



October 2009

This is our fourth edition of the EWG newsletter in 2009. This is a special edition to share our recent report to the International Board meeting in India in January 2010.

We aim to produce one more edition before the end of the year and welcome your contributions please. **Remember to share** your resources and reports with others in the EWG. Send links and examples to Lorraine Mirham – lmirham@hotmail.com

Report from the International Environmental Working Group

Following the November 2008 IB-meeting in Geneva, the Environment Working Group has achieved some of its goals but not all.

As the Convenors at this stage are not well informed and have little influence on environment related work in the other national sections, they have tried as far as possible to have the EWG goals pursued by their own national sections. The responses from members of our EWG -email list have been few.

The convenors' work is not being funded from the budget of WILPF internationally but the convenors try to do their best with the limited external resources at their disposal.

When we look back at the priorities for 2008/09 the situation is the following:

Climate:

The two EWG convenors Sushma Pankule and Edel Havin Beukes attended the UN Climate Change Conference in Poznan in December 2008 and submitted reports to WILPF and to the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment which accredited and sponsored our participation.

At the conference we submitted a statement from WILPF.

Edel Havin Beukes is a member of Forum's working group on climate and energy and collaborates with the other NGO representatives there in lobbying the government and preparing for the upcoming UN Conference (UNFCCC) in Copenhagen

WILPF will have accreditation at the conference that is scheduled for December 7 to 18. We will be collaborating with a number of other NGOs - WECF, WISE, IFG, Ecodefense, Sortir du nucléaire, NIRS, Greenpeace and the Environmental Institute of Munich – to unmask the true face of nuclear energy and to present a proposal, supported by citizens from all over the world, for a nuclear-free post-Kyoto regime.

At WILPF's invitation Helen Caldicott, the world-renowned antinuclear Australian activist and author, will be the main speaker. She will address the "*False promises of nuclear energy*":

Edel will be responsible for a possible side-event on the nuclear issue at the conference itself as well as at the NGO alternative Climate Forum 09. The Munich Environmental Institute together with Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF) has agreed to cooperate in WILPF's side event.

The NGO Climate Forum 09, to be conducted alongside the official UN conference will address the following issues:

- A women's perspective on nuclear energy: it represents no solution to the climate and energy problems. (180)
- The workshop will discuss the connection between nuclear energy and nuclear weapons production and its impact on women;
- The nuclear energy and climate change;
- The demand for scarce resources such as water by the nuclear industry, the true financial and economic costs of nuclear energy production;
- The emission of greenhouse gases such as CO₂
- The consequences of accidents, terrorism and war;
- The effects of radiation on human beings and our natural environment, and the problematic role of the IAEA. (International Atomic Energy Agency.)

Food and Water:

We hope to hear from our sisters in Italy on what they are working on concerning food at FAO in Rome.

Karin Aanes (another WILPF member) and Edel attended the "World Water Forum" in Istanbul in March 2009 and have submitted reports to both WILPF and ForUM.

The Norwegian section of WILPF has produced a book on water questions available in Norwegian from November 1st with Karin Aanes and Edel Havin Beukes as the main authors.

Blue October, the international event staged each year to protest the privatisation of water, was observed in Oslo during the week of October 7-10. Maud Barlow of Canada was one of the main speakers, with 23 organisations participating.

Human Security:

The UK Section has planned a seminar, "Women Challenging Security" to address the impact on women of military, economic and environmental insecurity. Speakers include women professors of Global Governance and Geography and Gender Studies from the London School of Economics.

The UK Section has continued to develop its Voices of African Women campaign which aims to raise awareness of a range of issues, many environmental, for women across the regions of Africa. A delegation of WILPF members will be meeting with ambassadors

from Botswana, Uganda and Angola. This follows a meeting in August with the Malawian ambassador. A regular Voices of African Women is produced by the Section.

Space :

WILPF, represented by Carol Urner of the US section, is collaborating with the Global Network headed by Bruce Gagnon to stage an campaign designed to focus on the militarisation of Space. In Oslo WILPF organised a meeting on October 14 under the heading of Keep Space for Peace that was addressed by professor Karl Grossmann of New York and Roman Dolgov of IPPNW from Moscow. They addressed the question of "What dangers does the US Star War Program represent for humanity and for the globe, environmentally, economically and militarily."

Nuclear energy, nuclear bombs and uranium weapons.

WILPF has been concerned with the effects on humans and the environment of nuclear weapons and nuclear energy from the very beginning of the so-called nuclear age. The need to make people aware of this would seem to be ever present – given the failure of the world's media to inform the public. A book on the issues involved is under preparation by the Norwegian section.

The website Reaching Critical Will is most very useful for keeping us abreast of the international debate.

Earlier this year WILPF has supported an international action to protest nuclear energy and to support the campaign against the IAEA-WHO agreements.

The Bergen Branch of WILPF-Norway has taken the initiative to promote a Nordic group under the aegis of The International Campaign to ban Uranium Weapons.

The UK Section has been lobbying hard to raise awareness of the huge risk to human security of the Trident renewal programme and of how the cost could be diverted to projects that tackle climate change and improve human security. The Section is also working on a response to a consultation paper which will contribute to a UK Strategic Defence Review next year.

Other:

- The EWG has produced (4) issues of the EWG Newsletter in 2009 edited by Lorraine Mirham.
- WILPF did not attend the CSD in 2009 as hoped for lack of economic resources and time.
- Sushma Pankule and Edel Havin Beukes (co-convenors)

PLANS FOR 2010-2011.

1. NUCLEAR MATTERS

Fight nuclear energy, nuclear weapons and uranium weapons. Expose the effects on people and the environment. Support international campaigns.

Expose the interests of the military nuclear industry complex and the interests of different governments.

Cooperate with the disarmament working group on this.

2. HUMAN SECURITY AND RESOURCE USE.

WATER: Follow up the international work on water; information about the current situation and what needs to be done.

FOOD: Focus on the issues of food supply.

ENERGY: Keep an eye on new sustainable alternatives and energy efficiency.

CLIMATE CHANGE: Follow up the work done internationally and nationally

MILITARY SECTOR: Expose the un-sustainability of military production and consumption.

Be active at the CSD18 and CSD-19.

3. EMPHASISE WILPF'S CONCERN WITH HUMAN SECURITY AS A PRIORITY OF PUBLIC POLICY.

The idea is to create a similar project as "Peace-women" and "Reaching Critical Will", on environment and resource use.

PLEASE JOIN to receive your EWG e- Newsletter, ESPECIALLY IF YOUR SECTION IS NOT REPRESENTED! To email the group and/or receive the e-news, the address is: environment@wilpf.ch

REMEMBER TO SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS AND IDEAS TO: Lorraine Mirham or Edel Havin Beukes

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