to the future, reimagine and act now to improve the situation for all women moving forward.

Ownership of this new reality is our collective responsibility. There is much to be done, to challenge violence against women. I feel hopeful knowing we have dedicated and talented women who are working to make a difference. The new Board and I recognize that by supporting each other we can accomplish anything. Even with these big responsibilities we can enjoy our time of work together in fun and friendship.

I know as an organization we can promote and leave a legacy for future generations of women where Equal Rights – Equal responsibilities is a reality. We can accomplish this by being purposeful in engaging and valuing women from all demographics and regions of the globe.

Resolution 1: Unpaid Care Work

The 38th Congress of the INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

1) Considering that in order to deal with the negative impact of COVID-19 on women, which is mainly due to the gender division of labour in the unpaid care work sector, we have to adopt what feminist economists are saying, that is we have to redefine economy taking into account women’s experiences, even putting them at the centre of economic analysis.

2) Acknowledging that economics are not gender neutral and that neoliberal policies and austerity measures adopted by many countries in the world do not respect rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights, IAW is of the opinion that our economies should be redefined by taking into account two concepts that are the backbone of society and the economy: Care economy and reproductive economy. The first makes society function and the second is the key to the continuation of the social order.

3) Decides that: The following policy recommendations be communicated to our membership for action.

Policy recommendations concerning unpaid care work

- Unpaid care is a universal issue: It affects women across the globe regardless of the level of education and income or the level of development of their countries. Recognition of unpaid care work Governments should:

- Measure unpaid care work. Tools and research to measure unpaid care work are critical to help implement public policies that improve the lives of women

- Recognize the value of unpaid care work by including the value of it in the gross domestic product or national income account indicators in order to prevent poverty, in particular female old-age poverty

- Raise awareness and build capacity. Ensure greater attention to unpaid care work in the private and public sphere.

- Governments should acknowledge and uphold the rights of women who work in the care sectors, to decent work, living wage and income security, gender responsive public services and zero tolerance to gender based violence.

Reduction of unpaid care work

- Invest in time saving and labour saving technologies and infrastructure to ease the constraints on women’s time concerning household level care tasks.

- Subsidize child, elder and care services to ensure that workers are compensated for their labour and families can afford to use their services.

- Subsidize energy . Governments should sponsor renewable energy services for the purpose of reducing the amount of time women spend on fetching firework.

Redistribution of unpaid care work

- Tackle gender norms and stereotypes as a first step in redistributing responsibilities for care and housework between women and men.

- Give maternity leave, public subsidies of 14 weeks. Improve women’s livelihood of taking leave instead of leaving the labour force entirely.

- Give equal amounts of maternity and paternity leave. Increase women’s employment by increasing incentives to hire women.

- Implement policies favourable to burden sharing. Encourage the adoption of legislative and policy measures that are focused on enabling women and men to more effectively balance family and work responsibilities.

- Engage with men: Ensure that policy supports an enabling environment for men to share care burdens.

Calls on the Board to ask our members to work with these recommendations, that is lobby their governments for their implementation and report back to the IAW Commission on Women and the Economy.

Calls on women and women’s organisations to join IAW in establishing an observatory that will collect data and information on socioeconomic trends that increase poverty, in particular women’s poverty.

Resolution 2: Healthcare not Warfare

The 38th Congress of the INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

Considering that the Covid-19 pandemic clearly demonstrates that the wellbeing of all human beings is an objective under the human right of health and



Caring economy: putting people over profits

that adequate public budgets and other finances are of prime importance to fund hospitals, sanitary equipment and research, even substitute incomes and support big, middle-sized and small enterprises.

Convinced that re-directing huge amounts of money spent for warfare into funding of welfare and healthcare and adequate income of care workers is urgent now and in the future: "We need vaccines not marines, we need hospitals not tanks!" Considering also the environmental damage of warfare in terms of forest devastation, wildlife extinction, and the long-term consequences of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution on human health.

Taking note with great concern that the UN General-Secretary's urgent appeal for a global ceasefire during these times of the global pandemic has not been followed by any of the conflicting parties and their supporters is of the opinion that if humankind is to win the fight against the virus while leaving nobody behind it needs a clear mind shift and a substantial shift in investments and national budgets calls on its membership to urge their governments to

- re-direct at least 50 % of all military state expenditure to the health sector, for research in cure and vaccine not only on COVID-19 but on Malaria and other pandemics, as well as for a better equipped sector of care work

- invest to a highest possible extent in all levels of cost free education since we now learnt that health is also depending on education, when understanding prevention measures as well as doing scientific research on medical analysis and solutions (e.g. vaccines)

- follow the UNSG's call for a global ceasefire without delay • collaborate in cases of crises and armed conflicts globally in mediation and peace negotiation whereby women of the crisis region or countries at war must be equal and meaningful participants in all peace processes at all levels (according to UNSCR 1325, 2000)

- respect and improve the implementation of gender equality in all areas of life and embrace women's potential to create a culture of peace Draft by Heide, Manju, Marion, and Rosy The headline and the quotation refer to the "Massachusetts Peace Action April 1st, 2020".

Resolution 3: ILO Convention 189

The 38th Congress of the INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

Considering that:

- increasing female labour participation makes families turn to domestic workers to care for their homes, children, aging relatives;
- domestic workers thus make dual incomes possible and so contribute to economic growth;
- domestic workers are often underpaid and have no social security;
- in many countries they are excluded from labour and social rights, which effectively legitimizes discrimination of a female dominated class of workers;
- as part of their promotion of decent work for all the International Labour Organization (ILO) has agreed on Convention 189, the Domestic Workers Convention, which sets standards for domestic work; is of the opinion that ILO Convention 189 needs ratification worldwide; calls on the President and the Affiliates and Associates: to urge their governments to ratify this Convention (if they have not already done so) which will help toward a more equal future for an estimated 67 million female workers.

Resolution 4: Family Planning

The 38th Congress of the INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

Considering the widespread lack of access to Family Planning and the fact that, at national and international level it is treated as a secret – despite the looming population growth and its consequences for the Planet -

is of the opinion that to improve the situation

All stakeholders should join forces and recognize that the Human Right to sexual and reproductive health includes de facto access to affordable contraception for women and men, and that this right must be respected.

International Agencies like WHO and UN Women should not only inform about Family Planning but promote the benefits through all their channels.

Governments of all countries should use traditional and online communication means and have wide-spread nets of agencies to inform all adult and adolescent women.

Resource persons should be qualified and be free from prejudice, in particular moral or religious reservations.

IAW Calls upon its member-organizations to influence their governments and Calls upon the international representatives among the Board members to influence International Agencies.

The theme of the 38th Congress suitably reflects the yearning of IAW membership globally, that is, putting people's rights and needs over profit -towards a systematic change to a caring economy. In this wise, State budgets, recovery and stimulus programs, financial instruments must all provide adequate funding for gender equality projects and aim for the promotion of human rights, peace, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the cessation of climate change expeditiously.

IAW welcomes participants from various parts of the globe to its 2020 virtual Congress, which is its most important membership meeting triennially. Congress will, amongst others, deliberate on resolutions on Caring Economy and Unpaid Work; ILO Convention 189 Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers; Fund Healthcare not Welfare; Family Planning and Reproductive Rights. Elections will be held to usher in a new leadership for the next triennium and vital decisions taken on the IAW Action Programme, its advocacy, future projects and the admission of a number of new member organizations.

It is trite knowledge that the COVID-19 pandemic, wars, increase of inequalities and various forms of violence against women has hit women's and girl's rights, needs, health and economical status extremely hard globally. Persistent women's rights violations now constitute a gnawing, universal predicament. Consequently, it is crucial at this time that IAW and aligned partners make women's voices heard and ensure their equal participation in all endeavours of life in the International Community.

This is the first-ever virtual IAW Congress in its 116 years of existence. The Alliance, as one of the oldest women's rights Non-Governmental Organizations, is well aware that at such precarious times as this, we must all intensify efforts towards the attainment of our noble objectives. To this end, IAW genially embraces the new digital technological advancements in its management of current global challenges.

Today IAW's first ever virtual Triennial Congress in its 116 years of history started with 67 participants from around the globe.

In her opening speech on the theme of the Conference, Joanna Manganara, IAW President, reiterated the urgent need for systematic change to Caring Economy by Putting People over Profits. According to her, in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis, it has become obvious that patriarchy (and other failed concepts of neoliberal economy) with attendant exploitation and devastation, is not compatible with Equality, Human Rights and Peace. There is no legitimacy for war, hunger, devastation against people and the planet for the profit of only a few. These are crimes which risk all our health, humanity and the planet. For the recovery, 50 percent of global military expenditures should be reallocated to global health expenditures.

The next endeavour is to end war. In this wise, IAW fully supports and recalls the United Nations Secretary General's call for a Global Cease Fire. It is not acceptable that members of the UN Security Council disregard the core task of peacekeeping and the will of millions of peace builders to end war. Women are ready to build a force for 50 percent participation in all peace negotiations and processes. There cannot be a track 2 or track 3 anymore.

According to Lyda Verstegen, Honorary President, IAW, "The ILO Convention 189 Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers ...needs be ratified by all UN member states. This would improve -mainly female -domestic workers' labour rights and working conditions globally, especially in consideration of the overlap with human trafficking." Protection against all forms of gender-based violence, as provided by the binding Istanbul Convention, should be given top priority.

To ensure women's human rights to reproductive health, contraception should be affordable and accessible everywhere to both women and men. In this regard, IAW expresses its solidarity with Polish women and all LGBTIQ globally.



Violence against women will be eliminated in a caring economy

During Nov. 25, the 2nd day of IAW's first-ever virtual IAW Triennial Congress, the IAW commemorated the **International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women**. Some joined the Congress dressed in its colour, **ORANGE**. Members in their countries and municipalities are now starting activities during the 16-Days-of-activism-campaign under the harsh challenges of the Covid-19 crisis. The IAW membership has great concern: they stated a current backlash against the currently achieved status of women's human rights. As global and regional studies show, there is an immense increase of all forms of violence against women and girls, including trafficking in women and girls. Women as caregivers and activists on the ground are at risk.

Nevertheless, our IAW women still organize on the ground for improved hygiene, access to sanitizer, basic health standards, for education and all the various needs in their communities. Women do not rest: they are agents of the change we all long for. Our members serve as volunteers in campaigns against the violation of women's rights in their societies. Women withstand attacks, work for a Caring Economy and empower others towards this goal. The **IAW project WATER & PADS FOR SCHOOLGIRLS** is only one of the many best practice examples of activities of our IAW membership.

Participants of the 38th IAW Congress underlined that **every day is a Day Against Violence against Women and Girls**. Instead, the many forms of violations of their human rights are a global crisis on its own: its unchanged reality is a global scandal. Women, it was said, are not bold enough in their approaches to encounter the threats. Women are still missing effective legislation, measures in education and public action against toxic concepts and practices of traditional manhood.

Instead of reducing violence against women systematically, too many states tolerate it. New forms have emerged as hate crimes in cyberspace. It was the consensus that **globally more effective legislation and financial investment is needed to punish perpetrators and to end this violence against 50 percent of the world's population**. Violence against women is a pandemic which harms all of us, our families, our communities, municipalities and states.

IAW members recommend **more awareness of the binding ISTANBUL CONVENTION** as a strong tool of international law: the ratification is not limited to any region. It has a treaty body – GREVIO – and its regular review processes recognizes alternative reports by women's organizations and experts. The Istanbul Convention is requesting a systematic, effective, and unified approach of legal and protective measures for women from its State parties.

The ISTANBUL CONVENTION aims for the reduction of all forms of violence against women and next to the UN CONVENTION FOR THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW) an effective tool of international law: often misunderstood it want our families, communities and states to prosper **because the day women are free from all forms of violence they will be able to contribute more effectively to the well-being, wealth and prosperity of their societies**. Members recommended requesting the International Community, institutions and all states to come up with **bold investments to end violence against women** and for peace. It was said, States must enforce life-long human rights education and finally stop Climate Change.

Men everywhere are invited to fight on the side of women for human rights: feminist men are the model of a great future of our planet because they are an integral part of our envisioned Caring Economy and Societies, globally. Men and women are not born for war and destruction; **women and men are equal in rights and responsibilities, born for peace and care in harmony** with human rights and the planet's ecological balance and diversity.

While the second day of the Congress proved in passionate discussions that the IAW membership is **united in cyberspace** and fully able to continue its work under its extended Action Programme, the 67 participants – associates, affiliates and individual members – awaited the results of the first ever digital election of the Officers of the Board of the IAW. When the election result was announced, the Congress gave digital “standing ovations” to the newly elected IAW President Cheryl Hayles who has blazed paths for a new IAW approach to fundraising in her Project 21.1. The Treasurer, Antonia Lavine and the Secretary General, Olunfunmi Oluyede had been re-elected into their second term. The election result of the fifteen new Board members from twelve countries will be announced today, Nov 26. 2020.



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