



E-Newsletter February/March 2007

Greetings, here is our fourth Environment Working Group e-newsletter. We hope you find it useful and would be very grateful if you could forward it to anyone in your Section and beyond, who would be interested and/or could use the information to further WILPF's aims. Thank you for your contributions and comment.

PLEASE note this edition has details of action we need to take, in Sections and as members of this group. Please respond, where you can, to requests for help and advice.

Important Action Regarding the World Health Organisation in Geneva

In honour of Solange Fernex's work and wishes for WILPF to continue our work in the area of atomic energy, we draw Sections' attention to the following required action:

On the 28 May 1959 the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) signed an *agreement* with the WHO (World Health Organization).

This *agreement* effectively put an end to free expression for the WHO, in matters concerning the impact of nuclear energy on health. The agreement stipulates that WHO research programs must be first *subjected* to consultation, so that the studies do not release results that might be harmful to the IAEA, and that may stunt the promotion of nuclear power stations.

Article I.3 of the *agreement* specifies that, 'each time one of the parties proposes to undertake a program or activity in the domain which presents, or may present a major interest for the other party, the first will consult the second in order to come to a common understanding.'

Article III of the accord states:

- 1) The International Atomic Energy Agency and The World Health Organization recognize that they could be called upon to take certain restrictive measures in order to safeguard the confidential nature of information furnished to them.
- 2) Subject to arrangements which could be necessary to safeguard the confidential nature of certain documents, the secretary of the IAEA and the secretary of the WHO will keep each other up to date on all projects, and all work programs which could be of interest to the two parties.

Remember that the objective of the WHO, as expressed in chapter 1 of its constitution, 'is to bring about the greatest possible rise in the level of health of all people'.

Chapter II indicates how the WHO would go about raising the level of health, exercising in particular the following functions:

- to furnish all information, and to give all advice and assistance in the domain of Health.
- to help entrain among people an enlightened attitude in all that concerns public health.

The terms of article III of the accord IAEA/WHO (quoted above) which impose confidentiality are contrary therefore to the constitution of the WHO.

This agreement is still in force today! The most glaring outcome of the accord is the policy of non-assistance to the populations most affected by Chernobyl disaster. All recent reports by the WHO have remained outrageously mute on this subject.

The entire nuclear edifice leans heavily on a pillar, this accord of 1959, which is nothing more than a forced marriage. Within the WHO there is certainly no unanimous opinion on this forced marriage. In order to dismantle the pillar, action is necessary to draw attention to this question.

WILPF would like to support the following actions:

1) A letter from your WILPF Section direct to the WHO *and* to the Health Minister of your country. Look here for an example: <http://www.ukwilpf.org.uk/NewsArticles/WHO.doc>

2) If possible, to participate in a daily 'presence' outside the WHO building in Geneva from April 26th (Chernobyl day) until the end of May 2007 (WHO's 60th World Health Assembly plus many activist events in Geneva around this time), and also for the following weeks and months through the summer time, to strongly demand to modify the agreement with the IAEA. This will take the form of a single person with a banner in front of the WHO building (supported if possible by a small team standing nearby) who will stay there for more or less one week.

This will be a European action which will give us the opportunity to build together a network beyond national borders.

So far, the co-organizers of this action are: Réseau Sortir du nucléaire (French network for a nuclear phase-out), CRII-RAD, Enfants de Tchernobyl Belarus, Contratome-Geneva, SDN Loire et Vilaine. Also with the declared support of:

- CNIC (Anti-nuclear Japanese Coalition)
- NIRS (Nuclear Information and Resource Service) U.S.A.
- Stop Golfech (Agen, France)
- Brut-de-Beton Production
- Groupe non-violent L. Lecoin (Dunkerque, France)

Contact: André Larivière du Réseau Sortir du nucléaire andre.lariviere@sortirdunucleaire.fr
0033 (0)4 71 76 36 40 or 0033 (0)6 76 69 54 98

Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) 15

WILPF is preparing to attend and participate at CSD 15. The 15th session of the CSD will be held between 30 April and 11 May 2007, at UN Headquarters in New York. This is the second, or policy year of the second implementation cycle during which the Commission will continue its focus on the following areas: Energy for Sustainable Development; Industrial Development; Air pollution/ Atmosphere; and Climate Change.

You may wish to find out more about CSD here: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/policy.htm>

Carole Shaw has recently joined the WILPF UN Office, part time, to work on the preparations for CSW and CSD 15. She is aware that various WILPF groups are very active on working on the issues represented at CSD 15. She is keen to share information and resources. If possible she would like to meet participants in New York before CSD 15 to orientate to the meeting and to share information. She is exploring the logistics and financial aspects of this.

Carole will probably use the International WILPF website Environment page to post information and documents for members to access. Please contact Carole if you are intending to attend CSD 15 or have information to share: Phone + 1 1 212 682 1265 Fax + 1 1 212 286 8211. She is in the WILPF UN office Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Email: carole.shaw@wilpf.ch
Registration for CSD15 closes on Thursday 5th April 2007 (3 weeks before the meeting starts). This is a holiday (Easter) weekend – so, Carole asks for all names to be sent to the UN office by Friday 30 March 2007. There is currently no restriction on registration.

There are currently two Sections wishing to offer side events: WILPF US Section – Carbon Footprint of bottled water (measure of the impact human activities have on the environment in terms of the amount of green house gasses produced, measured in units of carbon dioxide) *and* WILPF Norway – Militarisation of Space, Climate and Nuclear Energy and the date is likely to be 3rd May, 1pm to 3pm, in the building where WILPF has its UN Office.

Preparation for Congress

Proposals for WILPF's Programme on the Environment. Please note this is a DRAFT proposal and we welcome your comments and ideas for taking our work forward. We want to work effectively to achieve our programme aims and want to hear from your Section about how it can contribute to the tasks. Where you have expertise please tell us.

We also need input to the EWG report 2004-2007, please send your contributions to Edel and copy to Sushma - edel@beukes.net & sushmapankule@hotmail.com

1. The CSD

WILPF will follow up on the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development both nationally and internationally and will try to arrange a seminar in New York on relevant subjects.

In 2008- 2009 the CSD 16 and CSD 17 will focus on the following themes: Agriculture, Rural Development, Land, Drought, Desertification and Africa

In 2010- 2011 the CSD-18 and CSD-19 will focus on the following themes: Transport, Chemicals, Waste Management, Mining and a Ten Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production patterns.

Every year there are also "Crosscutting issues" such as: poverty eradication, changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, sustainable development in a globalizing world, health and sustainable development, sustainable development of SIDS, sustainable development for Africa, other regional initiatives, means of implementation, institutional framework for sustainable development, gender equality and education.

We ought to have a staff person, in the New York office, able to report on the work done with regard to the environment and sustainable development.

2. The Nuclear Complex.

WILPF ought to be active in a public campaign against nuclear power plants, by focusing on the connection between nuclear energy and nuclear weapons.

We ought to expose the myths about nuclear power, for example, that it is the answer to the problem of global warming, is inexpensive and safe etc.

WILPF will support all efforts to have the agreement between the IAEA and the WHO concerning the effects of radiation whether changed or terminated.

WILPF ought to demand that public authorities, nationally and internationally, provide the world's public with reliable information about the hazards to health and the environmental effects of nuclear radiation, so as to effect a change of policies in relevant UN organs, where the interests of the nuclear industry and the military are treated as paramount.

WILPF ought to publish material about the issues involved.

3. Climatic change and choice of energy sources

To the extent that human activities are recognised as a major source of the greenhouse gasses contributing to climate change and also the damage to the ozone layer, the choice of sustainable and non-polluting energy sources is clearly a matter of great importance.

WILPF ought to do its bit to raise public awareness of the issues involved and ought to support all efforts to advance the implementation of sustainable energy policies.

WILPF ought to publish a special edition of IPU on the issues raised by climate change.

4. Water, food and other resource use.

Since water and food are indispensable to life and wellbeing, WILPF ought to pay special attention to international as well as localised conflicts about water, the effects of wars and occupations on the sources of water, the infrastructure of water supply and sanitation situation.

A special edition of the IPU ought to be devoted to the issues

5. The demands made by military production and consumption on people and the environment.

This is an issue that calls for special efforts from WILPF in view of the unquestioned priority accorded to all matters pertaining to "defence" – without regard to the effects on people's and animals' lives and the environment of the production and use, whether in war or merely in testing, of different kinds of weapons: nuclear bombs, uranium ammunition, land mines, cluster bombs, laser-weapons, biological weapons etc.

As members of a women's organisation we have to be always ready to take initiatives on questions concerning the effects of militarisation on the environment for living: we ought to be equally represented in all bodies that deal with local, national, regional and global policies

NEWS

Sweden Nuclear Plants

The Forsmark nuclear plant situated 100 km north of Stockholm has 3 nuclear reactors.

In July 2006 there was an incident at one of the reactors that could have led to a catastrophe like that at Chernobyl – according to Sweden's top specialists. Work on a rectifier outside the plant caused a power cut that knocked out the plant's computers and cooling systems. Even a back up system of diesel generators could not be activated for more than 20 minutes.

Six months later an internal report, addressed to Forsmark management by three of the plant's safety crew, was leaked to Swedish Television, SVT. It painted a grim picture of a plant where short cuts in safety procedures had become a common occurrence, and where one catastrophe after the other had been avoided by mere luck. The report itemised numerous instances of errors and workplace hazards that had gone unattended to instances of alcohol and drug abuse that were detected by chance and much more.

Few of the many incidents were reported, fewer had been followed up even after the potentially fatal incident of July 2006. The regulatory authorities came into possession of the report nearly two months after its completion.

The report speaks of a management driven by a commitment to the maximisation of profits that has resulted in an overall and fundamental decline in the safety culture at the plant, while the public is given the impression that all is well.

Coping with nuclear waste

The Swedish Anti-nuclear Movement (FMKK) and World Information Service on Energy (WISE) invite you to participate in an international conference - "Coping with Nuclear Waste, April 27-29, 2007, in Stockholm, Sweden.

This conference will bring together people from all over the globe to discuss issues and come up with new strategies to counter the relapse of the nuclear industry. Science, activists and representatives of NGO's and government will come together to learn, exchange and listen.

With a focus on radioactive waste as a result of each part of the nuclear chain, speakers will be presenting cases on uranium mining, the so-called recycling of nuclear waste, decommissioning, military use of nuclear waste, the future of spent fuel, the role of Euratom and the IAEA in finding an international waste storage.

There will be speakers from Africa, Europe and the US. The conference ends with a special closed NGO session which will discuss possible future strategies.

Email: info@folkkampanjen.se

<http://www.folkkampanjen.se>

World Information Service on Energy (WISE) <http://www.antenna.nt/wise>

The information about the conference is taken from Nuclear Monitor no 652, February 8, 2007.

Cluster Bombs

Mari Holmboe Ruge reports:

Oslo Conference on Cluster Munitions,
22 – 23 February 2007

A group of States, United Nations Organisations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Cluster Munitions Coalition and other humanitarian organisations met in Oslo on 22 – 23 February 2007 to discuss how to effectively address the humanitarian problems caused by cluster munitions.

Declaration

Recognising the grave consequences caused by the use of cluster munitions and the need for immediate action, states commit themselves to:

1. Conclude by 2008 a legally binding international instrument that will:

(i) prohibit the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians, and

(ii) establish a framework for cooperation and assistance that ensures adequate provision of care and rehabilitation to survivors and their communities, clearance of contaminated areas, risk education and destruction of stockpiles of prohibited cluster munitions.

2. Consider taking steps at the national level to address these problems.

3. Continue to address the humanitarian challenges posed by cluster munitions within the framework of international humanitarian law and in all relevant fora.

4. Meet again to continue their work, including in Lima in May/June and Vienna in November/December 2007, and in Dublin in early 2008, and welcome the announcement of Belgium to organise a regional meeting.

Oslo, 23 February 2007

46 of 49 participating countries agreed to continue to work for a ban on cluster munitions. A detailed report on the Oslo Conference from WILPF observer Katherine Harrison will appear on the International WILPF website soon. The Danish, Norwegian and Swedish WILPF sections will propose a resolution to Congress in July 2007 that we formally join the Cluster Munitions Coalition. The participating countries are:

Afghanistan, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

RESOURCES

o Launch of Report State of the World 2007

The Worldwatch Institute launched its "State of the World 2007" – report in Oslo in February. The main theme is "Our Urban Future". The report this year examines changes in the ways cities are managed, built and lived in that could tip the balance toward a healthier and more peaceful urban future. Authors investigate water and sanitation, urban farming, local energy production, 'green' transportation options, disaster preparedness, local economic stability, and much more. You can order it here <http://www.worldwatch.org>

o WILPF Resources

Carol Urner, US WILPF, has launched an important e-news which this newsletter will link to for your convenience. Many of our concerns are shared across the Disarmament and Environment Working groups

- o **The Uranium Weapons leaflet** We want to draw your attention, if you have not already seen it, to this excellent leaflet sent to us by Susanne Urban, WILPF Bergen. It is a small comprehensive leaflet and there is only one paragraph that would need altering if a section wanted to use it (highly recommended). The paragraph, using a Norwegian example, could be replaced by the WILPF Section's country information. The leaflet is here: [http://www.ukwilpf.org.uk/NewsArticles/Uranium Weapons Bergen Leaflet.pdf](http://www.ukwilpf.org.uk/NewsArticles/Uranium_Weapons_Bergen_Leaflet.pdf) or email Lorraine lorraine@mirham.orangehome.co.uk and she will send it to you. It is currently a PDF file but can be made available in word (please note some of the formatting will be lost).

IF YOU HAVE RESOURCES TO SHARE, PLEASE TELL US.

Notices

1. WILPF's Disarm Campaign – important overlap with EWG work. Please keep up to date by taking time to look at Disarm E-news <http://disarm.wilpf.org/JAN-FEB%202007/E-newsJan-Feb.htm>

2. The UK Section would still like to speak with any Section in WILPF who would be interested in helping to fundraise specifically, to assist the translation and production of the book about Uranium Weapons. Contact Lorraine Mirham – lorraine@mirham.orangehome.co.uk

3. The EWG is very interested in the environmental cost caused by the military-industrial complex and would be pleased to receive WILPF articles, information or resources to share and learn from.

4. In the last e-news WILPF's Susanne Urban, from Bergen, called on as many groups as possible to **join the International Campaign to Ban Uranium Weapons**. She reported plenty of room for our WILPF Sections to sign up. Please sign up if you can. You can do this via the ICBUW website <http://www.bandepleteduranium.org/en/i/10.html>

Book Review

'Nemesis: The Last Days of the American Republic'
 737 U.S. Military Bases = Global Empire
 By Chalmers Johnson, Metropolitan Books
 Edel has sent us details of this book:

The following is excerpted from Chalmers Johnson's new book:

"Once upon a time, you could trace the spread of imperialism by counting up colonies. America's version of the colony is the military base; and by following the changing politics of global basing, one can learn much about our ever more all-encompassing imperial "footprint" and the militarism that grows with it.

"It is not easy, however, to assess the size or exact value of our empire of bases. Official records available to the public on these subjects are misleading, although instructive. According to the Defence Department's annual inventories from 2002 to 2005 of real property it owns around the world, the Base Structure Report, there has been an immense churning in the numbers of installations.

"The total of America's military bases in other people's countries in 2005, according to official sources, was 737. Reflecting massive deployments to Iraq and the pursuit of President Bush's strategy of pre-emptive war, the trend line for numbers of overseas bases continues to go up.....". Read more here - <http://www.alternet.org/story/47998/>

Chalmers Johnson is president of the Japan Policy Research Institute, a non-profit research and public affairs organization devoted to public education concerning Japan and international relations in the Pacific.

REMEMBER TO SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS AND IDEAS TO:

Lorraine Mirham

Email address: lorraine@mirham.orangehome.co.uk

We will aim to have the next e-newsletter to you in April. I will advise you of the deadline for material.

Thank you

E-News produced, this time, by Lorraine Mirham and Edel Havin Beukes