



## E-Newsletter November 2006

### Dear International Environment Working Group

At the IEC in London the International EWG decided to produce an e-newsletter, as often as possible, to share information and good practice between WILPF Sections. As an EWG member from your Section, we are asking you to help us to ensure we have relevant information to circulate in future e-newsletters.

We would like to suggest that the format is similar to other WILPF e-newsletters, for example the 1325 E-news and contains; an update on the Environment work from Sections, details about activities that have been successful, any specific materials, produced by Sections, that could be used more widely by other WILPF Sections and members (for example leaflets, links to WILPF reports or consultation submissions). Remember that Environmental issues mean very different things to each of us and depend on where we live, our income and the actions of our governments.

Here is our first e-newsletter. We hope you find it useful and would be very grateful if you could forward it to anyone in your Section who would be interested. Please send your comments to the group so that we can improve it for future editions.

**SOLANGE FERNEX** has died, but remains with us.



Solange Fernex, a French pacifist and politician, born in 1934 and resident in Biederthal (Alsace), died of cancer on 11 September at around 3pm. After living through some difficult stages and a recent short remission, she slipped gently away. Solange was president of the French Section of WILPF until her illness, and a member of the patron's committee of the French coordinating group for the Decade of Peace and Non-violence. She was a truly remarkable woman. In 1979 she headed the list of Europe-Ecologie in the first European elections and gained nearly 900,000 votes. She was a tireless campaigner for an end to the nuclear age and in 1983, together with 11 other activists in Paris, Bonn and San Francisco, she participated in the Fast For Life. The fast, a protest against nuclear warhead testing and the deployment of Pershing 2 cruise missiles, lasted for 40 days and gained worldwide sympathy. Solange wrote a book about this moving experience entitled, *La Vie pour La Vie* (A Life for Life). In 1984 Solange participated in the foundation of the Green Party in France and in 1989 she was elected to the European Parliament.

In 1995 she travelled to New York to help found the Abolition 2000 network. One of Solange's major concerns was the consequences of the Chernobyl catastrophe - in particular how the heightened background radiation affects the human genome. In a speech she made in Kiev, she brought the public's attention to the scientific collusion between the UN Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR), the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the International Agency for Atomic Energy (IAEA) – an unholy alliance that seeks to minimise the deadly effects of the Chernobyl fallout. In 2001 she championed the cause of Professor Yuri Bandazhevsky whose scientific findings contradicted UNSCEAR's findings and for which he was arrested and sentenced to eight years in a gulag. In Solange's view, "Science must cease to be silenced by the economic interests of the promoters of nuclear energy." Five days before her death Solange said, on

the phone to a friend involved in the same struggle, that she was going to watch over our work from her new location - and so she will, inspiring all those who 'speak truth to power'.

*Thanks to Marguerite Finn for this article*

## NEWS FROM INDIA

Sushma Pankule

In India people are facing enormous health problems. Deadly spread diseases, due to environmental problems, are widespread. Such diseases as Chikunguniya and Dengu, occur due to the mosquitoes, known as Aedes Aegypti. The symptoms of are high fever with joint and muscular pain, nausea, skin rash and fatigue. There is no specific medicine for it. Many people have died due to the disease and all because of unhygienic conditions - lack of sanitation and stagnant water are two major causes of the spread of the disease.

## NEWS FROM AUSTRALIA

Mary Zeisak

Australia's drought could be worst in 1,000 years. We talked about this problem at the WILPF 2004 Congress - unfortunately it has only become worse. To find out more, this article is very informative – <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/SYD9094.htm>

## NEWS FROM THE UK SECTION EWG

Lorraine Mirham and Rosalie Huzzard

The UK EWG have been thinking about its priorities for work over the next year. We have decided to concentrate on the following issues and would be grateful for any information or help:

**The nuclear issue** - we hope to expand on the work that was done for our submission to the UK Government's Energy Review earlier this year. If you want to read this go to [http://www.ukwilpf.gn.apc.org/NewsArticles/Energy Review Submission 2006.doc](http://www.ukwilpf.gn.apc.org/NewsArticles/Energy%20Review%20Submission%202006.doc)

**Water** - Rosalie Huzzard has been asked to produce an OPP for the International EWG on the water situation in the UK, which is in progress.

**Linking Militarism, Environmental degradation and Poverty** - both the disarmament and the development movement in the UK often ignore this link and also the impact that all these interlinked factors have on women's lives. In all our work we must emphasise the positive effect that the empowerment of women can have on solving these problems.

**Preparation for CSD15** - we will study the themes to be covered (energy, climate, industry and pollution) and examine how we should lobby our government on these.

## RESOURCES

1. Marguerite Finn (UK) has produced a leaflet on Climate Change which was used at a recent, large London demo. Please download a copy (it's a Word document) and use or adapt it if you wish. You can find it on the UK Section website [http://www.ukwilpf.gn.apc.org/NewsArticles/Climate Change leaflet Nov 2006.doc](http://www.ukwilpf.gn.apc.org/NewsArticles/Climate%20Change%20leaflet%20Nov%202006.doc)
2. UK Section Paper to UK House of Commons Defence Select Committee on the future of the Trident Weapon System can be read here [http://www.ukwilpf.gn.apc.org/NewsArticles/TRIDENT Replacement.htm](http://www.ukwilpf.gn.apc.org/NewsArticles/TRIDENT%20Replacement.htm)

**IF YOU HAVE RESOURCES TO SHARE, PLEASE TELL US.**

## BOOK REVIEW

### **Nuclear Power is Not the Answer**

Edel has recently read this new book by Helen Caldicott and highly recommends it to us. Edel says that she has found it very useful and that it has a large number of helpful facts and figures that we might want to use. Helen Caldicott explores the myths about nuclear power, the real costs and the raises the range of potential and likely catastrophic effects. You can find out more about Helen Caldicott and her latest book at this website: <http://www.helencaldicott.com/books.htm>

Publisher: The New Press (2006); ISBN: 978-1-59558-067-2

Scribe Publications (2002); ISBN:0908011652  
Melbourne University Press: ISBN 0522 85251 3

## INTERNATIONAL EWG MINUTES FROM MEETING AT IEC, LONDON SEPTEMBER 2006

Convenors and speakers were - Carol Urner (USA) , Sushma Pankule (India) and Edel Havin Beukes (Norway)

Participants - Pajj Wadley-Bailey (USA), Indra Nilaweera (Sri Lanka), S.Coote (UK), Ferial Abu-Hamdan ( Lebanon), Salwa Maasry ( Lebanon), Neelima Sinha (India), K.C.Neelam ( Nepal), Ida Harslof ( Denmark), Lorraine Mirham (UK), Carol Urner(USA), Sushma Pankule ( India), Edel Havin Beukes ( Norway).

The Environmental working group (EWG) decided to work on 2006-2007:

### 1. Suggestions for the WILPF- Congress in 2007 to have as a main topic "The Effects of War".

#### 2. The Nuclear Chain and the Nuclear Complex. Information and actions are needed on:

The uranium production process and use of nuclear reactors are the sources for nuclear weapons, nuclear energy and uranium weapons (DU-depleted uranium)

- a) Nuclear energy production is not sustainable and safe and we have to work against it.
- b) WILPF support a new UN "body "on alternative and sustainable energy. (IAEA does only promote the nuclear energy that we are against)
- c) The effect on health and the environment of the mining of Uranium and Thorium.
- d) The enormous problems of trying to take care of the waste from the production process.
- e) The use of Plutonium-238 as an energy source in space.
- f) The effects of radiation on people's health and the environment.
- g) The effects of nuclear accidents and the destruction of nuclear installations - Chernobyl, Windscale/Sellafield, Kystym, Three Mile Islands and many others.
- h) The Nuclear Industrial Complex and the politics and economic considerations behind the production of nuclear weapons and the use of nuclear energy.
- i) Follow up Solange Fernex work on the working relations between IAEA and WHO that must be changed.
- j) Work for Conventions on nuclear weapons, uranium weapons, militarization of space that are badly needed.
- k) The health and environmental effects of nuclear weapons used as in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, after tests with such weapons and by making even more new types of such weapons of mass destructions.

### 3. The Commission of Sustainable Development CSD-15.

The CSD-15 will have energy, climate, industry and pollution on the agenda at the UN, New York in May 2007.

EWG expects the WILPF UN office to be active in the process.

WILPF should arrange a meeting on nuclear energy and weapons in connection with CSD-15 and we hope to have WILPF-members contributing at CSD-15.

The WILPF- sections should find out what their governments do concerning CSD-15 and lobby them.

### 4. The connections between the military systems, environment and development.

The military sector is an unsustainable production and consumption activity.

- a) WILPF must expose the effects on health and the environment of all types of weapons.
- b) And show how the military use economic, human and natural resources for armament and wars that could have been used for human development and the environment.

### 5. The caretaking of Water.

- a) WILPF must focus on conflicts about and access to water - The Nile, Jordan River, Euftrat and Tigris, Litani and others.
- b) WILPF must focus on the effect of war on the water sources and on the infrastructure that is destroyed (pipelines, cleaning systems, pumps, dams, a.s.o.)
- c) WILPF must focus on the relations between water and food production and water and health.
- d) WILPF sections should inform each others about the water situations in their country.

### 6. Stop the militarization of space.

- a) WILPF sections should be active at the Space for Peace week 2-8. October 2006.
- b) WILPF should expose and inform about the effects of the military activities on the ozone layer and the effects on the global warming of their emission of greenhouse gases.
- c) WILPF should expose and inform about the manipulations of the weather systems. Also inform about the destruction of the protective capacities of the different layers of space around the earth.

The meeting 11.9.06 was convened by Sushma Pankule (India) and the participants discussed the water situation in their respective countries, The participants were Irina Grushevaia and Malinowka (Belarus), Nariman Ahmad, Maysoun Qahasmi (Palestine), Rosalie Huzzard (UK), Paj Wadley-Bailey (US), Dulcy De Silva ( Sri Lanka), Katty Patino (Bolivia), and Ferial Abu Hamdan ( Lebanon)

**What will be done?** - An EWG -mailing list will be established.

EWG address is: [environment@wilpf.ch](mailto:environment@wilpf.ch)

Edel Havin Beukes will act as the practical coordinator of the EWG.

Lorraine Mirham will be responsible for regular information and materials from EWG.

**Some important events** - Keep Space for Peace week 2-8 October 2006

Prepare for 2007 Congress.

Prepare for CSD-15 May 2007

Prepare for IAEA-WHO annual meetings

Prepare for International Environmental Day in Norway in June 2007 make information on nuclear energy- nuclear weapons and the effects of radiation on the health and the environment.

## INTERNATIONAL EWG Members

Kozue Akibayashi , Japan

Anna Liden , Sweden

Ansa Eneroth, Sweden

Pat Birnie, US

Irina Grushevaia, Belarus

Darien De Lu, US

Carol Uner, US

Eva Sweberg, Sweden

Edel Havin Beukes, Norway

Eva Fidjestoel, Norway

Karin Aanes, Norway

Laura Santana, US

Lorraine Mirham, UK

Marta Benavides, El Salvador

Margaret Bearlin, Australia

Mary Ziesak, Australia

Philo Morris, US

Phyllis Yingling, US

Karen Rald, Denmark

Regina Birchem, US

Rosalie Huzzard, UK

Roti Cgarlotti Make, Polynesia

Silvi Sterr, Switzerland

Sushma Dilip Pankule, India

Ferial Abu Hamdan, Lebanon

Indra Nilaweera, Sri Lanka

Salwa Maasry, Lebanon

K.C. Neelim, Nepal

Ida Harslof, Denmark

Katty Patino, Bolivia

Roula Zoubiane, Lebanon

Samira Khoury, Lebanon

Neelima Sinha, India

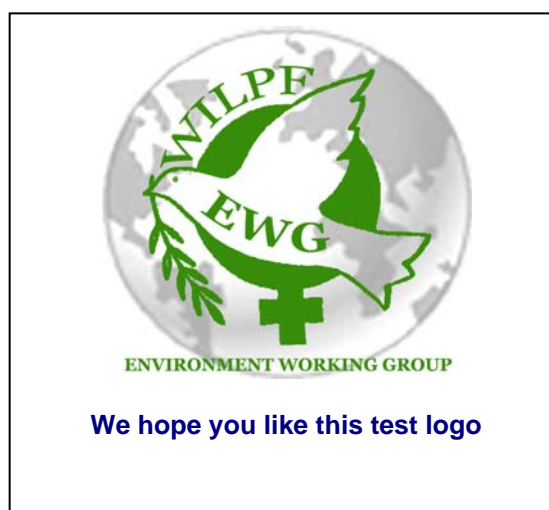
Nariman Ahmad, Palestine

Maysoun Qanasmi, Palestine

Dulci De Silva, Sri Lanka

Paj Wadley-Bailey, US

Pauline Tangiora, Aotearoa/ New Zealand



**PLEASE JOIN, ESPECIALLY IF YOUR SECTION IS NOT REPRESENTED!**

**REMEMBER TO SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS AND IDEAS TO:**

Lorraine Mirham

[lorraine.mirham@ntlworld.com](mailto:lorraine.mirham@ntlworld.com)

We hope to produce another newsletter before the end of the year and Edel Havin Beukes has offered to send an account of activities in the Norwegian Section to get us started. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you

*E-News produced by Lorraine Mirham and Edel Havin Beukes*