

International Peace Update

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Greetings from the President

Regina Birchem
WILPF International President 2004-2007

Women of many cultures and languages came together on the rocky coast of northern Sweden for the 28th. International Congress from countries as diverse as Nepal, Rapa in French Polynesia, Sierra Leone, Germany, India, Japan, Bolivia, Palestine and Israel... united in working towards a culture of peace instead of a culture of war, torture, oppression and injustice.

Jane Addams wrote that what holds the League together are its Congresses. Mary Zepernick (WILPF-USA former president) believes what holds us together is an experience of community.

When we meet, we find a community of purpose and commitment that is not bound by political, economic and racial boundaries. We also discover anew that the insecurities of the world are also inside us individually and challenge our relationships.

One objective in beginning as your new president was to have Congress agree to a clear program and action plan: "Economic and Social Justice, Respect for the Environment -The Foundation of Peace". We will work now to fund it. My other priorities are to develop and broaden the administrative and leadership capacity among us, to become a more multigenerational and multiracial WILPF, to lighten the ecological footprint of WILPF and to strengthen local WILPF communities.

It is a pleasure to work with the dynamic team of new officers -Marta Benavides (El Salvador), Dulcy de Silva



(Sri Lanka), Annelise Ebbe (Denmark), Samira Khoury (Lebanon), Mans van Zandbergen (the Netherlands).

Thank you for the trust and confidence you place in us. Your support, humour, zest, and creativity empower us.

The vision we share is brilliantly expressed in a call to action by a USA pre-election coalition called True Security -a call to say no to endless war and to "homeland security".

"Real security is found in the things that sustain life, not weapons that destroy life. Real security is food, water, land, health care, education, housing, meaningful work, a sustainable environment, liberty and dignity...

We say **NO** to the culture of torture and fear. **NO** to empires, military madness, illegitimate governments and stolen elections. **NO** to Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, and the occupations of Iraq, Afghanistan, Haiti, and Palestine. **NO** to environmental destruction and mindless consumerism. We say **NO** to the criminalization of dissent, the Patriot Act, the imprisonment of people of color and the racist system that divides us all...

We say **YES** to a world where all people can live with dignity, respect, and freedom. **YES** to all that feeds our soul and makes us feel alive. **YES** to real democracy that goes beyond voting. **YES** to community spaces that embody our vision of security, love, peace, beauty, justice, abundance and freedom".

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Congress lights

Krishna Ahoja Patel, IPU Editor

The WILPF Congress recently concluded in Kungälv (Sweden) took place in one of the most prestigious “people’s highschoools” at a resort called Kungälv. The main aim of this type of free school in Scandanaivia is to encourage creativity in individual learning at all ages and deepen understanding and knowledge on a particular subject. The scenic beauty of the surroundings of this school inspired the WILPF participants (more than 240) to exchange new ideas for a more peaceful world than what we have currently inherited. This Congress gave WILPF members an excellent opportunity to debate, discuss, disagree and find consensus on the future visions for WILPF. They represented 38 different national sections from various regions of the world. It was in this atmosphere that the WILPF International Program for 2005-2007 was reviewed, revised and refined.

The main theme of the Congress was an issue of immense international importance –Water, Women and Peace. The underlying concepts of these three vast subject areas are interrelated to current global challenges. The “right to water” was linked to human rights violations in general and the condition of women worldwide was considered to be an integral part of their unequal access to water resources. Several papers from different regions were presented which emphasized the urgent need for institutional structural change within society. It is clear from research results that when the ownership and management of water resources is in the hands of women, the conditions of peace are also established. The degree of violence against women is like a flood of water flowing rapidly from the international level to the national and then onwards to the household space. These scenarios prevent any conflict resolution to succeed or to leave any space for women to heal from traumas of war and violence. This leaves them very little time or energy to reconstruct communities and contribute to peace building. These were some of the thoughts expressed by the invited speakers in different workshops and plenary discussions.

It was also recognized and acknowledged that WILPF as an organization is at a turning point in history. Since 1915 it has been like a large river encountering rocks, cascades and dams. But now it has come to a bend, where its path to the ocean has become invisible. During the last three years, since the so-called “war on terror”, the rule of law applied to international relations have deteriorated to the extent that ethnic and religious wars within a large number of countries have begun to erode human security and stability. Since then the world has been transformed into artificial divisions among religions, cultures and civilizations. During the first half of the twentieth century, anti-semitism has been the rule of the day in several European countries when facism dominated their political ideology. And now, the focus has shifted to Islam on which the dominant political ideology and military might has begun to concentrate. Many a lesson in the history of humankind has been forgotten. Massacres and genocides have taken place during Crusades, among Catholics and Protestants and later among Hindus and Muslims and then Tutsis and Hutus and a host of other ethnic and religious communities during the latter half of the twentieth century. There is not a single state in the world which has one religion, one ethnicity, one language and one source of knowledge. Then why the proliferation of these conflicts? There is a speck of light on the horizon when we recall one recent date in history –15th February, 2004. At that time in 1,000 cities over 15 million people came out into the streets to demonstrate and protest against the invasion in Iraq, irrespective of race, religion, culture or ethnicity. This grand protest has sown the seeds of a new movement of peace which is being built on solidarity coalitions in different communities and countries. WILPF has a crucial role to play in continuing to be on the international agenda of global peace and work towards new NGO partnerships and coalitions.

In order to meet the global external challenges, can WILPF adapt and adjust internally as an institution and face the necessary structural changes for this purpose?





FAME 2005 with Ricardo Petrella

Information rassemblée par Françoise Mees, WILPF International Secretariat, Geneva.

The 2nd World Water Alternative Forum will be held on the 18th and 19th March 2005 in Geneva, Switzerland. The Forum's key objective is to further develop and promote institutions and public policy that will finally provide access to drinking water for all human beings and have water management done in a democratic, united and sustainable manner. Ricardo Petrella is one of the founders of this Forum.

Professeur à l'Université catholique de Louvain (Belgique) et à l'Académie d'architecture de l'Université suisse-italienne, Riccardo Petrella se définit lui-même comme « militant de l'eau ». Il est membre fondateur et secrétaire général du Comité international pour le Contrat mondial de l'eau. Et, à ce titre, l'un des principaux initiateurs du Forum alternatif mondial de l'eau.

Riccardo Petrella, un Forum alternatif mondial de l'eau, pour quoi faire?

Il ne s'agit plus de discuter abstraitement des problèmes de l'eau et de protester contre ceux qui en sont la cause. Il faut mettre en œuvre des solutions concrètes. C'est cela la programmation politique: faire en sorte que les choses changent et pas seulement continuer à protester parce que les choses ne changent pas. Je vous donne deux exemples de ce que nous avons déjà fait:

Le 10 décembre 2003 à Rome, Nous étions 33 « molécules » à déclarer que l'accès à l'eau est un droit humain. Nous nous sommes donné deux ans pour que 5'000 communes du monde entier, 1'000 parlementaires, 500 grandes ONG et 100 centrales syndicales nationales

adhèrent à cette déclaration de Rome. Notre idée est d'obtenir que les collectivités locales constitutionnalisent le droit universel à l'eau dans leurs statuts. Si 5'000 communes de par le monde font de même, ce sera une action politique forte qui fournira une base juridique fondamentale à cette reconnaissance du droit à l'eau.

Grâce à nos pressions, le Parlement Européen à Strasbourg a aussi voté le 10 mars 2004 deux amendements qui rejettent toute ouverture à la libre concurrence dans le domaine de l'eau.

Qu'attendre du Forum de Genève en 2005?

D'ici à mars 2005, des petits groupes de travail vont préparer des documents de synthèse. Tous ceux qui s'intéressent à ces thématiques pourront également échanger leurs expériences et leurs opinions via internet.

Un premier groupe « Finances » a déjà été constitué: comment financer l'eau et les services publics de l'eau à l'échelon mondial et local, quel nouveau système financier peut-on inventer, quelle nouvelle fiscalité, quelles nouvelles formes coopératives, de mutuelles, etc.?

On procédera à la même démarche dans les autres thèmes. La Suisse paraît s'intéresser plus particulièrement à la question d'un texte fondamental contraignant en matière d'accès à l'eau sous la forme d'une convention internationale. On peut aussi imaginer un contrat mondial.

Nous partons d'une vision très optimiste: si on lutte pour l'eau, c'est-à-dire pour le droit à la vie et pour un bien commun de l'humanité, tôt ou tard on gagnera.



Water for Life

www.gdrc.org

At its 58th session, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a draft resolution, (A/RES/58/217), proclaiming 2005 to 2015 as the International Decade for Action – Water for Life. Its goal is “a greater focus on water-related issues, with emphasis on women as managers of water”.



WaterYear2003

The official start of the Water for Life decade will be on World Water Day, 22 March 2005.



Ten challenges: Morogoro (Tanzania)

Liss Schanke WILPF Norway

Challenge 1: Existence of water

Many areas of Africa will be extremely dry some during the whole year –others during parts of the year. However, others will be green and fertile most of the year like Morogoro.

Challenge 2: Pollution of water

Protection of water sources against pollution from domestic users, agriculture and industry

Challenge 3: Water born diseases

Prevent water born diseases – such as cholera, typhoid fever and diarrhea– through testing, cleaning and treating drinking water. This is especially important in areas where a large percentage of the population have a reduced immune system because of HIV/AIDS.

Challenge 4: Gender equality

In most African countries, girls and women are the ones responsible for fetching water. This is heavy and takes a lot of their time, thus reducing their possibility for education, income generating activities and participation in social life, decision making, etc.

Challenge 5: Distribution of water

According to Tanzanian laws, domestic users are supposed to have first priority. This is not the case, as we have seen an army barrack, a monastery and a private hotel having bigger pipes than the villages.

Challenge 6: Improvement of water related institutions and equipment

The state water company, Moruwasa, is functioning extremely inefficiently –only covering 65% of the geographical area of the town and delivering very little water in most areas, in some only a couple of hours a day.

The pipes and technical equipment is in a very poor state. The management is bad and the accounts are not transparent.



source: www.emeagwail.com

Challenge 7: Privatization of water

In this area the privatization is on a very low scale: young boys selling water in the streets. There is no market for private companies –at the moment– as there are few customers able to pay.

Challenge 8: Legal framework

Ensuring access to water sources and to land with water sources.

Challenge 9: Water related conflicts

In this case, the Masais are allowed to fetch water for free in the well. In other cases they are not, which has resulted in violent conflicts.

Challenge 10: Water in a holistic perspective – environment, gender, development, peace, freedom

Access to sustainable water source: •Tanzania 68%
•Norway 100%.

Life expectancy: •Tanzania 44 •Norway 78.7 years.

Adult literacy: •Tanzania 76 •Norway 99%.

Gross Domestic Product per capita (GDP pc): •Tanzania USD 520 •Norway USD 29.620.

Gini index (inequality index): •Tanzania 38.2 •Norway 25.8.

GDI index: •Tanzania 130 •Norway 1 rank.
(UNDP 2003).

Short bibliography on water, women and peace

The Middle East Water Question: Hydropolitics and the Global Economy, by Allan, Tony.

Water Wars: Privatization, Pollution, and Profit, by Vandana Shiva.

Water for People, Water for Life, by THE UN WORLD WATER DEVELOPMENT.



Policy decisions, Recommendations and Resolutions adopted in Kungälv, Sweden

The Congress, the post-Congress International Executive Committee and the joint Officers meeting have adopted the decisions below. They are linked to the International Program Priorities, future actions, concerns and national issues. Here is a summary:

1. Policy decisions and Program Priorities

- Call for signatures and ratification of the Kyoto Protocol.
- Calling on the international community to take preventive action to prohibit the proliferation of small arms.
- Urging the French Government to take immediate action to decontaminate Mumroa and Fangataufa (Polynesia).

2. International Concerns

- Human rights considerations of the so-called war on terrorism.
- Legal consequences of the construction of the Wall (the decision of ICJ).
- World trade and its impact on women.
- Human trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children.

3. Future Actions

- Develop and strengthen Sections in Africa.
- Self-determination for the Rapa People (in French Polynesia).

4. National Issues

- Reconciliation process with the Indigenous people in Australia.
- Restitution of wages to the Families of Indigenous people in Australia.
- Opposition to Plan Colombia and to Plan Patriota.
- Support for sovereignty and self-determination of the Cuban people.
- Continuing Human Rights violations in Darfur.
- Adherence to International Law of the Sea between Australia and East Timor.
- Decolonization of French Polynesia.
- Opposition to crimes against humanity during the occupation of Iraq.
- Demand for voluntary return of refugees living in Nepal.
- Inalienable rights of the Palestinian People.
- Demand for a referendum of the Saharawi People.

From concepts to campaigns

Krishna Ahooja Patel
WILPF International Representative

These three main themes of the 28th Congress could be easily included in different national campaigns. You will find here a matrix to define those possible fields of activity:

WATER	WOMEN	PEACE
Land, Water and Food security	Women and Peacebuilding an alternative world view	Wars against women: Women against war
Democratic control of Water, Food and Trade	Globalise Women's rights and Human Rights	Globalisation and alternatives for peace
Water and Sustainable Development	Victims of systematic violence: Indigenous People, Minorities and Women	Challenging corporate power
Water: Source of Life and Conflicts	Globalisation, Women's Jobs and Justice	Militarism, War and Peace
		Middle East: Israel, Palestine and Iraq

International programme 2005-2007

The 28th WILPF Congress, meeting in Kungälv (2-8 August 2004) adopted an international programme underlining the following priorities:

Peace and Security – Disarmament, Demilitarization, Environmental sustainability, Global Economic and Social Justice.

Texts of the Congress will be progressively published on the website: www.wilpf.int.ch from 4th. October. Please watch it!

A printed version will be available at the end of 2004.



Water as a source of International Conflicts

An experience from South Asia

Neelam K.C President WILPF Nepal

South Asia is a region with the largest amount of untouched freshwater resources. These resources flow from the shared Himalayas in China, Nepal, Bhutan, India and Pakistan. As a result, the continent has many transboundary rivers among these riparian countries.

There have been serious misunderstandings and conflicts among these countries about the sharing of transboundary water resources.

For example, Nepal is always in conflict with India in the common and equal utilization of water resources, mainly from the Koshi, Gandak, Karnali and Mahakali rivers. The people of Nepal have a serious grievance towards India; they feel betrayed by India in the conduct of Koshi (1954), Gandak (1959) and Mahakali (1996) river agreements. They consider themselves as betrayed and even cheated by India in terms of water rights and their common and equal usage of the waters. In some cases, Nepal has floods during monsoon and drought during the dry season. Bangladesh's experiences are similar. These water conflicts have been the backbone of their foreign policy with India. The past experiences are full of conflicts without solutions to the proper utilization of shared water resources. On the part of India, even the riparian rights and benefits issues of Nepal and Bangladesh are grossly ignored. India denies the riparian rights and benefits of Nepal, but claims them from Bangladesh.

India's proposed inter-linking of rivers project (ILLP) is a recent example of major human and ecological disasters in the region in which Nepal and Bangladesh will be the worst victims. India is promoting these plans unilaterally, without any prior consultation, particularly with Nepal and Bangladesh and without their approval. It is quite problematic that even the Indian Supreme Court has issued an order last year in favour of the ILLP. But there has been slow progress after the formation of a new coalition government in India recently. But the consequences for Nepal and Bangladesh, or even for Bhutan, India's unilateral practices of withdrawing water from the major international rivers are always the same. Now, India is putting pressure on Nepal, particularly in the current state of serious poli-

tical crisis, to enter into secret and/or unequal deals with Nepal for building large dams more for its benefits than for Nepal without any active involvement of the people to decide about the future of their water.

On the part of China, it is also planning the diversion of major river waters from rivers

that originate in its territory that flow to Nepal and India. It is already creating a lot of tension even for India. China's unilateral dam projects are already creating major problems in the livelihoods and the ecology of the people in the Mekong region.

This century is declared by the World Bank as the century of water wars and it is already happening in Asia. The existing policies and practices of the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank of funding large dams and promoting the privatization of rivers and water is leading towards the total takeover of water resources by multinational corporations. There are already enormous conflicts even within the countries and between the communities and the states on issues of water rights and benefit sharing.

Therefore, it is highly important that all social movements and campaigns also focus their skills and energy to oppose the unilateral decisions by states in the utilization of trans boundary water and the corporation-led privatization. We have to promote the right-based communalization of water for all, and not conflicts and war.



source: www.cgrer.uiowa.edu



8 Mars 2004 au Burundi

Un appel de la Case pour le Progrès Social

Texte envoyé à LIFPL, Genève, par Kudeda Magambi-wa-Magambi et Apoline Kwenga



The house for social Progress of Uvira has celebrated the International Women's day by a march in Uvira's city and a declaration sent to local authorities. Insecurity was their major concern, as well as the civil re-integration of young women having served in different military forces. Legal discrimination against women has also been denounced, with requests for a better education and equal social and economic rights.

La casa para el Progreso Social de Uvira celebró el día internacional de la mujer con una marcha por la ciudad de Uvira y una declaración que fue enviada a las autoridades locales. La inseguridad ha sido la cuestión principal planteada, tanto como la integración de mujeres jóvenes que han prestado servicio militar. Asimismo se ha denunciado la discriminación legal existente contra la mujer, con peticiones para mejoras en la educación, la igualdad social y los derechos económicos.

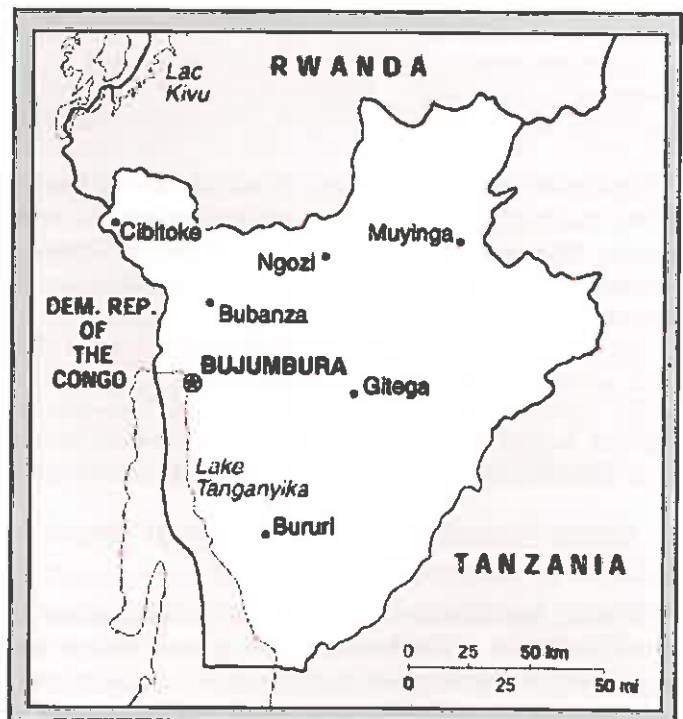
Dans le but de célébrer le 8 mars, Journée Internationale de la Femme en territoire d'Uvira, les femmes fonctionnaires, commerçantes, responsables des associations féministes et d'organismes internationaux basés sur notre territoire se sont associées pour une marche à Uvira sur le thème :

« Contribution de la Femme à la Paix et Soutien à l'unité du Pays et au Gouvernement de Transition ».

A la tribune de Mulongwe, divers oratrices ont souligné que la population en son entier fonde espoir au processus des accords de transition mis en place pour faire revenir la paix dans le pays. Des témoignages

évoquaient pourquoi et comment les filles mineures se sont livrées au service militaire dès l'âge de 8 à 12 ans, surtout à l'Est du pays (Goma, Kindu, Sud Kivu, Kalemie et Uvira) où presque toutes les femmes ont été victimes de viols et restent encore aujourd'hui effrayées de se rendre à leur travaux champêtres.

L'insécurité du territoire d'Uvira est semée par cinq groupes différents de belligérants, soient le Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie, les Mai Mai, les Interahamwes, les FDD et les Masuz/Namushebwa.



Il est demandé aux autorités de :

- Veiller à la formation et la réintégration civile des « Kadogos » jeunes filles militaires dès le plus jeune âge.
- Assurer l'intégration des femmes dans la société, tant du point de vue économique, social et juridique en encourageant la création de coopératives, en favorisant l'embauche et la représentation syndicale féminine, en modifiant les dispositions du code civil, pénal et du travail discriminant les femmes.

- Organiser des cours d'alphabétisation et reculer l'âge légal du mariage afin de favoriser la scolarisation et la formation professionnelle des jeunes filles.

BP 122 Bujumbura Burundi.



United Nations Geneva and WILPF Concerns

UN Reform

Reform has been on the UN agenda for a long time. Reform is seen primarily in terms of structural changes, often requiring amending the Charter. The pressure to enlarge the Security Council, including the number of permanent members, grew already in the 1980s. WILPF opposed the idea to increase the permanent membership of the Council, but supported proposals to increase the rotating, elected members to better reflect the size and diversity of the UN membership. It was not WILPF's opposition that has held up the Security Council reform, but the disagreement among governments about who should be added to the permanent membership.

UN and civil society

In the late 1990's, "Civil society" came to be seen as an important sector whose support has to be engaged in achieving the goals to be set by the Millennium Summit in 2000.

Important milestones of this discussion are the Report of the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations/Civil Society Relations and the High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, expected to submit its report in December of this year.

These are two areas of considerable interest to WILPF. Both panels will affect the future directions and priorities of the United Nations and how international non-governmental organizations, now having consultative status with ECOSOC, will relate to the United Nations in future.

Global Partnership for Prevention of Armed Conflicts

In 2005, representatives of organizations from around the world will meet at UN Headquarters in New York to discuss how 'civil society' can have an effective role in partnership with the UN and governments and institutions in preventing armed conflict. The idea came from the UN Secretary General in 2001 and was taken up by the European Centre for Conflict Prevention (ECCP), based in the Netherlands. The European region was the first to meet, in Dublin. The Norwegian section of WILPF was a sponsor of that initiative. The ECCP recently organized a working group meeting in Geneva to examine recommendations made by the various UN Panels and studies on UN/civil society relations. WILPF was invited and participated.

WILPF Representation at UN and the NGO community in Geneva

Krishna has represented WILPF in UN meetings on issues of development, resolution 1325, conflict prevention and



Edith Ballantyne

peaceful conflict resolution, human rights and others. As one of the vice-presidents of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women, she has assisted regularly with organizing round tables in connection with the Commission on Human Rights. She presided over and spoke on various panels. She has also worked with others on oral statements to the Commission on economic and social rights, and on the different women's issues.

Lee Weingarten has been representing WILPF in the Special NGO Committee on Human Rights, of which she was elected treasurer for the period 2004/2006, and in the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relations with the United Nations for which she served as the chair of the Elections Committee for the year and a half preceding the 22nd General Assembly of CONGO, held in December 2003.

The long-term interns have always represented WILPF very competently. This year's interns, Taeko and Fatou, and young volunteer Ruwandi have kept the good tradition alive. WILPF continues to contribute to the work of the NGO Committee against Racism and Racial Discrimination and to the NGO Working Group on Peace. And we continue to be the bedrock in the international NGO community on the question of Palestine.

It has not been possible for WILPF to be represented at the ILO Conference this year, nor to follow UNCTAD and WTO in any consistent way. We also have not been able to properly prepare for the various opportunities presented by the UN system or to give the kind of progressive leadership to the NGO committees in Geneva that is needed and that WILPF can provide.

The question is, how can WILPF find the human and financial resources to be able to take an effective part in these important developments? There is a link with 1325 that we should not miss out on. And the UN is more and more concerned with linking local and regional civil society with the global issues. Can WILPF afford to stay out of these activities?

Many economic and social issues are dealt with in Geneva where most of the UN Specialized Agencies are located, such as human rights – a vast and complex area. In addition, Geneva has important disarmament institutions we have to follow.

Serious consideration should be given as to how to organize the work with the UN in Geneva for WILPF to be fully effective. Here, building a strong voluntary UN team is important.

Edith Ballantyne WILPF UN Special Advisor



Water, Women and Peace: issues



Susi Snyder at Kungälv 2004

THE MAIN THEME OF THE CONGRESS WAS WATER, WOMEN AND PEACE. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE PARTICIPANTS EMPHASIZED THE FOLLOWING ISSUES:

1. Right to Water

The right to water is a fundamental human right, not yet recognized by the universal declaration and international instruments. This right is linked to the right to food and the most fundamental right to live where everyone has "an adequate level of life and access to the essential goods that give practical content to that type of life"... (Universal Declaration of Human Rights).

Lengthy and lively discussion on women, water and peace took place during the International Congress. During these discussions it was noted that problems related to water privatization exist around the world. Stories were recounted from all regions of the world

where women are working to stabilize their own access to water and to ensure protected and free access for future generations. There are physical and financial problems of water for domestic use in poor households; while the rich waste water for personal use and swimming pools.

2. Women's Involvement in Peace Processes

Resolution 1325, adopted by the UN Security Council (2000) in which WILPF was one of the main advocates, was discussed at length in several sessions in which a large number of national WILPF Sections participated. They proposed that this resolution should be mainstreamed in their work on gender and there should be more concerned efforts and more awareness generated on the operative paragraphs of this resolution. Its significance should be made an integral part of education programmes. Since the adoption of the resolution, a large number of women have organized seminars, conferences and training sessions, the main goal of which is to involve women in negotiations of the peace process. The 4th anniversary of this resolution will bring forward a report of the UN Secretary General, which will be complemented by a report "4 Years On" by the Peace Women Project of WILPF, in conjunction with the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

3. Global Peace

Peace as an international dimension of relations among states, groups and households was significant in the current international reality. From different workshops, it became clear that almost all of WILPF's International programme priorities have a component linking to peace. In the workshop on the environment, there was a focus on the concentration between preparation for war and destruction of the planet, and it was noted that if current programmes continue at the same pace, then the planet will be destroyed more rapidly than we think.

Considering the importance of the above issues, it was decided to have an International Women's Peace Conference in 2006. Cuba was proposed as the venue for this conference, which was unanimously approved.

Contact for Cuba: Jan Strout peacewomen4ever@yahoo.com

WILPF International New Team

WILPF is pleased to present the New International Team elected by the 28th Congress held in Kungälv, on 8th August 2004 for the period 2004-2007. Congratulations!



From left to right:

Mans VAN ZANDBERGEN Treasurer	Mans@wilpf.ch	The Netherlands
Marta BENAVIDES Vice President	Marta.Benavides@wilpf.ch	El Salvador
Samira KHOURY Vice President	Samira.Khoury@wilpf.ch	Lebanon
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Annelise EBBE Vice President	Annelise.Ebbe@wilpf.ch	Denmark

The Gertrud Baer's seminar in Kungälv – August 2004

By Fatou Dfawara WILPF Geneva Human Rights Intern

The GB Seminar is a seminar for young women wishing to share their personal experiences within WILPF.

Taeko Okada (Disarmament Intern) and myself have been invited to attend it, as part of our WILPF Internship at the International Secretariat, Geneva

office. For me, it was a tremendously rich experience as I became aware of the fact that other young women my generation and even younger ones are willing to involve themselves in developing women's participation in the international scene. So, twenty young women met with energy, ideas, courage and willingness, having their own space and raising voices to encourage more young women to join WILPF and keep it alive. I met activists, artists, students... Now I can say friends with whom I have been discussing, sharing, laughing, walking, singing, dancing, eating and even crying...

In a word, I have realized that it does not matter where you come from, what you are doing, which languages you speak, our differences are our strength to reach the same goal: A peaceful world.



THE 28TH WILPF CONGRESS HAS CELEBRATED THE CREATION OF THE INDIAN SECTION AND THE RE-BIRTH OF THE SWISS SECTION. HEREUNDER ARE NEWS ABOUT THEIR ACTIVITIES:

Meena Shelgaonkar
Treasurer of **WILPF India** Nagpur **Core** group

India

On 11st January 2004, the WILPF India Core Group, Nagpur, celebrated its third Annual Day by organizing a one day Symposium on "Educating Society for Peace Building". The Chief guest was a renowned writer and social worker Dr. Milind Bokil from Oxfam, Pune and Mr Maruti Chitampalli, a noted environmentalist from Nagpur.

Mr Chitampalli spoke on nature and tribals. He elaborated how the traditional systems followed by tribal in Vidarbha are compatible with preservation of forests and its environment, how these people are really happy in forests and that their displacement is causing lots of problems even unrest and naxalism. The tribals should be helped to develop their own resources and should be brought into the main stream without displacing but properly educating them. His conclusions were the results of his more than 30 years service in the Forest Departments. In fact he stressed on sustainable development and strategies for developing a peaceful tribal developed society.

Dr. Milind Bokil spoke on Development: In search of an alternate paradigm. In his speech, he stressed and elaborated on two basic aspects, that is: Our civilization's first principle is "Conquer Nature"; and its second principle is "Conquer human beings". Human control of Humans has been our important civilizational paradigm. More than 50 WILPF members attended.

Switzerland

In reality, the Swiss Section was born in 1915 and its first President, Clara Ragaz, acted as Swiss President from 1915 to 1946, but also was the International President of WILPF during the Second World War. The highest point of the membership was reached in 1934 with 14 local groups and some 600 members! Slowly that number decreased and the section slept until May 2004, when 19 women decided its re-birth. They have not stopped working since... A first meeting was held on 27th June; a large delegation came to the WILPF International Congress in Sweden. They reported back on 21st August and chose to meet in Zürich the symbolic date of 11th September to look towards the future and build their 2005 program, according to the priorities fixed by the Congress.

Contact: Switzerland@wilpf.ch

A F R I C A

The post-congress IEC decided to encourage the development of WILPF sections in Africa. This decision was taken, thanks to the active and positive interventions of African and Afro-american members participating in the Congress, who underlined the necessity to link better with the too-often "Forgotten continent". As a very first step, please find below the contacts for two existing WILPF sections, and note that WILPF US members are trying to sponsor a project with Rwanda. Please contact the International Secretariat in Geneva, should you wish any further detail.

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Swedish section welcomes the new Indian section in Kungälv



¿Se puede erradicar la violencia en 25 años?

Is it possible to eradicate violence in 25 years?

WILPF Costa Rica, translated by Mary Day Kent,
WILPF US Section.

We are all concerned about violence domestic violence street violence, violence against children, violence in the media, the violence of wars against nations and the violent suppression of dissidents within a country.

There is also economic violence, almost unseen, but which leaves millions of people, including the incapacitated, aged and homeless slowly dying for lack of even the-most basic needs.

It seems like an impossible task to eliminate all forms of violence but yes, it can be done with concentrated efforts of governments, groups and individuals. We can build a culture of peace and we can all help.

Where do we begin? A culture of peace means thinking and acting peace. We can begin at home seeing that toys and TV programs promote peaceful solutions and not violent ones. We can speak out against violence on TV and in games and toys, explaining to our families why violence is not a game. We can call or write programme directors of TV stations about programmes that show violence.

We can say NO to arms. A gun in the home is not a solution but is more of a problem. They are more likely to be misused than to deter robberies or assaults. In addition it is absolutely necessary to teach young people that guns are never to be used in play. Every year thousands of children are shot by accident or stray bullets or from playing with a "real" gun.

We must be aware of domination. Domination is a result of low self-esteem and the need to use force to raise one's self image. It can be very, very dangerous whether used by men against women, adults against children or in any human contact including street crime and traffic accidents. Wars and repression also stem from dominance. We can examine ourselves to see if we use dominance in our relationships with others in our families, at work or school, or in association with others.

We must think about peace on an international level. Conflicts are inevitable but there are forums available for negotiating solutions. There are the United Nations and the Organization of American States plus many regional groupings. (In Europe, Africa and Asia too) We can make them aware of our desire for peace and urge our governments to accept peaceful solutions to conflicts.

Military arms cost money. A lot of money is spent yearly on new weapons, combat planes and helicopters, satellites, ships, research and testing, recruiting and training, transportation and maintenance supposedly for national defense but in most cases, for dominance. Millions of dollars annually that could be better spent meeting human needs are misspent causing destruction, injuries and death. We can all write our govern-

ments, of the Organization of American States, at 17th St. and Constitutional Av., Washington D.C. 20006, orpi@oas.org, and the United Nations Organization at United Nations Headquarters, First Av. at 46th St., New York, N.Y. 10017, urging reductions in military spending and the use of international cooperation to resolve conflicts. A flood of letters will have an impact.

It is important that we all, individuals, families, and international organizations seek out and work to achieve peaceful means of solving problems. As human beings and citizens we can do our part using peaceful means ourselves and urging those in positions of leadership to use peaceful means. There are programmes that can help us find alternatives to violence, programmes that have been successfully used in communities, schools and in prisons and are found on the web at www.avpusa.com.

Some concrete suggestions for eradicating violence are :

- Peace education in the schools, including training for parents and teachers.
- Monitoring and controlling the manufacture and sale of violent toys and video games.
- Allowing the United Nations to sanction nations that commit injustice or violence on their own people or on other countries.
- Support a standing peacekeeping force for the UN that can respond to conflicts rapidly.
- Support leaders who are just and impartial on national and international issues.
- Encourage and support treaties that promote disarmament and ban weapons of mass destruction including land-mines.
- Support international meetings and conferences that strengthen intercultural acceptance.
- Stop the production and export of arms to underdeveloped countries.
- Support programmes like the US Peace Corps as a means of international exchange and as an alternative service to the military.
- Urge governments to establish departments or ministries of peace.
- Require that military budgets be limited to a percent of national budgets. Some countries spend more than 50% of their resources on the military.
- Support gun control.
- Ban the death penalty.
- Support drug treatment programmes and decriminalize the use of non-lethal non-addictive drugs to lessen the incentive for drug trafficking.
- Make health care and education a right for all citizens.
- Encourage student exchanges especially in areas of conflict.
- Support human rights groups such as Amnesty International, the Red Cross, and Doctors without Borders who monitor and expose bad conditions and help the victims.
- Practice non-violent communication and fairness in homes, among associates and in the media.
- Support non-violence training for law enforcement organizations and mediation training in law schools.
- Require non-violence programmes for domestic violence offenders.
- Be proud of being a peace advocate. *Together we can eradicate violence.*



THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE'S ADVISORY OPINION OF 9TH JULY 2004

The construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and its associated régime, are contrary to international law;

Israel is under an obligation to terminate its breaches of international law; it is under an obligation to cease forthwith the works of construction of the wall being built in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, to dismantle forthwith the structure therein situated, and to repeal or render ineffective forthwith all legislative and regulatory acts relating thereto, in accordance with paragraph 151 of this Opinion;

Israel is under an obligation to make reparation for all damage caused by the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem;

All States are under an obligation not to recognize the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall and not to render aid or assistance in maintaining the situation created by such construction; all States parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949 have in addition the obligation, while respecting the United Nations Charter and international law, to ensure compliance by Israel with international humanitarian law as embodied in that Convention;

The United Nations, and especially the General Assembly and the Security Council, should consider what further action is required to bring to an end the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall and the associated régime, taking due account of the present Advisory Opinion.

Source: www.icj-cj.org

A PEOPLE BEHIND WALLS

The road carves out its path like a long silver snake, slithering through virgin mountainsides, turning olive groves into concrete slabs. It's guarded by 1 armed border police squatting on rocky outposts, positioned every 25 meters along the route. Bulldozers roar, churning up savage clouds of red dust, while earthmovers delve into volcanic like ditches that herald the beginning of a 25ft high razor fence. A young donkey with a foal in tow hesitates before the ditch unable to proceed further and obviously confused its familiar journey is no longer possible. There is no path for man or beast. Large tracts of fertile land stand marooned, and forcibly abandoned, their owners denied access. Patches of old tattered green canvas once a carpet for the olives lie scattered here and there, together with remnants of perhaps what was once the scene of a picnic celebration. Olives trees harvested for centuries, their upturned roots now bared to the sky, plants and herbs long used in traditional Palestinian cuisine wither in the dry grass. Aside from the presence of Israeli police and Palestinian labourers there is not a villager in sight.

Palestine@wilpf.ch

WOMEN DEFENDING PEACE

The Suzanne Mubarak Women's International Peace Movement and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, headed by Ms Micheline Calmy-Rey, have invited a group of women and men dedicated to peace to meet in Geneva from 22 to 24 November 2004 to share successful experiences of conflict resolution and to identify obstacles and constraints to women's participation in peace processes and ways to overcome them. The objective is to agree on a plan of action for peace through solidarity between women's organizations and movements. The Middle East conflict will have a prominent place in the discussion. WILPF members invited to the conference will report in a next issue of IPU.

WILPF International Secretariat, Geneva



UN EXPERT REPORTS ON VIOLENCE AGAINST PALESTINIAN WOMEN

The Israeli occupation is a primal cause of violence against women in the Palestinian territories, UN special rapporteur on violence against women's Yakin Ertürk said recently.

In a visit to the occupied Palestinian territories June 13-18, Ertürk met with representatives of the Israeli government, the Palestinian Authority and UN agencies and travelled to refugee camps near the Israeli separation wall around the West Bank. She also visited Neve Terze Prison in Ramle to speak with authorities and detainees. Ertürk said that while persistent conflict has eroded the quality of life for Palestinians and Israelis alike, the burden fell most heavily on the Palestinian people. "This has generated an atmosphere of legitimized violence as a method of conflict resolution", Ertürk said. "As a consequence, an integrated system of violence which disproportionately singles out women in both the public and private spheres have emerged". Women are direct and indirect victims of the occupation, liable to be killed or harassed because of affiliation with certain men and vulnerable to having their homes demolished, Ertürk said. "The frequency, arbitrariness and unpredictability with which the attacks are conducted exacerbate the trauma of a life in constant uncertainty".

"Women are also subjected to heightened violence in the home and stringent patriarchal control by their family, the wider kinship network, local power groups and the community at large", Ertürk added.

In spite of these disadvantages, they are often left to lead households, caring for children and the elderly, without a reliable support system. Ertürk called on the Israelis and Palestinians to settle their conflict, demanded that the Palestinian Authority encourage the participation of women in local and national elections, and asked the international community to focus on women's rights in the West Bank and Gaza (UN press release, June 2004).

<http://www.unwfp.org>



Women's Health Issues

Marshall Islands: Nuclear Fallout

Nancy J. Pollock Victoria University, Wellington



Stopstarwars- Green Peace 2001- Marshall Islands

This text is an abstract from the presentation to the WILPF Asia Pacific Regional Meeting of Christchurch, Aotearoa on 28th February 2004

extended to Sept. 30, 2004, using \$2 million of US grant money to RMI. The women, men and children of these two atolls are faced with a diminishing health service while their health problems continue.

I will outline four issues within this complex issue, as I perceive them. The women are mainly concerned about their children, as I will elaborate. Secondly their own health, and reproduction requires on going

monitoring. Thirdly, the young women, particularly on rural atolls, are bearing children before their bodies can adequately nourish the infant. And fourthly the women play a major caring role for the men and children and young people in their families; this is hampered when the women are sick or debilitated.

Conclusions

Radioactivity has left many health problems in the Marshall Islands, particularly for the women. Only some of these have been acknowledged. Others have been dismissed as whims of 'primitive' people or stemming from ignorance.

But coping with sickness in others and herself is part of everyday life for a Marshall lese woman. The range of types of sickness, particularly cancers, has increased as a result of exposure to nuclear radiation. Outsider medical personnel acknowledge this much. The problems are ongoing, not restricted to the first generation 'exposed' as first thought.

It is ironic that the US spends billions of dollars annually to test the nuclear devices as preparedness weaponry, yet it claims it cannot afford \$740,000 dollars to monitor and treat those Marshall lese exposed to fall out from testing that weaponry.

The logic behind such cuts is beyond belief.

At most it is unethical and uncaring.

H health concerns have been an ongoing battle between the United States and the Marshall Islands. On March 1, 1954 the US exploded an atomic bomb, code named Bravo, which dropped its irradiated nuclear fallout on populated islands of the northern Marshalls. The immediate results were burns, hair falling out, and nasty sores that did not heal, and subsequent stillbirths and jelly baby births. The long-term results were cancers, especially high rates of cancer of the goitre, and goitre nodules, with the ongoing effect on stunted growth and reduced immunities of children born 20 and 30 years after that event.

The women of these two irradiated atolls, Rongelap and Utrik, have fought with Washington to acknowledge that these conditions were linked to radioactive fallout that contaminated their lands. Finally in 1987 under the Nuclear Claims Tribunal setup to hear claims for compensation by the Marshallese, some 32 types of cancer have been admitted as compensable by the US. That Nuclear Claims Tribunal is being wound up in 2004, leaving the claimants with incomplete payments, and little funding for ongoing monitoring of their health conditions. We have just learned (Yokwe on Line Feb.2) that the RMI and NCT have "found money at the 11th hour to keep the 177 Health program going". US funding expired on Jan 31, 2004. The programme is



Third European Social Forum

It will take place from 15-17 October-04 in London.
The European Social Forum was launched from the World Social Forum meeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

The ESF is a unique opportunity where social movements, trade unions, NGOs, refugees, peace and anti-imperialist groups, anti-racist movements, environmental movements, networks of the excluded and community campaigns from Europe and the world can come together to discuss how to achieve global social justice for all and debate ways of making "another world possible".

-WILPF will co-organize a workshop with Women in Black, Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp, Womenwith Peace Camp, London Region CND, and International Women's Peace Service where Activists will discuss and analyze ways women work to build peace and oppose militarism and war, through vigils and non-violent **direct** action; by working across divisions as in Palestine and the Balkans, and by using the United Nations process with Security Council Resolution 1325.

World Peace Forum 2006 Vancouver, Canada

Vancouver City Council formally endorsed the idea that a World Peace Forum be held in Vancouver in June 2006.
City council will be sponsoring a preparatory meeting on November 26/27 in Vancouver.

What will the World Peace Forum look like? One overarching theme of this World Peace Forum is the global implications of the invasion and occupation of Iraq. Another is that local governments and social action groups can work together to defeat global militarism and build a world of peace and justice. The World Peace Forum will be broad in scope, an umbrella under which dialogues for action can constructively take place. It will allow city representatives, indigenous peoples, faith groups, women, youth, labour, gays and lesbians, peoples of colour, seniors, professionals and others to come together, network and demonstrate to the world the thirst for peace and justice. It will allow for a major arts and cultural component, and maximize citizen involvement from the start. It will be an international event guided in its key decisions through an ongoing dialogue among the key stakeholders, locally, pan-Canadian and internationally. It will be multi-layered, including diverse sessions: research and analysis; delegated meetings for peace movements; a cities session; women's and anti-racist sessions; varied workshops and activities (bicycling for peace?), specific times allotted to regional peace calls (Americas, Middle East, Asia, Africa, etc), major cultural events, space for self-organizing, as well as a final day of activities including a major event that would bring together peace activists at the forum with the citizens of greater Vancouver, including Victoria. Many of these events could be simulcast over the Web or shared by other electronic means.

Forum Barcelona Towards a world with- out violence

This international congress (23-27th June 04) was part of the Barcelona Forum 2004. The forum is a platform to contribute to the renewal of ideas based on three core themes

Cultural Diversity as the desire to promote dialogue among peoples, valuing what they have in common, without losing sight of what makes them different.

Sustainable development to achieve world-wide balance between development and the use of natural resources, and social and economic goods.

Conditions for peace that are established as the commitment to perfect social and political justice, ensuring respect for Human Rights, as the only guarantee of living in harmony.

These core themes are the foundation for a large number of activities, which will be spread over nearly five months.

Taeko Okada and Ruwandi Silva, both interns from the WILPF Geneva office participated in this event.

Forum
BARCELONA
2004





Eleonore Romberg

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.

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Eleonore celebrating her 80th. birthday
WILPF Germany

Irmgard Heilberger

A deep shadow descended over the festive opening of WILPF's 28th International Congress on the sunny morning of 2 August 2004, at Kungälv, Sweden, when a call from Munich informed us that Eleonore Romberg, had died in the night.

All who knew Eleonore and had worked with her, whether for a long or a short time, felt an immense loss.

Eleonore was for many years one of the most solid pillars of the German section and of international WILPF. To the last minute of her life she was discussing with WILPF members at her bedside what had to be done to end war and violence and injustice

on this planet; on what we had to do to make permanent peace a reality. Her mind was always ahead of others and her determination no one could match.

At the age of 14, a polio attack left Eleonore lame. She rejected a life in steel brace and wheelchair. By sheer determination and intelligence she got herself to walk well enough to be independent and until the last few years of her life she refused assistance at airports. In her late thirties, Eleonore decided to study for a degree in sociology and then taught the subject at a special Catholic University in Munich.

Having come through the war and nazism, Eleonore was determined to make the call "never again war, never again fascism" a reality. She joined WILPF in 1953 because it was the organization that responded best to her political experience and vision of the future. From the beginning she was an active member in the German section as a part of an international peace organization. She served as an international Executive Committee member, as president of the German section and was International President from 1972 to 1974 and again from 1986 to 1992.

Eleonore has contributed tremendously over the years to the development of peace policies and actions, both nationally and internationally. She will be much missed by WILPF and all those she touched in her life.

Your articles are welcome in English, French and Spanish. Thanks to add an english short abstract for texts in French and Spanish.

NEXT ISSUE OF IPU: REGIONAL WILPF NEWS

The Winter issue of IPU will be published in December 2004.

Articles from National Sections are welcome.

Send those to: krishna.ahoojapatel@wilpf.ch and françoise.mees@wilpf.ch

Deadline for submission: end of october 2004.

The Editorial Board thanks you for your contribution.