

# International Peace Update



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## Export Processing Zones and Their Effects on Women Cherry Padilla

*On the 29-31 July, WILPF organised the "International Seminar for Life-Women Workers, Globalisation and Human Rights" in San José, Costa Rica. The seminar was held before WILPF's International Executive Committee and provided the opportunity for women from all over the world to participate. Our WILPF women in Costa Rica worked hard to bring women from the region, connecting women from Central, South and North America, to those from Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe and the Middle East. The seminar had several panels and workshops addressing the challenges that we as women face in the changing world with transformed economic, political and social relationships from the personal to the international level.*



The worst crisis of overproduction has hit the capitalist system with the unprecedented glutting of the market of industrial and agricultural products. Prolonged recession and financial crisis as consequences of this affliction have pushed big corporations to find ways to continuously amass huge profits amid the crisis. The globalization of capital and labor and the expansion of the world markets are the responses of big corporations to prolong their lives. Under the banner slogan of globalization, big corporations peddle an economic paradigm of liberalization, and greater integration of economies into the global capitalist system in the guise of global modernization and economic stability. The underlying motive, however, is to remove all barriers to the free movement of investments, to free access to all natural and human resources and to the non-stop flow of profit to their treasury.

Labor has been on the receiving end of corporate strategies to withstand the financial crisis and recession hitting the world today. Cost saving measures in corporate operations and the intensifying competition for markets have led to downsizing schemes of corporations to create a streamlined and competitive organizations. Thus, flexibilization of labor which includes casual hiring, short-term contract labor, job sharing and the like are instituted to take fullest advantage of the large army of unemployed. Consequently, labor becomes even cheaper and are easily hired and fired. Workers rights are undermined as unionizing is threatened with the fast turnover of workers and with corporate and governments' policies to discourage unionism.

In the fertile ground of capitalist globalization, TNCs enjoy immense freedom and wider opportunity specially in accessing the resources of the developing countries. With the IMF-WB structural adjustment program as vehicle, debt-ridden economies are told to restructure their economies through liberalization of trade and investments, privatization of public services and deregulation of all areas of the economy to remove protective measures.

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The aims and principles of WILPF are to bring together women of different political and philosophical convictions united in their determination to study, make known and help abolish the causes and the concept of war, to work toward world peace and for total and universal disarmament, the abolition of violence and coercion in the settlement of conflicts and the substitution in each case of negotiation and conciliation, the strengthening of the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies, the strengthening of the institution of international law; and to strive for political and social equality, economic equity, cooperation among all people and for development within a sustainable environment.

Conscious that under systems of exploitation and oppression these aims cannot be attained, and that a real and lasting peace and true freedom cannot exist, WILPF's duty is to facilitate by non-violent means the social transformation to permit the inauguration of systems under which social and political equality and economic equity for all are attained without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, or on any other grounds whatsoever.

WILPF sees as its ultimate goal the establishment of an international economic order founded on meeting the needs of all peoples and not on profit and privilege.

### International Peace Update

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Liberalization and deregulation have opened wide economies of the developing countries to TNCs exploitation and domination. Indebted countries, in their desire to comply with the requirements of the IMF-WB SAP, compete among themselves in offering cheaper labor to attract foreign direct investments. Many of these governments set aside protective mechanisms for their labor, modify labor laws and other legislation to establish export processing zones (EPZs). Export Processing Zones are safe havens for TNCs. In these free trade enclaves foreign manufacturing firms producing mainly for export benefit from certain number of fiscal and financial incentives. Their incentives range from tax holidays to harmonious industrial relations, credit for job creation to subsidized rentals among others. According to the ILO there are now 850 EPZs around the world and these zones are found in Asia and Latin America and are now beginning to spread across Africa. Majority of the industries found in the EPZs are either electronic or clothing and garments type where cheap and unskilled labor is usually required. In these export processing zones women are considered as the optimal labor force as they comprise the majority of workers. About 90% of the 27 million workers in EPZs around the world are young women. Here, women are considered cheap, docile and peripheral labor appropriate only for low skilled jobs. They are usually placed in work which maximizes their allegedly natural attributes of obedience, patience, dexterity, attention to details. TNCs maximize women's alleged docility through mandatory overtime and extremely high quotas.

Clearly, TNCs not only profit from the cheap cost of labor, they also profit from the freedom provided by governments such as not paying benefits and incentives to workers, of implementing flexibilization and contractualization of work, maintaining inhumane conditions of work and discouraging unionism. In other words, the zones mean more freedom for business and less freedom for people.

The liberal entry of TNCs in developing countries has caused the closing down of small industries rendering millions of workers jobless. Moreover, the new arrangement in labor market which use sub-contracting and outsourcing methods enriches further the TNCs coffers. "Subcontracting is an industrial and business strategy where the production process is fragmented and its most labor-intensive phases farmed out to work places with the lowest wages and most profit-maximizing conditions. In sub-contracting business, the TNCs remain at the top as they provide the product orders and can easily reject products made by subcontractors without benefit of payment for the labor used in the creation of the products. Again in the subcontracting business, work is mostly done by women and children on piece-rate basis at low cost and often well into the night, and without benefits at all.



Subcontracting not only covers products but labor as well. A rampant practice in the labor industries is that of hiring workers through employment agencies instead of direct employment by the factory or company. This is particularly prevalent in service such as packaging, maintenance, janitorial, sales etc. The nature of subcontracting work makes workers vulnerable to actual market fluctuations. Corporations can hire seasonal workers whom they can easily dispose in leaner times or when actual market demands are low and workers who on the basis of their job status are not entitled to any benefits which regular workers enjoy.

Subcontracting arrangements reduce the bargaining power of trade unions as workers are divided into regular workers who can form union and those under contract who are not allowed to join workers' union.

The policy of privatization contributes further to the oppression of workers specially those who are in public services. With the increasing privatization of public services such as health, thousands of government employees are in danger of losing their jobs. Moreover, the opening of public services for TNCs investments and profit-taking takes social services away from the poor majority among them are the workers.

Worse, these schemes in favor of TNCs undermine trade unionism as they employ various ways to bust, ban and repress unions. For example, in Brazil, gargantuan fines are used to penalize unions who go on strike. In the Philippines trade union repression increase five time in 1996 from the previous years. In Malaysia and the Philippines, according to the report of the UN independent expert on SAP, "the rapid expansion of foreign investment has come at a fearful human price. Inside, behind walls often topped with barbed wire, the economic zones resemble a huge labor camp where trade unions, strikes and freedom of movement are severely limited, if not forbidden."

Meanwhile, the new global financial environment, where institutional speculators have emerged as powerful actors, has enabled the accumulation of vast amounts of private wealth, a large portion of which is a result of speculative transactions. The number of billionaires in the US alone increased from 13 in 1982 to 149 in 1996. (Forbes Magazine, International Billionaires, the World's Richest People, 1977)

With increasing economic globalization, there is no other recourse but for workers of the world to link up with each other

and find ways of organizing themselves amid the growing repression and exploitation among their ranks. A new organizing method can be the organization of working men and women according to industry instead of the usual workplace-centered organizing. The Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) an offshoot of the Textile Labor Union in Ahmedabad, India is one example. SEWA is a labor union of working women in the unorganized sector in India. Community-based organizing of workers maybe another way of organizing especially those involved in home-based work or for domestic outworkers. Intensifying alliances with different international labor movements is another way. Workers from different countries working for the same TNCs may in the future unite under one union or they can be organized globally according to line industries. □

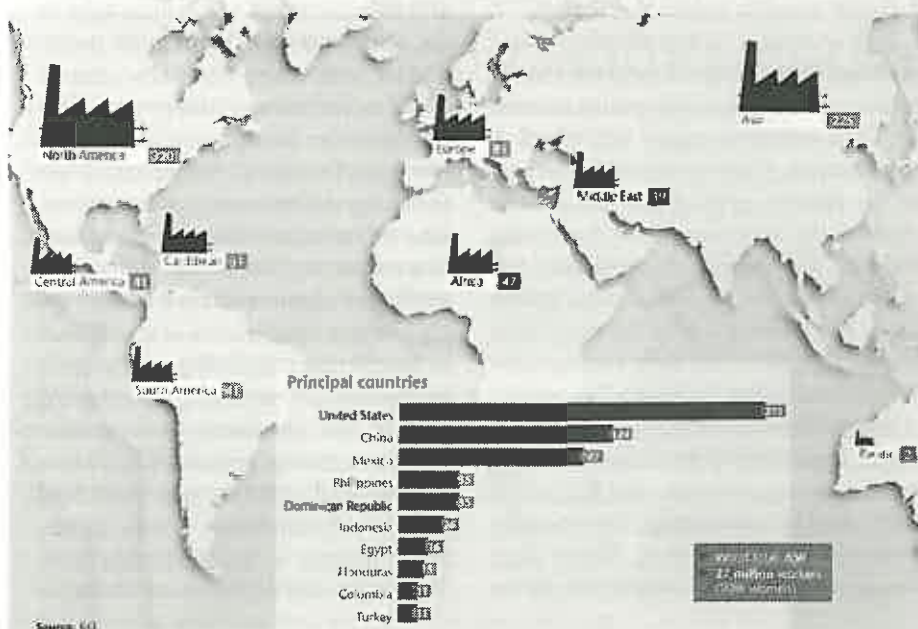
*Cherry Padilla is a WILPF International Vice President from the Philippines.*

*A full report of the Women Workers Seminar held in Costa Rica, is being developed by the Costa Rican Section in both Spanish and English.*

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**Export processing zones around the world**





## Style or Substance: Men's Response to the Feminist Challenge

Alberto Godenzi

How do men react if women challenge and seek to abolish the existing gender relationship? How do men respond, be it deliberately or unconsciously? Responses may be broken down into four stages.

Stage 1: passive blocking techniques. Their aim is to maintain things as they are. These include waiting for it to blow over, ignoring, theory-building.

Stage 2: active aggressive techniques. Their aim is to reclaim territory that women have conquered to restore the old order. They include domination, domestication, masculinization, division, harassment and battery. My estimate is that a vast majority of men remain mostly in those two stages.

Stage 3: associative techniques. With these, men try to appease women: "You are quite right in raising these demands, but let's try it calmly, slowly, through a peaceful dialogue with each other." This includes shows of goodwill, modernizing, harmonizing, self-presentation, and a more emotional approach.

Stage 4: anti-sexism, solidarity. This means attitudes and modes of behavior aimed at gender democracy.

Although the analysis of both the characteristics of anti-sexist men and the planned activities related to stage 4 are indeed of great interest, it will not be dealt with here as the primary goal of this article is to evaluate the responses of the dominating majority. It is precisely these reactions that women have to cope with on a day-to-day basis. Regression to an earlier stage is, of course, possible at any time, without prior notice-if and when circumstances permit. A man may use the techniques of different stages, depending on the situation he is in, the current requirements, and the person with whom he is interacting. The examples I have indicated refer to the lowest stage for each individual man, which provides the

most valid indication of his true and unrestrained reaction to women's challenges.

Women's responses cannot be simply matched to the stages of men's responses. They depend on the individual woman and on the historical situation. Conceivably, every men's behavior pattern may trigger every type of response listed here. Women may respond with resignation, anger, or cooperation if they become aware of the efforts of nonsexist men. Other possible responses include indifference, resistance, understanding, goodwill, caring, and skepticism. The process is of an iterative nature, that is, the mutual feedback may infinitely prolong the stimulus-response chain: men check on the results of their actions and readjust them, if necessary; women, for their part, are not unaffected by what men are doing either.

This 4-stages-model still shows a generalized picture of things. I would like to go into more detail on one item in Stage 3: that of self-presentation. An analysis of this technique gives a critical view of the so-called enlightened, or open-minded, men. It also shows how creative men's responses are. Self-presentation, or impression management, is a pervasive aspect of social interaction. It refers to the desire to manage the impression we make on others, to our efforts to structure the interaction with others so that we obtain a desired result. Applied to the context of men's responses to female demands, self-presentation is a technique in which a man asks himself, more or less consciously, how he must act so a woman or women will get a certain impression of him, which will lead them to the conclusion desired by the man. This may be a specific woman, all the women that he knows, or those for

whom it is important to him that they have a certain sympathetic impression of him, such as a supervisor or colleague. As a rule, the desired conclusion is that he is sympathetic to women in regard to questions of gender and that, consequently, he will be left unchallenged. There are several patterns of self-presentation. The techniques described provide us with a decoding device that will help men to understand their own actions better and help women understand men's behavior better. There are four groups of strategies and tactics:

1) *Assertive self-presentation strategies:* Men work to establish reputations that will be valid over long periods of time and be effective in a variety of situations; that is, these strategies are meant to make them immune to women's challenges. These are often successful.

- Competence and expertise. Men try to highlight their expertise while keeping a low profile on their patriarchal sides.

- Attractiveness. Men who possess socially attractive goods-handsome, creative, rich, clever, prominent, respected and/or powerful-may be more easily forgiven if they, for example, produce sexist movies.

- Credibility and trustworthiness. The message men want to project is: here's a guy who women can trust, who is credible, reliable, and authentic. Even though he may live in traditional style - well, there's much worse than him.

- Openness. Men want to create the impression that they are open and forthcoming, that they talk frankly about their sexual problems, their escapades, and the violent traits that other men - those with more inhibitions-simply refuse to admit. That is primeval man -tough and direct.

2) *Defensive self-presentation strategies:* Men try to make themselves appear as persons who cannot be held fully responsible for their actions, even in a variety of dif-



ferent situations.

- Helplessness and timidity. These men need women's support; they are still vulnerable little boys, afraid of and often misunderstood by the other sex and of the world.

- Alcoholism and drug abuse. The most frequent excuse for macho behavior. So long as he is not drunk or high on other drugs, he is the nicest father and husband.

- Symptoms of disease. Severe childhood traumas and/or hardship in the workplace make men's lives miserable. A patriarchal slip every now and then must be seen as physical or mental anguish. Once these hurdles are overcome, all will be well.

- Excuses. This is a strategy men are being trained in from their earliest childhood. "Objective" reasons are particularly often used as pretexts.

### 3) *Assertive self-presentation tactics:*

Men try to give women an impression of themselves that adds to their men's social power and lead women to act in line with men's interests and wishes.

- Flattery. Men praise women to appease them, hoping that they will appreciate the friendly words.

- Intimidation. Man puffs himself up to prevent women from making demands. The image he is striving for need not be a moral one. What counts is the deterrent effectiveness of the tactic.

- Self-promotion. Men get involved in the gender issue, hoping that grateful women will reward their commitment. They then use this to achieve special exempt status.

- Role modeling. Man pretends to be a role model for other men. Since most men do nothing at all, vacuuming the carpets once a week is heroic.

### 4) *Defensive self-presentation tactics:*

Men try to prevent or at least restrict a loss of prestige in women's eyes.

- Denial. Man denies that men enjoy privileges, that men are violent toward women, and so forth.

- Reevaluation. The scope and significance of men's privileges is being played down; their consequences are minimized. These individuals will contend

that, in fact, women have all the advantages because the popular sympathy is with them.

- Justification. While the fact that women are discriminated against is not denied, this has nothing to do with oneself. Objective difficulties block other solutions, for where would we be if...? Part of this tactic is to put the blame on women, who are supposedly the ones responsible for being disadvantaged, because they do not really want things to be different, they do not perform efficiently, they are too soft, and so forth.

- Unintentionality. Inequality and violence against women are recognized as facts. But they are seen as unintentional results of a fatal chain of individual events or as effects caused by some depersonalized structure.

Which technique is selected depends on the situation and on the intensity with which men are confronted with women's claims. Pressure to do something is certainly more marked if the consequences of doing nothing are felt to be very negative. As long as men regard the consequences as harmless, they will hardly feel an urgent need to reconsider their own positions. The objective of all these strategies and tactics is to appease malcontent and angry women without losing face, if possible. Responsibility is denied as long as possible. If it can no longer be denied, techniques are activated that will minimize any negative conclusions about one's own person.

Men's control and the potential for assimilation of men's responses to women's demands is often times subtle. If one looks for clues about how to change men's behavior, one should take into account the immense variety of coping strategies men can use in their efforts to undermine feminist challenges. This article has shed light on an as-yet underinvestigated area of men's behavior. If men are to start moving towards gender democracy, we need to know the factors and situations that could support the advancement of men to the stage of cocreating antisexist realities. Further research will be necessary to find the parameters of supportive coping pat-

terns that lay the foundation for a new structure and culture where men find options for new activities, emotions and identities. For a long time, men were seen as invariables in gender issues. They were setting the rules and women have had to adapt to these rules. In the future, paraphrasing a dictum by Jean-Paul Sartre, men have to start swimming to get to the new shores of gender equity. Mechanisms like passive blocking, active aggression, and associative techniques are the wrong equipment for this endeavor. □

A full version of this article which was published in the Journal "Men and Masculinities, 1999, 1(4), 385-392" can be obtained by contacting the author at the University of Fribourg, Department of Social Work and Social Policy, Route des Bonnesfontaines 11, CH-1700 Fribourg/Switzerland.

*Alberto Goderzi presented this material at the "Men & Masculinity-An Issue for Peace Building" workshop at the Hague Appeal for Peace.*

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power and democratic accountability. The process of developing a local economic system must go hand in hand with more political and democratic control and accountability at the local level.

6. Trade and aid for self-reliance. The rules of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (WTO) must be changed into a 'General Agreement for Sustainable Trade', coordinated by a revised WTO, which has equitable and sustainable development as its primary objective.

7. Protecting the environment by 'Resource Taxes', which can be used to make the change from 'global' to 'local'.

It is important and fortunately it is happening more and more that NGOs, trade unions, grassroots groups and others are working together for these urgent changes. At this moment, a statement is circulating opposing a Millennium Round or a new round of comprehensive trade negotiations. □

*Coby Meyboom is a member of WILPF in the Netherlands.*



## WILPF Seminar on Women and Peaceful Conflict Resolution

Tirana, Albania, July 14 - 18, 1999

Sonja Wölte

The idea for a seminar originated at the end of 1997 and was intended to focus on the disarmament work of WILPF Albania (in collaboration with other organizations). The original goal was to evaluate these activities, offer new input on conflict resolution and mediation skills and thus support capacity-building in order to strengthen new plans and activities of WILPF Albania. The project proposal was approved by the Swiss government in February 1999. Then came the war. When it was decided to go ahead and carry out the workshop, it was not clear how the political situation in Albania would be by the time of the seminar.

Because of timing, the seminar was partly hijacked by the consequences of the Kosovo war and the refugee crisis in Albania. In many ways, it served to work through some of the experiences of the participants relating to the situation. The original topic was pushed into the background by these needs. In some ways, the seminar was caught between the past and the future, which resulted in a disruption of the original logic of the seminar and accounts for the fact that the outcome and future plans of the seminar have little to do with the past activities. They strongly relate, however, to the newly acquired participants' skills in conflict resolution and mediation. The participants are determined and have committed themselves to work for peace education in their communities and in local schools and have designed quite detailed action plans.

### Participants and Venue

The seminar took place in the city hall of Tirana and was attended by 19 participants, 15 of them Albanian women, one refugee woman from Kosovo and three women from Macedonia. The majority of the Albanian participants were WILPF members, most of whom are

teachers. Two Macedonian women worked at the ministry of Labor and Social policy, the third woman was a university professor for education. The Kosovar woman was a refugee with whom WILPF Albania had collaborated in the refugee camps. There was a lively and friendly atmosphere. The participants had never been exposed to a training workshop before and appreciated the new experience. The participants from Macedonia often added a new and different perspective to the discussion, though most of the seminar focused on Albania. The Macedonians were interested in being exposed to a conflict resolution training in order to organize something similar in their country. With the support of the other participants, the Kosovar woman had a chance to work through her experiences and she reminded everyone of the challenges ahead of the region in rebuilding Kosovo.

### Training

The seminar focused on training, while experience sharing and action planning were also included. Dr. Diana Francis (UK), the main facilitator and peace conflict resolution trainer, focused on theory and skills of nonviolent conflict resolution and mediation. Identifying different forms of violence (direct, structural and cultural) in Albanian society and thinking about alternatives to violence and productive solutions for conflict on all three levels were the red thread of the seminar. The participants explored the basic principles of mediation in theory and role plays. Integrated into the training was a session on women's human rights.

### Reports of WILPF Albania Activities

*Disarmament* In cooperation with a cultural Albanian organization, WILPF created a network of WILPF and other women around the country. In cooperation with local institutions such as the local authorities or the Muslim institu-

tions, families were visited and 750 anonymous questionnaires were distributed in 7 villages to assess the awareness about the danger of the weapons, and the willingness to hand them over. 75% of those surveyed were women, of which 94% were against the use of weapons in the family. The majority of the women were willing to deliver the arms (82%), but reported that the men in the families wanted to hold on to them in order to defend themselves and the families. This was accompanied by other activities, such as lectures, media work, exhibitions, posters, conversations in families, and writing contests of children about the problem. In the town of Kashar, the WILPF activities which were part of an overall movement to fight the spread and use of small weapons in society, resulted in the voluntary delivering of 1800 small arms. Also, the police confiscated 2800 arms in this town.

### Refugee crisis

WILPF activities in the last few months were dominated by the refugee situation in Albania. WILPF members worked voluntarily in the refugee camps, visited and helped families hosting refugees in their homes. The main sites were the sport palace in Tirana (150,000 refugees), a small camp in the North of the country (Kashar) which was run by the French humanitarian organization "Premier Urgence." In Kashar, WILPF helped bring in medical staff, teachers for children and organized some cultural activities, such as children's drawing competitions about the theme of peace. In Tirana, WILPF brought packages to refugees to meet their most urgent needs at the beginning. The same is true for the visits to the homes of families hosting refugees. Other WILPF women had as many as 30 refugees staying in their homes.

The timing of the seminar just after the Kosovo war and the return of the refu-



gees to Kosovo resulted in some shifts from the original plans, the need to work through the personal and social experiences resulting from the refugee situation became apparent. Several representatives of local authorities as well as the Albanian deputy minister of Local Affairs were present for part of an afternoon when the women shared their experiences. The women reported on their work in the refugee camps and hosting refugees in their homes. During the emotional reporting it became obvious that the participants had been traumatized to some extent by what they had been exposed to: the testimonies they heard, seeing the physical and mental conditions in which the refugees arrived in Albania and the permanent stress caused by having refugees in their pri-

vate homes. The Albanian women's reports were exacerbated by the personal accounts of the Kosovar participant, who also made a plea for outside help for the Kosovar people.

#### Outcomes

The participants chose to work on issues regarding the situation in Albanian society more than on a regional level. Because the majority of the women were teachers, they chose to become more active in peace education in Albanian schools, as poverty, violence, crimes and drugs have become major problems. The women committed themselves to peace education in different regions of the country. The school projects will begin in September and a first assessment of the implementation is planned for January, when the different groups will meet and discuss

their progress. Apart from these concrete plans, there was the participants determination to apply the new conflict resolution skills in their communities and to serve as mediators on the local level or at the work place. On the regional level, WILPF Albania will intensify the contacts between Albanian, Kosovar and Macedonian women to build up a regional network of women peace activists. Finally, the participants adopted a letter of solidarity and support to the Kosovar activist Flora Brovina, who had been kept in prison by the Serbian authorities and released to a hospital in Pogradec, Albania, where she was staying during the seminar. □

*Sonja Wölte is the project coordinator and a WILPF 1997 human rights intern.*

*...continued from page 11*  
rent political and economic structures. *What do you think the future brings for WILPF? Do you think there is a future for WILPF?*

**Babsi:** With such a history WILPF certainly has a future. I am not too concerned that WILPF really stops or changes very much. I think WILPF has kept a progressive agenda since the foundation in 1915 until now. If you read the documents you see that we could have changed very often and took a more mainstream position, which we didn't. The structure we have insures actually that there is continuity. The questions that need to be asked are: "Does WILPF have an impact in the world we live in. How can we measure and improve the impact?" I believe we have an impact on the people we draw into the organization. Most people when they come to WILPF are very impressed with the depth of analysis and the international solidarity. But do we have an impact on the real shaping of policy? We have not managed to reach the media, for whatever reason. We have not managed to have the media to carry the message we want to spread. Also, we have not professionalized our ability to do that. That is serious. Because for a po-

litical organization just to exist for its own existence doesn't make much sense. We can improve our structure, yes, but how can we have a stronger impact in being part of the global movement to transform society? I think we are on the right track but we have to be very critical and to always ask ourselves these questions.

My main reason for leaving the Secretary General position was to move to Germany and to have some free time as well. But second, I witnessed also, the UN being devaluated in the last few years. I felt also that what I do in Geneva is to try to improve the UN work a little bit on our subjects. This is not to diminish the importance of this work, but do we have an effect on Sierra Leone policy as such, for example, or on issues that are not being discussed in the UN and are our main areas of work? We concentrate at the international level but at the same time, the power was taken away from the UN—a great portion of it. This year for example, for the first time I wrote to the Secretary General of NATO because it became so obvious that we also have to tell him that we protest and not only ask Kofi Annan to take back what the UN had lost. WILPF's challenge is to ask how to look into the future, how best to do the UN

work, and how to best promote the international debate for profound transformation.

**Michaela:** In addition to what Babsi said about the UN and how to deal with the new situation, I think it is also very important to strengthen the identity of WILPF outside of the UN. This could contribute that WILPF has a better impact on national and local levels.

*Can you give us an example of how that might be?*

**Michaela:** For example, we could focus more on the lobbying of governments and institutions outside of the UN-structures, such as the OSCE. As Babsi mentioned, it was the first time that she addressed a letter to the NATO and she took a different approach. I think, in the current situation, we need to continue to support the UN, but at the same time WILPF has to become more visible in the general public through their national sections.

*We wish Babsi well and we welcome Michaela! □*

*Regina Birchem is a WILPF International Vice President.*



## Decent Work in an 'Indecent' World Economy

Krishna Ahooja Patel

The 87<sup>th</sup> session of the International Labor Conference which concluded its work at the end of June 1999 will remain a watershed in the history of ideas in the world of work. For the first time, this specialized agency of the UN family has expanded its horizons beyond the governments, employers and workers to reach the ordinary citizen and the civil society. Under the title "Decent work," the new ILO Director General, Juan Somavia seriously examines world economic and social realities by recognizing that the "market" does not function in isolation from its political context. In the critical period of "global transitions," where change is the operative word, the report turns its attention to the problems of human security and human needs, the social dimensions of poverty and unemployment. Its lucid and concise analysis does not conceal political issues in refined language or slur over increasing inequalities and inequities in technical jargon.

In the new world scenario, where ideologies have declined, where relationships between state, labor and business have changed and where transformation of the production systems have radically altered employment patterns, the 1999 ILO report succeeds in presenting an optimistic profile of the future of the world of work. There appears to be some hope in promoting social dialogue and seeking consensus among social partners by providing a 'human face' to the world economy. How to convert the current inhumanities of the world economy into a human face was the theme of several eminent speakers and invited guests at the 87<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference.

Professor Amratya Sen, the Nobel Lau-

reate, in his address to the Labor Conference linked the concepts of work and workforce to the principles of fundamental human rights. "In a world teeming with unemployed and underemployed people",

way of looking at globalization. She said that "trade liberalization and social justice are mutually reinforcing," but warned that "the defense of human dignity should not be confused with protectionism. Applying protectionist measures in the name of respect for labor standards would be a self-defeating strategy", she added.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE  
87th Session 1999

### DECENT WORK



INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE  
GENEVA

The definition and interpretation of the term "decent work" will remain controversial, while national economies will place emphasis on different forms of work, but these two words will become an umbrella for all workers irrespective of their status. The unregulated wage workers, the self-employed and the homebase workers will all seek its shelter. In

he said, "only a significant broadening of national and international efforts to promote equity and protect the rights of workers can transform the '*dreaded anticipation*' of the globalization economy into an agreeable and constructive reality." (italics added)

President Bill Clinton also referred to the possibility of a "human face" of the global economy. In his words: "we must find a new way, a new and democratic way, to maximize market potential and social justice, competition and community." How the 'invisible hand of the market' can be made to move towards social justice was not examined in his comments. His core point was that "as we press for more 'open' trade, we must do more to ensure that all our people are lifted by the global economy."

Mme Ruth Driefuss, the first woman President of Switzerland who has spent many years in the trade union movement and has participated in several International Labor Conferences, had another

the words of the report itself, "all societies have a notion of decent work, but the quality of employment can mean many things. It could relate to different forms of work and also to different conditions of work as well as feelings of value and satisfaction."

"Women have transformed the labor markets of the world," says the report. But one might ask, could they not transform the world economy itself? This is a big question to which the ILO or its new programme structure is not in the position to respond by itself without the help of other international and national institutions and structures. But for the first time, gender issues cut across all ILO programs which are classified in four clusters; namely, rights at work, employment and income opportunities, social protection and social dialogue. The Director General provides special and specific reference to this theme by aligning gender policies with development policies. The following comment is relevant: "although the vocabulary of gender has trickled in



to the programs and activities, it is still linked to statements on equality for women and women's rights and constrained by the absence of an integrated policy..."

The ILO at its recent session also adopted a new International Convention for an immediate and universal ban on the Worst Forms of Child Labor that still afflict 250 million children between the ages of five and fourteen in developing countries alone. About half or some 120 million work full time while the rest combine work and schooling. In this session, there was also a preliminary discussion by the Committee on Maternity Protection which concluded that the "time was ripe" for revising the earlier ILO convention adopted in 1952. A new convention would take into account changes that have occurred in legislative provisions in a large number of countries, as a result of women joining the workforce in large numbers.

Is it a coincidence that at the end of the century the ILO should focus on women and children who constitute seventy-five percent of the world population today. Most of them are politically, economically and socially excluded from the mainstream model of development and its many rewards. ILO Conference in 1919 during its first session had also adopted six labor standards on women and children, three of which concerned maternity protection, night work (women) and minimum age (industry). That was the period of the first

cruel stages of industrialization in England, France and Germany when women and children died on the factory floor worn out of fatigue and hunger. And now in 1999, we are in the "global transitions" of a multiple crisis, economic, social, political and financial. There are now 150 million persons fully unemployed worldwide. There are also 100 million migrants - an increasing number

of whom are now women in all regions of the world. The ILO has drawn a very sober lesson from this twisted world scene and has recommended changing the pattern (paradigm?) of development itself, shifting long term growth paths and skewing patterns of income distribution.

The 1999 ILO report reflects a new approach to formal and informal work by the new Director General Dr. Juan Somavia who has lived through the twists and turns of the development debate and has been a participant in the changing scenario of the UN system. His origins - Chile, a country of the south - may also leave a mark on the inventive and innovative approach of the ILO which has carved its own creative international agenda in the UN system.

#### WILPF Urges ILO Policy on Gender Equity

On 14 June 1999, Secretary General Barbara Lochbihler made a statement at the International Labour Conference on behalf of WILPF. Below are some excerpts:

..."It is very encouraging to see that since taking office, the Director General has indicated priority areas for the ILO's work very clearly, we are happy to learn that gender issues and equality for women will constitute an important agenda item for all future ILO objectives. As he suggested on 8

**"Women have transformed the labor markets of the world,' says the report. But one might ask, could they not transform the world economy itself."**

March 1999, "...gender roles and responsibilities shape the entire world of work, not only in terms of men and women in employment, but in the relationship between work and life."

While we understand the need for new directions for the work of the ILO, which will also influence structure and style, we are concerned that new terminology may be

misunderstood and might initiate a shift to priorities departing from the principles within the ILO. We hope that the significant word "decent" before work will be clearly defined. Would the term mean "adequate work and income," we would like to reflect on this point a bit more. In our opinion, the word "decent" may not fully reflect the reality of the deteriorating work situation around the world today.

Today, the international climate of trade liberalization and globalization of the world economy has sharpened the disparities between rich and poor and has led to the massive reduction of jobs on the global market. More than one billion persons in the world live in extreme poverty, the majority of whom are women. A large part of today's economic activity takes place in the informal sector and is now a growing trend. It is high time for the ILO to come forward with a serious and adequate response to the need for labor protection, particularly when it comes to the organization of workers in the field.

In following the Director General's themes, including fostering sensitivity about the culture of development and the need for richness in outlook, we further suggest that the ILO study the importance of the "feminization of the development process" rather than the static concept of the "feminization of poverty." This means gender equality at all levels so that development itself has to be engendered.

When working towards Beijing plus 5 with the ILO, we should point out that employment policy towards equal opportunities is not solely about bringing women into the labor market, but moving from inequality between those in and outside the labor market to equality within the labor market. Equal opportunity should be an integral part of the employment agenda..." □

*Krishna Ahojja Patel is a WILPF representative to the UN in Geneva.*



# INTERVIEW WITH MICHAELA AND BABSI

Regina Birchem

[At the IEC meeting in Costa Rica, I had the opportunity to interview for IPU readers Babsi Lochbihler, WILPF's Secretary General for the last seven years, and Michaela Told, our next Secretary General.]



*Michaela, at this IEC meeting you are getting a crash course on WILPF from the view point of women from many countries. What are your first impressions?*

**Michaela:** I am very impressed by the warm welcome I received here in Costa Rica by all the WILPF members. I enjoy meeting women from different countries of the world, learning about their experiences, their activities and concerns. At the same

time we all have the same desire to work for peace. This meeting is definitely a crash course on WILPF, especially in reference to all the internal information, politics and policies of WILPF which makes me feel excited and curious about WILPF as an international women's peace organisation. However, it is not my first exposure to WILPF. I was accredited by WILPF at several UN Human Rights Commission meetings, at the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, at Preparatory Meetings of the European Region for Beijing. In addition, I also attended the IEC-Seminar on Conflict Resolution in South Asia in Sri Lanka in 1996.

*Leaving your work as a development advisor and trainer, do you feel you are leaving something behind in this transition and going to something totally new?*

**Michaela:** After having worked in Lao Peoples Democratic Republic (PDR) for two years, I do feel sorry to leave my Lao colleagues and friends behind with whom I have become close over these years. It is hard to separate from good friends, even though I am sure that I will not forget all the good-and bad - memories which were related to this work. The work with WILPF will be to a certain extent new, because I will move from "development" to politics, even though I consider "development" work as politics as well. Development and politics are linked to globalisation and the economic world order and, in this sense, the work with WILPF is not that new, especially because I have been involved in Human Rights work in Sri Lanka in the last 10 years. After more than two years living in Lao PDR, it will be a big change to come back to Europe in December 1999. Living abroad gave me the chance to know different cultures, behaviours, attitudes, to learn about different ways of perceptions and thinking, as well as to understand a different political, economic, social, and cultural context. Nevertheless, the transition is defi-

nately facilitated by the fact that my current position with the Swiss Red Cross provides the opportunity to work with a multicultural team in an international non-governmental organisation which relies largely on volunteers to implement its activities.

*What kind of work do you do in Lao?*

**Michaela:** I train and advise the staff of the three Lao Red Cross branches in management-budget-

ing, planning, reporting, monitoring, administration, in everything which is needed to run an office-and in implementing activities on the village level. The Lao Red Cross Society trains Village Volunteers in Community-Based First Aid which includes traditional first aid and health education on the most frequent diseases in the community, mainly malaria, diarrhea, and respiratory infections.

*Michaela, you have experience in three of the most tragic and devastated countries in the world, Sri Lanka, Mozambique and Lao. And most recently, in Lao you have experienced the result of the destruction that took place there during the United States involvement in Vietnam. How have these experiences affected you and your work?*

**Michaela:** The involvement of the US in Lao goes back to the late 50s but a new dimension started in 1964 through the US 'Secret War' in Lao. Only in March 1970 did President Nixon confirm publicly the military involvement of the US in Lao at a time when the war in Vietnam and Lao had effectively merged Lao PDR is today the most heavily bombed nation on earth per head of population. During the years of war, the US dropped 2,100,000 tonnes of bombs on Lao. In the 1960s and early 70s more bombs rained on Lao than were dropped during World War II. This cost the US American tax-payers more than US\$2 mn per day but the cost for Lao was and is incalculable. Local people do not often talk about the time before the revolution in 1975. They have integrated the effects of war into their daily life. Bomb shells are used as pillars for the construction of their houses, as flower pots or as water reservoirs. Most of my friends, colleagues and even most of the population in the project areas have moved and sought refuge in other parts of the country at certain times. Bomb craters can be found all over, children today are using them as a playground. Farming in many parts of the country is still a highly dangerous occupation, as well as is the construction of water or irrigation systems. The war





in Lao PDR, as in any country in armed conflict, has hindered economic "development" and it will take many more years until the country and its peoples can recover from its severe effects.

*Babsi, you are going to Amnesty International (AI) as Secretary General of the German Section after seven years as Secretary General with WILPF.*

**Babsi:** I'm not leaving WILPF and I'm very glad to have a WILPF home in Germany and hope to join the group in Berlin.

*Exactly what will you be doing with AI?*

**Babsi:** It will be in some way similar to what I do now. I have full responsibility for the whole office - more than 40 persons - and work with an elected board, do government lobby work, public relations work and represent the organisation to the outside and to the press. I am also a link to the International Secretariat of AI in London. I think the structures are pretty similar to WILPF as a membership organization and in our work with the UN and non-government organisations. But it will be different in the sense that the mandate of WILPF is much broader and more political which I enjoy and like so much. Amnesty has a more specific mandate and therefore, it is easier to influence government policies and to mobilise public support for Human Rights promotion and protection.

*So you are happy to go back to Germany?*

**Babsi:** Yes, I am. Not that I am a nationalist, but I am pleased to live with my own language and culture. And, also, I never inserted myself properly in the community where I live in Geneva. In the last seven years I worked with WILPF and it was my life. But in the next 40 years I want to develop also other sidelines such as joining initiatives in my neighbourhood, talking to people, and to enjoy alternative cultural and political cabaret.

*What was the most rewarding experience in working with WILPF?*

**Babsi:** To be exposed to women from very different social backgrounds, to experience the cultural diversity and to learn

how other women see the world and how, wherever they live, they work to transform and improve it. It really broadened my horizon to observe that there is not one way to live. We can work in very different situations and have the same vision. To have this experience in WILPF and not just learn from reading about it is very rewarding.

*Today when you were speaking as a participant on a panel of the Women Workers Seminar, you said "War is not natural" and you got a big applause. Do you have thoughts about that?*

**Babsi:** Now that you ask, I thought why do I have to say this-war is not natural-and I get applause. It seems everyone is waiting for someone to say this. From our surroundings, from the atmosphere around us, the media and the information we get, all is constantly, not necessarily promoting war, but implementing it, accepting that war is always there. The message of my presentation was that at the end of this century we as civil society, with some exceptions like WILPF, have not really internalized that war is not necessary. We still have to argue that conflict prevention is a better way, that there are ways to resolve conflicts in a different way, that war is not normal. Maybe the people who listened also share my concern that we will see more of violence and confrontation based on the injustice of the economic system. War will be more readily explained as humanitarian intervention and said to be the result of ethnic conflicts.

*What do you think was the toughest thing you experienced with WILPF?*

**Babsi:** The toughest was my ongoing search of how to be a good Secretary General and to fill this position in a meaningful way. I consider myself a feminist and I know that leadership should not rely on title and show power. To find a balance, to be mature enough to give political guidance and leadership in a way that goes with the argument and not with the position was what I had to work at. It was also difficult to be exposed to the international community. In my naive, provincial life, I thought that everything at the UN is progressive, forward-looking and guiding the way. What I found was bureaucracy with a lot of frustrated civil servants who knew a lot in the state-

of-the-art of information however had no drive to really change.

*Michaela, after listening to Babsi, what do you think are the biggest challenges? What attracts you to this work?*

**Michaela:** When I saw the vacancy for this position, I took the opportunity to combine my experiences, concerns, personal interests and activism with my professional life. For me, WILPF is a unique organisation which combines issues of peace, economic justice and women's rights. First, WILPF attracted me because it is a women's organisation. I firmly believe that women's voices have to be heard, that women have to contribute to the current debates and strive for a change in the existing power structures, that they have to demand their rights in the private and public sphere. This is especially so because women are educators and mobilisers in the communities.

WILPF also attracted me because it is a feminist organisation. I do believe that women can offer a different view on the political and economic world order addressing power relations between rich and poor, North and South, men and women. In this feminist perspective we as women are able to transform these world order and power relations. Thirdly, WILPF attracted me because it is a peace organisation. I think that women have to address all forms of discrimination and violence because we are especially affected by these discriminations and violence, be it domestic violence, sexual violence, racial violence, structural violence, violence at the work place or in armed conflicts. Peace for me is not only the absence of war but also concerns human rights-political, social, economic, cultural and minority rights.

Finally, WILPF attracted me because it is an international organisation. We can have a unified stand and act in solidarity on an international level in order to strengthen our sisters in the South in their struggles and the women's movement world-wide to fight against injustices and to demand changes of the cur

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## Five Years After Beijing - How Far Have Women Come?

Felicity Hill



From June 5-9, 2000 the world's governments will review the document that came out of the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Beijing Platform for Action. This Special Session of the General Assembly will be called "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century" and is also known as the Beijing Plus Five. Women's organizations all over the world are preparing to reaffirm and update the women's issues on the global agenda.

**Governments Prepare Themes, Procedures and Substantive Debate**  
A preparatory meeting was held in New York to plan the agenda and procedure from March 15-19, 1999. This difficult meeting decided that governments would focus on: best practices, obstacles encountered, visions for the future, and the identification of new and emerging trends. Governments committed to: not opening the Platform up for renegotiation, supplying national action plans for implementing the Platform, participating in Regional preparatory meetings.

We are all familiar with the Twelve Critical Areas of Concern, the chapters of the Beijing document: Women and Poverty, Education and Training of Women, Women and Health, Violence Against Women, Women and Armed Conflict, Women and the Economy, Women in Power and Decision-Making, Institutional Mechanisms, Human Rights of Women, Women and the Media, Women and the Environment and the Girl Child.

Instead of looking at these chapters again one by one, five themes are being employed to assess the progress made in implementing the commitments made in the 12 Critical Areas: 1) Political will, commitment and leadership, 2) account-

ability, 3) capacity building, 4) participation and cooperation for implementation and 5) special measures for the most disadvantaged.

**An Alternative Report from NGOs**  
Each government is asked to supply answers to a questionnaire formulated by the UN division for the Advancement of Women (the text of this questionnaire is available at [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw)). Non-governmental organizations are organising an alternative report by using the questionnaire, their governments response if available, and all other documents and sources relating to the status of women in their country. NGOs should attempt to identify emerging themes that may not be covered within the 12 Critical Areas of Concern.

WILPF Sections should decide at the national level with NGO colleagues, whether or how to undertake an alternative report. Find out if your country has responded to the questionnaire. Check your country's status on international commitments-has it signed CEDAW, does it have reservations, will it ratify the Optional Protocol? WILPF Sections should all become part of this process, or initiate it if it is not already happening in your country.

A timeline for the development of your report has been suggested as follows:

**July 1999:** Obtain a copy of your governments response to the questionnaire. Begin to plan how to tackle a review of progress made in your country with other organizations.

**August 1999:** Produce your country report and make it available at your regional meeting. Prepare an executive summary of your national report and upload it to your regional website.

**September-December 1999:** Plan how to develop a regional report in collaboration with other NGOs in your region.

**December-February 2000:** The Central Co-

ordinating Committee is formed to collect all regional reports and produce a draft Global NGO Alternative Report

**March 6-26, 2000:** The Second Preparatory Meeting - the NGO Community discusses, reviews and finally adopts the NGO Global Alternative Report.

**June 3-4, 2000:** NGO Working Session prior to the UN Special Session. Launch of the NGO contribution to the Review.

**June 5-9, 2000:** Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace.

### Regional Meetings

Find out when UN regional and sub-regional meetings are being held for your region. Identify who might attend and begin participation from your Section!

- October 26-29, 1999, Bangkok, Thailand, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,
- November 22-27, 1999, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Economic Commission for Africa,
- January/February, 2000, Lima, Peru, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean,
- January 2000, Geneva, Switzerland, Economic Commission for Europe,
- Beirut, Lebanon, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

### Putting Peace Back in the Equation: WILPF's Role in Beijing + 5

There's lots to do before June 2000! WILPF wants the governments of the world to continue implementing the commitments made in Beijing and therefore hopes that this document, and the document to come out of the 1985 Nairobi UN Conference on Women (known as the Forward Looking Strategies), will be reaffirmed for another ten years (both are set to expire in 2000). When we compare the Nairobi document and the Beijing document, we see a disappointing decrease in emphasis on peace. It is up to WILPFers the world over to help rebuild that emphasis in the

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## No Consensus, No Progress in the CD

JUNG Gyung-Lan

The Conference on Disarmament held the second part of its 1999 session from 11 May to 25 June in Geneva. These meetings were held during Balkan war, which affected the work of the CD. The Conference's programme of work was not accepted. The stalemate of the CD was not solved.

### Programme of Work

The CD found itself without a work programme for 1999 and faced the prospect of a third unproductive and wasted year. The Conference did not get the programme of work because there were divergent views with regard to the mechanisms which deal with nuclear disarmament and prevention of an arms race in outer space in the CD.

NATO bombing against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: The second part of the CD began by observing a minute of silence for the victims of the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). There was a big difference between Russia and China on one hand and the US on the other hand on the position of the NATO bombing against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Russia and China condemned NATO action against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia because NATO violated the United Nations Charter. On the other hand, the US said that the humanitarian crisis in the region had been generated through the deliberate and inhumane policies of the Serbian Government, not through the actions of the NATO. China said that the ethnic conflict

in Kosovo was an internal affair of FRY and should be resolved internally. China also insisted that the US and others were using the issue of human rights to trample on the sovereign rights of a country and to intervene in its internal affairs. Positions clashed between crimes against humanity and the matter of sovereignty.

### Nuclear Disarmament

Ambassador Mohamed-Salah Dembri, one of Presidents of CD during the second part of 1999 session, proposed an Ad Hoc Working Group which was responsible for undertaking an exchange of views on nuclear disarmament and for exploring prospects which could produce an acceptable compromise. There was unanimous acceptance of the Ad Hoc Working Group mechanism, but no consensus was made on its mandate.

Prevention of an arms race in outer space: Russia, China and Pakistan addressed the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. They worried about the US's plan to speed up its work on the National Missile Defense and the Theater Missile Defense systems. The plan would constitute a violation of fundamental obligations under the ABM Treaty and could trigger a new round of the strategic arms race including in outer space.

Fissile Material Cut off Treaty: The US, France and the United Kingdom proposed to re-establish an Ad Hoc Committee on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nu-

clear explosive devices. According to the proposal, this Ad Hoc Committee would meet in successive sessions of the Conference until its work was completed, without the need for annual reauthorization. But Pakistan and India did not accept it. Pakistan said that creating a permanent committee was contrary to the CD rules of procedure. India said that there was no provision in the rules of procedure to do it.

### Prospects

The international peace and security situation affects the ability of the CD to make substantive progress. The situation is closely related to disarmament affairs. The Balkan war enhanced mistrust between the members of the CD. As some delegates pointed out that the lack of progress within the CD was not due to lack of efforts, but due to lack of the requisite political will. Substantive work depends on the political will of the members of the Conference. The stalemate of the Conference is not easy to solve.

As Ms. Anne Anderson, Ambassador of Ireland, said, "if work on the nuclear disarmament does not happen in the CD, we consider the work should move to another forum which might hold out a better prospect of progress." The stalemate of the CD raises the question of the usefulness of the CD. □

*JUNG Gyung-lan is WILPF's 1999 long-term intern on Disarmament/Economic Justice.*

*...continued from page 12*

national, regional and international work we do for this Review Conference. WILPF International is beginning the work towards making Women and Armed Conflict a major focus. The UN office has received funds to develop a PeaceWomen website that will become part of the Beijing + 5 Global Communication Network which

will link websites devoted to the other 12 Critical Areas of Concern, as well as databases, updates, regional and UN sites. We hope to make this website as useful to our Sections, and all organisations wishing to reaffirm the ways in which women's lives are affected by the military economy, cultural militarism, preparation for war and war itself. □

For all NGO information on Beijing + 5 in English: [www.womenaction.org/preview.html](http://www.womenaction.org/preview.html). For all NGO information on Beijing + 5 in French: [www.femmesafrique.org/toile/toile3.html](http://www.femmesafrique.org/toile/toile3.html)

*Felicity Hill is the Director of the WILPF UN Office in New York.*



## Education for a Culture of Peace in a Gender Perspective

### Betty Reardon

"A culture of peace will be achieved when citizens of the world understand global problems; have the skills to resolve conflict constructively; know and live by international standards of human rights and principles of racial and gender equality; appreciate cultural diversity; and respect the integrity of the Earth. Such learning cannot be achieved without intentional, sustained and systematic education for peace." So reads the statement announcing the Global Campaign for Peace Education launched at the Hague Appeal for Peace Civil Society Conference in the Hague in May 1999. The statement implies a broad and comprehensive definition of peace and lays the ground work for facilitating the introduction of peace education into all the schools of the world. So comprehensive a notion of peace also makes it possible to adopt from among the many and varied current models of peace education those best suited to particular cultures and learning populations.

It also opens the way to develop new approaches or to extend and enhance some of the more necessary, but less widely practiced approaches. Education for peace in a gender perspective is one such approach which some peace educators would argue should be seen as one of the most essential, one that should be, in



some form or other, universally included in school curricula.

It was partly in response to this need that UNESCO took the decision to develop a prototype curriculum on "Education for a Culture of Peace in a Gender Perspective." The Global Campaign for Peace Education advocates teacher education as the fundamental and primary requisite for the introduction of peace education into the schools of the world. UNESCO's proposed prototype curriculum is to be designed not for adoption but for adaptation or to serve as a suggested guideline for teacher training institutions in all parts of the world. This is an approach to educational innovation similar to that of the Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy which was adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 1994. It does not prescribe content or methodology, rather it maps the terrain of the global issues and problems that such education should address, and provides a rationale and value base for innovation.

The rationale for peace education from a gender perspective while clear to some feminists has not been readily apparent to all peace educators. Neither sexism as a global problem nor gender as an essential perspective that must be brought to bear on the analysis and proposed solutions of all global problems has been accorded much attention by the field. Yet it is one of the most useful perspectives for illuminating the two major characteristics of the core problems addressed by the field: the global extent of the problems that makes them of universal concern; and the cultural and geopolitical diversity of their manifestations that makes it necessary to deal with them in ways diverse and flexible enough to be adapted to cultural specificity. These characteristics also argue for the inclu-

sion of sexism as a problem of equal universality and global significance as racism. They also indicate that gender is among the most useful lenses for viewing and appreciating cultural differences that the statement of the Global Campaign for Peace Education identifies an essential learning for a culture of peace.

The value base of this particular teacher education prototype for education for a culture of peace will draw upon that outlined in the Integrated Framework of Action while extending and deepening it with particular reference to the international human rights standards, emphasizing, especially the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. It will address the global problems of war and violence, injustices of various kinds, including those of international economic structures, and the abuse of the environment. It will demonstrate the differences in the effects of these problems on men and women while calling attention to the significant and often unrecognized contributions women have made to their resolution. It will also illuminate the interpretation given to these problems in the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies and the Beijing Platform for Action.

It is hoped that it will bring attention to educators in all disciplines and grade levels the necessity to consider gender in addressing all social issues and to help them to understand its special and essential relevance to peace. Those who wish to contribute material for the curriculum are requested to contact the author at: [bar19@columbia.edu](mailto:bar19@columbia.edu). Or by mail at: Teachers College #171, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, USA. □

*Betty Reardon is a WILPF member and Director of the Peace Education Program at the Teachers College at Columbia University in New York City.*



## Pacific Women Speak Out for Independence and Denuclearization

*Edited by Zohr de Ishtar*

*A joint publication by WILPF (Aotearoa), the Disarmament and Security Centre (Aotearoa), and Pacific Connections (Australia)*

### Excerpts of a review by Fatma E. Marouf

In this brief but powerful book, recently updated and reprinted, eleven indigenous women share their stories of survival in the colonized and militarized Pacific islands. They come from diverse lands but a common thread connects their tales: the desire for an independent and nuclear free Pacific.

During the fifty years following the devastating bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, 66 atmospheric devices were detonated in the Marshall Islands, 12 in Australia, 12 in Johnston Atoll (in Ka Pae'ina/ Hawai'i), 30 in Kiribati, and 46 in French Polynesia, not including the 147 tests conducted underground.

While the Indigenous people are the direct victims of those nuclear tests, they affect the whole world. By bringing in-



igenous women's voices to the international arena, this book demonstrates the impact of the nuclear military industry on almost every aspect of life, from economy and politics to education, culture, health, natural resources, and biodiversity.

Some of the women believe that their task is to convince people around the world that all peoples have a right to independence. Others speak out primarily for victims of military violence, many of whom continue to suffer in silence.

Underlying all these issues is the recurrent theme of colonization. The United States, Britain, France, Portugal, and Australia bear much of the blame. In addition to exposing the atrocities that helped establish Western superpowers, this book is important because it reminds us that colonizers do not only come from the North. Women from East Timor and West Papua, for example, discuss the genocides committed by Indonesia.

Pacific Women Speak Out is a valuable resource for anyone interested in an "inside" account of the impact of colonization. The women speak with a clear purpose: to preserve their peoples and lands. Their narratives are personal, honest and direct. Each story challenges the reader not only to care, but also to take responsibility and act.

To obtain copies, please contact:  
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## “Cannibalism of Capitalism”: From the MAI to the Millennium Round

Coby Meyboom

In the European Parliament, the Green Group organized an international conference titled ‘From the MAI to the Millennium Round’ (April 1999). NGOs around the world discussed the negative impact of the economic globalization process—increases in social inequality, economic insecurity and environmental damage—and what should be done to stop this process. Han Deggeler and I participated in this conference on behalf of the Dutch section and WILPF International.

From Nov 29-Dec 3, 1999, the governments of the world will meet in Seattle for the World Trade Organization’s Third Ministerial Conference. The agenda: to expand the powers of the World Trade Organization (WTO) through a new comprehensive round of trade liberalization and to extend the mandate of the WTO also with the issue of ‘investments.’

### The MAI

This reopens doors, putting the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) within the WTO. In Oct 1998, the MAI negotiations were given up by the OECD countries. The broad and persistent resistance of NGOs, grassroots groups, citizens, politicians and trade unions has been a major factor in stopping the negotiations. We want an agreement that contributes to a worldwide process of a sustainable development and that gives to Transnational Corporations (TNCs) not only rights but also obligations.

In Seattle, the review of the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs), including patenting genetic manipulated life will take place. This raises strong ethical questions: can patenting, what was developed for machines, also be used on living creatures? The fact that patenting life would exclude the South because the poor countries do not have not enough access to scientific developments.

At the Brussels conference, 200 participants and prominent speakers, with a broad representation from the ‘South’, had an intensive and inspiring interchange of ideas and experiences, not only about the causes of the increasing social inequality, environmental damage and economic insecurity, but also on alternatives. All pointed out the urgent need to first evaluate the functioning of the WTO before new issues are launched in Seattle. Especially the WTO should not develop policies on investment and competition. Seattle instead should decide to initiate a process to review, repair and reform the existing WTO agreements. There should be a moratorium to expand the scope of power of the WTO. Or, as Tewolde Berhan Gebre Egziabher from Ethiopia said it: “To end the cannibalism of capitalism”. He, and many others, asked that a real voice be given to so-called ‘underdeveloped’ countries in the WTO. Their politicians and governments are well informed on the complicated rules of the WTO, can assist the meetings and have equal possibilities to input into decision making as have the politicians from the North. Also important is that the North and the South are really interested and better informed about what is going on in their own house and that they take these differences into consideration. A clear example is the use of an ECO label within the WTO countries, an initiative from the North. This proposal, with the best intentions, is to protect the environment. But Southern countries feel this proposal as a kind of protectionism in order to refuse their products on Western markets.

### Alternatives

All over the world governments are working on the preparations to the coming WTO Conference. The EU, especially the European Commissions, is very busy with these preparations. It is a great pity that the Commission is on the side of a Millennium Round. That was also an impor-

tant reason for the Green Party to invite NGOs from the North and the South to find alternatives in good collaboration. In this context is mentioned the Tobin Tax as a means of regulating capital speculation with taxes. These taxes would be put into a so-called social fund to combat poverty. It is also very important to change the policy of the World Bank and the IMF into a policy that protects the vulnerable groups in our world, to release the foreign debt and to take appropriate measures to diminish the gap between poor and rich. However, the best would be to work worldwide towards creating another kind of economy. Colin Hines gave an impressive speech on the topic: ‘Replace globalization with localization’. To achieve this he mentioned the following seven steps, which are interconnected:

1. Control of import and export by measures like tariff barriers to stimulate and encourage local communities to produce their own food and other products. Anything that cannot be produced locally, should be traded nationally. Long distance trade should be a last resort. That also takes environmental damage of long distance transports into account.
  2. Control of TNCs. The activities of TNCs should be brought back under government control, with transparency. The flow of capital to other countries to exploit differences in tax laws should be stopped.
  3. Keeping capital local, instead of money flying freely around the globe. This money should be invested in the region to improve the environment and to create social conditions and job opportunities for the whole population.
  4. To stimulate competition policy new firms should be encouraged to enter the market place by grants etc. in order to guarantee local competition and to avoid the formation of monopolies.
  5. Maximum decentralization of political
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