IAW Newsletter March 2021 no.3

Dear readers.
In the February Newsletter there were some technical problems. Some of the links did not work. In this March Newsletter you'll therefore find two articles from February hopefully with active links.
Please note the information about Generation Equality Forum; Mexico, March 29-31.
Registration closes on March 19 2021.

Vienna Declaration 2020
Austrian feminists have the chance of like-minded senior officials in important ministries. At regular intervals they invite NGO representatives to briefings on gender issues at EU and international levels. From the last virtual meeting here are some references to documents and analyses mentioned that could also be of interest to IAW members.

Vienna Declaration

Gender Advisory Group
IAW representative, Soon-Young Yoon, serves on the Gender Advisory Group convened by the President of the General Assembly, H. E. Volkan Bozkır. She reports that gender equality is one of his three priorities. IAW recommendations included how gender equality could best be mainstreamed
middle-income countries, least-developed countries, culture, corruption and HIV/AIDS—all which he agreed are interlinked with gender equality.

See attached full report.

COVID 19
Join the discussion

On the IAW website Renée Gérard has started a discussion on the series of crucial questions raised by the lengthy Covid 19 crisis and its impact on populations. IAW would like to know how our friends around the world are living the situation, what are the specific problems for women in their countries, and what is the national and regional response to help them.

You join the discussion by going to the IAW website (www.womenalliance.org), SCROLL DOWN to "OPINIONS", click Covid 19 - a mirror to reflect....., read thee comments and add your own.

Or you may go straight to the discussion: Covid-19: a mirror to reflect current risks and challenges – International Alliance of Women (womenalliance.org)

GLWR’s call to the Greek Government to ratify the International Labour Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment in the world of work

Athens, 8 December 2020
The Greek League for Women’s Rights (GLWR) has called the Greek Government to submit to the Parliament and to ratify the International Labour Organization Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment in the world of work. Convention 190 and its Recommendation 206 were adopted by the International Labour Organization on 21 June 2019 by an impressive majority.
environment free from violence and harassment. It recognizes sexual harassment and harassment related to sex at work as forms of gender-based harassment that disproportionately affect women. It covers violence and harassment, not only in the actual workplace but also in every place and condition related to work. It covers the risks faced by workers in the informal economy, where 61% of workers worldwide are employed. It regulates, for the first time, the effects of domestic violence on the world of work. In this sense, it has an added value in comparison with the relevant EU acquis.

By 21 December 2020 at the latest, ILO Member States were required to submit ILO C 190 and Recommendation 206 to their national legislative bodies with clear and reasoned arguments on the eventual ratification of the Convention (or at least the preparation thereof) and the implementation of the Recommendation; this is necessary also for the information of the public opinion. Eventual "silent submission" would be a breach of their obligations². By November, 30 countries had submitted C 190 to their national parliaments, Greece not included. Member-States have to inform thereon the General Director of the ILO as well as the most representative employers’ organisations and trade unions so that the latter have the opportunity to submit comments on how the Government complies with its international obligations.

The ratification of ILO C 190 by the Member-States is an act of compliance with an international consensus, that was reached by an impressive majority; more than that, it is an opportunity to implement the international acquis on combating gender-based violence at work. The European Commission, in its Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, encourages the EU Member-States to proceed thereto. The ratification of ILC 190 has become even more relevant and important in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and during the recovery from this crisis: the ILO highlights 12 reasons for this.

In view of the above and of the dramatic increase in cases of violence against women in Greece, we call for Greece’s immediate and timely compliance with its international and EU obligations and the ratification of ILO Convention 190.

On behalf of GLWR Board
The President
Irene Fereti


3. ILO Brief (May 2020), 'ILO Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190): 12 ways it can support the COVID-19 response and recovery',
Response of the Greek League for Women’s Rights to the EU Commission’s public consultation on its initiative «Combating gender-based violence – protecting victims and punishing offenders»
Read the response

CSW 2021: Decision Making - VAWG
- recommendations by the IAW Commission on Democracy and GLWR

This year the CSW has as its main topic DECISION MAKING. Its emphasis is on ensuring women’s full and effective participation and decision making in public life as well as the elimination of violence. Thus ensuring human rights. The positive effect which equal participation of women have on the whole of society is not mentioned. The combination with Violence against women emphasises women as victims not as contributors. We emphasise that the participation of women is not only a human right but has positive effects on the whole of society. Stronger: it is often essential for the solution of problems. Therefore we advocate that Governments at the CSW recognise the essential contribution women have in keeping societies together and that the equal participation of women and men in decision making in all areas and all activities is not only a human right but an essential condition for a healthy society particularly in problem solving and conflict resolution. This should be included in the CSW agreed conclusions 2021.
Read more

Recommendation by the Greek League for Women’s Rights (GLWR)
The GLWR would like to propose that the global issue of VAWG, as the major aspect of inequality and the urgent need to effectively combat and prevent all forms of VAWG is stated more strongly and clearly in the IAW Oral Statement, with Justice and Education been the key factors to this end. The GLWR further suggests that the significance of the work and expertise of Women’s Organisations in addressing violations of women’s rights across the globe should also be emphasised. Their critical role should be recognised by Governments.
#CSW65’S TO COME UP WITH A STRONG COMMITMENT FOR ROBUST FINANCIAL INVESTMENT FOR GENDER EQUALITY

- *Money for the change must go’ round.*
  Marion Böker, IAW Vice President

During #CSW52 (2008), in the light of the global financial crisis, stakeholders at the United Nations listened more eagerly than ever before to feminist economic claims. The Agreed Conclusions of 2008 is a great document of AGREED LANGUAGE "on financing gender equality and the empowerment of women", to be reaffirmed in the first paragraphs and mainstreamed throughout the language in the Agreed Conclusions of the current CSW65. It is time to price each measure and commitment!

During the Covid-19 crisis 2020, it seemed for a while as if the global politics, media and all stakeholders had realized that the existing gender inequalities and forms of violence against women and girls are part of a systemic crisis putting the survival of our life at risk.

Women, as care givers at home and in the care sectors with systemic pay and pension gaps, became visible in their importance. A lot of lip service was given in all regions that recovery plans and the rebuilding of finances and policies cannot go back to the old risky normal of Gender Inequalities. Recovery plans were announced, promising robust investments in Equality for Women, in securing better care and health sectors and many more nice things.

Feminist economic analysis proved that unfortunately nothing was realized when recovery plans were finally tabled. They needed to be adjusted, improved so as to make them work for Gender Equality.

**Read more**

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**UNmute Civil Society Campaign**

Soon-Young Yoon, IAW main representative to the UN New York, has sent this appeal to support the Unmute Civil Society Campaign by endorsing its recommendations “to ensure meaningful civil society participation at the United Nations” She states that this initiative can help expand the space for women’s voices throughout the UN processes. This is particularly important for the CSW where there is a shrinking space for feminist and women’s groups

- You can find the Recommendations paper [here](#)
Annegret Krüger, board member of the Women’s Network for Peace, Germany and an individual member of IAW showing the banner in Tübingen

**UN Nuclear Ban Treaty now into Force**

by Heide Schütz, co-convener of IAW Commission on Peace
Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons has come into force, according to the regulations two months after the fiftieth member state of the UN has signed and ratified it in the national parliament. Up till now the number of supporters has increased by one state, but hopefully many more of the almost 200 UN member states will follow this year to put pressure on those states which hesitate or even reject it.

From now on nuclear weapons are illegal! The treaty prohibits countries that have joined it from “developing, testing, producing, manufacturing, transferring, possessing, stockpiling, hosting, using, or threatening to use nuclear weapons. They must also refrain from assisting, encouraging, or inducing others to engage in these activities.” These weapons of mass destruction endanger all people worldwide and the planet itself. We must get rid of them for good which means the total elimination of the existing 15,000 weapons many of them in operational status. The nuclear power states USA, Russia, China, Great Britain and France which hold a permanent seat in the UN Security Council are not willing to sign this treaty. They try to legitimate this instrument of power by all kinds of arguments. One of them is the so called balance of deterrence as a guarantee of peace. The treaty was signed neither by the new nuclear powers Israel, India, Pakistan and North Korea nor by NATO states like my country Germany which is eager to be a partner in a nuclear war strategy by supplying aircrafts and pilots to fly the bombs with nuclear warheads. Why? Don’t ask me.

We know that the first nuclear strike – either launched deliberately or by technical error - will evoke a nuclear war with horrific consequences because a great number of nuclear weapons are ready to launch on warning. Those of humankind who will survive will have to face a nuclear winter that is a danger to all life on earth in addition to the nuclear pollution with all its destructive consequences – and there have been quite a number of scary accidents already! Two of them have been handled wisely by two Russian members of the military: Stanislav Petrov and Wassili Archipow. They prohibited a nuclear war – most people do not even know about it.

Worldwide, including in my country Germany, there are numerous groups and organizations of civil society that have been working persistently and for decades for the ban of nuclear weapons. Albert Einstein himself and Bertrand Russell, two nuclear physicists that were at the forefront of scientists proclaimed again and again to stop the dangerous nuclear arms race. It was a great honour and success when ICAN, the International Network “Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons” with member organizations in 100 countries, received the Nobel Peace Prize in December 2017 shortly after the adoption of the treaty by the UN General Assembly on July 7, 2017. What must be done now? The next goal is to de-alert the ready-to-launch weapons immediately and eliminate all existing nuclear weapons by the year 2045, one hundred years after the founding of the United Nations and its resolution Nr. 1 against nuclear air strikes! Hiroshima and Nagasaki were the lessons learnt, but these lessons have been erased deliberately from the school books of the nuclear power states.

The ICAN website gives information on the status of each country and there is
Protect the People and the Planet”, which means “to end the nuclear threat, abolish nuclear weapons and shift the weapons budgets and investments to support public health, COVID-19 recovery, the climate and sustainable development” launched by Unfold Zero are also important pillars for a nuclear-weapon-free world. IAW has endorsed this appeal, hopefully many more member organizations will follow.

Much has to be done yet but civil society can play an important role.
https://www.icanw.org
https://www.mayorsforpeace.org
https://www.globalzero.org
http://www.pnnd.org

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The UN and Nuclear Disarmament.

Global Commemoration of UN Resolution 1 (1).

Report by Esther R. Suter, IAW – Co-Convener Commission for Peace and Disarmament
https://www.baselpeaceoffice.org

The 2021 session of the UN-Conference on disarmament in Geneva opened (virtually) Jan. 19th. Tatjana Valovaya, Director-General of the UN-Geneva, is the successor of Michael Moller and the first woman in this position. She is a former Russian diplomat and is Secretary General of the Conference on Disarmament. She underlined that the UN may play a significant role for disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons. In 1946, after the fall of two atomic bombs, the elimination of nuclear weapons became a goal with UN Resolution 1 (1). Now 75 years later, there is a reduction, but the elimination of nuclear weapons seems illusive. Therefore, she is of the opinion that it is an urgent need to implement the new treaty on ban, prohibition and abolition of nuclear weapons of 20.1.21, achieved by 51 countries - and that 2021 is the crucial year.

Maria Fernanda Espinosa explained that there are worldwide about 15,000 estimated nuclear weapons and that hundreds are in state of alert to be used within a few minutes. Nuclear weapons are the most imminent threat, but do they contribute to peace and stability? Security is only possible through disarmament. The definition and prohibition of weapons of mass destruction (1977) include chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. While chemical and biological weapons have been banned, nuclear weapons still exist and there is a huge gap between the UN-goal and the policy of member states. The treaty of the prohibition of production, test and sale of nuclear weapons is opposed by
Three positions are of concern: 1) The elimination of nuclear weapons until 2045 by implementing the UN-disarmament agenda - 100 years of UN’s target of a world without nuclear weapons. 2) Convert nuclear budgets and use money for the UN global poverty program, Covid-19 pandemic program among others. 3) Women to be in the centre of all recovery strategy. Women are agents of peace and change – peace and disarmament affairs are a political choice.

For further programme details (speakers) and the whole record of the event see:
www.abolition2000.org/event/the-united-nations-and-nuclear-disarmament
https://youtu.be/pjLU1Xi2PZg (1h34min)
Further co-sponsors:
Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament
http://www.pnnd.org
Right Livelihood Foundation https://rightlivelihoodaward.org
World Future Council https://www.worldfuturecouncil.org
Youth Fusion https://www.youth-fusion.org

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Generation Equality Forum
Mexico
March 29 - 31 2021

**Information sent by Marion Böker**
The Generation Equality Forum is a civil society centred, multistakeholder, global gathering for gender equality convened by UN Women and co-hosted by the Governments of Mexico and France, in partnership with civil society and youth.
Read more

Programme

Registration
**Registration is open till March 19**

FAQ

**Members who plan to attend, please notify Marion Böker at marion.boeker@gmx.de**

The **Generation Equality Forum (GEF) Mexico Advisory Group** is gathering input from feminist and womens’ organizations to present at the Mexico Forum in March
submit their recommendations for the Beijing +25 agenda, which will be discussed and finalized through the GEF proceedings.


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