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IAW • AIF NEWSLETTER

IAW Newsletter December 2021 no.7

Important information

Dear fellow members of IAW,

This is to inform you that in accordance with IAW practice ALL official communication will continue to be done by IAW officers using their official IAW email address (...@womenalliance.org) and IAW official platforms.

Chères collègues de l'AIF,

*ceci est pour vous informer que conformément aux usances de l'AIF
TOUTE communication officielle continuera d'être effectuée par les
officières de l'AIF en utilisant leurs adresses e-mail
(..@womenalliance.org) et les plateformes officielles d'AIF.*

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Souad Houssein



Anjana Basu, India, new member of the Newsletter editorial Group

Born in Allahabad, schooled for a time in the UK, Anjana Basu has to date published 9 novels and 2 books of poetry. Anjana Basu lives and works as an advertising consultant in Calcutta. She is a trustee for the Saroj Nalini Dutt Memorial Association which works to empower women through traditional handicrafts

Report from India—Dr Manju Kak

The All India Women's Conference has a long history on issues of Peace, Diversity and Communal Harmony, especially when the nation was partitioned into India and Pakistan and refugees flooded our refugee camp. Recognising the Diversity in this nation our Founding fathers also incorporated many Directive Principles of State Policy that emphasized on respect to all communities, religions, cultures and genders.

The AIWC Mission statement states its mandate to work for the values of Communal Harmony, Peace and Co-existence.

Deepak Chopra writes, "the urge to fight and to turn competitors into enemies, nations into armed fortresses, and everyone into winners and losers won't save a planet that needs emergency medicine." This choice involves a conscious decision, and when enough people (men and women) make the decision, *the*

“Universal co-dependence and co-existence,” the Planet will not survive.

Since the past year through Covid times the All India Women's Conference worked through our 10 Zones spreading the message of Peace in these difficult and troubled times.

In continuation of that work we are happy to announce again **our extended partnership with National Foundation for Communal Harmony for the rest of 21-22, in organizing 3 National Webinars.** The subjects we have chosen are Peace within ourselves, our families, communities and organizations and the outside world.

1. **“Unity in Diversity”** addressed by Shivani, a famous TV presenter and philosopher of the spiritual sect of Bramha Kumaris, **22nd September, 2021.**
2. **“Celebrating Gandhi—The practice of Non Violence as a vehicle for Peace.** By **Prof SR Bhatt**, ex-President, Indian Council for Philosophical Research, & Chair Indian Philosophical Congress & Radha Behn Bhatt, Gandhian environmental activist, national awardee,— **4th October, 2021.** A message was also delivered by Marion Boeker, Executive Vice President IAW.
3. **“ Womens’ Struggle—a continuing Legacy.” To be held on 20th November. 2021.**
4. In addition, we will be conducting **6 Workshops/Seminars/ Cultural events** throughout India at Colleges and Universities with the theme of Universal Tolerance and Peace.

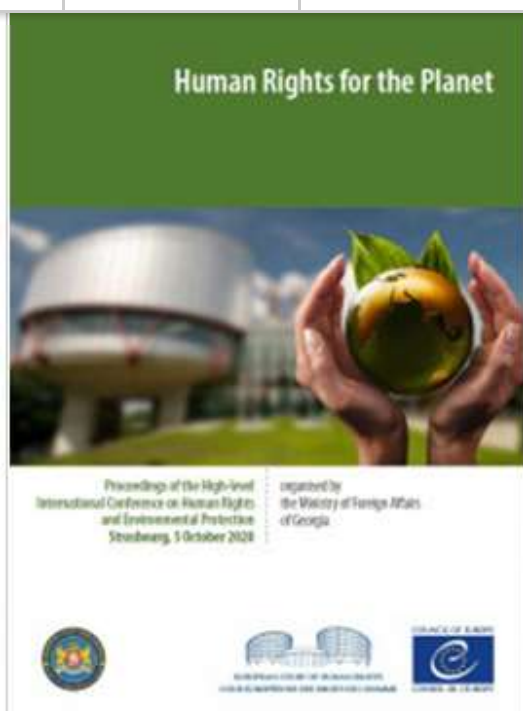
As well we will be taking up 2 regional training programs on the theme **“ Unity & Harmony—Women's Empowerment.” For 2022.**

Manju Kak

EVP—IAW; Ex Treasurer AIWC, Member in Charge AIWC (National Integration, Peace & Communal Harmony)



Mme Samira YASSNI représentera l'Association des femmes juristes africaines (AWLA) au Maroc, en qualité de Présidente.



High-level International Conference on Human Rights and Environmental Protection

Climate change, loss of biodiversity, depletion of natural resources and chemical pollution bring new challenges for the European Court of Human Rights, the Council of Europe and the Governments of its Member States.

Free download

<https://edoc.coe.int/fr/environnement/10249-human-rights-for-the-planet.html#>

Great News from Kinshasa, DR Congo

Sent to IAW Newsletter by Rosy Weiss

The 2021 Chairperson of the African Union and President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, has just publicly echoed **Every Woman's call for a global treaty on violence against women and girls.**

The President did so during his speech at the closing of the inaugural African Union Men's Conference on Positive Masculinity: "Galvanizing Positive Masculinity to end the scourge of violence in Africa."

At this conference, the Kinshasa Declaration on Positive Masculinities was adopted, which President Tshisekedi noted is the "very first continental Declaration dedicated to fighting violence against women and girls*."

Critically, he indicated that the African Union recognizes the need for legally binding mechanisms. President Tshisekedi stated:

I take advantage of this occasion, through adopting this continental declaration, to launch a strident appeal in favour of signing up to an international treaty on ending violence against women and girls.

lancer un vibrant appel visant la signature d'un traité international relatif à la lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes et aux filles.

Read the Kinshasa Declaration

[Read more](#)

LAND RIGHTS AND WOMEN IN JHARKHAND – THE LANDESA REPORT

by Anjana Basu

In the fight to equality, many states do have laws that allow women to own land, but due to small knit communities in the village, the elder or the community head take the decision of doing the contrary. In Jharkhand especially tribal laws and customs prevail where women do not have rights over land. But what do you do when the husband is no longer there to feed the family? The women have to take over and there are no means to earn a living. That is easier said than done though. Societies are mostly regulated by a body of norms, customs, taboos, traditions, values and moral standards which undergo changes with the passing of time. However, Tribal societies differ in terms of their functioning as they are mostly governed by the traditional customs and taboos which are often resistant to change.

For women who do have access to land only work on it and cannot claim it. Many believe in superstitions and do not allow women to do anything with the family land and accusations of witchcraft are wielded against them to silence their claims to land.

In Jharkhand, women are more related to land than their male counterparts. The lands, which keep them occupied, are acquired in the name of development without opening up any avenues of employment for them. There is neither a real rehabilitation program in the region nor the system of 'land in lieu of land'. The large-scale trafficking of tribal women from Jharkhand to industrial areas in other states of the country is a major repercussion of the above malaise. Initially attracted by such employment which gives them ready cash and trinkets, these women often land up being victims of economic exploitation. This economic exploitation is often accompanied by sexual exploitation. This has ultimately led to the break-up of family ties, erosion of the authority of the village headman and a general sanction of the traditional tribal social structure (Prasad, 1988). The root cause of their exploitations, according to Madhu Kishwar, a woman's rights activist, is present in their own tradition i.e. non-inheritance of land by the tribal women.

The study by the land advocacy group Landesa explores the relationship between land and women, its importance in the life of women, their awareness level with regards to land rights, and the present status at the ground level in the context of the Munda tribe in Jharkhand. It has been observed in previous

women has received scant attention.

Landesa has carried out land use studies among women in different communities and countries. The Jharkhand study is carried out with their characteristic thoroughness over a relatively small sample size of 10 villages.

According to the survey out of the 10 villages only 4 percent of housing plots and 3 percent of agricultural land was held solely or jointly by women, as reported by [reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com).

Naveen Kumar, who is the head of research at Landesa says that when they asked the women whether daughters should receive a share of parental land, only 20 percent said yes. It is not surprising that women would say such a thing as this mentality has seeped into their heads also because of centuries long patriarchal rule. This is something that needs to change.

"India's tribal land laws have categorically failed to protect the rights and interests of women in tribal communities," said lead researcher Shipra Deo, Landesa's Director of Women's Land Rights, India. "Though intended to preserve cultural and religious practices of Scheduled Tribe communities, these laws instead fortify deeply entrenched gender discrimination, subjecting women in tribal communities to the basest assaults against their dignity, livelihoods, and even their lives."

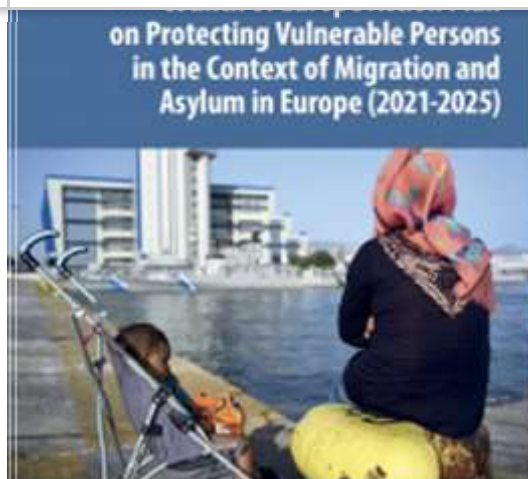
The methodology used for the study is both doctrinal and non-doctrinal for which primary and secondary set of data was collected and both qualitative and quantitative analysis have been used. It was found during the study that a majority of Munda women accepted the fact that getting land inheritance rights would empower them but they did not want to or care to claim it. In Jharkhand where the state has penetrated deep into the governing system of the village community even in the 5th Schedule Areas, the study helps to suggest a positive change in the area of women's land rights which can be brought from within the Munda community.

IAW at Townhall Meeting

by Soon-Young Yoon

On 17 November, Soon-Young Yoon, UN rep of IAW, participated in a Townhall meeting with Civil Society in the UN General Assembly hall. She asked Ambassador Abdulla Shahid, President of the General Assembly, "Why do you think gender equality and women's empowerment is essential to address the crises of our times, like the climate emergency"? He answered that he believed women, particularly rural women, know Mother Earth the best. For his views on this issue, see the UNTV

recording: <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1p/k1p8nf072x>



Council of Europe Action Plan on Protecting Vulnerable Persons in the Context of Migration and Asylum in Europe (2021-2025)

Council of Europe Action Plan on Protecting Vulnerable Persons in the Context of Migration and Asylum in Europe (2021-2025) (coe.int)

The action plan is composed of four pillars: three of them based on the core mandate of the Council of Europe – human rights, democracy and the rule of law – and a fourth transversal pillar focusing on co-operation.

[Free download](#)



Dhavanti Rama Rau (centre) Final hour with her sisters.

Lady Dhavanthi Rama Rau

by Rosy Weiss

An exciting and most informative webinar took place 18/10/21 about Lady Dhavanthi Rama Rau (1893–1987), the grand-aunt of our Vice-President, Dr. Manju KAK, organized by IAW member organization, AIWC.

Born as Dhavanthi Hardoo she graduated from the Presidency College Madras and taught in the Queen Mary's College, Madras, as one of the first Indian women to do so. At that time, the fact of an educated woman and teacher was something very unusual and scaring for mainstream patriarchy.

The arranged marriage with Sir Bengal Rama Rau obviously did not change her convictions, and her husband, apparently, supported her ambitions.

Seeing the picture of Dhavanthi with her sisters, it seems more than obvious, at least from a European perspective, that the husband's (male) support appeared to be more than decisive, for any female empowerment at that time.

It was the time, by the end of the 19th century, that women of the Indian elite classes started to form their own organisations.

Lady Rama Rau's involvement as a pioneer in Indian family planning is well documented. In 1949 she founded the Family Planning Association of India. In 1946 she became the 19th President of AIWC.

Within IWSA/IAW she apparently attended the Eleventh Congress, 1929 in Berlin, Germany from June 17 to 22. In "Politics and Friendship"[1] she is listed 1935 as a member of the IWSA Board.

Lady Rama Rau was the recipient of several awards for her outstanding services.

Very moving were the testimonies towards the end of the webinar by young women, descendants of Dhavanti, within the large family of Dr Manju Kak. It

[1] „Politics and Friendship. Letters from the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, 1902-1942“. Ed. Mineke Bosch, Annemarie Kloosterman. Ohio State University Press. Columbus.1990.

LADY DHANVANTHI RAMA RAU, President A.I.W.C. 1946 – 47

by Manju Kak

Kashmir Pundit by birth, Madras by Education and Mangalorean by marriage, she is a graduate of the Presidency College, Madras and was a Lecturer of the Queen Mary's College for some times. The enthusiasm and zeal of the pioneers of the Women's cause, Dr. Reddy and Mrs Cousins, inspired her to enter into public life. Her first act being participation in the drafting of the memoranda for women's franchise. She continued the work begun with Zeal in the South, by helping to establish the Lady Irwin School in Simla in 1926.

A new and valuable expansion of her activities took place when she led the first Indian delegation to the International Alliance Congress in Berlin. Mrs.Sarojini Naidu, Smt.Kamala Devi and Mrs Jothi Matthai being the other delegates. She was thereafter elected to the Board of the Alliance as a representative of the All India Women's Conference, and occupied this position till 1938, attending Board Meetings in Brussels, Amsterdam, Paris, Marseilles, etc. She was also active in the London Committees of the Women's Indian Association and the National Council of Women in India and helped to start the present London Liaison Group of the A.I.W.C.

The Asoka Akbar Van, which has been gifted to India by the Skippo Fund, has a heavy running expenditure. Lady Rama Rau, with her great power of organization, bravely took up the responsibility of managing the Van. It has rendered very useful service in the villages near Bombay City.

Ne lâchons rien - ça vaut la peine!
Dranbleiben - es lohnt sich!



Association suisse pour les droits des femmes

Schweizerischer Verband für Frauenrechte

adf
svf

“Celebrating 50 years of women's suffrage in Switzerland”

by Ursula Nakamura-Stoeck

"Pioneers - then - now - tomorrow" was our motto for the public event we

since 1912 an affiliate of the former International Alliance of Women's Suffrage. We wanted to bring our courageous pioneers out of oblivion.

The first part includes speeches given by Ruth Dreifuss, a former Swiss Federal Councillor, Jessica Kehl, former president of ADF Suisse and Greta Gysin, a young national parliamentarian.

Part two presented a theatre performance where 4 actresses taking on the roles of 4 well-known historical ADF pioneers had a discussion with 4 politically active young feminists who presented their own views in a rather spontaneous way. This all had to be in German or French, but English subtitles were out of our reach.

We were particularly proud of our patronage committee with prominent Swiss people, 5 former female Federal Councillors, many current members of the national parliament, artists, writers and academics – mostly women.

What has been achieved? What remains to be done? What future do we want?

For the script we could largely rely on the excellent history book "The struggle for equal rights" (Le combat pour les droits égaux) edited by ADF Suisse and presented at the IAW Congress in 2009.

Meanwhile in lockdown, the artists became very fascinated investigating the biographies of their pioneers. Almost all repetitions took place virtually. The young feminists, including two members of the national parliament, could only participate in one single zoom session!

It was very lucky, that Martine Gagnebin, president of ADF Vaud could introduce to us Cristina Gagnebin Müller, her niece, as film director. All participants were thrilled about it. Two singers also worked with us. They even transcribed the famous "March of the Women", the song of the English suffragettes, into a music-piece for two voices.

Film Recording

All participants at the event gathered at Berne in June. The movie had to be produced within just one day! For Cristina Gagnebin and Yuri Tavares, photographers, it was challenging to squeeze all into such a limited timeframe. We got a crash course about filming because most of us had no such experience. Our feelings of excitement were so great, that we all were spontaneously singing the final song together - an unforgettable event!

Post production and presentation

Nicoletta De Carli a language teacher and ADF member wrote all the subtitles in French or German.

On 4 September 2021, the movie was presented both at Basel and Pully near Lausanne. It became a huge success.

The actresses and singers emphasised that they only now became aware of how much the pioneers had to fight for women's rights at that time. They are very grateful to them and want to get involved in women's rights in future!

The film is now uploaded in German and French on the **ADF-SVF website**.

Please click on "Film suffrage féminin"! and enjoy!

Festival panafricain du cinéma et de la télévision de Ouagadougou

par Souad Hossein

La 27ème édition du Festival panafricain du cinéma et de la télévision de Ouagadougou s'est déroulée du 16 au 24 octobre 2021 dans la capitale du cinéma africain.

Cette édition organisée par une nouvelle équipe qui n'en était pas à ses débuts en la personne de son Délégué général Monsieur Alex moussa Sawadogo. Outre l'organisation qui a été optimisée, cette édition s'est illustrée par son palmarès de la catégorie longs métrages qui a récompensé par deux réalisatrices :

- Gessica Génés (Haïti) pour son film intitulé : "Freda" soutenu par l'Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, récompensé par l'étalon d'argent
- Leyla Bouzid (Tunisie) pour son film intitulé : "Une histoire d'amour et de désir" qui a obtenu l'étalon de bronze.

outre cette avancée des femmes au plus niveau du FESPACO - cette édition qui vient de s'achever a récompensé le film intitulé "La femme du Fossoyeur" de Khadar Ahmed (Somalie). rares sont les personnes qui s'attendaient à entendre le nom de ce pays souvent assimilé au terrorisme au djihadisme et à mille autres maux , la Somalie étant un état longtemps resté ignoré et en déshérence car n'oublions pas que depuis 1991 la Somalie a connu une guerre civile et n'a toujours pas à ce jour de gouvernement stable. Souhaitons lui la même performance politique et de stabilité que cette récente performance cinématographique. Il convient de souligner que le film somalien a été entièrement tourné à Djibouti et a été supervisé par une réalisatrice/productrice djiboutienne Lula Ismail ! cela démontre s'il en était besoin que les professionnelles du cinéma africain existent et réussissent avec brio et sont sur tous les fronts.

Bien évidemment, nous nous devons également de saluer la résilience du Burkina Faso qui a tout fait pour tenir cette édition que d'aucuns croyaient compromise voire même désertée par les cinéphiles et les bailleurs internationaux. Certes cette édition a connu une certaine baisse de fréquentation mais cela n'a nullement altéré son fonctionnement qui a plutôt gagné en visibilité et en efficacité. En période de pandémie mondiale et de menace terroriste, saluons les efforts consentis par le Burkina Faso. A souligner également la solidarité du Sénégal qui est venu en force en tant que pays d'honneur, le Sénégal n'a pas failli à sa mission de renfort en terme d'accompagnement et a pu assurer auprès de son pays frère le succès de cette édition !

Tous ces signaux montrent la montée en puissance du cinéma panafricain qui est résolument en marche vers le succès international.

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Souad Houssein

Priscilla Todd

Deadline for contributions to the February 2022 Newsletter is January 15 2022.

Please send your contributions to

iaw.newsletter@womenalliance.org. and souadh2o@gmail.com

Content

Heading

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