

# International Peace Update



Volume 69 No.1, Spring 2004

Published by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

## Women Define Democracy

Krishna Ahooja Patel

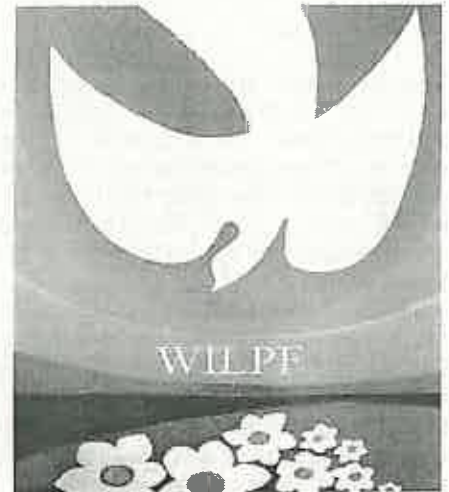
This issue focuses on "democracy" and its different definitions. Lately, the term is being used for countries recently occupied— such as Afghanistan, Haiti, Iraq and Palestine— by the only superpower and its allies. Democracy is obviously not a plant that can be uprooted from any soil, packed and exported. Freedom is an essential component of democracy.

History shows us that through the ages, individuals and diverse social groups have struggled to acquire, sustain and exercise human rights and fundamental freedoms. The political chaos across borders and increasing violence in many countries and communities clearly show that institutions of democracy can only be constructed with the full participation of all citizens. The right to vote is the essence of democracy. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, democracy was never defined from women's perspectives nor has it always included religious and ethnic minorities. More importantly, women were not even considered persons in the national legislation of many countries. For example, in Canada, women became legal persons only in 1929.

The ancient Greek and Roman laws not only accepted the institutions of slavery as natural, but also excluded women from political spheres. In the United Kingdom, where the development of democratic institutions began to take root in the sixteenth century, there was a slow evolution towards giving the right to vote to the majority of the population who did not own property. After a violent and determined struggle, women acquired the right to vote only at the turn of the last century. New Zealand and Finland preceded the United Kingdom on legalising equality of rights between women and men. The American Constitution and its Charter of Rights in the United States also did not consider women on the electoral list.

The Napoleonic code followed by several European countries became an obstacle in the way of equality of rights between women and men until the middle of the twentieth century. During the process of decolonization in the 1950's, the new nations of Asia and Africa made the equality of rights between women and men an integral part of their constitutions. At this moment in history, the developing countries were a step ahead of the developed countries in terms of gender equality at the legal level.

*(Continued on page 2...)*



*Congress info on pages 16 & 17*

## IN THIS ISSUE

Thoughts on Democracy.....	1- 6, 11
Women on Disarmament (Statement to CD).....	7-8
Reaching Critical Will at WSF.....	9
Conclusions at CSW.....	10
WILPF New York.....	12
WILPF Geneva.....	13-14
Another World is Possible.....	15, 18
WILPF Congress.....	16-17
Women in Action.....	19
Peace Woman Award 2004.....	20
WSF: Resistance or Reform.....	20

4



WILPF

1 rue de Varembe  
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland  
Tel. (41) (22) 919 7080  
Fax. (41) (22) 919 7081  
E-mail: info@wilpf.ch  
www.wilpf.int.ch

NEW E-MAIL

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

Published by WILPF  
Annual Subscription:  
CHF 20.- or US \$15.-

Editorial Board: Krishna Ahoja Patel  
(President), Edith Ballantyne (Editorial Consultant)

Co-editors: Krishna Ahoja Patel, Joanne LaBossière

Layout: Ruwandi Silva, Joanne LaBossière

*Your articles are welcome. Opinions expressed in signed articles are not necessarily endorsed by WILPF.*

(Continued from page 1)

The political participation of women at the highest levels of decision-making has been on the international agenda for half a century. It was a cross-cutting subject in all the UN conferences on women from 1975 to 2000. The increasing rates of women in decision-making levels have been much faster in regional parliaments, state assemblies and municipal councils. Access to the political power at the top levels of government and ministerial posts has been much slower in comparison. In 1962, when the first woman in history became Prime Minister in Sri Lanka, she paved the way for women to exercise power and influence as heads of state. Since then, there have been more than thirty women prime ministers and presidents. Of these, the majority emerged through the democratic electoral processes in South Asia and Israel, in countries where the dominant populations were Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish and Muslim. How did this happen in the poorest region of the world where the majority of women are unable to read and write? Research is missing on how these phenomena occur!

Now at the beginning of the twenty-first century, there are more and more women in the decision-making levels of government. However, the number of women in parliaments continues to be lower compared to the number of men- except in two or three countries, such as Norway and Iceland, where it is almost equal. Only when the legislature, the executive and the judiciary- the three components of democratic institutions- reflect fifty percent of women, will women truly begin to define democracy.



**Krishna Ahoja Patel**  
**WILPF International President**



## Democratic and Jewish- Is It Possible?

Aliyah Strauss, WILPF/ Israel

A public debate is raging in Israel. Sometimes it's an orderly discussion organized through a university; but mostly, it's a disorganized, untidy debate where everyone and anyone throws around the concepts: 'democracy,' 'anti-democratic,' 'Jewish values,' 'humanistic values,' and much more. It's a discussion in which each person who can gain an audience in the media gives these concepts their own value and definition. The point of the controversy is: Can Israel be both a democratic state and retain its Jewish character? It may seem at first glance that this is a very specific debate in Israel, without international interest or connection. I believe that with the present situation of shifting populations and the rise of non-homogeneous communities in most of the democratic countries of the world, this is an important point for discussion.

There is a minimal procedural definition of democracy: it is the right of citizens to compete for participation in the government of their society; democracy is a type of management or governance. A democracy is a state ruled by democratic laws and institutions: a government selected by a parliamentary majority, or by a majority of the voters, with regularly spaced parliamentary elections, freedom of expression (also for minority views), freely chosen political organizations, habeas corpus and recourse through an appeal to the supreme court of justice. By this minimal definition Israel is a democratic state.

A much wider definition is in terms of democratic values. In this definition, democracy is a political regime which protects basic definitive values such as freedom,

equality, individual rights and minority rights. Each of these concepts needs to be expanded and defined, but I will leave them as they are and assume that my audience understands them. Also, I believe that all democratic regimes in the world fall short of the democratic ideal.

In Israel approximately 80% of the population is Jewish, and 20% is Arab- Palestinian Israeli- mainly Moslem with a minority of Christians. Israel does not have a constitution; a lack which many decry as the basis of our problem with democracy. But Israel does have Basic Laws, and democratic values are expressed beautifully in the Israeli Declaration of Independence. Freedom, equality, and individual rights are promised to all the citizens of Israel; but what actually happens is that the Palestinian Israeli minority suffers much discrimination.

Israel officially recognizes two languages, Hebrew and Arabic; but the language and culture of the Arabs are second class at best. Two educational systems exist, Jewish and Arab; but the Arab educational system is controlled by Jews- the Palestinian Israelis do not have educational autonomy. There isn't a fair division of resources, and the Palestinian Israelis don't receive their fair share in the budgets or appointments- they are not partners in the ruling regime.

In a poll taken in 2001, more than 1/3 of those polled thought that Israel should encourage the Arabs to leave the State, so that their percentage of the population would decrease. More than half of those polled thought that the State does more than enough for its Arab citizens; anyway, they say, Israel should give preferential treatment

to the Jewish citizens before giving anything to the Palestinian Israelis, because Israel is a Jewish State. From the poll it is abundantly clear that most of the Jewish citizens of Israel have not internalized the principles of civil equality or the importance of defending minority rights.

The cornerstone of Israeli society and the State is the Jewish nationality. Therefore Israel is a partial democracy which focuses on the Jewish nationality rather than on each citizen; it could be called an ethnic democracy. With this in mind I wish to return to the question: Can Israel be a true democracy and also remain Jewish?

The functioning of Israel's democratic system is mainly distorted by two factors: 1) the 36-year-old occupation of Palestinian territories and their 3.4 million population, who are a separate group from the Palestinian Israelis, citizens of Israel. The Palestinians in the territories have no voting rights and are subject to a military rule that by its very nature is arbitrary, discriminatory; 2) the protracted state of hostility existing between Israel and the Arab world. (Two Arab states have made peace with Israel - Egypt and Jordan.) This state of hostility, plus the long, drawn out occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, have harmed Israel's democratic system. Israel cannot become fully democratic unless it liberates itself from the evils that arise from the occupation. Such a move is indispensable for ending the conflict with the Palestinian nation and creating the conditions of peace with the Arab world.

Democratic countries are imperfect in this imperfect world and many have discriminatory legislation  
(Continued on page 4...)



(Continued from page 3)

which favors certain groups based on ethnic and cultural origin. In Israel the age-old dream of Jews having a country where their language and culture are the dominant ethnic component has become a reality. This isn't something to be taken lightly, nor is it likely to be given up. However, the official criterion for "Jewishness" is a religious one: being born in or converted to the Jewish faith. Herein is the crux of the problem. The separation of Religion and State in Israel is an essential step for expanding and improving the democratic character of the State. If Jewishness is separated from its religious components, then all citizens, including Palestinian Israelis, would be able to enjoy the Hebrew culture and language as well as their own cultural heritage. The Jewish Israelis would also feel freer to enjoy much more of the Palestinian cultural heritage than they now do. Religion must be a private, not a collective, affair; culture is collective and evolves slowly. This is predicated on the basic concept that the government will not be preferential to one ethnic group over any other, nor will it be discriminatory in its laws and actions. Can Israel be both democratic and Jewish? I believe it can be, but we have a long way to go to improve our democratic institutions so that all the citizens of Israel can identify with the State and feel that they have an integral part in it.

*This essay was inspired by an article by Prof. Sami Samoucha, professor of sociology at Haifa University; an interview with Victor Cygielman, co-editor with Ziad Abu Zayyad of Palestine-Israel Journal; an interview with Adam Keller, editor of The Other Israel, newsletter of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace.*

## Democracy as Duty

Liss Schanke, International Vice-President, WILPF/Norway

We have all heard about the democracy in Athens under Socrates in year 2: and we all know that this is a major historical lie. Athens never was a democracy in the sense of "government by the people for the people". Only approximately 10% of the population was included in the Athens democracy: the Athens-born, well-to-do, free men over 20 years of age. 90% of the population was excluded: the young, the slaves, the poor, the immigrants- and of course the women. The main basis for exclusion was ethnicity, economy, age and sex.

We are faced with the very same democratic challenges today, 2000 years later. How do we prevent political decision-making from being limited to a small minority?

We must bear in mind that the *results* of the decision-making process are, in most cases, linked to the *participants* in the process. It is likely that the main benefactors of a decision-making process dominated by white, well-to-do, middle-aged men will be white, well-to-do, middle-aged men. In such cases, it may be more fitting to speak of plutocracy (governance by the rich) or nepotism (governance by friends and relatives) rather than democracy.

Democracy is therefore a duty. The democratic key words- participation, accountability, transparency- are all based on a relationship between those governing and the people, with mutual sets of duties in the national as well as in the international arena.

*Participation* implies that inhabitants actually do participate in political processes- beyond voting at elections. Retiring from the political arena is undermining democracy itself and implies that you are increasing the space for private interests. Women must also be willing to participate and support women candidates in order to achieve an equal representation of both sexes in politics.

*Accountability* implies that you hold governments accountable- and protest in all possible ways when necessary. In my opinion, it also implies paying taxes- as taxes go through public budgets and public decision making processes, contrarily to most private funds. Private schemes to escape taxation therefore undermine accountability as well as increase poverty.

*Transparency* implies that you make the effort to keep your self informed- which goes beyond switching on your national television in the evening.

*Democratic rights die if they are not constantly used.*





## Latin American Elite Evaluate Democracy

Marta Benavides, WILPF/ El Salvador

In a series of polls by the University of Miami School of Business Administration and Zogby International, more than 500 "opinion leaders" in six Latin American countries (Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela) were asked to rate their satisfaction with democracy in their country. Among those surveyed, members of the Brazilian elite (71%) and Chilean elite (69%) are most satisfied with democracy in their nation. Fewer than half of the elite in the other countries say they are satisfied: Argentina (49%), Colombia (42%), Mexico (38%) and Venezuela (11%). When asked to rate their confidence in public institutions, Latin elites express the highest levels of confidence in the church, the armed forces and the media.

Interviews were conducted August through October 2003. For the purposes of this survey, elites were defined as high/middle-high

income respondents with special knowledge of their area of interest. Since all interviewees lived or worked in urban areas, all interviews were conducted in the main cities in each of the six countries.

What is interesting is that this study is meant to reflect the level of democracy in each country. Yet, according to UN agencies, the Latin American region has come to be the one part of the world where the greatest inequality is manifested, since the distribution of wealth is not widespread, and the very few continue to be very rich and hold the land of the nations. For the peoples in the region, it is important to measure democracy by the increasing percentages of employment, of pension holders and of land ownership. Other factors we should take into account are the access to education, the upholding of all human rights,

the protection of the environment, the lowering of violence in general and of women and children in particular, the guarantees for gender mainstreaming in all aspects of the life and the civil participation in peace negotiations and decision-making affecting our quality of life. For us in the region, these are practices that we wish to be a reality not only in civil and political life, but also in those organizations to which we belong.

*"Radical democracy describes an adventure of human beings creating with their own hands, hearts and minds, the conditions for their freedom... It is a way in which people order their lives together, through discussion and common action, on principles of equality and justice."*

\* contributed by Linda B. Belle, Executive Director of the Jane Addams Peace Association (loosely quoted from Douglas Lummis' book entitled *Radical Democracy*)

## Democracy in Aotearoa/New Zealand

WILPF/ Aotearoa/ New Zealand

### Treaty of Waitangi

There is a huge challenge for us here in Aotearoa as far as questions of democracy are concerned. A few years after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi between the indigenous people (Maori) and the representative of the British Government, which enabled the settlers to come here, a government was established by the settlers based on the British system. It could be argued that the form of government set up by the settlers was illegal because Maori were denied any place in it. At that time the people able to vote and

become part of the government were male landowners, and because Maori were not considered to own land as individuals they were excluded. The land was acquired from Maori by purchase, by war, by unjust laws or by confiscation. Eventually Maori were given a limited participation by having a few elected members in Parliament. Once the new settlers far outnumbered the indigenous population, it was easy to fall back on arguments of democracy in terms of a universal adult franchise and decision-making by majority vote, especially when women and Maori got the vote in 1893. In 1996

N.Z. abandoned the first-past-the-post system it had inherited from Britain, and introduced a new system, Mixed Member Proportional Representation, which tries to retain a geographical balance and also enables more women and Maori to participate by way of the Party list.

Introduction of extreme monetarist and free-market policies in the late 1980s has resulted in an increasingly greater gap between rich and poor, in increased unemployment, and cutbacks in the social welfare system. At the  
(Continued on page 11...)



## Challenges of Democracy

Helen Yensen, WILPF/ Aotearoa/New Zealand

Democracy is a concept that is not easily defined, nor is it set in concrete. Indeed, from its early birth as a political system in Athens more than 2500 years ago, it has been a developing concept, thrusting its tentacles wider and wider, especially more recently. It has been discussed, argued, fought over and died for. Nelson Mandela is quoted as telling the judge at his trial, after he had been convicted: "I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons will live together in harmony and equal opportunities. It is an ideal for which I hope to live and see realized. But, my lord, if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

The basic meaning of democracy, i.e. governance by a nation's citizens, is meaningless without certain societal and human rights conditions. We agree with those who say conditions essential to the flourishing of a democratic society are press freedom, individual freedom, adherence to human rights, democratic institutions, political decision-making that involves most if not all stakeholders, an educated electorate, and equal opportunities for all. But we would add: inclusivity in all dealings and consideration of other's rights and particularly of a sense of community, which brings in the values of caring and sharing.

Challenge comes from the difficulty of defining the

boundaries between: rights and obligations; individual and group rights; freedom to and freedom from; freedom of speech and from gratuitous defamation or the spread of pornography etc.; human rights and security of individuals or the state; stress on what people have in common or the acknowledgement of diversity. There are no easy answers. The balance in the West seems to have gone over the top towards a liberal ideology of "me first and damn the rest" and a concern with community comes last if at all. Also, we need to ask whether one model fits all societies at all times. The latter challenge has come more recently not just from different cultures and value systems, but also as we watch the disasters of some powerful Western countries trying to impose their "democratic" systems on other countries and that, by overwhelming force, which seems a contradiction in terms.

Democracy is a total way of life and involves not only the political system, but also how other social institutions and organizations operate. A minimum requirement for a state to operate as a true democracy is support by democratic institutions and an adherence to human rights. Otherwise, people may have a vote, but corruption will be rife, and real power will remain in the hands of the few and only the few benefit. Looking at some of the long established democracies who set themselves up as models of democracy for the rest of the

world, like the USA, one may well ask whether they are not modelling the decline of democracy instead. Lifting the standard of living of the general population of a country, i.e. creation of wealth, is often considered to precede moves to or can result in demands for more democratic processes. Yet, when most people in a country feel they are doing well, they have less concern about the type of government they have.

Many governments still seem to believe that if the franchise is reasonably universal for all adult citizens, then they are properly represented in the legislature with political decision-making reflecting the will of the people. First-past-the-post systems are notoriously exclusive and often result in minority (in terms of the national vote) governments. But even more genuine representational systems are not as inclusive as the theory would suggest, particularly in view of the power of major parties to control candidate selection.

At an institutional level we are learning to ask about who makes the decisions, who benefits, who controls the resources, thus revealing where the real power lies. In addition, some organizations have adopted a consensus model of decision-making involving all stakeholders, which requires a lot of practice and also time, but if used well, results in better decisions and greater support from those involved.

### Available to Order from WILPF: International Women's Day Seminar Reports

- *Women's Rights and the Economics of War* (2003)
- *Terrorism, the Global Order, Arms and Missile Defence* (2002)
- *In the Line of Fire: A Gender Perspective on Small Arms Proliferation, Peace Building and Conflict Resolution* (2001)
- *Reporting of War and Disarmament: the Role of the Media in Building a Culture of Peace* (2000)

Each 5 CHF (Please add cost of postage)



## Human Security, Women and Disarmament

International Women's Day Seminar  
(Geneva, 10-11 March 2004)

Since 1983, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has been privileged to organize a seminar on disarmament on International Women's Day with the support of other NGOs focusing on peace. This year's speakers included the Egyptian Ambassador, the former Deputy Director of WHO, the Japanese Ambassador and a representative of the ICRC. The conclusions of the Seminar were approved by the participants before the statement was presented to the Conference on Disarmament the next day. Following is an excerpt of this year's statement, read out by the Deputy Secretary General of the CD, Mr. Roman-Morey:

Throughout the war-plagued history of civilization, leaders and decision-makers have been operating within a framework of "national security." Most actions taken on the international stage are based on the preservation of national security. How successful has this framework been? Since the end of the Second World War, there has not been more than a week without some conflict somewhere on the planet. During the fifty years of the Cold War, the world has witnessed the bloody embodiment of "national security" during which 315 armed conflicts took more than 27 million lives wounding 100 million others. At the heart of the Cold War lay the notion of nuclear deterrence. While

the Cold War ended more than ten years ago, the nuclear threat has reached another climax. We risk losing the positive gains made in previous years as the Nuclear Weapon States reinforce their arsenals, conduct experimental high-level missile tests, research new types of nuclear weapons, and more and more Non-Nuclear Weapon States look to the nuclear option as a way of preserving "national security."

How did we miss the opportunity for nuclear disarmament that the end of the Cold War offered us? How is it that the global nuclea stockpiles are *not* diminishing irreversibly? How is it that, despite the promise made

in 2000 at the NPT Review Conference to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in security policy, we continue to find nuclear weapons at the core of security strategy documents?

You must ask yourselves: *Whose security do nuclear weapons guarantee?*

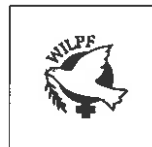
More than three years have elapsed since the Security Council adopted the historic resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Three years onward and we do not want to utilize another International Women's Day statement to discuss why and how women are affected differently. Instead, we want to demonstrate how a gender analysis can facilitate nuclear disarmament talks. We call for the transition from a national security framework (which has failed) to a human security framework.

A gender perspective does not mean simply counting the number of women and men at the conference table, (although an increase in women decision-makers in this Forum as in all others would be one way to ensure a gender perspective). Rather, as the action plan of the Department for Disarmament Affairs states, "Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the *process* of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programs in all areas and at all levels."

(Continued on page 8...)



Left to right: H.E. Naïla Gabr, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Egypt to the UN; Ms. Carolyn Handschin, Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI); Dr. Aleya Hammal, Former Deputy Director of WHO/ Co-Founder Women for Peace Global NGO Network; Dr. Krishna AhojaPatel, WILPF International President



(Continued from page 7)

The DDA gender plan, launched during last year's unsuccessful UN Disarmament Commission's meeting, is itself situated in a human security framework. The plan recognizes that "Gender analysis begins with people, their experiences and their lives, rather than with notions of state security." The plan works on the assumption that a shift towards a framework based on human security must begin with disarmament. If we are to realize the promise stated in Article 26 of the Charter to regulate armaments



Left to right: H.E. Kuniko Inoguchi, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament; Ms. Edith Ballantyne, WILPF UN Special Advisor

toward the least diversion of global resources, we must challenge the current notion of national security. As the action plan states, "disarmament and gender analysis offer critical approaches to the concept of national security grounded in military superiority and the threat of the use of force." A gender perspective will enable nation states to move away from a narrow military view of security to a universal notion of human security.

The cornerstone of the disarmament regime, the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, stands at its most crucial juncture in its history. The world has watched itself backslide on key advancements made at the 2000 Review Conference. Drastic positive measures are needed to

ensure the longevity of the NPT. With the third NPT PrepCom fast approaching, all States Parties to the NPT and the peoples they represent are greatly dependent on the work of this Conference on Disarmament.

The CD and the NPT share many of the same issues. If the CD were able to make substantive progress on some of them, such as Negative Security Assurances, the positive effect on the NPT would reverberate throughout the international disarmament regime. The CD has the responsibility to demonstrate the vitality of the international disarmament regime as a way of strengthening the NPT review process.

One way to start to demonstrate this would be to officially adopt the Five Ambassadors' proposal NOW and work in line with it. There are no obstacles to begin negotiations on an Fissile Material Cut Off Treaty (FMCT). If certain key States still have not formulated a position on an FMCT, the participants of this seminar urge you to go ahead without them. Work on this treaty must begin as soon as possible, so that any production of fissile material becomes as inconceivable as a return to full-scale nuclear testing is today.

We offer you today a new way of thinking, a new framework in which to devise your strategies and craft your positions. Not one human being in the world will be *less* secure once you have managed to negotiate an FMCT. What a responsibility and privilege you have, to be charged with the responsibility and *ability* to protect the lives of every person on the

planet! And it really is within your power. By starting work on that treaty *now*, you will be taking one critical step toward the safety and security of every single human being on earth.

NEW PUBLICATION

**THE LINE: WOMEN, PARTITION AND THE GENDER ORDER IN CYPRUS**  
(Zed Books, Feb. 2004)

By Cynthia Cockburn, member of WILPF London and Women in Black Against War activist

With Cyprus joining the European Union in 2004, the pressure is on political leaders to resolve forty years of conflict between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, and to erase the brutal Partition Line that scars the island, fostering nationalist hatred and impeding communication. The 'EU moment' has already triggered a startling decision to open checkpoints on the Green Line for day crossings, an opportunity eagerly seized by ordinary citizens. But a permanent peace agreement is elusive.

This scholarly but lively study is a gendered analysis of conflict and peace processes in Cyprus, based on extensive interviews and group discussions with women living both north and south of the Line. Their memories evoke nationalist attacks on Turkish Cypriots in the 1960s, the violent expulsion of Greek Cypriots in 1974, and the gender-specific experience of being a refugee. We see in today's Republic of Cyprus and the unrecognized Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, rivals in continual stand-off, a gender order in which patriarchy, nationalism and militarism combine to keep women on the margins.

The Line traces the fortunes of a remarkable Cypriot women's project working for peace, using the Internet to defy the barriers to communication placed between them. In the future Cyprus of their imagining we will no longer draw arbitrary and damaging lines to separate so-called ethnic groups, or to differentiate men and women, creating hierarchy, exclusion and inequality. The study will be relevant to all who teach about, think about and strive to put an end to racist, sexist and militarist oppression and violence in this and other regions of the world.



## Reaching a Critical Mass of Political Will at Mumbai\*

Rhianna Tyson

Anti-nuclear activists are often dismayed when other peace activists, not quite as familiar with the nuclear threat, fail to see the linkage between a preventive war doctrine and the continued build-up of nuclear weapons. Many nuclear abolitionists believe that war will never be prevented so long as countries continue to spend billions of dollars to maintain and develop these genocidal, ecocidal, and suicidal weapons.

With the help of the World Peace Council, we organized an event entitled, "The Threat of Nuclear War: Campaigns to Abolish Nuclear Weapons," and solicited the co-sponsorship of 23 organizations from around the world.

The idea for the teach-in was threefold: to deliver an overview of nuclear policy and practice in various parts of the world; to spread the word about international campaigns taking place to abolish nuclear weapons; and to hear from activists working on a local level to rid their communities of the nuclear scourge.

In the first segment, we heard testimony from a Japanese atomic bomb survivor and from nuclear policy experts from the U.S., Japan, Greece and India, who described the nuclear policy and practice in their countries in succinct, understandable and passionate terms.

The second panel, with its focus on global campaigns to abolish nuclear weapons, stressed that a discussion on nuclear weapons is not in isolation of the other

discussions taking place at the WSF. We heard from representatives of Mayors for Peace, the Parliamentarian Network for Nuclear Disarmament, and the Global Action to Prevent War. Each representative relayed the critical role of civil society in various international campaigns.

The last panel of local activists was certainly the liveliest and featured environmentalists, scientists and educators. These activists from the U.S., India and Belgium described various methods that they employ to involve people in the struggle on a local level.

Overall, the event\*\* was well-received. There wasn't enough time for all of the questions that were hatched among the audience members, but several informal discussions, networking, information-swapping took place for at least an hour after the event officially concluded, despite the late hour.

Next year, it is highly important that WILPF reserve a table or booth and send several delegates in order to staff the table continuously and conduct fruitful outreach and solicitation of new members. With the growing feminist presence at the WSF, WILPF could easily expand our membership with scores of new women from different corners of the globe.

The WILPFers present spoke to many women of various ages who wanted to know more about WILPF. Possibilities for new membership at a gathering such as this are immeasurable. It is vitally important for experienced,

knowledgeable and dedicated WILPFers to go to Social Forums (regional and world) and other large networking gatherings of activists. We must reach out to activists and young women around the world at all available opportunities. A strong, unified WILPF presence that would be able to teach women about the history of WILPF, our amazing principles from which I personally derive so much pride, and of our projects going on all over the world is an absolute imperative if we are to build momentum for our work and to promote sustainability of our beloved organization.

### Enough is Enough

Enough is enough  
The killings are more than enough.  
Whether Buddhists or Hindus,  
Muslims or Christians  
May be from Sri Lanka,  
Or from South Africa,  
Or from India or Kenya,  
Or from Palestine or Israel,  
The killings are more than enough.

Enough is enough  
The killings are more than enough.  
Whether the skin is brown, black or white,  
May be from North or South,  
Why we kill each other?  
For whom are the killings?  
For whose satisfaction?  
The blood of all of us,  
Is not brown, black or white.  
It is red, pure red, dark red.  
Enough is enough  
The killings are more than enough.

Oh! I am scared,  
We have suffered enough.  
No tears to cry.  
Enough is enough.  
The killings are more than enough.

Dulcy de Silva  
International Vice-President  
WILPF Sri Lanka

\* An excerpt from the WILPF report on the World Social Forum. Full report available at: [www.wilpf.int.ch/events/2004\\_WSF\\_report.html](http://www.wilpf.int.ch/events/2004_WSF_report.html)

\*\* Broadcasted live on: [India.indymedia.org](http://India.indymedia.org)



## Agreed Conclusions at the Forty-Eighth Session of the CSW

*PeaceWomen Project, WILPF UN/New York*

On 12 March 2004, the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) adopted its Agreed Conclusions on *women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and resolution and post-conflict peace-building*. Concluding its two week-long 48th Session (1-12 March 2004), this marked the first time, since the adoption of UNSC Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security in 2000, that the Commission has treated the issue of women's equal participation in peace negotiation and agreement processes, electoral processes, disarmament and security sector reform.

The Commission on the Status of Women is mandated to act as a dynamic and catalytic body, which makes recommendations to the Economic and Social Council "on urgent problems requiring immediate attention in the field of women's rights." Yet, the composition of the Commission's membership, the governmental groups that participated in the negotiations, and the Commission's work toward a consensus-based, negotiated text, prevented it from effectively fulfilling this mandate. The language negotiations deteriorated into a political game between individual governments and governmental blocs, characterized by a disregard for the international law framework, forcing the discussion away from the pending and emerging concerns under the theme, toward the political desires of the capitols of the Commission members.

One of the critical issues that the Commission failed to address, despite NGO advocacy, is the inclusion of language on the full and equal participation of internally

displaced, refugee and returnee women, thus disregarding an expanding body of existing language. The Agreed Conclusions of the 42nd Session in 1998 adopted language both on protection and participation of refugee and internally displaced women. In addition, since 1998, multiple sets of guidelines have been formulated by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights on the protection and participation of refugee and internally displaced women, and both the Secretary-General's study and report and the UNIFEM Independent Experts' Assessment have provided recommendations on these same issues. Furthermore, the Commission members, as members of the 58th Session of the General Assembly (2003), adopted resolution A/C.3/58/L.57 on the protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons, which includes UNSC Resolution 1325 in its operative paragraph 4.

Governments weakened the Agreed Conclusions through their failure to incorporate implementation-focused language. There were four issues that proved to be among the most contentious during the language negotiations: reaffirmation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325; the provision of resources and funding; and the identification of actors responsible for carrying out the recommendations made in the Agreed Conclusions.

*For more information on the 48th session of the CSW, please visit: [www.peacewomen.org/un/ecosoc/CSW/CSW2004.html](http://www.peacewomen.org/un/ecosoc/CSW/CSW2004.html)*

## Politics for Peace

In the year 2002, there were local and national elections in the Netherlands. The political workgroup Women for Peace and the WILPF Dutch Section wanted to get the item PEACE on the agenda and therefore wrote a brochure entitled *Politics for Peace*.

The brochure is divided into 5 chapters; each chapter includes a short introduction followed by recommendations from the Political Workgroup. The subjects are:

- Conflict prevention and conflict handling
- Disarmament
- Nuclear disarmament
- Europe: Common foreign and security policy
- United Nations

Elections for the European Parliament will take place in 2004 in 25 countries. Considering the fact that international questions concerning war, conflict prevention and peace are of every country's concern, the brochure was translated in English in order to be more widely available to everyone.

The political workgroup sincerely hopes that this document will be useful for many women, not only in Europe but all over the world, and not only for the European Parliament elections but also for local and national elections elsewhere.

To obtain a copy of the brochure please contact Han Deggeller ([h.deggeller@wxs.nl](mailto:h.deggeller@wxs.nl)) or Anjo Kerkhofs ([anjo.kerkhofs@cgev.nl](mailto:anjo.kerkhofs@cgev.nl)) and indicate whether you want an electronic or paper copy.



Women for Peace  
Vrouwen voor Vrede  
Frauen für den Frieden  
Femmes pour la Paix  
Donne per la Pace  
Kvinnor för Fred



(Continued from page 5)

same time, international global trade agreements pushed by the WTO undermine Maori claims to special rights as tangata whenua ("people of the land"), including sovereignty rights. Those developments also undermine New Zealand sovereignty generally.

At a non-governmental level, various organizations and institutions which were predominantly run on the models of the dominant culture, have been involved in developing models of shared *sovereignty* with Maori, sometimes within the one organization, but increasingly in separate organizations, emphasizing the sharing of resources, and providing space for Maori to work in ways that are more suited to them. A quote from Professor Mason Durie in Te Mana, Te Kawanatanga is relevant here: "Self-governance at local or national levels requires a level of organisation which incorporates both customary Maori practices and the application of democratic principles. The two are not incompatible, nor should their juxtaposition be discounted. Maori can be strengthened by the past and can learn from it. But the challenges of tomorrow will require a canopy of skills and wisdoms, many of which will come from other cultures and nations... The task is not so much to shed the vestiges of western civilisation, or to dismantle the past 150 years as if it were all a mistake, but to draw on the past, good and bad, in order to reconstruct a pathway for future generations."

So are we a democracy? On balance we definitely still lean more that way, but improvements are needed, as well as constant vigilance to fight increasingly anti-democratic government and other societal actions and tendencies. Government responses to the so-called war on terrorism are verging on being anti-democratic in impinging on human rights.

### Linkages Between Democracy and the International WILPF Programme

#### WILPF/ Aotearoa/New Zealand

For us in Aotearoa and the Pacific the issue is to balance the rights that democracy should provide and the rights of the indigenous peoples. The issues that we are committed to concentrate on are: Racial justice, racism and the rights of indigenous women, freedom from inequality, oppression, discrimination and exploitation; demilitarisation and disarmament of the Pacific and support for the independence of Pacific peoples.

We held the Asia-Pacific Regional meeting in Aotearoa/ New Zealand in February 2004 to enable more WILPF members in the region to participate in the programme. This is part of our contribution to the democratic process in WILPF. Having regional meetings is a way of working more horizontally.

As an international organisation, to work more democratically or to be more inclusive we need to look at ways of working that acknowledge the ways of other cultures, not just the "western" way. This includes the ways of communicating, listening, conducting meetings and making decisions. This was something we noted at the IEC meeting in Auckland.

Perhaps we should look more to people skilled in consensus decision-making techniques and group dynamics to facilitate our meetings to make sure all are heard. The preparation of programmes and actions can then profit from the widest possible input, and be thoroughly examined and adjusted. This requires more members to become familiar with that approach and to know that "all other" is only one option that "consensus decision-making"

offers, and that it has many benefits in the way all involved feel part of it, and are prepared to support it, even when they personally still feel another way would be better. To truly work it also often needs a change in attitudes, i.e., working together to get the best possible outcome rather than feeling defensive about one's own proposals.

Democracy has more to do with processes around the direct involvement of stakeholders in decision-making, rather than just around opportunities for more inclusive voting methods. There are values underlying democratic processes, but individual freedoms have to be balanced by obligations to others and particularly to the community. Non-violence and conflict resolution by negotiation and conciliation, and political, social, and economic equity, as well as observance of human rights are all part of the democratic process.

#### NOTE TO NEW SUBSCRIBERS IN THE USA

Largely due to staffing changes in the international secretariat of WILPF, a number of new subscriptions to the IPU which were received from the US section headquarters in 2003 have only now been processed.

We would like to thank you for your patience and hope that your first issue of the IPU will come as a pleasant surprise, that you will find it worth waiting for, and that you will excuse us for the delay. Of course you are now entitled to receive the newsletter throughout 2004.



## Report from WILPF UN/New York Susi Snyder

The last three months in the United Nations office (UNO) of WILPF have been, as usual, extraordinarily busy. Our four person staff (Kara, Rhianna, Sarah and Susi) along with the assistance of several interns (Ciara, Yujin, Julika, Katya, Monika, Dulce, and Anna-Martine) have maintained the three WILPF international websites ([www.PeaceWomen.org](http://www.PeaceWomen.org), [www.ReachingCriticalWill.org](http://www.ReachingCriticalWill.org), [www.wilpf.int.ch](http://www.wilpf.int.ch)), attended countless meetings and written hundreds of pages of reports, newsletters and other documentation.

One recent highlight was the amazing WILPF dinner held during the 48th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Hosted by former WILPF/UNO Director Felicity Hill, this dinner brought together more than 30 WILPF members to talk about emerging issues at the CSW, ways to move forward with Security Council Resolution 1325, and upcoming WILPF events—including the International Congress in Göteborg.

The Reaching Critical Will (RCW) project of WILPF/UNO had a successful tour of South Asia, organizing a fantastic event at the World Social Forum (see article in this issue). Most recently, RCW has been working with NGOs and the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs in preparation for the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Preparatory Committee meeting (26 April– 7 May). We are expecting to host more than 70 WILPF members at this meeting, where governments will discuss

this treaty, a cornerstone of the disarmament and nonproliferation regime. RCW has also been updating the NGO Shadow Report: Accountability is Democracy, Transparency is Security, a model for reporting required by the 2000 Final Document of the NPT Review Conference. This document will be



*Left to right: Kara Piccirilli (PW Team), Sarah Shteir (PW Team), Rhianna Tyson (RCW), Susi Snyder (WILPF/UNO Director)*

released during the upcoming NPT PrepCom and will be available on the RCW Website. The RCW team is also closely watching a US sponsored resolution in the Security Council on nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, hold in meetings with members of the council and a press conference to draw attention to this issue in the media.

The PeaceWomen project compiled a fantastic resource in preparation for the CSW— it is a compilation of agreed UN language on the issue of women's political participation. This document can be downloaded from the PeaceWomen website ([www.peacewomen.org/www/un/ecosoc/CSW/WILPFCSW48languageareview.pdf](http://www.peacewomen.org/www/un/ecosoc/CSW/WILPFCSW48languageareview.pdf)). You can also contact WILPF/UNO

to have copies mailed to you. The PeaceWomen team is currently working on developing the Peace Keeping Watch section of the website, enhancing the resources available on Women, Peace and Security, and translating the site into Spanish and French. We are also beginning preparations for the 4th Anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325 and examining ways to affect the Economic and Social Council examination of gender mainstreaming and the Secretary General's report on Women, Peace and Security. PeaceWomen is also looking at ways to effect the ten year review of the Beijing Platform for Action, which will occur in the Spring of 2005.

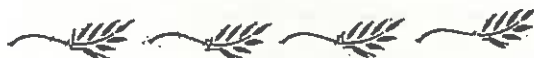
The WILPF/UNO strives to make the UN a more democratic institution through several mechanisms: we bring people who have never been to the UN before to witness negotiations first-hand, we raise the UN literacy of our members by making official documents available on the internet and we draw attention to emerging issues that will affect our membership through the 1325 E-Newsletter, the RCW News Advisory list, and occasional postings to the WILPF-News email list serve. By talking and listening to WILPF members about the UN we increase their knowledge and our ability to best represent WILPF at the UN. The WILPF UNO is currently fundraising in order to hold trainings for our members on the workings of the UN system. If you are interested in contributing to this effort, please contact Susi Snyder, WILPF/UNO Director at [wilpfun@igc.org](mailto:wilpfun@igc.org).



## WILPF International/Geneva

WILPF Geneva continues to be in transition while the organization gets its staff in place to implement its policies, programmes and projects. The office is in the process of completing this task to enable it to work at full capacity. Meanwhile, there has been a remarkable effort by WILPFers, interns and volunteers to fill in the gaps of our regular activities. Silivi Sterr is focusing on the preparation of the congress and Linda Zehetbauer has been helping with the office management from time to time. Mans Van Zandbergen, Mari Holmboe Ruge and Kirsti Kolthoff have also visited and undertaken specific tasks and responsibilities. Edith Ballantyne continues to be of great help, offering her advice and services during this period.

Currently, those who are carrying out regular activities at the international office are being introduced on this page. Taeko Okada prepared and organized the seminar on Disarmament on International Women's Day. Fatou Diawara attended and participated in relevant items of the Commission on Human Rights and helped in drafting two statements in which WILPF participated. Sarangerel Nyamhoo has been keeping accounts and reminding WILPF of budgetary constraints. Joanne LaBossière has helped in preparing this issue of IPU. Ruwandi Silva has been concentrating on the layout, while Lee Weingarten has updated the list of subscribers of IPU and international members.



**Fatou Diawara** is of Cameroonian and Guinean descent. She was born in Lausanne, Switzerland, and grew up in Paris. She completed a Master's Degree in International Law, specializing in Human Rights, at the City University in London. She is particularly interested in women's issues, from a legal perspective, and wrote her thesis on women used as weapons of war in armed conflicts. Fatou is this year's Human Rights intern. She has been attending the 60th session of the Commission on Human Rights and writing reports and summaries on what's been happening there. She drafted a position statement on violence against women in armed conflicts, which she presented during the CHR under Item 12: Integration of the Human Rights of Women and the Gender Perspective, Violence Against Women. Prior to the Commission, she completed training on the CHR with the YWCA and met regularly with members of other NGOs, such as the Kurdish Human Rights activists and Saharawi

Women. On a recent trip to Paris, she attended a meeting about Culture of Peace at UNESCO and participated in the annual conference of WILPF French section.

**Taeko Okada**, originally from Japan, joined the WILPF Geneva office at the end of January 2004 as the new Disarmament/Economic Justice intern. She has a Master's Degree in International Studies and has been a member of WILPF Japanese section since 1993. She helped organize the IEC meeting held in Japan in 1994 and attended WILPF's 26th International Congress and Gertrude Baer Seminar in Helsinki, in 1995. Prior to joining WILPF in Geneva, she worked for the United Nations University in Tokyo as an administrative assistant. She had also worked for a NGO in Japan for two years after finishing her Master's programme. She has a license to teach Ikebana (Japanese flower arrangement). She likes traveling and meeting people from different countries.

Since arriving in Geneva, Taeko has attended the first session of the Conference on Disarmament for about ten weeks, collecting all the statements made at the CD, sending them to the NY office together with a report. She organized the annual International Women's Day Seminar on "Human Security, Women and Disarmament" with several other NGOs, which was held on 10-11 March at the United Nations. (See Seminar's statement on pages 7-8) She also attended the meeting on "Safeguarding Space for All: Security and Peaceful Uses" organized by United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the Canadian Permanent Mission.





**Sarangerel Nyambuu** is from Mongolia. She has four children. She obtained her first degree in business, specializing in international trade and finance from the High Institute of Planning and Statistics in Warsaw, Poland. After living eleven years in Poland with her family, Sara returned to Mongolia to start working as an accountant in a state-owned trading corporation. After 3 years, she was promoted to the position of export manager and, through extensive business traveling, had the opportunity to meet different people and cultures. She then joined a family business in export/import, where she was responsible for finances. In 1997, her family moved to Geneva, where Sara reassumed her primary role of mother and wife. In 2001, she started a Masters in Business Administration while doing an accounting certificate, which she has recently completed with plans to take the CPA exam in November. She has also worked as an accountant for the International Organization for Migration (IOM).



Sara has now been working as an accountant for the WILPF Geneva office for almost 2 years on a part-time basis. She finds her work here interesting and challenging. Having met many interesting women working together for world peace, she hopes to continue to contribute to WILPF's causes.



**Joanne LaBossière** studied French Literature and Women's Studies at the University of Ottawa, Canada, and Gender Studies at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland. Her main interests include the social constructions of gender, women and/in literature and the media, and the empowerment of young women. She came to WILPF/Geneva to gain experience in an international women's organization working towards positive social change.

**Ruwandi Silva** is from Sri Lanka. Before coming to Geneva, she owned and ran Neranji Communication and Type Setting Center in Colombo. She was also involved in the young women's group of the WILPF Sri Lanka section. She helped co-ordinate the *Peace Talk*, a European study tour on multi-party federalism for Sri Lankan politicians and activists and worked with *Informed* and *Women and Media* on human rights issues.

Ruwandi was the Disarmament and Economic Justice intern in 2003. This year she is working as a volunteer. She is interested in the dynamics of international relations and is learning more about the activities of international peace organizations— how to lobby the agencies of the United Nations, how to raise people's awareness on peace issues and how to empower women in peace-building. In developing a deeper understanding of the relationship between peace and development, she hopes to better contribute to the Sri Lankan peace process. Besides volunteering at WILPF, Ruwandi is also studying German.



**Lee Weingarten** is a WILPF "veteran", having worked at the office since the mid-70's, first as a secretarial assistant to Edith Ballantyne when Edith was president of the Conference of NGOs. During the 80's, she helped with the series of conferences on indigenous peoples, migrant workers and apartheid which were organized largely by WILPF as secretariat for the NGO Committee on Racism. During the late 80's and early 90's, she worked full-time and then part-time as a WILPF staff member before going back to the Conference of NGOs. Now retired, she has come back as a volunteer, working especially on the database for the IPU.



## ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE

Jen Margaret, WILPF Aotearoa/New Zealand

After three weeks of traveling in the south of India, I wasn't sure that heading to Mumbai to attend the World Social Forum—with 100,000 participants, hundreds of workshops, seminars, stalls and plenaries, in a city of 16 million and sleeping in a tent with 15 others—was the best way, nor the most relaxing, to end my holiday. So it was with some trepidation that I made my plans to go. Going seemed like a crazy thing to do but not going seemed even crazier. I'm active in peace and social justice work with a particular focus on Tiriti o Waitangi hence my interest in WSF. So with an exit plan in mind in case it was too overwhelming, I headed north from Kerala to Mumbai for what would turn out to be an incredibly energizing and inspiring experience. Much of the energy and inspiration came from making connections with other people who are passionate about social justice.

### Background to the World Social Forum

The World Social Forum developed as a response to the growing international movement against neo-liberal economic policies being pursued in most countries and capitalist led globalisation. The World Social Forum was conceived as an international forum built around the slogan: *Another World Is Possible*. It seeks to provide a space for discussing alternatives, for exchanging experiences and for strengthening alliances between social movements, unions of the working people and NGOs. The first WSF was held in January 2001, in the city of Porto Alegre, Brazil. It was timed to coincide with the holding of the World Economic

Forum in Davos, Switzerland. Every year since 1971, an exclusive club of chief executives of the world's largest and most influential transnational corporations meets with academics and political leaders in the Swiss resort town of



World Social Forum in Mumbai, India

Davos, to chart the global economic agenda. The WSF was thus also seen as a counterweight to the options proposed by the World Economic Forum.

The World Social Forum is not an organisation, not a united front platform, but "...an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, free exchange of experiences and inter-linking for effective action, by groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neo-liberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism, and are committed to building a planetary society centred on the human person" (*from the WSF Charter of Principles*).

### World Social Forum in Mumbai

2004 was the first year for the World Social Forum to be held outside of Brazil. Mumbai was chosen as the location. It's difficult

to convey the intense, multi-sensory experience that is India in just one medium, but I'll give it a try. The venue was a large exhibition centre with a number of huge hangar-like buildings, hundreds of large tents for workshops and a large outdoor stage area. It was hot and dusty, it was noisy, it was colourful, it was exciting and sobering. It was packed with people from all over the world. There was so much going on (the 3 day programme was twice the size of a New Zealand suburban newspaper!) that, while having a myriad of experiences, I felt like I only skimmed the surface.

The days were a mix of attending sessions and exploring the wealth of other offerings on site. Getting from one part of the site to another was in itself an experience as one was often caught amidst protest marches of which India has a tradition. Throughout the day there were marches constantly taking place—the main roads would become jammed with people all making their calls for justice with banners, chanting and music. This tradition was taken up by others. At one stage I looked across the narrow road and there were three marches happening simultaneously—Koreans, Gujaratis and Tibetans.

Theatre (4 stages), visual arts (a number of major exhibitions) and music (both spontaneous and programmed concerts with top local and international performers) were all important parts of the mix. There was a very powerful exhibition in which you were spiralled (physically and

*(Continued on page 18...)*



## Water · Women · Peace

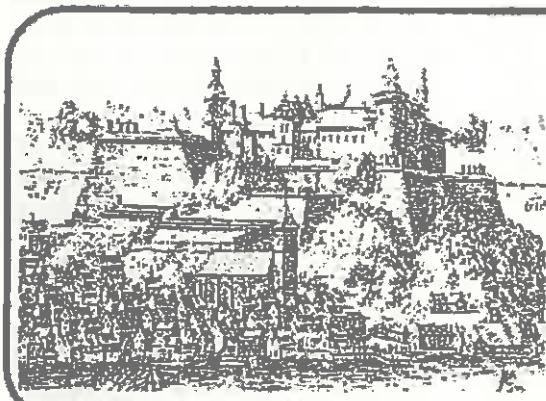
Annelise Ebbe, WILPF/Denmark

Water, Women and Peace is the major theme of the 28th Session of the WILPF International Congress (2 to 8 August 2004). It encompasses the contents of the Congress and future WILPF work. The Congress is a very important event, a political milestone and an organizational challenge every third year. As one of the Convenors of the Congress Committee, I am eager to share the highlights of the Congress, as well as its goals.

Working rather intensively on the Congress since the IEC meeting in Auckland, it is rather obvious to me that one cannot define the aims and the goals in one and a half sentence. Since WILPF work and its aims and principles are complex and richly faceted, the same can be said about the aims and goals of the Congress. If I should try to express this in a simple way I would say that I see three aims for the Congress: 1) To have quality discussions on the WILPF programme in order to achieve a realistic and effective platform for action. This will be done through seminars and workshops, with reports from the thematic committees, the Officers, the New York and Geneva offices and the sections. 2) To have quality discussions on the organization itself in order to strengthen WILPF at all levels. This includes organizational workshops, reports from organizational committees, financial matters, and the election of Officers (and hopefully the creation of new non-militaristic titles). I also want to see the Gertrud Baer seminar as a means to strengthen WILPF as an organization by getting new members and empowering young members. 3) And of course to meet and talk and sing and dance and create space for every single WILPF member!

### Logistics and Venue

The Congress will be held in beautiful surroundings. It will take place at the Nordiska Folkhögskolan (Nordic Folk High School) in the town of Kungälv, 20 km north of Göteborg (Gothenburg) in Sweden. The Gertrud Baer seminar will also take place at the Folkhögskola. Everybody will be accommodated in two-bed rooms and single rooms. Food for vegetarians and diabetics will be available. There are rooms for seminars, big meetings and workshops, all with good acoustics. There are computers, access to the Internet, etc. – all the technical equipment we want and need, including interpretation facilities for up to 40 participants.



#### A Little History...

Sweden hasn't been at war for the past 190 years. The country has had an active policy of neutrality for many years. But more than 200 years ago, there were many wars between Sweden, Denmark and Norway. Two fortresses in Kungälv still remind us of these wars. Kungälv itself has been under siege 40 times.

### Themes and Speakers

An introductory session on *Water as a Source of National and International Conflicts*, chaired by Regina Birchem, will include contributions from the following people and sections: Mary Ziesak (Australia), Katia Patino (Bolivia), Sushma Pankhule (India), Aliyah Strauss (Israel), Samira Houry or Roula Zoubiane (Lebanon), Anjo Kerkhofs (The Netherlands), Lucinda Amara (Sierra Leone), Dulcy de Silva (Sri Lanka), Liss Schanke (Norway).

### Other Congress Speakers include:

Elisabeth Rehn, co-author of the UNIFEM 1325 Report: *Women, War and Peace*

Johan Galtung, International Peace Researcher: *Deep Culture, the US and War/Peace*

Kerstin Grebäck and Maria Ermanno, Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation: *Lessons learned from using a model for peace-building in which gender equality is an indispensable instrument for sustainable peace (Rethink! A Handbook for Sustainable Peace)*

Asa Romson, Policy Unit, Forum Syd: *Privatization in the Water Sector in the South and the Role of International Finance Institutions*

Felicity Hill and Susi Snyder, WILPF/UN NewYork: *Information, Communication and Technology for Peace; WILPF on the Web*

Krishna AhojjaPatel, WILPF/International: *Globalizing Women's Human Rights*



## Cultural Events

It has been very important for the Swedish host committee to make the Congress a cultural event as well. The opening session is a cornucopia of different political and cultural experiences. Our hosts have also prepared outings throughout the whole week including a visit to a peace area in Vasapark in Göteborg on Hiroshima Day, and a day trip to the old island town of Marstal where we will celebrate our newly elected Officers.

## Gertrud Baer Seminar

The Gertrud Baer Seminar is entitled: *Empowering Young Women for Peace Work*. It has two aims: capacity building and recruitment. The young women will have two days 'on their own' before they join the Congress for two days. They will get a short presentation of WILPF's history, aims and principles, and discuss durable development, global justice and peaceful negotiations. They will also be introduced to the very important work at the UN level and the UN Security Council Resolution 1325. The participants of the Gertrud Baer Seminar are welcome to join the WILPF Congress after the seminar.

## Dates

- The Congress begins Monday, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August 2004 with an opening ceremony in the afternoon. It ends Sunday, the 8<sup>th</sup> of August.
- An IEC meeting will be held on August 1<sup>st</sup> (afternoon) and August 2<sup>nd</sup> (morning).
- The Gertrud Baer Seminar will take place from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> of August. Participants will join the Congress for the opening ceremony and the seminars on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>.
- There will be an Officers' meeting before the Congress on the 31<sup>st</sup> of July (afternoon) and the 1<sup>st</sup> of August (morning). There will also be an Officers' meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August (morning and afternoon).

## Workshops

The WILPF programme related workshops aim at strengthening our programme work and our political impact both at the national and international level. The purpose of the organizational workshops is to strengthen the organization itself.

### WILPF Programme Related Workshops:

1. Middle East (Kirsti Kolthoff; WILPF Israel; WILPF Lebanon; WILPF Palestine)
2. Racism and Indigenous Women (Joan Macdonald, WILPF Aotearoa/New Zealand)
3. Globalization and Alternatives for Peace- Global Challenges after 9.11 (Krishna Ahooja Patel)
4. Woman, Militarization and the Environment (Working Group on Environment; Dutch section; Aotearoa/ New Zealand section)
5. Women and Trade (Krishna Ahooja Patel and Margaret Turner)

### Organizational Workshops:

1. Recruiting New Members (Joyce McLean and Annevig Schelde Ebbe, Leadership Development Committee)
2. Strengthening WILPF Sections in the South (Samira Khoury and Roula Zoubiane)
3. WILPF Organizational Challenges (Marta Benavides)
4. WILPF International Communication (Annelise Ebbe)
5. Fun with Fun(d)raising (Mans van Zandbergen and Dolores Taller)
6. Constitutional Questions (Mari Holmboe Ruge)
7. Information, Communication and Technology for Peace; WILPF on the Web (Felicity Hill and Susi Snyder)
8. How a Section Can Implement the International Programme (Edith Ballantyne)

**For more detailed information on the Congress, please go to: [www.wilpf.ch](http://www.wilpf.ch)**

Or, for inquiries relating to registration, please contact:

Boel Bruce: [boel.bruce@swipnet.se](mailto:boel.bruce@swipnet.se) OR Ragnhild Svensson: [ragnhild\\_svensson@hotmail.com](mailto:ragnhild_svensson@hotmail.com)

All other inquiries and questions can be made to the International WILPF office in Geneva:

Phone: +41 22 919 7080 / Fax: +41 22 919 7081 / E-mail: [silvi@wilpf.ch](mailto:silvi@wilpf.ch)

Postal address: WILPF, CP 28, 1 Rue de Varembe, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.





(Continued from page 15)

emotionally) in and out through a visual display on sectarian violence and the impact of the earthquake in Gujarat. Amidst the bustle there was a quilting area where people could sit together and sew; the patches were put together and created a stunning backdrop for the closing event.

I spent hours wandering through the hundreds of stalls and information displays from peace and justice organizations from all over the world. There was also a vast range of stalls with beautiful crafts and fair trade goods, so shopping for gifts was able to be worked into the day. There was a huge range of food stalls and eating was always an interesting time not only in terms of tastes but also of conversations I had, perched on the makeshift seating.

I attended a range of sessions including: ICT and Development, Indigenous Rights, Challenging Media Stereotypes in Developing Countries and Transformative Education in Global Democracy. The latter was a workshop facilitated by the Paulo Friere Institute in which participants engaged in intense small group discussions about the impact of neo-liberal globalization on education.

Discussion at a session on Globalization and Indigenous Rights provided a clear reminder to me of the role of non-indigenous people as allies in these struggles. At this session Dr Huirangi Waikerepurua, a Kaumatua from Parihaka, talked of the path of peace taken by his people, led by Te Whiti and Tohu, when the

colonial government waged war on them. It was a powerful experience hearing these stories of Aotearoa recounted in this global context. A subsequent session focused on a range of strategies, from direct action to utilizing UN mechanisms that indigenous peoples from around the world are using to respond to the assaults on their land and peoples.

There were also a number of plenary sessions, accommodating up to 20,000 people, where leading people from the movement addressed a range of topics. I was



World Social Forum in Mumbai, India

inspired by Arundhati Roy's analysis and chilled by her accounts of the brutal sectarian violence in Gujarat when she spoke at a forum on "Wars against Women, Women against War". At the end of each day I would return 'home', tired and dusty, to the shared accommodation (I didn't end up in a tent!) where I was hosted by Shikshantar an Indian organisation working to radically transform education through the creation of learning societies and by challenging existing educational structures ([www.swaraj.org/shikshantar](http://www.swaraj.org/shikshantar)). People from around the world who were linked with this organisation were hosted in communal accommodation. Together we did tai chi, played group building games, had discussions and reflected on our experiences at WSF. At night I would wake to a symphony of gentle snoring in the

room I was sharing with women from Mexico, Pakistan, India, France, Brazil and Lebanon. Before going to WSF, the forum's slogan *Another world is possible* seemed to me an unattainable future vision. But while I was there, I became aware that each person I met and learned from was part of this 'other world', that they were already creating and living it. For me, a vital part of this world is the valuing of relationships and diversity. WSF, despite being such a large event, was organized in a way that allowed people a huge freedom to connect and interact with each other. A sliding scale of attendance fees (from \$2US to \$50 US for the 5 days) also made the forum accessible to a wide range of people.

Since returning a number of people have asked me what the outcomes of WSF were. My response is that a lot was achieved

on a range of levels, much of which I'm not aware of as there is a lot of work happening at higher political levels in relation to the event. For me the outcomes related to developing connections and feeling strengthened in my work. While people might have had vastly different ideologies, the solidarity came from being aware of the multitude of ways people are working to create different paradigms, that is, creating another world.

The photos used in this article are from: [india.indymedia.org](http://india.indymedia.org)





## Invest in Caring not Killing

What does protesting against war have to do with campaigning for recognition and wages for all the unpaid work women do? They may, at first, seem like separate issues. However, their connection is clearly established through the demands and activities of the Global Women's Strike, the global movement coordinated by the International Wages for Housework Campaign and the International Network for Wages for Caring Work. Insisting that societies INVEST IN CARING NOT KILLING, the Global Women's Strike demands that the \$900+ billion now spent on military budgets be used instead for basic survival needs— clean accessible water, food security, healthcare, housing, education, safety from rape and other violence, protection of our planet— and therefore, for women who are the first caregivers and the first fighters for the survival of loved ones.

In other words, war has everything to do with unpaid caring work and housework: the wages, pensions and benefits that women aren't getting are used instead to wage wars. Thus, the demand for recognition and payment for all the unpaid work women do is about much more than a pat on the back and a paycheck. It implies a deeper societal change, in which welfare and life outweigh the values of the Market. It's about creating a world in which caring, and therefore survival and enrichment of every life and the planet's, becomes the aim of every society and every economy. A world in which breastfeeding, raising children and preparing food for the families are more important than developing sophisticated weapons, building bombs and training soldiers to kill.

*It's about fostering a culture of peace.*

The Global Women's Strike asserts that as caregivers, waged or unwaged, women are always workers, and that they have the power to bring the whole economy—including the military interests—to a halt. That's exactly what women did in Iceland on 24 October 1975. They said: *When women stop, everything stops.*

The Strike adds: **STOP THE WORLD AND CHANGE IT.**



*The Global Women's Strike is a global network that strengthens the ongoing struggle of grassroots women (and men). For more information, go to: [www.globalwomenstrike.net](http://www.globalwomenstrike.net)*

## WOMEN'S WORLD SUMMIT FOUNDATION



### Prize for Women's Creativity in Rural Life 2003

On Wednesday 15 October 2003, at a special ceremony in Geneva moderated by Elly Pradervand (Executive Director of Women's World Summit Foundation) and Ilse Moser (WWSF-Prize Programme Coordinator), five women laureates were honored for their contributions to sustainable development, household food security and peace.

\* Betty Makoni (Zimbabwe) was honored for her work on behalf of children's rights in the village of hope;



\* **Marta Benavides** (El Salvador), a WILPF IEC Member, for her work in creating a culture of peace;

\* Byatshandaa Jargal (Mongolia) for her efforts to combat malnutrition;

\* Theresa Secord Hoffman (USA) for her work to revive native Indian basketry;

\* the Association of Austrian Mountain Farmers, for their presentation of a cabaret on rural development.

The 5 Laureates were selected from amongst 33 Prize winners in 2003.

*For more information, please go to: <http://www.woman.ch/women/1-award.asp>*



**International Peace Woman  
Award 2004**



The international office in Geneva hosted a small party to mark WILPF's 89<sup>th</sup> birthday. Representatives of several NGOs and women's organizations attended the celebration held on April 28, 2004.

At this event, Eleanore Romberg was nominated for the International Peace Woman Award 2004. Eleanore joined the WILPF German section in 1956. She later became President of the section. She served as WILPF's International President from 1989 to 1992. For almost half a century, Eleanore made a remarkable contribution to WILPF at the national and international levels.\*

The International Peace Woman Award was created in 2003 to honour women who have made a lasting contribution to the international movement for a peaceful world. Edith Ballantyne was presented with the award last year.

*\* More information on her work will appear in the next issue.*

**World Social Forum in Mumbai:  
Resistance or Reform**

**Krishna AhoojaPatel**

What happens in an international forum where a thousand voices are raised by hundreds of civil society organizations? What comes out of a large gathering of over a hundred thousand activists who spell out their visions of an alternative world system based on economic and social justice? The demands were clear in a few simple and attractive campaigns, banners and placards. Nobel Laureates Shirin Ebadi (human rights activist) and Joseph Stiglitz (well-known economist), Arundhati Roy (famous writer) and Medha Patkar (environmentalist and social activist), and thousands of activists came under a unifying slogan: ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE.

Analyzing the titles of the 800 panels planned for the Forum, it can be surmised that the WSF was not propagating a monolithic creed or a fundamental system of values or a single definition of democracy or the neoliberal economic project. There was a wide spectrum of views rejecting the current consequences of corporate globalization which has been instrumental in creating wide spread poverty, deprivation and destitution among millions. The unique feature of the discussions was the plurality of views; the diversity of cultures was not only tolerated but celebrated.

An interesting observation from the venue of the Forum: to experience poverty of development, the participants did not have to walk very far. It was part of the surroundings and the conference scenery. All one needed was to pause, perceive and participate on how little humanity survives!



**Note to persons / institutions receiving the  
International Peace Update on a complementary basis:**

We will be glad to continue sending you our publication free of charge if you find it useful.

Please return this enquiry to WILPF, Case Postale 28, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland (if preferred, send us your YES or NO to continued receipt of IPU via E-mail to [info@wilpf.ch](mailto:info@wilpf.ch). Please include your full name and address.)

I wish to continue receiving the IPU free of charge.

Please remove my name from the mailing list for IPU.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

If we have no response by 15 June 2004, your name will be removed from the mailing list.