IAW Newsletter April 2021 no.3

Dear readers,
The next IAW Newsletter is due around June 1 2021.
Please send your contributions by May 20 2021.
Enjoy reading!

Lene Pind, editor.

Joint Statement on the occasion of International Women's Day March 8

by

Soroptimist International
International Alliance of Women
Associated Country Women of the World

International Alliance of Women
UNCSW65 - Oral Statement

The International Alliance of Women joins concerned voices calling for recognition of VAW as the major aspect of inequality in society as well as insisting on accountability for women’s human rights with the intention to achieve gender equality and ensure the quality of life for the undervalued half of humanity. Women must be equally represented in all areas of public life and decision making essential for the wellbeing of their communities. Of paramount importance is the human right of every woman to experience a violence free environment to realize her potential.
progress in improving the status of women. We call on the UN Human Rights Council and the UN Economic and Social Council to hold all member states accountable to the objectives of the human rights standard of CEDAW as well as the commitments formulated in the Sustainable Development Goals: especially for the post pandemic period and the needed global up levelling of the Care Economy.

This year’s **Priority theme** is timely given that women continue to be under-represented in public life and decision making, which contribute to a disproportionately negative impact on the life of women when a global crisis such as COVID-19 happens. Women are more likely to work part-time. They are the first ones to lose their jobs in a crisis. They also assume greater responsibility for household and unpaid work and have limited resources to cope with a pandemic. This forces women to remain in abusive relationships. The fact that globally women represent 25% in parliaments underscores the deficit in women’s contribution to the recovery and well-being of societies.

The IAW calls on UN member states to re-direct at least 50% of all military state expenditure to the health sector, a public service where women are heavily represented, for research in cure and vaccine distribution not only for COVID-19 but including other infectious diseases.

It is imperative that member states commit fully to:

- invest in all levels of education as health is dependent on education, as well as supporting scientific research on medical analysis and solutions (e.g. effective vaccines)
- follow the United Nations Secretary General’s call for a global ceasefire without delay
- collaborate in cases of crises and armed conflicts globally in mediation and peace negotiation whereby women of the crisis region or countries at war must be participants in all peace processes at all times (according to UNSCR 1325, 2000)
- respect and embrace women’s potential to participate in creating a culture of peace
- build a Care Economy based on gender budgeting
- recognize the significance of the work and expertise of Women's Organizations such as the International Alliance of Women in addressing violations of women's human rights around the globe

We assert it would be proactive to accelerate gender parity in public life by creating conditions and incentives for women candidates at the local and national levels through gender-sensitive political financing, subsidies for childcare, and non-partisan crowdfunding and endowments.
UN Commission on the Status of Women/CSW 65th Session /virtual – GLWR - Press Release

by Laoura Aliprante

The 65th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW65), the UN’s largest annual gathering on gender equality and women’s empowerment will take place from 15 to 26 March 2021. This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the session will be mostly virtual. Representatives of Member States and ECOSOC-accredited NGOs from all regions of the world will attend the session. The IAW - International Alliance of Women /accredited ECOSOC NGO is an international Non-Government Organization founded in 1904 with Consultative Status with the United Nations. The IAW delegation will be actively participating in the discussions at CSW65. The Greek League for Women’s Rights (GLWR), the first exclusively feminist organization established in Greece in 1920, is an affiliate member of the IAW since 1923 and there has been a long tradition of the two organizations working together for gender equality and protecting and promoting women’s rights worldwide. Dr Laura Alipranti-Maratou, Vice President of GLWR and elected IAW Board Member is an accredited delegate and will participate in the session.

Themes of the 65th Session:

- Priority theme: Women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls;
- Review theme: Women’s empowerment and the link to sustainable development (agreed conclusions of the sixtieth session)
Virtual FORUM with more than 700 sessions held by ECOSOC-accredited NGOs and about 26,000 registrants.

Newly released data shows that progress to achieve gender equality in public life and decision-making has been too slow.

- Women make up 25 per cent of parliamentarians globally, and only three countries have 50 per cent or more women in parliament.
- Less than one per cent of parliamentarians are women under 30 years of age.
- Women make up only 13 per cent of negotiators, 6 per cent of mediators and 6 per cent of signatories in formal peace processes.
- In 2020, only 7.4 per cent of Fortune 500 companies were run by women.
- Just 22 countries in the world are headed by a woman.

At the current rate of progress, it will take another 130 years to reach gender equality at the highest positions of power.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted women disproportionately – from loss of jobs to rise in violence against women and unpaid care work. Although women are at the front line of COVID-19 response as healthcare workers, innovators and leaders, their contributions remain less visible and less valued. Only 3.5 per cent of COVID-19 task forces across 87 countries had gender parity.

Achieving gender equality in leadership and decision-making is possible. Gender quotas in legislatures and other sectors, zero tolerance to violence, special measures that enable women to enter the political pipeline, and dedicated funding to women’s organizations, have proven to be catalytic in bringing change.

The IAW hopes that UN Member States will reach an agreement on how developed and developing countries can work together to accelerate progress and ensure that gender equality and women’s empowerment remain central to the post 2016 SDG agenda as both a standalone goal and an Intersectional theme.
Rapport sur l'égalité femmes/hommes au Burkina Faso

By Viviane Dah Konditamé, Burkina Faso

Dans son rapport sur l'égalité femmes/hommes et le viol des Droits des Femmes au Burkina Faso, Viviane Dah Konditamé, dresse en fait, à ce sujet, un tableau de la condition de la femme dans toute l'Afrique. Et tout cela, "suite à la persistance" dit-elle "des pesanteurs"

Viviane Dah Konditamé nous présente, sans en omettre aucune, toutes les formes de violences que les hommes peuvent faire subir aux femmes, ainsi que les moments de cette violence dans sa vie, de sa naissance à son décès, et surtout, elle s'attache à donner des informations sur les instruments juridiques, aussi bien locaux qu'internationaux qui permettent aux femmes de se défendre, car "par leur nature ils visent à l'élimination de toutes formes de discrimination à l'égard des femmes.". Ces informations font de son texte un instrument à l'usage de toute femme africaine qui subi des violences ou des atteintes à ses droits

Lire l'article
A great victory for Egyptian women with the unprecedented representation in the Parliament 2021

By Horeya Megahed, REGional Coordinator for the Arab Region

The percentage of women MP in the new Parliament (2021- 2026) has reached 28.5 per cent with 162 women out of the 568 members of the House of Representatives. This is a result of long efforts for women empowerment. The trigger was the constitutional amendment in 1919 which granted women at least 25% of the total members in the implementation of the positive discrimination of women. They are mostly elected on party lists in addition to 14 appointed by the President representing 50% of the total appointed members - maximizing the gain for women since the Constitution stipulates at least 25% for them.

The new representation is the highest in history since women gained their full political rights in the Constitution of 1956. In the elections of 1957, two pioneer women entered the Parliament representing 0.57% of the total members. Since then the number of women has fluctuated for decades around 2.2% with some few exceptions when quota was implemented. The last Parliament of 2015 has witnessed the representation of 90 women i.e. about 15% as a result of party quota by law and the appointments.

The representation of women in the Parliament defeats the idea that women are just colouring the scene. In the media the motto is that “Women are coming”.

The new Parliament is witnessing a generation of young people and people with special capacities, (We don’t officially use the term disabled).

It is worth noting that the inaugural session on January 12th, 2021, was chaired by a woman: Mrs Farida el Shobasy- a prominent journalist- for the first time in the parliamentary history as she is the oldest member. While one of the two Vice Presidents was a young lady of 25 years old as she is the youngest MP.

As for the Senate which was innovated in the amendment of the Constitution of 2019, the number of women is 40 out of 300 representing 13% of the total members of 300, half of them elected on party lists the others were appointed by the President.

COVID and Women’s Contributions

by Anje Wiersinga

In the discussion on the influence of COVID on women, the emphasis is too often on the negative effect on women: more women are losing their jobs, their livelihood, and domestic violence against women increases. This is true
women – that women nowadays can be active in society and in science. We thank the Pfizer vaccine for the discovery of Jennifer Doudza – a woman who in 2020 got the Nobel Prize in chemistry for the original work on CRISPR gene editing which made it possible for Pfizer to use this technique for the production of the vaccine. And Sarah Gilbert Professor of Vaccinology developed the Oxford vaccine.

Also worth mentioning as contributors in this COVID area are epidemiologists such as Usmé Blackstock, Natalie Dean, and Emma Hodcroft and reporters on Medicine and Science such as Apoorva Mandivilli, who received the Victor Cohn Prize for Excellence in medical science reporting.

Could somebody make a poster of the two women Jennifer Doudza and Sarah Gilbert which could be shown at vaccination sites? This will spread the knowledge on women as contributors to society and as role models.

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Soun-Young and the UN

Soon-Young Yoon, UN representative for IAW, launched her online book of essays “Citizen of the World—Soon-Young and the UN” that tells stories of her life, work at the UN (paid and unpaid) and reflections on being a global citizen.

The promotional video is here: https://youtu.be/eH3qTWbGrYs

The online book is at www.soon-young.life.

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Femicide.

by Helen Self

Femicide is a word and a concept familiar to all of us, that is the killing of a woman by a man. But according to a UK Sunday newspaper, ‘The Observer’, it is not a word which features in the dictionary. The Observer has launched a campaign to highlight the problem following the distressing case a year ago of the strangulation of a woman called Ruth Williams, 67, by her 70 year old husband. He was depressed by lockdown and was said to have lost control after his wife told him to ‘just get on with it’. Her neck was fractured in five places, yet the verdict at the end of his trial was manslaughter on the grounds
case.
In response to this and other cases the paper has launched a campaign to
highlight the femicide problem. The example above is, of course, only the tip
of an iceberg. The statistics show that a woman is killed by a man every three
days, an appalling state of affairs which has remained constant over the past
decade. The Observer notes that the perpetrator may be a husband, partner,
ex-partner and even a son. A stranger not known to the victim may be a
burglar, tradesman, taxi driver, stalker or a man encountered in the street.
To guide us through the campaign, the paper has focussed upon three
overarching aims, **Name it, Know it, Stop it**. First, to name it, the world must
know and accept what we mean when we speak of femicide, not dismiss it as
feminist nonsense. This requires reliable statistics for which the Observer has
turned to a Femicide Census  [https://www.femicidecensus.org/](https://www.femicidecensus.org/).
Initially the Observer is investigating the deaths of older women. Something I
find shocking is that suspicious deaths of older women have not been recorded
in police statistics, they are absent from the Crime Survey for England and
Wales (CSEW), in which a cap of 59 years has recently been increased to 74.
Without proper scrutiny the death of elderly women is most likely to be
attributed to an accident or natural causes. It is apparently easy to kill
someone and get away with it if they are expected to die in the not too distant
future. Therefore, we need the identification of hidden homicides. This
contrasts with a more recent development when the defence against the death
of young women has been attributed to ‘rough sex’. Apparently some women
enjoy being tied up and knocked about. Even strangled!
On 11 March a Labour MP, Jess Phillips, read out a long list in Parliament of
women who had been killed by men in the past year (118). By the end of her
presentation, three more women had died.
Since then the country has been convulsed by the shocking case of abduction
and murder of a young woman innocently walking home in the evening in
London. Her body has been found thirty miles away in woodland by the South
Coast. To add to the outrage is the arrest of a Metropolitan Police Officer who
has been charged with her murder.
In response, women across the country have demanded changes to the law to
make women safe on the streets. Protest meetings and vigils have been
planned, but as with everything else at present they have been banned
because of covid!

Souad Houssein

La Corne de l’Afrique qui est composée des pays suivants : (Djibouti, Erythrée, Ethiopie, et Somalie) elle partage avec bon nombre de pays d’Afrique et du monde des fléaux qui entravent la survie, le développement, l’autonomie, la liberté, la sécurité et l’égalité des chances des femmes.
Cependant, il est important de souligner la spécificité de cette région parfois oubliée de certaines instances décisionnelles internationales.
Pourtant la Corne de l’Afrique semble être une véritable « zone rouge » en ce qui concerne la gravité des maux qui minent les femmes de cette région et ce dans la mesure où elle concentre plusieurs fléaux dont elle n’a pas l’exclusivité mais qui en font une zone où les femmes sont en situation de grande fragilité.

1. Certains pays sont enlisés dans des guerres civiles depuis plus de vingt années, d’autres traversent régulièrement des conflits - Il s’agit donc d’une zone d’instabilité politique qui ne peut qu’amplifier les difficultés que rencontrent les femmes de cette région. Les groupes de terroristes appelés CHABAB qui entend faire régner la terreur sous couvert de l’islam, trouve chez les femmes et les jeunes filles des cibles facilement atteignables même si leur violence n’est pas spécifiquement orientée vers elles.

2. Le contexte socio-culturel et cultuel aggravent fortement l’exclusion, les inégalités et discriminent les femmes. Dans cette région le taux de mutilations génitales féminines atteint des records de près 98% des jeunes filles notamment en Somalie selon les NU, quant au mariage précoce il atteint environ 45% alors que les violences de toutes sortes y sont légion.

3. Il est d’autant plus important de soutenir les femmes que bien qu’elles soient discriminées portent souvent sur leurs épaules l’avenir de leur famille au sens large du terme. En effet, le choc lié à l’exode rural ayant fortement remis en cause le statut des hommes notamment dans les milieux défavorisés qui est passé de protecteur de la famille, de propriétaire de cheptel à celui de quasi- assisté. Ce qui a conduit à une
CONCLUSION
Même si tous les pays de cette région ne répondent pas à cette tragique description, nous devons avoir à l’esprit que la question climatique, la pauvreté grandissante et le contexte de terrorisme religieux sont des facteurs aggravants pour la survie des femmes. Chaque jour la liste des victimes de violences, de discrimination, et d’attaques diverses augmente comme malheureusement ailleurs dans le monde mais dans cette région les fléaux qui persistent depuis de nombreuses années sans grande évolution semblent avoir découragés les institutions internationales pensant que ce ma persistant est sans doute incurable. Tout ceci devrait nous inviter à la plus grande vigilance et à agir plus énergiquement car le temps est compté.
Dans les pays où le sort des femmes est plus enviable, il convient néanmoins de consolider les acquis toujours fragiles comme on l’a vu en Tunisie récemment, les avancées peuvent être remises en question à tous moments.
Paris, le 5 mars 2021
décennies.

par Samira Yassni, Représentante Internationale de L’AIF auprès de l’Union Africaine

La question des femmes s'impose aujourd'hui avec force dans une société marocaine en pleine mutation. L'urbanisation accélérée, l'instruction, le salariat féminin et l'ouverture sur l'économie mondiale, sont autant de facteurs qui ont conduit à l'évolution de la condition féminine. Ces deux dernières décennies, la femme marocaine a fourni beaucoup d'efforts et a pu montrer qu'elle mérite tout poste qu'on lui confie, y compris les postes à responsabilités. Elle a fait ses preuves dans tous les domaines, l'économie et les finances, la santé, le sport et bien sûr la politique et la culture...

lire la suite

L'autonomisation économique des femmes marocaines au temps de la Covid-19 et d'avant : comprendre pour agir

Samira Yassni

La femme représente la moitié de la société. Côte à côte avec l'homme, elle a toujours contribué au développement des sociétés lorsque les facteurs de conversion lui ont permis de mettre à l'œuvre ses potentialités pour parler simple. Aujourd'hui, cette catégorie de la société marocaine, et mondiale, subit de manière disproportionnée les répercussions de la crise de la Covid-19, sur plus d'un aspect de la vie en société. Ceci est particulièrement vrai lorsqu'il s'agit des domaines de l'autonomisation économique des femmes. Les observations que l'Observatoire Marocain des Droits des Femmes soutiennent que les effets économiques de la Covid-19 sont exacerbés pour les femmes et les filles, au Maroc et ailleurs. Ils se matérialisent en des pertes d'emplois, en la vulnérabilité qui leur est associée et au travail en danger. L'objectif de ce Research Paper est de mettre en avant l'effet de la crise de la Covid-19 sur la vie des femmes en société, avec un accent sur les retombées sur le travail féminin. Une présentation de la situation des femmes dans le monde sera notre point de départ. Ensuite, nous jetons la lumière sur la situation des femmes au Maroc pendant cette crise. Enfin, nous analysons le préexistant avec, à l'esprit, la conviction selon laquelle la situation des femmes sur le marché du travail ne peut être adressée adéquatement en l'absence de compréhension fine des problématiques d'avant la crise.

Samira Yassni
A personal story about IWD in the Netherlands

In the **Bold & Brilliant** invitation sent by Dr. Jocelynne Scutt I was introduced as a speaker. I studied in Groningen (at least 2 hours by train from Amsterdam) and have lived in Amsterdam since 1985. I have represented IAW in the Board of European Women's Lobby (EWL) since October 2014. I attended several annual meetings of IAW including Reykjavik (2011) and Berlin (2018).

I have been working as an expert woman in decision-making since 1990. As a retired professional I still publish blogs (Note 1) and tweets about women in politics in order to support both IAW @womenalliance and EWL @EuropeanWomen.

As a student I became a conscious feminist in 1979 partly as a result of talking to members of my herstory group ‘the fifties’ about abortion and the right to decide as a woman to have one. She Decides or being a boss in your own belly still is an important subject for us feminists of all walks of life.

As a student in social and political history in Groningen I went to an event on March 8 where prostitutes from Amsterdam were talking about their sex work. This strategy of talking with is very, very important and is from where we - as feminists - have come!

As a conscious feminist in 1996 I went to the city hall of Amstelveen as part of my job seeking challenge to attend a lecture by Marianne van den Boomen about a new opportunity: Internet! Her book subtitles *Internet ABC for women*. I reread her lecture in 2010 and connected it to the Aletta Jacobs (Note 2) speech at 8.3 by the first woman of the Netherlands who became an EU Commissioner, Neelie Kroes, in 2004.

As a woman in politics in 2019, I was a candidate at place 15 in the Elections for the European Parliament, (Note 3). Since the summer of 2020, I have supported the campaign ‘Omdat ik het verdien’ / ‘Because I deserve it’ (for equal pay) at Instagram by giving likes and comments. This campaign is inspired by the example of Iceland. In 2021 I liked Insta Happy International...
It’s a New Day. This video is dedicated to the ones leading the way like Emma Gonzalez (USA), Frida Kahlo (Mexico) and Jacinda Ardern (New Zealand) (Note 4) Quote “A life without purpose is no life at all”.

My personal vision since 2010 is: remain developing your electronic skills (eSkills):
1st Internet, 2nd social media and 3rd since corona pandemic how to Zoom. In order to reach a gender equal society it is important to remain healthy and develop electronic skills (eSkills) step by step and use them as a strategy: frapper toujours (always hit!)

Note 1 blog ‘Women’s economic independence 1995-2020’ at angerman.europa.blogspot.com

Note 2 Aletta Jacobs 1854 - 1929 is the first woman to attain a PhD in the Netherlands on 8th March 1879. For a quarter of a century she was at the head of the Dutch Women’s Suffrage Association and is also a BIG inspiration in the herstory of IAW!

Note 3 Photo Aletta & Arina at Elections European Parliament in Amsterdam

Note 4 I received this YouTube with subtitles in Dutch by Anouk by WhatsApp twice at IWD 2021.

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Successful efforts to save the accreditation status of IAW with UN DPI

By Joanna Manganara

Dear All,
I would like to inform you about the Department of Public Information of the UN where I was for a number of years at the head of the IAW Delegation and I submitted eports in the name of IAW. With DPI we had problems that made us almost lose our accreditation status, which is very difficult to regain once more.

The DPI was established in 1947, official relations between DPI and NGOs date back to 1968. ECOSOC Resolution 1297 called on DPI to associate NGOs with effective information programs in place and thus disseminate information about issues on the UN’s Agenda and the work of the organization.

Each year NGOs accredited to DPI have to produce a report of their activities. In 2017 Soon -Young, who was at the time head of our delegation at DPI, failed to submit such a report on time because she was not given login details. In order to sort out this problem, I arranged a meeting with Mr Jeffrey Brez who was the new chief of NGO relations and advocacy at DPI and Mr Felipe Queipo who was working with NGO relations and Advocacy with DPI in New York. I also invited Funmi to attend the meeting During this meeting misunderstandings were cleared up They told us that we were OK with our accreditation status and that they wanted me to become the focal point of IAW with DPI and be given login details After being designated focal point for DPI I submitted the IAW DPI Report for 2018 on the 3rd of June 2019 and in January 2021 I submitted the IAW DPI Report for 2020 which has become biennial since 2020 Both reports
It's NOT my clothing, it's YOUR eyes
sent by Anjana Basu, individual member in India

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_uVHPTzeAzw&lc=UgwAtSL3HXgfRNxsLp94AaABAg&fbclid=IwAR3cZYHobOl mjRb9t6o0D89GKswCs6cHj0Aa-65xcOdH7bPdWBN-QJlw6CU

Bangladeshi women and trans people, and even men, face different kinds of harassment in the public realm. This has sadly become a very common thing in Bangladesh, especially due to the kinds of clothes they wear. The skills, energy and capacity to cope with these obvious male gazes and judgmental looks are something Bangladeshi women have had to develop, some cope, many do not! The situation is everywhere, from the villages to small towns to the big city, and often erupts in nasty judgements that are annoying yet perceived to be quite normal. At times, these have ended in violence against women and trans people, with quite limited access to justice. Paraa’s sustainable ethical fashion platform: Chol has started this campaign to address the issue, set in an alternative reality, where women and trans people can travel, commute freely and just be themselves in public. It’s often a common thing for women to think twice about their attire before stepping out into the public realm. Still many are brave enough to be themselves no matter what. But this simple thing should not be a struggle. We will be posting more videos on this campaign to reflect how people deal with this issue. We want to break the practice of judgemental gazing and motivate people to take this matter more seriously and start changing from within.