

International Peace Update



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Business As Usual

Cathy Picone

With the recent genocidal attack against the Maubere people of East Timor by the Indonesian armed forces (TNI), the international community has once more come face to face with the ugly underbelly of global capitalism. Recent atrocities on the part of TNI need to be understood in a larger context if we are to comprehend the full sway of the forces at work.



On 5 May this year, Indonesia, Portugal and the United Nations signed a memorandum of understanding outlining the "necessary security conditions" for an autonomy ballot for East Timor. Despite protestations from human rights groups and the East Timorese Resistance, oversight for security and supervision of the ballot was given to the Indonesian

government. The day of the ballot, Monday August 30, came and went. Nearly 100% of the East Timorese people registered to vote and, of those, 78.5% voted for independence. At that time, there were around 15,000 Indonesian troops in East Timor. It was clear that TNI were well able to maintain 'law and order' as on the day of the ballot and for a week following, when things were relatively quiet.

A week later, they unleashed mayhem and murder on what Xanana Gusmao called "my brave, heroic but defenceless people". Since then, it has become clear that TNI's scorched-earth policy has seen many hundreds of East Timorese brutally killed and hundreds of thousands of others driven across the border into West Timor. Thousands are unaccounted for. Analysts are still debating the extent of the complicity of the Indonesian government in the attacks but indications are that such a thorough-going genocide could not have been carried out without the involvement of many civilian elements of the Indonesian government.

The 120,000 East Timorese who fled into the hills behind Dili have now begun their return but, at the time of writing, of the 200,000 - 250,000 East Timorese who fled or were forcibly displaced to West Timor, at least 145,000 remain in camps under the control of Indonesian-backed

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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 that permits 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 private profit and privilege.



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militias. Despite the presence of the multinational peace enforcement force (UNAMET) now in East Timor, the security situation for those displaced to West Timor is still extremely dire. In addition, their living conditions are of great concern to UNAMET and aid agencies.

Horrific Human Rights Violations

While the scale of TNI atrocities is far greater this time, the crimes against humanity since the ballot are nothing new. Stories of horrific human rights abuses have been coming out of East Timor ever since the Indonesian invasion in 1975. Michelle Turner's book *Telling East Timor: Personal Testimonies*,* details accounts of the most cruel and brutal violations imaginable. These tortures and murders, including murders of babies and children, rapes, house burnings, church burnings and lootings have been going on in East Timor ever since 1975. The massacre at the Santa Cruz cemetery in 1991 by Indonesian troops against unarmed East Timorese, including children, was different only in so far as two television journalists happened to capture it on film. Even before the most recent massacre, it was estimated that 200,000 East Timorese had died at the hands of the Indonesian military or due to starvation directly attributable to their activities.

Horrific human rights abuses by the Indonesian military against the peoples of their 'provinces' have not been limited to their '27th province'. In 'Irian Jaya' (West Papua), the so-called Act of Free Choice supervised by the UN which gave over that territory to Indonesia in 1969 also surrendered the indigenous people there to savage butchery at the hands of TNI. Credible reports have been received of TNI taking men out in helicopters and throwing them overboard into the sea. Mass graves have been found in caves in the territory. In July last year after an official delegation of the Indonesian Human Rights Commission visited West Papua, it was disclosed that the people had suffered murders, house burnings, church burnings and other human rights abuses at the hands of the Indonesian military which was acting allegedly to protect the interests of a US mining giant. In Aceh (where US petroleum interests are heavily invested), estimates of Acehnese civilians killed between 1989 and 1998 vary from 5,000 to 39,000. Thousands of others have been raped and tortured. ➔

*Published in 1992 by New South Wales University Press Ltd., PO Box 1, Kensington, Australia 2033. Available in North America through International Specialized Book Services, Portland, Oregon 97213-3640. Tel: +(1-503) 287 3090. Fax +(1-503) 284-8859.



The Rape of Resources

In a copycat model of their Dutch colonizers, the New Order Regime in Jakarta has expropriated the resources of numerous subjugated peoples throughout the archipelago. From Aceh to Ambon to Kalimantan to Irian Jaya to East Timor, the story is the same: the Javanese civilian and military elite in Jakarta have overseen a grab for the resources of First Nations peoples in the outlying 'provinces'.

Corporations from the US, Canada, Japan, UK and Australia have been supported by the New Order Regime. The revenue generated by oil and gas in Aceh, for instance, goes straight to Jakarta and to corporate interests with the Acehnese receiving only a standard regional budget. The huge profits from US mining companies in Irian Jaya do not go towards supplying infrastructure for the local indigenous peoples. In Kalimantan, local people who have been farming and panning for gold for generations have been displaced by the activities of an Australian mining company. Foreign-owned clothing and footwear multinationals exploit the human resources through their subcontracting factories across the archipelago. So-called trade unions sponsored by the Indonesian government ensure a docile work force often with unjust, harsh, even cruel working conditions.

While the Indonesian military and its civilian apologists do their best to whip up ethnic, cultural and religious divisions among the peoples, the secessionist movements in provinces such as Aceh, Irian Jaya and Ambon arise directly from the economic exploitation of the peoples. Huge fortunes have gone both to corporate

interests and members of the Indonesian elite. Corruption Watch Indonesia estimates the personal wealth of the Soeharto family at between 7-70 billion US dollars in cash, property, art and public assets.

In this context, when called upon to contribute ground troops to a multinational peacekeeping force for East Timor, it is hardly surprising that the Pentagon's reply was a stern "no" - it was not in the 'vital interests' of the US to do so.

A Country In Transition

Indonesia is presently going through a huge transition. Since the fall of the Soeharto government last year, the Republic has seen its first democratic elections in forty years. Activists in the widespread movement for democracy in Indonesia are being killed by the same military which has killed the East Timorese, the West Papuans and the Acehnese. (Even in the new People's Consultative Assembly—the MPR—the military maintains its dual function and is assured of 38 reserved parliamentary places.) In the past month, at least nine Indonesian students in Jakarta have been killed and hundreds of others injured in violent mass demonstrations about the succession to the Presidency and the new Emergency Security Bill which will give further sweeping powers to the military.

A Flourishing Arms Trade

International arms traders have flourished through sales to the New Order Regime. Suppliers have included the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Finland, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. Ironically many of these countries were among those sup-

porting the recent resolution by UNHCR for an international human rights investigation of war crimes on the part of their client regime in East Timor. Despite the rhetoric of 'ethical' arms sales in some nations such as the UK, British Hawk ground attack aircraft have been spotted in swoops over Dili and water cannon sold by the UK have been used to suppress demonstrations in Jakarta. In addition, the US, UK, Netherlands, Germany, France, New Zealand and Australia have supplied military training to the Indonesian armed forces.

Some Win but Most Lose

With increasing privatization of publicly owned assets, larger and larger proportions of populations in affluent countries are being turned into shareholders. Befuddled by share ownership, misled and confused into thinking that their interests coincide with those of the multinational corporations, many ordinary people, especially those in business circles, fail to recognize the nexus between trade with oppressive regimes (such as the New Order Regime in Indonesia) and ongoing human rights infringements. For instance, during the height of the recent military onslaught against the East Timorese people, when the Australian trade union movement instigated bans on the handling of cargo from Indonesian ships, an Australian wheat farmer responded by saying that political considerations should not interfere with the sale of his produce to Indonesia. Popular sentiment such as this is reflected in national trade policies—and not only in Australia.

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Cathy Picone is a national coordinator of WILPF Australia.

CAN THE EFFECTS OF GLOBALIZATION BE MITIGATED?

Virginia Rasmussen

'Globalization' was the topic of this year's NGO Conference, from 15-17 September 1999 at UN headquarters in New York. The Conference is sponsored annually by the UN Department of Public Information in cooperation with NGOs. WILPF's Virginia Rasmussen was invited to speak at the panel on 'can the art and skills of conflict prevention and resolution contribute to mitigating that process?' Her answer to the question has been adapted for publication in IPU.

Most of the conflicts resulting from the globalization process, as we are experiencing it, cannot be resolved because the wrong combination of parties is at the resolution table. This does not mean that we quit all current prevention and resolution efforts with regard to the large conflictual issues globalization is now foisting on us. It does mean that as we struggle to do that work we look at the underlying realities that make conflict resolution in this increasingly globalized world so very tough, and work to change those realities.

To think more clearly about who should be at the table we need to see what is at the heart of a conflict resolution process that works. What we find there is something that acknowledges, and whose outcome re-

flects, the human needs and human rights of the parties to the conflict. We hear so often that conflict should be seen as an opportunity to come to new understandings, to bring ourselves to a better place. Indeed, in conducting conflict resolution training I became aware that conflict is healthy and natural.

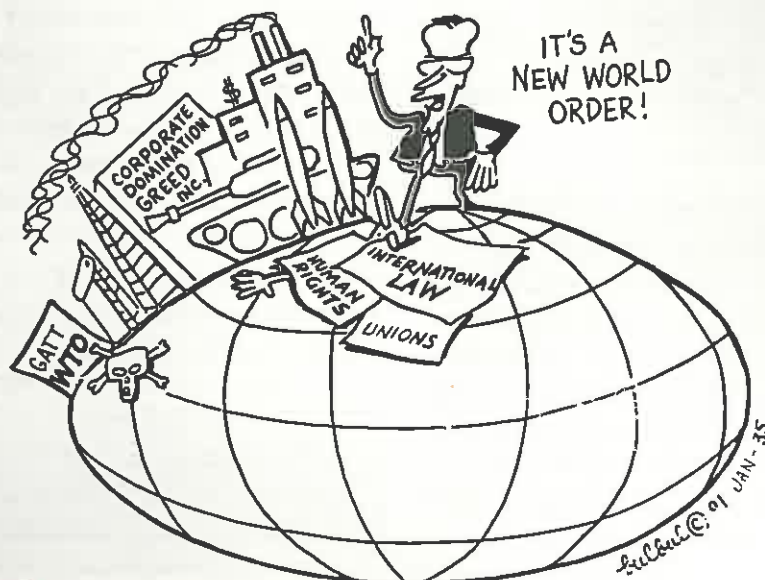
Conflicts arise when there are differences in values, or the goals for expressing those values, or the methods for reaching goals, or the style of carrying out the methods, or the power to do any of those things, or any combination of those things. Conflicts are not resolvable when the disparity in any of those factors (values, goals, methods, style, and power) is too great, or when too many factors are at issue. Thus, sufficient common ground for the reso-

lution of conflict is possible only when human beings are involved who do have similar basic natures, similar basic needs, similar rights and powers, with a level of shared commitment to human rights.

Who or what are the parties in conflicts arising out of current globalization patterns; conflicts which increasingly are about the fundamental elements of human life and its conduct: air, water, genes, crops, food, soil, people's work, trees, ores, technologies, airwaves, capital, services, people's thoughts, histories, etc.? Are the parties at the resolution table human beings capable of resolving conflicts with one another? Are they capable because large enough common ground is shared by them, and small enough disparities separate their values, goals, methods, styles and power?

One of the parties to most conflicts is revealed in the invitation to this conference: "If business has determined the direction and set the tenor of globalization how can other voices of civil society assume their place in the policy-making that is shaping the future of humankind?"

"Business" has determined the direction, set the tenor? What "business" are we talking about? Surely not the Mom and Pop grocery at the corner of the block struggling





for customers and money enough to pay the bills. Is it Don and Dave's auto repair shop on County Road? It is important that our language puts us on clear and common ground if we are to see these conflicts sharply.

Why are we not saying that giant business corporations have determined the direction and tenor of our future? And why are we not appalled by the statement that business is determining the future of people and the Earth?

Would we be more appalled if the sentence read, "giant business corporations have determined the direction and tenor" of our future?

Would we be clearer on the roots and nature of our conflicts and the capacity for their resolution if we said that giant business corporations are defining our values, our work, our investments, our production, our communities, our media, our lives and, indeed, our governments?

For surely we have noticed that our governments have increasingly fallen in line, doing the corporations' bidding, aiding in their oppressive acts even as governments' sovereign powers are sapped by so doing, and the financial resources essential to conduct the responsibilities of public life are stolen, too often with government consent.

This kind of straight talk is critical to understanding the possibilities, or lack of them, that lie in conflict prevention and resolution processes. Most conflicts arising out of globalization forces involve, as one party, the corporation pursuing its man-

date of gaining more profits and power at the expense of absolutely everything else, and, as the other party, natural persons as individuals or workers, as communities of people, or protectors of Earth, or citizens of nations. Now this one party to the conflict, this corporation or collection of corporations, is not a natural person and it is certainly not a citizen.

There is a long history in western civilization, of men of property using the corporate form as a means to economic and governing power. In the United States, a country whose corporations are at the forefront of corporate globalization, the corporate form was granted personhood, and these artificial persons have gone on to acquire wealth, privileges, and immunities way beyond that of natural persons. Yet the owners of property have been so successful in colonizing our minds to accept as inevitable their wealth, power and governing authority that few of us question the illegitimacy of that authority even in countries that loudly proclaim democratic histories and governments.

How else but "mind colonization" can explain so ready an acceptance of our conference invitation which casually inquires that as we face a corporate-determined future can we get together to determine if we as NGOs can find a role for real people in the policy-making that will bring us our future?

Is it not right that we who represent organizations of natural persons should be here to make a claim for a people-determined future? How can we begin to do that? What must we

learn about our nations' corporate histories; about, in some countries, the corporations taking away the rights and responsibilities of citizens and governments; what new kinds of language, strategies and action must we build together in order that some day natural persons are on both sides of the conflict resolution table? They will be on both sides only when people define and are in charge of business corporations and all other corporate and government entities we establish to serve us.

Are not these the powers that so-called democracies would choose for the citizens of all nations?

Why then do we at this UN conference marginalize ourselves with the label 'civil society' and seek only a role for this "civil society" in shaping the future, to be merely a partner or participant in a process in which we concede majority power to corporate bodies, as the UN Research Institute for Social Development recently did when it seemed quite happy to settle for civil society "growing closer to the world's elites in government, business and finance."

Such a distribution of governing authority among corporate entities, non humans all, will rarely if ever allow the resolution of globalization's human conflicts. Think about the consequences of those many resolution failures and be appalled. □

Professor Rasmussen is Co-Chair of the WILPF US Campaign on Challenging Corporate Power, Asserting the People's Rights.



Corporations and the United Nations

Felicity Hill and Edith Ballantyne

For years, the serving United Nations Secretary-General has been invited to the annual World Economic Forum held in February at Davos, Switzerland. It is a gathering of the major leaders of government and big business and of prominent individuals.

Why a Global Compact?

At this year's Forum, United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, proposed that the corporations and the United Nations forge a "global compact of shared values and principles which will give a human face to the global market". He specifically called on the corporate leaders to "embrace, support and enact a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, and environmental practices" and stated: "unless human rights, labour rights and environmental values are really seen to be taking hold, I fear we may find it increasingly difficult to make a persuasive case for the open global market."

Market with a Human Face

The UN Secretary-General made good use of his presence at the Davos Forum by calling on corpo-

rations to respect universally accepted human rights standards and improve the work place and management policies accordingly. We would like to think that the real motivation of his call is not to save the open global market, but rather to secure improvement of working conditions and of the environment for workers around the world who suffer the consequences of capitalist economic globalization.

The UN needs Money

Many believe that the UN's drive for corporate partnership is inspired by the UN financial crisis, caused primarily by the US non-payment of dues. They see this semi-privatization of the UN as a way for corporations to exert influence on the multilateral process at the UN to defeat the emerging movement against globalization.

There is a growing practice in the UN of relying on private funding sources à la Ted Turner. Starved for government funding as national governments are dwarfed financially and weakened politically by global corporations, UN officials are seeking support wherever they can find it. An example is the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) initiative known as the Global Sustainable Development Facility. The GSDF seeks to promote corporate investment in sustainable development projects in the world's poorest countries and has the goal of integrating two billion people into the market by the year 2020. The UNDP, which is the UN's most visible face

in 143 countries, has approached at least 30 major global corporations to pay \$50,000 to become corporate sponsors in exchange for certain privileges. This joint venture between the UN and transnational corporations, such as Rio Tinto Zinc, Dow Chemical, Citibank, etc., is criticized as 'greenwash' by many non-governmental organizations, which point out that the UN is cleaning their tarnished reputation by working with them.

The Global Compact

The development of the Global Compact and the GSDF provokes many questions. For example, the outreach to the big corporations in the financing of UN and Agency programmes seems to be made by the Secretariats rather than by the political bodies of the Organizations. Is it up to the Secretariats to make space for corporations in the UN system that are likely to have an impact on political decisions? Do the Secretariats have the member states' quiet approval? Where are these issues debated publicly, both internationally and nationally? Have the member states abdicated responsibility for ensuring the multilateral functioning at the United Nations and for providing the resources this requires? Instead of seeking a global compact with corporations, should the United Nations not reach out to the people, through their organizations, to forge a compact to challenge the rule of corporations and work together for the advancement of the goals of the

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UN Charter? There are many other questions that torment one's mind.

The Global Compact involves the Offices of the UN Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Labour Office, and the Environment Programme. They are to work with corporations on enacting nine principles derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declarations of the ILO on fundamental principles and rights, the Declaration from the Copenhagen Summit on Social Development and the Rio Declaration on environment and development.

Inducing the big corporations to respect and enact social and environmental standards arrived at by multilateral negotiations is not a bad idea. However, all previous efforts to do so have failed. Governments in the past were unwilling or unable to make UN-negotiated codes of conduct binding instruments, to

be translated into national law. Voluntary observance of codes of conduct never went far. Why should the Global Compact achieve more?

Mr. Annan argues that only if companies respect the nine principles will the global free market be acceptable to people. But is making the free market system acceptable not a diversion from what the UN should be doing, that is, to lead in bringing about a world economic order which serves to satisfy the needs of the human beings rather than the greed of big business?

The establishment of such an economic order remains the fundamental issue and needs to be dealt with in all its depth. To get corporations to join it in a global compact to respect nine good principles can mitigate the open market's harsh effects on the lives of many persons, but it will not change the system which by its nature is unfair and exploitative. The UN was designed by its found-

ers to develop and stand up for universal labour, environmental and human rights. Clearly, it is the forum which could best regulate the corporations' practices and assist member states in controlling them. The United Nations needs the political will of governments and resources from them to carry out this responsibilities. It needs governments to pay their dues and pay up their debts. This is particularly so in the case of the United States of America.

Applying universally accepted human rights standards everywhere will ease the worst effects of the global market and eventually lead to a world order based on meeting the needs of all peoples rather than on profit and privilege, the ultimate goal for which WILPF strives. □

Felicity Hill is Director of the WILPF UN Office in New York. Edith Ballantyne is Special Adviser on Disarmament Matters.

The Compact's Nine Principles

The Global Compact asks the private sector to embrace, support and enact a set of core values within their sphere of influence in the areas of labour standards, human rights and environment practices. This can be done through individual corporations and business associations.

Human Rights

1. Business should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights, and
2. Make sure they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Labour

3. Business should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.
4. The elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour.
5. The effective abolition of child labour, and
6. Eliminate discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Environment

7. Business should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.
8. Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility, and
9. Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

Agriculture, Land, Forests, and Trade:

Commission on Sustainable Development, 2000

Regina Birchem

The Environment will be a dominant, over-riding concern accompanying us into the next millennium. The present global impact of humans on the non-human world is not sustainable and action can no longer be postponed.

Environmental Crisis

It is pretty much agreed that global warming has arrived. In the last decade, especially the last years of the millennium, there were higher than normal average temperatures, drastic changes in precipitation patterns, and violent storms. Hurricane Mitch killed more than 4,000 people in Nicaragua in 1998 and left 7.7% of the population homeless. Hunger and poverty also kill, as soil degradation and desertification march on, especially in Africa, where food production is down due to the rainy season that never came or left too early. Tropical forests world-wide have been eliminated beyond replacement.

War, conflict and military activities, of course, hasten the environmental degradation, the impoverishment of land and people. Human security

is not only about the number of bombs, firepower, verification and delivery systems, the NPT and weapon treaties. Water, food, soil, air and other basic stuff are timeless essentials of human security. The ruthless culture of domination, power, and exploitation that motivates the insanity of war and military 'defence' also motivates the destruction of natural systems.

CSD 2000

The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was established after the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 to monitor and review implementation of Agenda 21 and other agreements reached in Rio, two conventions on Climate and Biodiversity, and the Forest Principles. It meets annually for two weeks in the spring in New York with delegations from governments and NGOs. The CSD has no power of enforcing implementation of environmental agreements, but monitors progress and makes recommendations.

The eighth session of the CSD will take place in New York, from 24 April to 5 May, 2000. The important time of preparation of the reports and the agenda takes place months in advance.

The themes for CSD-8 are Sustainable Agriculture; Land Resources; and Financial Resources/Trade and Investment/Economic Growth. The Commission will also receive the outcome of work of the Inter-government Forum on Forests. The overarching

issues for all CSD sessions under the current work programme are poverty and consumption patterns.

Sustainable Agriculture

Early in the session, a dialogue segment will involve groups in agriculture dealing with topics such as:

- Choices in agricultural production techniques, consumption patterns and safety (for example, biotechnology, 'chemical' versus 'organic' production, pest management systems);
- Globalization, trade liberalization and investment patterns (access to markets, equity and poverty, mechanisms to protect the poor against the adverse effects of globalization);
- Best practices in land resource management to achieve sustainable food cycles (land rights, urban sprawl, human settlement dynamics, protection of biodiversity and forests).
- Knowledge for sustainable food systems, providing education, training, knowledge-sharing and information needs.

What should WILPF be doing?

1. Make the integral relationship of human security and development with the survival and health of natural systems an over-riding concern in our work.

We as an organization have not internalized the basic ecological nature of our peace work. There ought to be an essential connection made to the ecological context of our human existence and the culture of peace we say we are trying to build.





The Commission on Sustainable Development and the implementation of Agenda 21 are still seen as 'add-ons' in WILPF's work. There is no special staff or budget commitment to this aspect of our international programme; it is seen as social 'volunteer' or the work of a member or an officer to monitor as best she can—if she has a passion for doing so.

The lack of peace is a major obstacle to the sustainability of natural systems. We need to deepen this analysis and not just make the UN events in which environment and development are discussed merely another forum to present our disarmament agenda.

2. Prepare for the Earth Summit III in the year 2002

Major social and political changes have taken place since 1992 as well as irreversible ecological changes. Globalization has become a prominent issue. There is increased poverty, more people, less water and less cultivable land; an alteration of disease patterns, epidemic HIV, TB and new diseases; a loss of biodiversity and the introduction of unproven and questionable technologies. As of 1999, the human population is over 6 billion persons with another 3 billion projected in the next 50 years. These are essential realities related to human security issues.

(a) For information on how to participate in the CSD-8 as a WILPF member and how to be involved in preparing for Earth Summit III, contact Regina Birchem, R.D. 1, Box 1324, Irwin, PA 15642; email: <rbirchem@AIUSA.net>; fax/phone: +(1-724) 446 3157.

(b) NGO's everywhere are working on environment and development issues; working together is essential to the whole CSD process.

(c) For web sites and to be added to the NGO CSD electronic network contact: csdgen@undp.org

Regina Birchem is a WILPF International Vice-President. She follows environment and development issues at the UN.



Homes destroyed in the 1995 conflicts are still in ruins

The women of Africa, more than women of any other region of the world, have intimately linked peace and development. The Global Environment Outlook-2000 report released October 1999 by UNDP offers some statistics for Africa:

- Africa is the only continent in which poverty is expected to rise during the next century.
- Since 1950, 65% of the agricultural land has been degraded.
- As a result of declining food security, the number of undernourished people doubled to 200 million since 1960.
- Fourteen countries of Africa are subject to water stress or scarcity and a further 11 will join them by 2025.
- Africa lost 39 million hectares of tropical forest during the 1980's and another 10 million by 1995.
- Africa emits only 3.5 % of the world's carbon dioxide now. This is expected to increase to only 3.8% by 2010.

From *Global Environment Outlook 2000 (GEO-2000)*. Available from the United Nations Environment Programme, PO Box 30552, Nairobi, Kenya. Email: <geo@unep.org>; web site: (<http://www.unep.org>). Or, from Earthscan Publications Ltd., 120 Pentonville Road, London N1 9JN, United Kingdom. US\$30.



UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

The 51st session of the Sub-Commission met in Geneva from 2 to 27 August 1999. Its new name (formerly called the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities) was adopted by the Commission on Human Rights at its 55th session. It is one of the many recommendations made by the Bureau of the 54th session of the Commission to rationalize the human rights work. It is possibly the only recommendation the Commission has accepted so far.

Unlike the Commission, which is composed of 53 Member States, the Sub-Commission is made up of 26 independent experts who are nominated by Member States and elected by the Commission for four-year terms. They can be re-elected.

The work of the Sub-Commission has been under particular scrutiny during this process of 'enhancing the effectiveness of the Mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights'. Because of their independent function on the Sub-Commission (although the experts are nominated by governments and often enough, when not elected to the Sub-Commission serve on their government's delegation to the Commission) they take up issues of human rights violations and negotiate resolutions on issues that the Commission at times prefers not to touch. This becomes particularly irksome to governments in the case of country situations.

The Sub-Commission has been meeting annually in Geneva for a period

of four weeks in August. Its main purpose is to serve as a kind of think-tank for the Commission, undertaking studies on critical human rights issues and recommending new standards and other measures to the Commission that promote and protect human rights.

The majority of the recommendations to 'enhance the effectiveness of the human rights mechanisms' concern the revamping of the Sub-Commission. For example, it is proposed to reduce the membership from 26 to 15 experts, to reduce the length of the Sub-Commission's sessions from four to two weeks annually, to merge working groups and combine the topics of studies and thereby reduce the number of special rapporteurs. Furthermore, the Sub-Commission would no longer have authority to negotiate resolutions on country situations. It would be limited to undertaking only thematic studies at the request of the Commission.

Many of the recommendations made by the Bureau of the 54th session of the Commission are radical but not necessarily positive. The 55th session could not agree to any of the substantive changes proposed. It decided to continue consideration of the recommendations in an inter-sessional working group.

The working group has met once and has made some progress at least in clustering the various issues for a better overview of the differing positions of governments.

Meantime, the 'reform process' seems to have had some impact on the work of this year's session of the Sub-Commission. For instance, only one 'country resolution', on the human rights situation in Congo (Brazzaville), was adopted.

More attention is being given to the human rights aspect of economic globalization. Last year, the Sub-Commission asked two of its members—Ms. Deepika Udagama of Sri Lanka and Mr. Joseph Oloka-Onyango of Uganda—to prepare a working paper on ways and means by which the primacy of human rights norms and standards can be better reflected in, and better inform about, national and regional trade, investment and financial policies and practices, and how the UN human rights bodies and mechanisms could play a central role in this regard. The working paper was presented to the Sub-Commission this year; it has been lauded as a good foundation for future studies. The Sub-Commission is recommending that both authors be appointed Special Rapporteurs to make a preliminary report for a study on 'globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights' with the final study to be presented in 2001.

Another resolution, directed to the WTO 1999 Ministerial Conference in Seattle, urges governments to be cautious about a new round of trade negotiations and take into account international human rights obligations and principles. □





Whither the Conference on Disarmament?

JUNG Gyung-Lan

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) had little to account for when it closed its 1999 session on 7 September in Geneva. The only concrete decision it took was to admit five new members: Ecuador, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Malaysia and Tunisia. The decision was taken on 5 August and expands the CD's membership from 61 to 66 countries. There are still 21 more countries waiting to be invited to the table.

There is a growing malaise on the part of some governments and of non-governmental organizations and institutions that follow and work on disarmament issues. During the past several sessions no serious debate, and certainly no disarmament negotiations, have taken place in the CD chambers.

Although an agenda for this session was adopted quickly enough, the CD members found no consensus on how to deal with its items. They could not even agree on establishing any one of the usual working groups. They never got beyond 'intensive consultations,' and hardly even debated in any serious way issues of disarmament, the prevention of nuclear war, nuclear disarmament, prevention of an arms race in outer space, and a fissile material cut off treaty.

Canada's Ambassador to the CD, Mark Moher, had to state that the Conference did not fulfil its task "to negotiate constructive multilateral agreements responding to

priority security needs." What is needed to wake up the members of the club and get them to face their tasks which are, after all, to negotiate steps toward general and complete disarmament?

There is a faint light in the distance: Recently, the US has let it be known that it is willing to take up at next year's session the issue of preventing an arms race in outer space. However, considering that the US continues its efforts to build a missile defence system, and in the process is destroying one of the cornerstone treaties—the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty—one cannot but wonder what the US Administration has in mind.

No one believes that disarmament can be negotiated in a vacuum, outside the context of the economic and social upheavals and tensions, of hot and smouldering conflicts in which we are existing today. As Leslie Luck (Australia), serving as the last CD President of the year, said: "The CD can only be a microcosm of the wider international environment which has provided difficult challenges over the past several years."

In 1998, events such as the nuclear testing by India and Pakistan marked a major setback and challenged the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regimes. In 1999, the NATO bombing against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the US plan to establish a national anti-missile defence system, and India's declared nuclear doctrine further eroded the

international climate. The refusal by the US to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was a further shock.

Of course, these events should galvanize the CD members, and all the people, into taking new actions for multilateral negotiations for disarmament. The tasks and responsibilities of intergovernmental forums are to work for the global good from which everyone can be a beneficiary. We are allowing our governments to drift away from genuine multilateral, global efforts and from the UN Charter while 'globalization' is on everyone's lips. But then the economic and social globalization we are living is driven by the strong beating the weak. The strong want more and better arms to conquer. The climate this produces is not one conducive to disarmament.

The CD has nothing substantive to send to this year's UN General Assembly. The President, Leslie Luck, has the honour of transmitting the report. He stated, however, that "there is a strong collective interest in commencing substantive work as soon as possible during the next CD session. I therefore propose to jointly conduct with the incoming President consultations during the inter-sessional months in order to try to achieve this goal...". Let us not only hope, but mobilize pressures in the capitals to ensure that the CD will do better in 2000 than it did this year. □

Jung Gyung-Lan is the 1999
WILPF Disarmament Intern.



THE RIGHT TO KNOW ABOUT RADIATION

Solange Fernex

Efforts by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom to make the facts about radiation known to the public are of long date.

Gertrud Baer' Efforts

In 1954 and 1955, Gertrud Baer, WILPF's representative to the United Nations and its system of specialized agencies, called on the World Health Organization (WHO) to undertake a study on the effects of radiation on health. WHO considered the issue as "being too political". However, at the World Health Assembly held in Mexico in May 1955, Dr. Karl Evang, chief delegate of Norway, raised this question again, insisting in particular on the genetic effects. In the following year, in 1956, WHO decided to undertake a study on "public health problems related to somatic and genetic action of radiation". However, this report was never finalized and presented to a subsequent World Health Assembly. By 1960, the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation and the IAEA were handling the subject.

Persisting in her efforts, Gertrud Baer proposed at a NGO conference, held in November 1955 by the Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome, that a study be made on the use of solar energy. Her suggestion was retained in the conclusions of the conference. In 1956, ECOSOC unanimously adopted a resolution, introduced by France, requesting the UN Secretary-General to make a report

on new sources of energy other than nuclear as a factor in economic development.

Gertrud Woker and Others

In August 1955, three WILPF members - Dr. Gertrud Woker and Dr. Hélène Stähelin from Switzerland, and Isabelle Pontheil from France - attended the UN conference on the "Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy" in Geneva. Later at the WILPF's triennial Congress, held in Birmingham, Dr. Woker reported that although the dangers of radio activity were thoroughly discussed, a paper by Professor J.J. Muller of Indiana University in which he referred to the genetic effects of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombing was excluded. This ban, she believed, was due to fears of the American Atomic Energy Commission that its contents would reinforce the massive movement against further nuclear testing. However, thanks to the insistence of many experts, Professor Muller's paper

was included in the published report of the Conference. It was published later in the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*.

WHO and IAEA

Unfortunately, WILPF could not prevent the approval by the World Health Assembly of the Accord between the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Two provisions of the Accord (in annex to Resolution WHA 12-40, adopted in May 1959) prevent public opinion from learning about the real effects radiation has on people's health.

The Accord reaffirms that the IAEA "has the primary responsibility for encouraging, assisting and coordinating research on, and development and practical application of, atomic energy for peaceful uses throughout the world...". Under Article 1.3, "Whenever either organization proposes to initiate a programme or activity on a subject in which the other organization has or may have a substantial interest, the first party shall consult the other with a view to adjusting the matter by mutual agreement."

This may explain why WHO undertook only a very limited study on the health effects of the Chernobyl disaster, beginning as late as five years after the catastrophe (in 1991) and terminating it already five years later (in 1995), at the end of the latency period of





of cancers, when they begin to appear as the result of radiation from the nuclear accident.

This no doubt also explains why the records of the Congress organized by WHO in November 1995 to mark ten years after Chernobyl were never published. They would have included a number of papers that had been submitted on the effects of low level radiation on health, in particular on the genome.

In fact, Article III, paragraph 2 of the Accord imposes the rule of confidentiality on the two parties in matters that in one way or another could "interfere with the orderly conduct of its operations."

This ties WHO and IAEA in an unacceptable manner in view of the flagrant conflicts of interest between the two organizations. It is urgent that this outdated text be amended.

As a start, WILPF is asking the 35 members of the WHO Executive Board to put on the agenda of the next World Health Assembly, May 2000, an item on the revision of resolution WHA 12-40, and is proposing amendments in line with the above. The petition circulated by WILPF to this effect has received thousands of signatures of prominent personalities and organizations in France and other countries. It is urgent to win the support from all who are concerned about the withholding of information about the effects of radiation on health.

We have a right to know. Once in possession of the full gravity of the consequences both civilian and military nuclear activities have on peo-

ple's lives, public opinion will massively reject this suicidal path. The damage to the gene bank of living beings, and the consequent danger to the generations to come, is unacceptable and must be abandoned forthwith. □

Solange Fenex is President of the French Section of WILPF and presided over the NGO Tribunal on Chernobyl in 1996.



The signature campaign petitioning the World Health Assembly to amend its Accord with the IAEA continues. For the text of the Petition with the proposed amendments to the WHO/IAEA Accord, contact the WILPF Geneva Office.

We call on WILPF sections and their friends, particularly in countries represented on the WHO Executive Committee, to call on their governments to support the demand to place on the 2000 WHA agenda an item calling for the revision of the WHO/IAEA Accord, and providing them with the proposed revised text.

The countries represented in the WHO Executive Committee and where WILPF has sections include: Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Peru, Russia, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, and US. Write to Geneva for the names of the Members.

Trade, Sustainable Development and Gender

UNCTAD is preparing its tenth general assembly by holding a series of expert meetings. One Expert Workshop, on Trade, Sustainable Development and Gender, was held in Geneva on 12-13 July 1999. Its purpose was to develop recommendations for mainstreaming a gender perspective in policies and programmes consistent with the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), the UNCTAD IX Declaration (1996) and the agreed conclusion on gender mainstreaming (ECOSOC 1997).

The workshop dealt with the issues of 'globalization and gender', 'trade-related issues and gender' and 'specific problems of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and gender'.

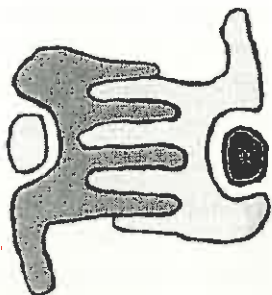
UNCTAD X will be held from 12 - 19 February 2000 in Bangkok.

(continued from page 3)

The US Government's inaction over Timor once more exposes its rhetoric about the 'protection of human rights' as a sham when one remembers its intervention in Kosovo and Iraq, for instance. It is clear that the US intervenes militarily to protect and further the interests of US corporations. Governments of 'western' countries in Europe, North America and Australia have for too long hidden behind a hypocritical gloss of human rights rhetoric all the while maintaining that 'business as usual' with oppressive regimes is consistent with gross human rights violations. □

2000 — International Year for a Culture of Peace

Heather Shafter



A group of Nobel Peace Laureates marked the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights by issuing 'Manifesto 2000'. The principles outlined in the Manifesto are at the heart of UNESCO's activities in the International Year for a Culture of Peace.

In summary, the Manifesto declares that the year 2000 must be a new beginning for a culture of peace; that transformation requires the participation of everyone; that "a culture of peace can underpin sustainable development, environmental protection, and the well-being of each person;" and that each individual is responsible for the future of humanity.

Based on these principles, the signer makes six promises:

- To respect the life and dignity of every human being.
- To reject violence in all its forms.
- To share both material resources and time with others in the spirit of putting an end to injustice, exclusion, and political and economic oppression.

From the Preamble of the UNESCO Constitution:

The Governments of the States parties to this Constitution on behalf of their peoples declare, that since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed...

- To defend freedom of expression and cultural diversity and to engage in dialogue.

- To preserve the planet in developing practices which respect all forms of life and preserve nature.

- To rediscover solidarity in the sense of recognizing a responsibility to contribute to the community of which each person is a part.

In a partnership programme it is undertaking in this International Year, UNESCO will disseminate Manifesto 2000 and will ask partners to help it to get to every corner of the globe. Everyone can commit to the goals of the Manifesto and sign it. The aim is to collect several million signatures worldwide and present them to the UN Millennium Assembly in September 2000 in New York.

UNESCO is calling on all organizations working for peace and solidarity to organize events which will highlight the goals set out in the Manifesto. In turn, it will facilitate the exchange of information about the events that are being planned.

The third level of partnership is to plan/identify local projects which contribute to the building of a Culture of Peace. The projects can be about the environment, education

and training, culture, human rights, democracy and peace, social integration and poverty eradication, information and communication, health, sustainable development, international solidarity, and quality of life. To aid in the development of these programmes, UNESCO has created a kit of "Local Projects for a Culture of Peace".

The fourth level of partnership is to identify projects which contribute to the implementation of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

Joining the UNESCO programme for a Culture of Peace is a natural act for WILPF, which has signed a partnership agreement to celebrate and propagate the International Year for a Culture of Peace.

WILPF's UNESCO representatives will soon send WILPF sections materials about the International Year, including copies of the Manifesto.

During the almost 85 years of its existence, WILPF has worked for the transformation from a Culture of War to a Culture of Peace. We will continue to do so. Remember to report your activities and projects to WILPF's representatives in Paris so that they can inform UNESCO about what we have done during the year. □

Heather Shafter is an intern with the French Section of WILPF and follows the work at UNESCO.



Conflict Resolution

Young people need to know that conflict is a more or less permanent aspect of their lives. They therefore need to know more about the origins of conflict, to be able to anticipate it and to be able to develop peaceful means of coping with it. Can we, if we want to understand more about war between nations, get any clues from quarrels and arguments in everyday life? Here are some descriptions of fairly simple scenes. Select some of them as starting points for simulation exercises, or as discussion themes.

A. Classroom

Someone throws a ball across the classroom, and the teacher sees it. The teacher is angry, but unfortunately picks on the wrong pupil. "You! You again. You're always causing trouble." The pupil

B. Fans

Late Saturday afternoon, there are five of them, their team has lost. They meet some fans from the other side. It's five against seven. One of the group of seven says words to the effect "Your side deserved to lose, they played dirty, they always do." The group of five

C. Snowball

12-year-old children throwing snowballs at each other. Three against three. A scream, and one of them has a badly cut face. There was a stone in a snowball. "You threw that" says the child, pointing at another. The child pointed at

D. School club

A boy aged 8 has just joined a school club. A group of older boys in the

club decide to 'initiate' him by throwing him into a large holly bush. As this is about to happen, another of the older boys challenges this intention and there is an argument, which becomes more and more heated. Just as a fight is about to begin between the leaders of the two factions, authority appears on the scene in the form of a teacher who is walking along a nearby road. No blows have been struck, and he is a sufficient distance away not to realise that the group is engaged in a heated argument. After a friendly greeting he continues on his way. The interruption is just sufficient to allow tempers to cool a little, and then the two groups again begin to argue

Let the pupils 'enter' one or more of these conflicts, and ask them to try to solve the differences between the persons/groups. As in most simulations, the subsequent discussion is of crucial importance. During this time the alternatives can be explained and discussed. It is possible that one or both persons/groups might decide that the best course would be to 'fight it out'. This should not be regarded as a 'wrong' solution and condemned, but examined for its merits and demerits as a response to the situation ... "What other ways have you tried to find?" "Is this a fair and suitable way of dealing with the situation?"

During the final discussion, the teacher can relate the alternative solutions to the adult world and to relations between countries. Conflict resolution:

through aggression means war;
through withdrawal is the equiva-

lent of a settlement by bilateral diplomacy or the resolution of a dispute between two individuals by common agreement;

through negotiation represents mediation, or the offering of 'good offices' in international relations; and **through decision by a third party** means a decision by arbitration or law. It is not suggested at this stage that any attempt be made to explain the difference between settlement by law based on the application of legal rules by a court, and settlement on the basis of 'what seems fair' or 'natural justice' by arbitration. *The important point is decision by a third party.*

1. Discuss how you react and behave when conflicts arise in your own surroundings. Select an incident which has actually taken place in class or at school and discuss how this conflict was tackled by the various parties involved.

2. In sports and games we have rules and regulations. Why is this so? What happens to players who break the rules? Select a well known game. Play it by deleting some of the rules. Discuss what happens.

3. Discuss whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: "We cannot avoid conflicts. From time to time they are bound to happen. What we *can* do is try to learn how to control the conflicts when they occur."

The above is an Extract from UNICEF School Series No.6 on Conflict Study and Conflict Solving. Simulations a, b and c are taken from World in Conflict (Richardson, World Studies Project) while simulation d was prepared by Frank Field..



WILPF Statement to the Third Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organization, Seattle, USA, 30 November to 3 December 1999.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), founded in 1915 to work for world peace based on economic and social justice, on equity and on equality for all, calls on governments to resist entering into a new round of trade negotiations under the World Trade Organization (WTO) at the Third Ministerial Conference in Seattle, from 30 November to 3 December 1999. We urge them to launch instead a thorough assessment of the impact the existing agreements under the WTO have on the development of developing countries and on the life of people and their environment everywhere.

There is a need for regulating trade in order to respond to the needs of global development which benefits all peoples. But there is no place in this new millennium we are entering for consolidating instruments that help the rich dominate over the poor. Unless the WTO becomes transparent and accountable to the people and works for the promotion of trade arrangements that are fair and benefit the people around the globe, there is no room for this organization in our global village.

Studies and reports issued by the United Nations and others show that the gap between the rich and poor countries, and between rich and poor citizens within countries, is widening.

UNDP's 1999 Human Development Report (page 3), focusing on the effects of globalization, cites among other indicators the following:

"By the late 1990s the fifth of the world's people living in the highest-income countries had:

- 86% of world GDP (the bottom fifth just 1 %);
- 82% of world export market (the bottom fifth just 1 %);
- The world's 200 richest people more than doubled their net worth in the four years to 1998, to more than \$ 1 trillion."

This widening disparity between rich and poor is causing social disintegration, violent conflicts and wars in all regions of the world.

The WTO trade regime favours the powerful corporations and financial institutions whose interests are to maximize profits for themselves and not to improve the lives of the working people and their families.

The big transnational corporations (TNCs) drive capitalist globalization, the process of consolidating wealth and power through trade liberalization, privatization and deregulation. The WTO negotiated trade agreements reinforce and accelerate the globalization process which aims to remove the obstacles to the global movement of capital and production

of goods that have accumulated in the rich capitalist countries. In this process, developing countries and its citizens and the majority of citizens elsewhere are the losers.

The WTO also severely undermines democratic local and global governance, openness and accountability to the people all of which are basic to creating conditions for equitable sharing and stewardship of the world's riches.

This increasing economic and social inequity is taking a particularly heavy toll on women. They provide the bulk of cheap labour in the free trade zones where they are employed in conditions of slavery and where the most basic labour and environmental standards are violated. The ensuing disastrous effects on their and their offsprings' health is a crime that needs redress. An ever larger number of women is driven into prostitution, sex trafficking and slavery by the abject poverty to which they are condemned.

Food security of humankind is threatened by increasing consolidation of land for cash crops and the dominant power of chemical and biogenetic industries over crop cultivation. This is also negatively affecting the bio-diversity and ecosystem of the earth.

These conditions are accelerated by the iniquitous trade agreements negotiated under the WTO.

In summary, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

—Opposes any further liberalization negotiations, especially those which would bring new areas under the WTO regime, such as investment, competition policy and government procurement. We also oppose the trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS) agreement;

—Calls for a comprehensive, in-depth review and assessment of the impact existing agreements under the WTO have on developing countries and peoples everywhere.

—Demands that every agreement that has been made under the WTO be revised to respect the fundamental rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the different covenants and conventions promoting and protecting human rights, women's rights, labour rights, health and education, and the environment, as well as the commitments made by governments to implement the plans of action resulting from the world conferences on environment and development, population and development, social development, women and the human settlements (Habitat II).



Canada

Toronto WILPF Women are on the Move. The Toronto Branch of WILPF recently organized a day of workshops and strategy sessions to prepare for the World March of Women 2000. About thirty local women met to discuss disarmament, women's human rights and capitalist globalization. The focus

In addition to enthusiasm about the March, there was a great deal of interest in WILPF's United Nations activities, including the use of "shadow reports" to United Nations treaty bodies. WILPF members discussed the Toronto Branch's 'shadow report' submitted to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1998, as well as ongoing



Colleen Burke (second from right) with other members of the Toronto Branch.

was on actions that can be taken on these issues at the local level.

To this end, a committee was formed to begin organizing for the World March of Women in Toronto.

The March is actually a series of events taking place throughout next year and its broad themes of poverty (which encompass issues of global debt and neo-liberal economic policies) and violence against women (including violence in armed conflict) fit in well with WILPF's areas of work. Our "Women on the Move" conference brought together local women who have been active on a variety of local campaigns to share their experiences and ideas with women who are eager to get involved.

international lobbying activities for the creation of the International Criminal Court.

'Women on the Move' proved to be an excellent opportunity to inform women about WILPF's work, attract new members and jump-start activities to plan for the World March of Women in our community.

Colleen Burke, President,
Toronto (Canada) Branch

For more information on the World March of Women 2000, and on how to get involved in your country you can contact:

*Federation des femmes du Quebec
110 rue Ste. Therese, #307
Montreal, Quebec
Canada H2Y 1E6
marche2000@ffq.qc.ca
www.ffq.qc.ca*

Aotearoa/New Zealand

APEC In Aotearoa. This year's APEC activities began for Aotearoa when our government agreed in 1998 to be host to APEC this year. There have been meetings all year long, together with protests and alternative events. We are fortunate, those of us like WILPF who are opposed to what APEC stands for, that there is a very active group in Aotearoa, called the APEC Monitoring Group, which keeps everyone well informed about what is happening. The Group was started in 1994. Some of its members have attended previous APEC/NGO Summits and have been working with opposition groups in other countries.

The first Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) was held at the beginning of February in Wellington accompanied by an alternative conference and protests. The same thing happened again in Christchurch in April, when the meeting involved small and medium businesses.

At the Women Leaders Meeting in Wellington, the APEC Monitoring group held the "Beware The Miss-Leaders" Conference and a very effective street theatre action of 'cleaning the lobbies', with mops and buckets, where the official meetings were held.

There was also a small group of 'Witches Against APEC' which purported to put 'hexes' on events. They received much publicity.

At the Foreign Ministers Meeting in Auckland in June the police dealt with the protesters in a heavy-handed way, making us all nervous

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about what it would be like during the September Summit. We were also very nervous about the fact that the security guards protecting the overseas leaders were going to be carrying guns. A special law had to be passed to enable this to happen.

In the event, there was no violence in September even though there were a number of large protests and marches. On the last day of the Summit there was a protest march around the park perimeter of the Auckland Museum where the leaders were meeting. This was led by a group of Maori (the indigenous people of Aotearoa) including a WILPF member and joined by all sorts of groups concerned about the impact the free trade and investment, the free market model has on Aotearoa. Unfortunately for us it poured with rain all the time we were walking (2 hours) and our WILPF banner, like us became completely saturated.

There was also a rally and march on 12 September (Sunday) where one of our Auckland Branch WILPF members spoke. Lots of other ethnic groups—Tibetan, Sri Lankan, Chinese—as well as human rights groups protested when the Leader's Dinner was being held.

During the Summit weekend the APEC Monitoring Group had organized a Conference on 'Alternatives to APEC', which took the place of NGO Meetings that had been organized in other countries. There were overseas speakers as well as speakers from Aotearoa but we thought it was important that it was not seen to be part of the APEC and its focus 'APEC Means Business'.

The people in this country who are opposing APEC are being given a strong lead by Maori, who have all along seen the economic globalization for what it is; for them it is a continuation of the colonization under which they have always struggled. Now the rest of us are being subjected to the same treatment.

Most New Zealanders do not see any benefit from the free trade agenda: real income has declined, there is more unemployment, with Maori and Pacific Island people being the most affected. We seem to be at the mercy of the multinationals and international investors. We have been one of the countries that has wholeheartedly adopted global free trade, even though we are so small and vulnerable. Our governments have assured us that if we stick with it other countries will follow suit, but this shows no sign of happening. The more powerful countries have much more protection for their industries, resources and workers, so there has been a fair bit of cynicism here about the whole issue.

Nearly everyone admits the free market crusaders are under siege. United States trade representative Charlene Barshefsky broke bluntly with APEC's usual euphemisms by stating, "I think there is a growing distrust...by our respective publics of market opening. If global market opening is to remain the hallmark of the international trade system it is going to be critical to recapture

and maintain confidence in open markets." This does not mean the APEC priesthood has changed its views. It just thinks it must try harder to win over the doubters.

This year's big business booster is a concerted push on the WTO at the new round of trade negotiations in Seattle. In June, APEC trade ministers decided to push for industrial tariffs to be included in the round, as well as the already agreed issues of agriculture and services. Some countries, such as New Zealand, want the WTO to make fast decisions about fisheries and forests, but other countries, such as Japan, are not so eager. APEC is split over these issues.

APEC also wants the WTO to sort out some messy problems which it could not fix itself such as tariff busting and the dates for achieving free trade and investment for 'developed member economies' and 'developing economies'. APEC is powerless to do anything about, for example, Japanese protection of its food markets. The real match is at the WTO. According to one commentator "APEC is a sideshow. It is a lightweight compared to the WTO, the IMF and the World Bank. It is largely a talking shop".

Attempts to include trade unions, women, environmental groups and others into APEC have had very mixed success. APEC remains a deeply divided club of international 'somebodies', with limited powers and meagre achievements. It papers over the cracks and produces mountains of unreadable reports.

Joan Macdonald
WILPF Aotearoa/New Zealand





Dear Readers,

This is your page. We invite your comments on articles published in IPU and to write us on issues which are of concern to you. You may wish to share information or enter into a dialogue with other readers on justice, peace, disarmament and any other security issue through this page.

Pam Sexton and East Timor

I would like to share the story of Pam Sexton with the readers of IPU.

"I feel a deep responsibility to do all that I can at this moment for my East Timorese friends, to work with them to end the unimaginable violence they have faced and to help rebuild shattered lives...The situation is extremely dire; the killings and disappearances so extreme. It is difficult to understand such a sinister plan to destroy a people". These poignant words were part of an update e-mail Pamela Sexton, Co-Chair of Pajaro WILPF, sent from Australia .

In 1990 Pamela, a graduate from Vassar, taught English for two years in its college exchange programme in Yogua, Indonesia. During this time, an incident in East Timor touched her deeply and changed the direction of her life. She heard that the military had slaughtered 270 mourners as they walked toward a cemetery in East Timor. This ghastly massacre was video-taped by Alan

Nairn, international journalist, in an attempt to publicize the atrocities occurring since Indonesia invaded East Timor after Portugal gave up the colony in 1975. Since then, the Timorese had been striving for independence in face of overwhelming odds. When Pamela returned to the States, she moved to San Francisco to volunteer with the East Timor group, knowing her knowledge of the language and her contacts in Jakarta would be invaluable.

In 1997, Pamela and her partner, Curt, went to East Timor for a short time, and met with organizers working for self determination. When the election date was finalized in 1999, the International Federation for East Timor organized a team of non-partisan observers. Pamela was hired as the US coordinator to recruit, screen and organize a US contingent to be a presence at the 6 September election in East Timor. When the overwhelming vote for independence was announced on September 10, the violence unleashed soon after by the militia threatened the lives of the foreign volunteers. Two days later, Pam was flown to Darwin, Australia.

Since the evacuation, Pamela has been under great stress. Some of the East Timorese with whom she worked and had created a warm relationship have been murdered.

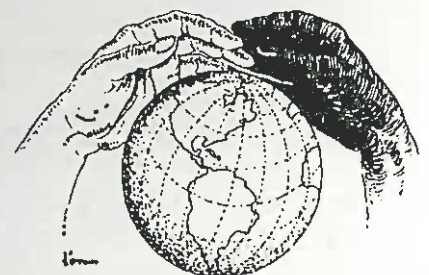
Pam was to go to West Timor to do research regarding rumours that the militia is harassing and raping the refugees forcibly taken to this concentration camp. As a witness to one of the most savage genocide travesties of this century before and

after the elections, Pamela will give an eye-witness account later this fall when she participates in a US speaking tour organized by Grassroots International.

Pamela is committed to work for justice with the East Timorese. She has been trained in nonviolence, and feels that her knowledge of the language, her experience and skills will be useful. Pamela's strength and determination to speak for the Timorese comes from the women of the island who show inspiration and courage, although threatened daily. This has never deterred them from the goal of independence. "They inspire hope and faith in spite of tremendous pressure." Their courage has inspired Pamela "to do the work that not many others can do...working against the genocide that is happening."

Pamela Sexton is living proof of the adage that one person can make a difference. Her courage and commitment to social justice and human rights have been tested; her response is awesome. WILPF can indeed be proud to have one of its members on the forefront fighting for the issues that have always been ours — peace, justice, freedom and above all, tolerance for other points of view.

Ruth Hunter
WILPF Santa Cruz, USA





Meetings in 2000 — Interim List

- Beijing +5** — Regional Preparatory Meeting, Economic Commission for Europe, 19-21 January 2000.
NGO Working session, 17-18 January, Geneva (Registration deadline 30 November 1999).
- Conference on Disarmament** — first session: 17 January -24 March; second session: 22 May-7 July,
third session: 7 August - 22 September, Geneva.
- UNCTAD X** — 12-19 February, Bangkok.
- Conference of NGOs (CONGO)** — Board meeting, 24-25 February, New York.
- NGO Consultation preceding the Commission on the Status of Women** — 27 February, New York.
- Women's 8 March seminar** — Joint NGO seminar to mark International Women's Day, 7-9 March, Geneva. (The Reporting of War and Disarmament - The role of the Media in building A Culture of Peace).
- UN Commission on the Status of Women and Preparatory Committee for Beijing + 5**, second session — 28 February to 17 March, New York.
- Commission on Human Rights** — 20 March-28 April, Geneva.
- Preparatory Committee for Copenhagen + 5**, second session, — 3-14 April, New York.
- NPT Review Conference** — 24 April 19 May, New York.
- Commission on Sustainable Development**— 24 April-5 May, New York.
- Preparatory Committee for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance**, first session — 1-5 May, Geneva.
- NGO Millennium Forum** —22-26 May, New York.
- Beijing +5, Special Session of the UN General Assembly** — 5-9 June, New York.
- Copenhagen + 5, Special Session of the UN General Assembly** — 26-30 June, Geneva.
- WILPF International Executive Committee, Seminar** —27-29 July, Berlin, Germany. (Topic: racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance).
- WILPF International Executive Committee 2000** — 31 July - 5 August, Berlin, Germany.
- Sub-Commission on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights** — August, Geneva.
- Review Conference of the Landmines Convention** — 11-15 September, Geneva.
- United Nations Millennium Assembly** — 5 September, New York.
- Millennium Summit** — 6 September, New York.
- UN General Assembly** — from 12 September, New York.
- World March of Women 2000** — 1-17 October (rallies and other actions).

Some major events in 2001:

World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, probably in South Africa.

World Conference on Small Arms, Geneva.

You are invited to inform us of major events for their inclusion in WILPF's calendar which will be published from time to time.

