



# Women's

## Federation for World Peace International

United Nations Office Newsletter

Fall 2004

### Millennium Development Goals: Civil Society Takes Action

#### 57th DPI/NGO Conference

September 8-10, 2004 - UN HQ, New York



By Bonnie Berry

The theme of this year's DPI/NGO conference created an opportunity for the UN and NGOs alike to focus on the importance of nations, NGOs and civil society turning their attention to the Millennium Development Goals. The DPI/NGO Executive Committee, in considering the options for possible midday workshops, and plenary sessions put emphasis on those NGO representatives and UN officials who could share success stories and best practices in working toward fulfillment of the MDGs, as well as give guidance regarding facing difficult obstacles to achievement of MDGs. Considering that in 2000, 189 member states committed to and promised fulfillment of the MDGs, it is appropriate and necessary that all concerned about our collective global future discuss and determine how to move forward on these important milestones. In addition, if our respective national officials are not discussing how to facilitate fulfillment of MDGs, we as NGOs must lobby and encourage our governments to fulfill their promises to the UN and fellow member states to commit funds and effort to this end. Achievement

of these goals would improve the lives of countless people and make vast headway toward the alleviation of the most egregious human suffering.

Lest we forget, the Millennium Development Goals are:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
- Achieve universal primary education.
- Promote gender equality and empower women.
- Reduce child mortality.
- Improve maternal health.
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.
- Ensure environmental sustainability.
- Develop a global partnership for development.

In his message to the conference, Secretary General Kofi Annan stated, "I am very pleased that you have chosen the Millennium Development Goals as the subject of this year's DPI/NGO Conference. As representatives of hundreds of nongovernmental organizations, you are potential leaders of the MDG campaigns

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### The Role of NGOs in Overcoming Poverty Through Education

#### Midday Workshop

September 10, 2004 - UN HQ, NYC

By Bonnie Berry

WFWPI partnered with International Relief Friendship Foundation and the Religious Youth Service to sponsor a Midday Workshop at the NGO/DPI Conference. The panel was held in Conference Room B at UN Headquarters, NYC with a standing room only crowd in attendance. Panelists were Mrs. Erina Rutangye, Chairwoman of WFWP Uganda, Rev. John Gehring, Executive Director of Religious Youth Service, Dr. Kathy Winings, Vice President of IRFF International Board of Directors, Dr. P.C. Lunia, Chairman, Golden India Foundation. Mrs. Motoko Sugiyama, Director of WFWPI UN Office was moderator.

Midday Workshop, continued on pg. 9



## Statement of Purpose

The Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) supports a network of National WFWPI Chapters worldwide. WFWPI Chapters adhere to the principle that women, working together, taking initiative and empowering one another across traditional lines of race, culture and religion to create healthy families, are resolving the complex problems of our societies and world. Ultimately "solutions" come as *true* partnerships between men and women are established in all levels of society. The beginning point is within society's most elemental level—the family. Peace then expands into our communities, nation and world.

Therefore, WFWPI works to provide women worldwide with: *the knowledge, tools and support needed to create peace at home, peace in our communities, our nations and our world.*

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## At the UN in New York...

Reports of NGO Briefings

### The Family Today: Emerging Issues on the International Agenda

In Observance of the 10th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (IYF)  
DPI/NGO Briefing • May 13, 2004 - UN HQ, New York

*By Motoko Sugiyama*

This observance was sponsored by the Programme on the Family Division for Social Policy and Development, DESA (Department of Economic and Social Affairs), United Nations on May 13, 2004 at UN HQ, New York.

First, the message for the International Day of Families on May 15 from Secretary General Kofi Annan was read by Under-Secretary-General of DESA, Mr. Jose Antonio Ocampo. Mr. Annan stated that there has been progress during the past 10 years. Many Member States are instituting national programmes of action. The interest,

commitment and resolve evident among all actors and at all levels indicate that the well-being of families has become a central focus of all concerned with national development and poverty eradication. Yet more needs to be done. He urged governments, civil society and individuals to keep working for policies and programmes that recognize and support the contribution each family makes to its members, its community and society.

Speakers were Mr. Claude A. Allen, Deputy Secretary, United States Department of Health and Human Services, Ms. Aster

*The Family Today, continued on pg. 10*

### Girls & Technology: New Educational Opportunities

Report from NGO Briefing on March 25, 2004 - UN HQ, New York

*By Hannah Alexander, UN Youth Rep. of WFWPI, Senior Student of Mount Holyoke College*

In recent years, the United Nations and its agencies have adopted frameworks and resolutions which call on countries to provide girls with equal access to ICT and education. These include the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), the World Education Forum's (WEF) Dakar Framework for Action and the World Summit on Information Society. As a result, many developing countries are making strides in providing high-tech skills and education to young people, particularly girls.

On 25 March 2004, a Department of Public Information (DPI) - sponsored panel discussion was held to address "Girls & Technology" and the role the UN and civil society have played in promoting education and equal access to technologies for girls.

The briefing featured three speakers: Cream Wright, Chief of the Education Section, UNICEF; Paul Goa Zoumanigui, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of The

*Girls & Technology, continued on pg. 10*

### Upcoming ECOSOC High-level Segment: A Focus on Poverty Eradication

DPI/NGO Briefing • May 27, 2004 - UN HQ, New York

*By Motoko Sugiyama*

A briefing highlighting the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010) was held at UN HQ, New York being moderated by Mr. Paul Hoeffel, Chief of NGO Section of DPI.

First, there was a video presentation entitled "The UN's Upcoming Social and Economic Agenda" featuring Ambassador Marjatta Rasi, President of ECOSOC being interviewed, followed by three speakers: H.E. Iftekhar Chowdhury, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, Ms. Aliye Celik, Chief ECOSOC and Inter-organization Cooperation, and Ms. Hanifa Mezoui, Chief NGO Section, DESA.

Ambassador Chowdhury illustrated Bangladesh's successful development program and methods for poverty elimination since the independence of

Bangladesh in 1970 by giving numeral statistics. Micro-credit programs for women have been very effective.

Ms. Celik encouraged NGOs to give input at the upcoming High Level Segment by participating in the NGO Round Table discussion prior to the High Level Segment. She also briefed on the content to be covered at the Round Table.

Ms. Mezoui expressed her gratitude for NGOs' great participation and involvement in ECOSOC. Her office is also making every effort to have as many NGOs participate in the High Level Segment this year.

During the concluding discussion period most interest was focused on the Micro credit Program and its success in helping women become self-reliant.



## Working Together to Promote Integrated Rural Development in Developing Countries Particularly the Least Developed Countries

Panel Discussion • July 1, 2004 - UN HQ, New York

By *Merly Barete-Barlaan*

The High Level Panel was held in the ECOSOC Chamber. Panelists were: Mr. Marius Ratolojanahary, Vice Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Madagascar, Mr. Mark Mallach Brown, Administrator of UNDP, Mr. David Harcharik, Deputy Director General, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Mr. Lennart Bage, President, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

900 million out of 1.2 billion extreme poor live in rural areas. Rural poverty reduction and rural development are critical to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Marius Ratolojanahary stated that 80% of the 16 Million people of Madagascar reside in rural areas, relying on agriculture, livestock and fishing. The President of Madagascar is committed to reducing poverty, corruption and creating effective strategies to achieve the MDGs. Their government is giving high priority to rural development, education, and health. The country is divided into 20 regions for creating alliances and partnerships. As a

result of ECOSOC's Ministerial Declaration in 2003, which encourages alliances and partnerships for rural development, Madagascar became the pilot country. This created much support and hope at the highest political and business levels in the country.

According to Mr. Mark Mallach Brown, countries need an efficient agricultural sector for sustained and balanced development. 70% of those who live on less than \$1 /day are in rural areas. Hunger can be solved by governments committing to improving soil fertility, creating jobs, allowing farmers to retain more profit, improving small scale water management, and improving access to modern tools and supplies.

Mr. David Harcharik stated that rural development must be an integral part of national and international development policies. Broad based increases in agricultural productivity, combined with hunger reduction, offer the best means for moving beyond precarious survival. Pooling efforts to eradicate poverty is a fundamental part

*Working Together, continued on pg. 10*

## The Emerging Recommendations of the Millennium Project: A Global Business Plan to Achieve the MDGs

Briefing by Professor Jeffery Sachs - July 21, 2004

By *Merly Barete-Barlaan*

Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on the Millennium Development Goals and Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, briefed the members of the ECOSOC in the ECOSOC Chamber. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Ambassador Jagdish Koonjul of Mauritius, Vice President of ECOSOC.

Prof. Sachs stated that the barriers to achieving the MDGs can be faced with partnerships between poor and rich countries. According to studies done on students in Western Kenyan schools, poor students consistently pass their secondary examination. This proves their determination and capability to get out of poverty if they have the help they need.

Some ways to help fight hunger and disease and turn the tide of poverty are: providing adequate fertilizers to improve soil quality, good water management, and access to information and communication

technologies for improving education, healthcare and security. Small amounts of well-targeted money can improve extreme poverty.

He called on governments of developed nations to create MDG-based poverty reduction strategies that analyze what developing nations need so their children can stay alive and what it would cost to carry out those plans. Sachs then emphasized the imperative of funding the plans. He called upon developing nations to put governance plans in place to insure that aid money gets to the villages.

Prof. Sachs concluded that there is no reason to fail in achieving the MDGs other than neglect. What do we need to do to achieve the MDGs? We need to move from words to action. Developed countries need to follow through with rigorous, monitorable programs of lifesaving, poverty-reducing infrastructure development. In order to reach goals by 2015, we have to act now and every day for the next ten years.

## Peace Boat Northeast Asian Youth Voices in the Global Efforts for Conflict Prevention

September 10, 2004 - ECOSOC Chamber, UN NYC

By *Bonnie Berry*

United Nations NGO Section/DESA, together with Peace Boat and NGO-UN Conflict Prevention Working Group sponsored a panel discussion, giving an opportunity for Peace Boat Global University students to speak their minds about war and the threat of war, military build up in Northeast Asia, and the impact of increased military spending on social and cultural programs.

Hanifa Mezoui, Chief of the NGO Section of DESA, pointed out during her opening remarks that the ECOSOC Chambers normally only houses meetings of the 54 member states. Japan based Peace Boat consistently participates in activism toward nuclear disarmament for Asia and commitment to strengthening NGO interaction and networking. Several hundred mainly Japanese and Korean youth participate in educational programs each year regarding human rights, environmental protection and interdependence. This legacy afforded representatives from the Peace Boat to speak in the ECOSOC chamber. Ms. Mezoui reminded us that establishing global peace will take more than minimizing violence. It will require sharing mutual values of respect and understanding.

Peace Boat students expressed a longing for peace, concern about violence being used to force peace. They pointed out that typically when military budgets increase, spending for education, social programs and culture decrease. Many of these students have personally experienced war or threat of war.

The panel concluded with brief statements from adults including Mr. Danila Turk, Asst. Sec. General for Political Affairs, Jack Patterson and Jennifer Nordstrom, representatives from GPPAC (Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict). Mr. Turk stressed that humanity MUST strive to find nonviolent means to resolve differences. He emphasized that solutions to armed conflict are complex and input from NGOs and civil society are needed. The UN can not do it alone. Mr. Patterson called for a priority shift from conflict management to conflict prevention. Ms. Nordstrom outlined the GPPAC process and timeline of seeking input regarding conflict prevention from civil society, involving research, discussion and action which will culminate in a Global Action Agenda for Conflict Prevention, to be launched at UN Headquarters in July of 2005.

# At the UN in Geneva ...

## The Realization of Peace in Women's Hand: Meeting the Challenge

8th Women's Conference for Peace in the Middle East  
May 9-12, 2004 - Geneva, Switzerland

By Carolyn Handschin

The 8<sup>th</sup> Women's Conference for Peace in the Middle East was convened on May 9-12 in Geneva, Switzerland. Sessions on May 10-11 were held at the United Nations. This conference series, an annual regional gathering in the Middle East, came to the global platform of the UN for the first time this year. Forty Middle Eastern women leaders in the areas of politics, law, media, education, academics, and nongovernmental organizations were invited to address the issues of their region with the experts from UN Agencies, government representatives and many international NGO's based at the UN. At the opening banquet, **Mr. Jean-Luc Chopard**, chief of protocol, extended a message of welcome to the participants on behalf of the Geneva State Government and its President, M. Robert Kramer. Citing Geneva as a place of hope, peace and action, he said, "Even though the last century has witnessed tremendous progress in the scientific and technical field, for the honor of mankind, we should also be capable of progress in the field of human relations". **Mrs. Conchita Poncini**, President of the CONGO Committee on the Status of Women- Geneva extended wishes for a productive meeting.

The Opening Plenary began with remarks from **Prof. LanYoung Moon Park**, Pres. of WFPW International and **H.E. Mrs. In'am Al-Mufti**, Senator of Jordan, co-chairs of the conference. Prof. Park applauded WFPW Japan for the decade of humanitarian and educational activities that WFPW-Japan has been sponsoring throughout the Middle East.



Conference Co-Chairs: Prof. Lan Young Moon Park, President of WFPW International and H.E. Mrs. In'am Al Mufti, Senator of Jordan

"We uphold the universal wish of every human being to create a safer and more peaceful world for our children". Mrs. Al-Mufti noted that, "Our future depends on people and leaders around the world developing the vision of a better and safer world, as well as developing strategies, institutions and the will to achieve the vision. We must each ask what *our* role is and how we can properly prepare our children for their future responsibilities".



First opening panel with Amb. J.C. Boulgaris presenting the speech of Mrs. Calmy-Rey, Swiss foreign minister, the two chairpersons, Prof. L.Y. Park, Mrs. Al Mufti, Senator of Jordan, Carolyn Handschin

The Welcoming Speech of the Swiss Foreign Minister, **H.E. Ms. Micheline Calmy-Rey**, a tireless advocate for the Middle East and women's empowerment was read by the Swiss Ambassador to the UN, **H.E.Mr. Jean-Marc Boulgaris**. The **Keynote Speech** was delivered by video from **H. E. Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak**, First Lady of Egypt and Founder of the Women's International Peace Movement. She began by saying that she chooses to focus on positive advances, expressing gratitude to all people who have continued to raise consciousness about the imperative for peace.



Dr. Bernard Ramcharan, Acting (interim) High Commissioner of Human Rights, Geneva, Dr. Feride Acar, President CEDAW (UN-Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against women)

She reminded us that we must consider above all, the fundamental need for human security; because without it, we can not realize our potential, or fulfill our aspirations and dreams! The conference drew close to 150 participants, including Ambassadors (notably, 5 women Ambassadors), several heads of UN Agencies, and representatives from UN programmes, governments and international NGO's.

### Opening Panel: Women's Contribution to Peace in the Middle East

This first Panel was facilitated by **Carolyn Handschin**, WFWPI Deputy Director for UN Relations. In his statement, **Dr. Bertrand Ramcharan**, Acting High Commissioner for Human Rights, noted the difference that women's input has made in situations of

conflict, voicing the need for participation of women in conflict resolution. **Prof. Feride Acar**, President of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), outlined their work in assisting

women to end discrimination and become empowered change agents. She urged all participants to lobby their governments to ratify the CEDAW Convention. **Ambassador Najat Al-Hajajji** (Libya), President of the Human Rights Commission (2003) noted the importance of exercising all Human Rights. "Lasting peace is comprehensive peace based on justice and equality." **Dr. Aleya Hammad**, former Executive Director of WHO/Women's Health and co-founder with Mrs. Mubarak of the Women for Peace NGO Network was also among the panelists. **Dr. Yvonne von Stedingk**, presented case studies of 2 NGO's who work with 'Education for Peace' programmes in the Middle East that bring children of conflicting sides together to work out their traumas. Students learn about common roots and aspirations and develop an appreciation of their cultural diversities. **H.E. Mrs. Oya Talat**, wife of the Prime Minister of the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus and the President and co-founder of the Patriotic Women's Union was the last panelist to speak. She invited her longtime friend and colleague, Nadina Theodorou, a Greek Cypriot, to join her at the table as she spoke about the investment of women in peace initiatives over the years in their divided nation. She spoke about the recent bitter disappointment for peace activists on both sides when the referendum for unification failed, but assured us that their will to unify Cyprus is unbroken.

WFWP-Japan presented a video, **Women Behind the Scenes**, a look at the Middle East Peace Conference Series as well as many educational and humanitarian activities that WFWP has organized throughout the region.

### Panel Session Two: The Role of Women in Creating a Culture of Peace

The first speaker was **Ms. Rama Enay**, an Israeli representing Women's International

Zionist Organization (WIZO) at the UN in Geneva. She detailed the work of women's organizations in Israel to give women a voice, educate and train them in leadership roles and to sponsor their pursuit of peace through seminars and projects that enjoin Israeli and Palestinian women and youth. **Ms. Siham Hillis**, a Palestinian recruitment officer for UN Relief Works Agency (UNRWA) spoke of two projects that were organized for Palestinian children of the Ramallah Refugee camp following the 7<sup>th</sup> Middle Eastern Women's conference last year. She spoke of the longing of Palestinian and Israeli women for peace, noting the specific ways that women contribute to creating a culture of peace. The final speaker of the session was **Ivette Abi Nader**, an educator and journalist in Lebanon. Recognizing the crucial role that women have in nurturing and guiding future leaders, she noted the value of volunteerism and character education as a central aspect of education. In spite of the centuries of rule by brute force, she pointed to the instrumental role historically played by individual women in laying the foundations for peace.

**Panel Session Three:  
Women's Initiative and Middle East Peace**

The first speaker, **H.E. May Abu-alsamen**, a Jordanian Senator, said that women's organizations working in Jordan have doubled since 1990. They bring a new breadth, quality and balance into the political and civil arena.



High level segment panel with from left to right: Dr. Ramcharan, Dr. Acar, Amb. Najat al Hajajji, President of the Human Rights Commission (2003) and Amb. from Libya to the UN, Mrs. Al-Mufti, Jordan, Carolyn, the First Lady of North Cyprus, Dr. Aleya Hammd, Dr. Yvonne von Stedingk

Individual members of the royal family as well as government institutions have made great effort to introduce a vision for a culture of peace, training women as facilitators of the peace process. **Dr. Kawthar Al-Jouan**, a Kuwaiti lawyer and director of the Women's Institution for Development and Training outlined the historic struggle of women of her country to gain their right to vote and be represented in parliament in spite of having achieved leading positions in other fields. As president of the lobbying committee for women's political rights, she carefully chose members of both genders and orchestrated a campaign to put all views clearly on the table so just decisions are made. The final speaker, **Dr. Amal Osman**, V.P. of the Egyptian Parliament and law professor, highlighted the role of women in preventative diplomacy. Their talent is better used as intermediaries, limiting

escalation of disputes, fostering reconciliation and mobilizing civilians. She said that although conflict in her region has damaged social development and women's aspirations, women's organizations have exerted considerable influence on public policy and respect of law.

**Panel Session Four:  
The Role of Middle Eastern Women in  
Creating a World of Peace**

**Dr. Lubna Al-Kazi**, a professor at Kuwait University focused her discourse on the ways that Kuwaiti women work to spread tolerance in spite of mistrust, competition, and insecurity that has harmed the social and moral fabric of life. **Mrs. Ehteram Malakouti Nejad**, the Executive Director of the Support Network for Single Women in Iran pointed to the link between family values and a responsible civil society. After detailing the originally intended role of the UN, she proposed that if women have difficulty stopping war, they can find ways to support the work of the UN. The final panelist was **Ms. Naima Al-Shayji**, international consultant in Kuwait with a background within agencies at the UN.

**Panel Session Five:  
The Pieces of Peace:  
Practical Steps Women Can Take Towards  
a Peaceful World**

The first panelist, **Ms. Nadina Theodorou** has been working for twenty years in Cyprus as a volunteer with seriously ill children, and children victims of domestic violence, living under the protection of social services. She described her experience working with Siham Hillis (UNRWA officer in Gaza) to bring a group of 8-10 year-old orphaned Palestinian refugee children to Cyprus to experience a peaceful environment. Few eyes were dry as she detailed the joy the children experienced in the beauty of nature and caring of others outside their community for the first time. Although there have been visits from Israeli children to Cyprus sponsored by the government, Palestinians hadn't been free to travel. Generous financial donations, hospitality, special outings, music and dance lessons, sportswear and clothing from many Greek Cypriots contributed to what Mrs. Hillis described as a 'rare and wonderful experience that gave the children hope for the future. **Mrs. Leila Barakat**, Founder and Chairwoman of the New Woman's Society in Egypt, reported on the work of her NGO to invite Palestinian children to Egypt. She too, had heard Mrs. Hillis' description of life in the Gaza Refugee Camps at the WFWP Middle Eastern Women's Conference last year. The final speaker, **Mrs. Evelyn Zachary**, Chief of the Social Services Division at UNRWA Headquarters in Amman, Jordan, gave a very informative startling exposé on the historic achievements and ongoing commitments of her agency to bring a better standard of living to the Palestinian Refugees. She gave insight into health services, education

(achieved gender parity), relief services, micro-finance/enterprise pro-programmes and home demolition relief especially for civilian women.

**Interactive Sessions/ Proposals**

During questions and comments, there were lively, even heated exchanges. Participants sensed when the debate became divisive, correcting themselves, with conference theme in mind. Although it was clear that certain basic facts had to be put on the table in order to address root causes, the organizers encouraged consensus building and forward looking strategies. Throughout the sessions, an evolution in the ability to "receive" the other, a kind of progressive reconciliation was gradually won. As the 8<sup>th</sup> conferences on issues of Middle Eastern women, the framework of trust and honesty that has been built over the years has surely influenced the outcome.



Participants including 2 representatives of the Women's Internation Zionist Organization (WIZO)

The conference closed with **proposals** for the creation of several joint activities. These included a conference for empowerment of women to be co-sponsored by WFWPI in Kuwait and a continuation of the projects for children in the Ramallah Refugee camp in Palestine. A support network for schools in the region was proposed that would work with education for peace curriculum, and, where possible, democracy education, as well as a possible project to give Middle East youth experiences in diplomacy through children's congresses or other means. Establishment of a task force was proposed to identify projects for 'Poverty Eradication for Peace' and research into the best way to promote "1325 Advocacy" in each country. Follow-up to the proposals will be reported at the 9<sup>th</sup> MEW Conference in spring 2005. WFWPI President, **Prof. Lan Young Moon Park** invited the participants and their organizations to join in women's empowerment training and reconciliation as well as an upcoming international women's rally for peace in Jerusalem. The ongoing outreach to women in Palestine and Israel is an attempt to understand their situation, show solidarity and help build bridges towards reconciliation and reconstruction. The worldwide activities of WFWPI, to empower women, strengthen families and reinforce commitments to building a culture of peace in more than 100 countries, were recognized in the closing statements by chair, **HE In'am Al-Mufti**.



# Activities Around the World in 2004

## Germany

- ❖ **Sisterhood Ceremony Reunion** visit for German women visiting their Jewish Sisters from last year's Sisterhood Ceremony. All visiting women had home stays with their Jewish counterparts, toured the city of Dresden and learned the history of the Jewish people in Dresden, as well as much about Jewish traditions. A special kosher meal was caringly prepared and shared by all. Family and personal bonds deepened and strengthened between hosts and visitors.
- ❖ **Collection and Donation** of goods was held for Kenyan NGOs, including computer, fax, cell phones, bicycles, typewriters and more.
- ❖ **Numerous educational programs** such as Problem Solving through Effective Communication, Dignity of Women, Founding Principles of WFWP, and Introduction to different cultures were held.
- ❖ **WFWP Germany publishes** and distributes a quarterly newsletter, "Heart and Hand". Circulation is 300. Plans are to continue this and develop the newsletter into a more professional piece.
- ❖ **Committees have been established to strengthen development in the following areas:** German-Jewish reconciliation, Christian-Muslim exchange and dialog, German-French reconciliation, Social Service activities (1% Love Sharing campaign for North Korea, Russian orphanage, aid to African countries, and support for Eastern Europe). Groundwork is also being laid for sisterhood ceremonies with Holland and Belgium.

## France and Germany

### Sisterhood Ceremony

- ❖ German women traveled to France for the first ever Sisterhood Ceremony between German women and French women. This profound and moving ceremony between women of nations with enmity existing between them for centuries marked a tearful new beginning.

## Moldova

### Service Projects

Support for Cazanesti village, Telenesti district:

Paved the main road in Cazanesti with gravel so that villagers can reach the school, hospital, post office and shops during the autumn and winter wet seasons.

Drugs and medical equipment donated to the hospital.

Provided school supplies for 10 needy children.

Undergarments for 223 orphans were donated.

### Other Projects:

- ❖ Concert and awards ceremony for elderly celebrating UN International Day of Aged
- ❖ Donation of cloth and thread to Ukrainian children for use in learning traditional embroidery.
- ❖ Round table for young teachers on conflict resolution skills.
- ❖ Charity performance for children at Republican Center for hearing impaired. Needs assessment and acquisition of equipment for development of hearing and speech (in collaboration with other aid organizations).

## France

### Sisterhood Ceremony Reunion

- ❖ Anniversary Celebration with sisterhood pairs from first Christian – Muslim Sisterhood Ceremony, held at Grande Mosque Park in Paris.

## Spain

### Activities & Education

- ❖ Women's Day Celebration
- ❖ Conference Series: "**Woman's Role in Building Peace: Development and Obstacles**", held in Madrid. Nine functions on different topics were held, demonstrating our concern for peace, bringing women from diverse cultures together, building friendships and creating a forum for discussion on women's role as peace builders.



*Women's Day in Spain*

## Iceland

### Iceland

- ❖ Foster parent scholarship project in Cambodia (joint effort with another NGO)
- ❖ Educational programs strengthening the bonds between mothers and daughters
- ❖ Seminar "Improving the Sexual Behavior of Young People in Iceland"

# Activities Around the World in 2004

## Austria

### Service Projects

- ❖ Representatives participate in UN Committee on Peace, Committee on Status of Women meetings and participated in numerous UN functions in Vienna, Geneva and NY.
- ❖ Collection and donation of container of items to Albania, distributed to the needy by Christian Children's Fund.
- ❖ Ongoing support of girls and orphans school project in Afghanistan.
- ❖ Collection of toys and children's clothes for poor in Budapest.
- ❖ Charity fundraiser for projects in Ghana and Somalia



Collection and Distribution by WFPW Austria for Albania, in cooperation with Christian Children's Fund.



## Italy

### Activities

- ❖ Raffle Fundraiser for 1% Love Sharing aid to North Korea
- ❖ International Women's Day Celebration
- ❖ Sponsored and Organized International Women's Festival
- ❖ Inauguration of new WFPW chapter in Bologna
- ❖ Jointly with 20 other NGOs, organized Family Festival in Bergamo
- ❖ International Women's Choir for Peace performed as a fundraiser in Bergamo
- ❖ Multi-Ethnic Children's Choir, "Voci Bianche Citta di Padova" performed on national TV with a Russian children's choir, participating in a touching friendship ceremony.
- ❖ "The Role of Women in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – Towards and Era of Peace" Conference held jointly with another ngo in Rome.

## Norway

- ❖ Financed transport of a container of clothes, toys, medical supplies for children in Estonia
- ❖ Celebrated United Nations International Day of Peace with an interreligious prayer service and speech by Knut Holdhus, "Principles of Peace"
- ❖ Christmas Party, presentation on aid work to Estonia, raffle to raise funds for Estonia aid.

## Romania

- ❖ Held weekly meetings on topics of education, health, cooking, travel culture, handicrafts
- ❖ WFPW President has ongoing program teaching crafts in school for handicapped.
- ❖ Collection of Children's clothes for local orphanage.

that we need in every country. This is a campaign in which all people – young and old, rich and poor, women and men, have a role to play. Indeed, our chances of success depend in great part on the degree to which you, the individuals and groups that make up civil society, mobilize around this mission. Consider the consequences of failure. If we do not achieve these minimal goals by the target year of 2015, we will have failed hundreds of millions of people who are looking to us for assistance and solidarity. We will have doomed another generation of children to lives of deprivation and insecurity. Not least, we will have lost a major battle in the struggle for human rights, for multilateralism, for development assistance, and for inclusive, equitable development in a rapidly globalizing world.

There is a growing, if fragile, consensus that we have reached a historic moment at which we have the means to end extreme poverty around the world. We have the information through the national and global reporting processes. We have financial resources, although not enough yet, which are being used more effectively and with greater accountability. We have an ever-growing catalogue of best practices. And there is growing public awareness about the importance of the goals and their role in building strong, stable societies.”

Secretary General Annan also stressed that the MDGs are different than previous lofty promises because not only are they measurable, but they enjoy unprecedented support from the political arena. Finally, they are achievable. Secretary General Annan, President of General Assembly, Julian Hunt and Under Secretary General for Communication and Public Information, Shashi Tharoor all stressed the crucial role that NGOs are playing in implementing programs that bring achievement toward goals as well as communicating both to governments and citizens, and monitoring progress.

It became clear at the conference that UN reform is increasingly geared toward strengthening interaction and the working relationship between the UN and NGOs/civil society. At last year's conference Sec. Gen. Annan announced the formation of a High Level Panel to examine ways to strengthen these ties. The outcome report from this panel was released just prior to the conference and was cited by numerous panelists. In fact, Sir Emyr Jones Parry, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the UN, a panelist at one plenary session, stated that even the Security Council is examining the options for the creation of an avenue for input from

nongovernmental organizations to the Security Council.

Although it is impossible to give a full account of the conference proceedings in this article, I would like to share highlights of one particular plenary: “Strategies for Overcoming Obstacles to the MDGs”. This lively panel was moderated by New York Times Op-ed Columnist, Nicholas Kristof. Panelists included Bineta Diop, Executive Director of Femmes Africa Solidarite in Senegal (and founder of the Mano River Women's Peace Network), Sir Emyr Jones Parry, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the UN, Miklos Marschall, Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia of Transparency International, and Wu Qing, Director of Cultural Development Center for Rural Women in China. Main obstacles to achievement that were discussed; insufficient public awareness, absence of political will, lack of commitment in the private sector and among individuals, inadequate financial resources, corruption, misallocation of funds, and the difficulty in implementing programs in the midst of armed conflict.

Kristof stressed that security is a key factor in advancing on the MDGs, citing China and India as nations that have made progress after years of stagnation. He stated that there are two strategies for progress toward good governance and healthy economic policy. Large organizations improving large structures, such as creating law that enhances progress is one way. The other is local grassroots efforts to develop programs and impact the morals and values of the immediate community through education and publicity.

Bineta Diop defined the crucial role of women in peace building. Her observation about Africa is that historical problems such as slavery and colonization still weigh progress down. In addition, there is still raging conflict in many African nations. She has been successful in implementing efforts to bring women together to lobby their governments to cease fighting. She also sees progress in the area of gender equity. In Rwanda, half of parliament is women. Also, civil society put pressure on leadership to insist upon gender parity among commissioners to the African Union. Now, five commissioners are men and five are women. In spite of these successes, and the commitment of 53 African nations to the fulfillment of the MDGs, Sub-Saharan Africa has seen no progress in 4 years. Bineta emphasized that civil society; particularly women must continue to apply pressure to leaders in order for progress to happen.

Finally she called for the international community to focus on goal 8, reminding us that when people have their basic needs met, and rights respected, it is a safer more secure world (referring to the problem of terrorism).

Miklos Marshall told a compelling story of a very hilly developing country purchasing tractors from a flat country with a tractor surplus. This transaction came about as a result of a small bribe. Loans were arranged for farmers, only to find out the tractors could not be used on the hilly land. Farmers defaulted and the economic devastation was severe for the nation as a whole. He quoted a statistic that 5% of the global economy is used for bribes or corrupt transactions. Marshall insisted that systems of accountability, good governance and democracy are requirements, key components for achieving the MDGs.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry spoke from the perspective of donor countries, echoing Marshall about the importance of accountable systems and getting the delivery of aid money right. A sense of ownership of the goals by each nation needs to be cultivated. He saw NGOs in a role of custodian, guardian and “holders to account” of governments. He also stressed that development without security is impossible and security without development is not lasting. He did cite some success stories. In Mozambique, poverty has been reduced by 50 to 70%. Uganda and Thailand have reduced the spread of Aids considerably. Parry also advocated a stronger role for the UN in facing not only development issues but also the serious political issues in the world.

Wu Qing shared about the tremendous successes of the Center for Rural Women she directs. Their target is training for grassroots women leaders and girls who have dropped out of school. The focus is skill building for job preparation, which empowers the girls and women economically. The impact spreads because these girls and women are able to support other family members to complete school. The center also has a legal aid fund, emergency relief funds, classes in math, computer, Chinese and English. The center's magazine offers inspiration to women for self-improvement and practice for their literacy skills. It also provides training about gender equality and citizenship. Wu mentioned that funding comes from foundations around the world because of the goals of the center, the transparency and the democracy with which they function. Through her work she has gained a

DPI/NGO Conference, continued on pg. 9

## Midday Workshop, continued...

Mrs. Rutangye, the first to speak, gave great credit to Uganda's President for his openness and his proactive approach to facing the



Mrs. Erina Rutangye,  
Chairwoman of WFWP Uganda

nation's problems. She then outlined the many very practical projects that WFWP has instigated. Two primary schools have been founded in Western Uganda, serving 520 students who are either orphaned or from very poor families.

On the secondary level, Kizinda Parents Vocational School offers both formal and vocational training to over 500 students. All graduates last year passed national exams, with 25% passing the highest level exam. Vocational programs include carpentry, sewing, agriculture, construction and environmental management. Peace High School was founded to assist disadvantaged girl children in the following categories: girls escaping from Female Genital Circumcision, orphaned by AIDS, returned girl soldiers, those traumatized or orphaned by the Northern Ugandan war, gifted girls from extremely poor families who can't afford school tuition. WFWP has also sponsored a number of post high school students both for vocational training and college studies.

Adult literacy, life and development skills for women, community health education (ABC approach to AIDS, with emphasis on Abstinence and Being Faithful, as well as basic hygiene) have also been conducted extensively. In addition, education against Female Genital Circumcision has been held.

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*DPI/NGO Conference, continued from pg. 8*  
constituency strong enough to run for public office and win.

Altogether, there were four plenary sessions and approximately 30 different midday workshops on various topics relating to fulfillment of the millennium development goals. Improvements over last year's DPI/NGO conference were: much more opportunity for networking and interacting with other NGOs and the panelists, more focus on successes and best practices, as well as more youth involvement. Much of the content of the plenaries, copies of speeches, videos and opportunities to email comments are all still available at the conference website. ([www.undpingoconference.org](http://www.undpingoconference.org))



Education on family values and relationships have been held, as well as matching women in sisterhood ceremonies to promote support systems for facing problems, and family education on poverty eradication has also been implemented. One of the most inspiring successes for WFWP Uganda has been a result of a small grant from UNDP. This project aimed to help 400 displaced families in Mbale district of Eastern Uganda living on very steep degraded land prone to erosion and landslides. The families have been taught intercropping of seasonal and perennial crops and agro forestry, including coffee on each acre sized family plot. Family income was predicted to increase from \$200 annual to \$1200 annual. Instead, real income per family has increased to \$2000. Soil and water management, compost making, water harvesting, health and hygiene, family values and HIV/AIDS avoidance skills are also taught. WF Uganda has concretized a development framework for transforming poor families to families with hope. Their vision is to advance the number of families raised out of poverty each year.

Rev. John Gehring, reminded us that war and the threat of war is a major obstacle to



Rev. John Gehring,  
Executive Director of Religious  
Youth Service

overcoming poverty and achieving basic ambitions in life. Within each great religion we can find the motivation to forgive, love and unite with those who have wronged us. However, Rev. Gehring pointed out that when the religious impulse is manipulated for political or economic gain, it can cut like a sword. The majority of conflict hot spots have some connection to religious tension. He suggested that if poverty is to be overcome, and education is to play a leading

role, then deep cooperation must occur among adherents of different religions. Religious Youth Service was founded in 1985 to fulfill the motto, "World Peace through interreligious action". Since then RYS has offered over 130 service projects in 47 nations. Young adults of all religions and cultures are invited to come together to live, work and share together while providing service to communities in need. John informed us that service projects are often tied to education, health or environmental needs such as building, repairing schools and clinics or reforestation work. He emphasized that though the physical work of the volunteer is important, just as, or more important is the group effort to create the culturally, religiously diverse community of good will. This pattern of cooperation illustrates what is possible to the leaders of today.

John shared an example of the ripple effect that these activities can have within a community. He spoke of Das Marinas, a very poor community in the Philippines, where Christians lived on one side of a stream and Muslims on the other. Though these communities were not openly hostile to one another, there were undercurrents of distrust. RYS brought 40 young people from 16 nations, and each major religion to help construct a bridge across the stream. A local Technical school and other local NGOs lent support. As work progressed, slowly children in the respective communities were drawn to the activity, then their mothers. Within the week, many of the men in the community were pitching in. At the ribbon cutting, the Governor and the local Imam and Bishop stood together to cut the ribbon to open the "International Bridge of Love". It was evident that the love and sacrifice offered by the youth helped forge a bond between the two communities, demonstrating that this type of cooperation can be a powerful force in generating social change. Rev. Gehring challenged other NGOs to support and develop this type of "education of the heart".

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Midday Workshop, continued on pg. 11

## *Girls & Technology, continued from pg. 2*

Republic of Guinea to the United Nations; and Sylvia Thomas, Representative of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, Inc. Paul Hoeffel, Chief of the NGO Section DPI, moderated the discussion.

Mr. Hoeffel commenced the discussion by highlighting the UN agencies' current efforts to promote girls' technological skills. Mr. Hoeffel stated: "UNICEF has been working in countries like Sudan and Guinea to use radio technology and has sponsored internet learning forums between students and teachers from around the world."

Mr. Wright explained, "Technology is the primary driving force of progress. It's about more efficient productivity, greater adoption of natural resources for our own use and the production of goods and services." In addition, Mr. Wright underscored the importance the UN places on women's access to technology. Access to technology is the third most important issue facing women, behind poverty and violence against women, according to the UN. Mr. Wright stressed that, "Girls should be introduced to technology then be allowed to freely choose these areas and be educated to see the career opportunities." Mr. Wright listed barriers to increasing access to technology in the developing world. According to Mr. Wright, social and cultural bias, poor infrastructure, especially technical infrastructure, act as impediments. Mr. Wright affirmed: "In most developing countries, traditional ways of thinking about the role of women and

traditional issues of power remain. Often when technology is introduced, men soon infiltrate the sector and take over." The first step to success is overcoming poor technology infrastructure. Governments must invest in the infrastructure.

Mr. Zoumanigui provided a background on the development of education in Guinea and an overview of what his country is doing to promote technical and educational capacity in northwest Africa. "In 1958, Guinea became independent," noted Mr. Zoumanigui. That same year, Guinea's education system became public and three ministries were created to oversee the fledgling system. However, barriers continued to prevent girls from attending school. To address this, the government created the Center for the Advancement of Women, where girls who were not enrolled in school, could learn trades like sewing and dressmaking. According to Mr. Zoumanigui, in 1984, Guinea placed further emphasis on the education of girls and women. The government and civil society jointly reformed the education system. The government increased enrollment of girls in technical and professional schools, increased the subjects girls could learn in professional schools to include civil engineering, carpentry and cooking; and at the university level, increased the number of girls studying economics, law, medicine, pharmacology, and engineering. Mr. Zoumanigui affirmed that progress in Guinea's educational system was made

possible by UNICEF's and civil society's assistance.

The final panelist, Ms. Sylvia Thomas, a representative of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, Inc. (IEEE), an NGO which works in approximately 175 countries around the world to advance technical, engineering and computer skills for girls, called on "all nations and all individuals to facilitate international partnerships to increase technological literacy and status of girls." Ms. Thomas further highlighted the importance of fulfilling the MDG's by the year 2015, "especially those goals that promote gender equality and empower women through the elimination of gender disparity in education at all levels." (See [www.developmentgoals.org](http://www.developmentgoals.org) for the Millennium Development Goals).

(EFA – see [www.unesco.org/education/efa](http://www.unesco.org/education/efa) for the *Education for All* plan)



## *Working Together, continued from pg. 3*

of advancing rural development because: 1. Poverty is multidimensional and addressing it will require a holistic, multi-sector approach, 2. Least developed Countries need greatest external support. 3. Greater regional cooperation offers opportunities for working together for rural development. Example: NEPAD has developed, with inputs from FSO, IFAD and WFP, a comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme. In Rome, FAO, IFAD, WFP, the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute and a number of NGOs have launched an "International Alliance against Hunger". The Alliance is a voluntary association of institutions and people who share a common commitment to the rapid eradication of hunger in the world. The immediate goal of the Alliance is to help mobilize the necessary political will and resources at all levels to ensure that the World Food Summit goal and Millennium Development target of halving the number of undernourished people, is achieved by 2015 or before. The goal of the Alliance is to nurture the growth of National Alliances against Hunger (NAAH) in both developing and developed countries. 80 countries have established or will establish a national alliance. The effectiveness of the alliance will depend on its ability to respond to the needs of poor people, especially women and children. FAO facilitation of South-South Cooperation seeks to enhance solidarity among developing countries by providing cost-effective expertise and opportunities for long-term interaction in the field.

Mr. Lennart Bage's \* message pointed out the opportunity to evaluate the progress

*Working Together, continued on pg. 12*

## *The Family Today, continued from pg. 2*

Zaude, Senior Gender Advisor, UNDP, Mr. Peter Crowley, Chairperson, Vienna NGO Committee on the Family, moderated by Mr. Paul Hoeffel, Chief of DPI/NGO Section. In this panel, the issue of domestic violence was raised as well as combat against AIDS. The UN definition of family and the role of grandparents (intergenerational issues), were also raised, among others.

Unless we as parents teach the value of equality for husband and wife, domestic violence will never end and a healthy family can not be achieved. Ms. Zaude stated that many women don't know how to practice their rights, even though they know they have rights. Therefore, it is very important that efficient social policy be made to educate to women on how to exercise their rights. Also, social policy should protect women and children, who are particularly vulnerable, from AIDS.

Mr. Allen explained US policy to combat AIDS which has committed 2 million US dollars each to 14 countries. Fifteen billion dollars in the U.S. budget goes to combat

AIDS and related issues. Defining family is becoming an increasingly sensitive and controversial issue now because of homosexuals. The UN does not have a clear definition. An NGO representative from Israel shared experiences about raising children who were brought out of dysfunctional families. An NGO representative from Russia shared that single parents can make successful families. There is an issue of polygamy in many African countries, where even women involved don't know why change is necessary. Ms. Zaude expressed the important role of teaching wisdom that grandparents have, which is lost when grandparents are not involved in family life. She also explained that UNDP provides training programs showing men how to be partners with women within the family. At the Tenth Anniversary of IYF, we as members of the human family need to recognize again that the ultimate solution to problems on every level of society comes from true partnership between men and women.



## Midday Workshop, continued...

RYS has been active in areas facing religious tension and violence such as India, Northern Ireland, former Yugoslavia, Indonesia, Southern Thailand, Northern Uganda, the River State in Nigeria and Philippines. RYS has also worked to promote healing with indigenous populations in Australia, New Zealand, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Paraguay, Samoa, Tonga, Bangladesh, India and Thailand.

In conclusion, Rev. Gehring said, "For poverty to be eradicated, we will need to have peace. For peace to take root we will need to have justice. For justice to be established we will need to be governed by love. The religious community and NGOs can play a



Dr. Kathy Winings,  
Vice President of IRFF  
International Board of Directors

major role in promoting a culture of peace. The culture of peace emerges when we educate the heart to have the capability of healing and helping. Education will play a major role in eradicating poverty and establishing a just society when it provides both the external skills to function in our society and the internal skills to build trusting relationships."

IRFF's Dr. Kathy Winings gave a brief overview of successful programs in Zambia and Cameroon, among others that emphasize a combination of micro-enterprise, micro-financing and educational programs that cover core curriculum, vocational, computer training and capacity building. Rather than give a complete inventory of projects, she introduced us to what she referred to as service learning, utilized by IRFF for the past 15 years. Dr. Winings defines service learning as, "A method through which one learns and develops through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs and that provide structured reflection time for the participant to think, talk or write about their experience. The activity becomes the catalyst for learning, growth and enhanced development which comes through the reflection process." She went on to clarify that the reflection process is what sets service learning apart from conventional volunteer programs. She has come to expect enhanced character formation, heightened learning, a stronger sense of citizenship and deepening

family and social relationships, as well as strengthening of self esteem through effective service learning programs. Dr. Winings indicated that service learning addresses some of the intangibles on the way to advancing the Millennium Development Goals, such as unhealthy attitudes toward self, community, life and the future (i.e. hopelessness, powerlessness, despair, anger, lack of respect for others and resentment). She contends that policy changes, more money and more schools cannot change these attitudes, but service learning does have the power to integrate cognitive and moral learning, bringing the heart and mind into a new synthesis. Also, service learning gives the opportunity for those in an academic environment to apply the theories they are learning to actual situations, giving the student the opportunity to serve, reflect, feel and relate all at once. This process empowers those in difficulty to envision their own solutions, what they have to contribute and how they may impact and be impacted by help from beyond their communities, putting them on equal footing with those



Dr. P.C. Lunia,  
Chairman, Golden India Foundation

who come to "help". Dr. Winings did not claim that service learning is a panacea, but called it a useful tool for NGOs and civil society to utilize. In concluding, she quoted a service learning participant who said, "The purpose of life, above all, is to matter, to count, to stand for something, to make a difference that you lived at all." Her observation is that participants in service learning do indeed come to realize that they can make a difference.

The final panelist, Dr. P.C. Lunia presented a number of proposals for the UN Organization in the arena of specific educational program presented either online or by DVD, on a very broad scale. He stressed the two areas of employment generation and education as being key to poverty eradication, emphasizing that education is primary. Dr. Lunia praised NGOs for their voluntary motive and ability to work with less formality, less bureaucracy and more result orientation than governments. He went on to suggest that, because of this, perhaps NGOs should be entrusted with the job of poverty eradication through education. Dr. Lunia proposed four

projects that he estimated to cost a total of \$2 billion.

The first suggestion was for a Free Virtual University sponsored by the UN and providing online education in approximately 500 different areas. He cited the increasing costs of college education and the statistical proof of the connection between higher education and prosperity.

The second proposal was for interactive DVDs to be created and distributed freely in twenty different languages on different trades, skills and jobs using the guidance of experts in the respective fields. His concept is to put training for certain jobs such as repair and maintenance of TVs, radios, tractors, cars, scooter, electrical equipment and hundreds of other things used daily on these DVDs so that people could teach themselves these trades by using the DVDs. An alternative to the DVD is to broadcast these training programs on a special UN sponsored program.

His third proposal involved researching the best quality sources of 800 different fruits, vegetables, legumes and herbal products, and distribute the seeds of these top quality products to farmers worldwide by NGOs, giving poor farmers the opportunity to choose from the best, and grow suitable cash crops. He recommended the preparation of an interactive DVD on each of the crops with information needed to procure, grow and harvest the crops. Dr. Lunia suggested making this instructional information available on a web portal and/or international TV channel also.

Finally, Dr. Lunia recommended the creation of an international TV channel that disseminates the knowledge and secrets of the "great thinkers" of the world to train people for meditation and happiness. Dr. Lunia did not share how he arrived at his budget estimates, but certainly if these programs were implemented, they could have the power to improve the well being of untold numbers of people in the world.

The discussion following the panelists' presentations was spirited and excited as many were sincerely inspired by the testimony of successes presented. Attendees involved in their own service work appreciated the definition of "service learning" and affirmed their own experience of the power of the reflection process to transform, following service action. Each of the panelists had a unique perspective and presentation of best practices that clearly stimulated the listeners regarding possibilities that could be undertaken to advance the Millennium Development Goals.





## Special Observances of the United Nations International Decades and Years



1994-2004	International Decade of the World's Indigenous People	July	First Saturday- International Day of Cooperatives
1995-2004	United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education	11 July	World Population Day
1997-2006	United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty	9 August	International Day of the World's Indigenous People
2001-2010	International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World.	12 August	International Youth Day
		23 August	International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition (opening day of General Assembly)
2001-2010	Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly Africa	September	International Day of Peace
2001-2010	Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism	8 September	International Literacy Day
2003-2012	United Nations Literacy Decade: Education for All	16 September	International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
2005-2014	United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development	September	Last week – World Maritime Day
2004	International Year to Commemorate the Struggle against Slavery and Its Abolition	1 October	International Day of Older Persons
2004	International Year of Rice	October	First Monday – World Habitat Day
2005	International Year of Micro credit	4-10 October	World Space Week
		5 October	World Teacher Day
		9 October	World Post Day
		10 October	World Mental Health Day
		October	Second Wednesday – International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction
			World Food Day
		16 October	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
		17 October	United Nations Day
		24 October	World Development Information Day
		24 October	Disarmament Week
		24-30 Oct.	International Day for Preventing Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict
		6 November	International Day for Tolerance
		16 November	Africa Industrialization Day
		20 November	Universal Children's Day
		20 November	World Television Day
		21 November	International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women
		25 November	International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People
		29 November	World AIDS Day
		1 December	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery
		2 December	International Day of Disabled Persons
		3 December	International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development
		5 December	International Civil Aviation Day
		7 December	Human Rights Day
		10 December	International Migrants Day
		18 December	

### ANNUAL DAYS AND WEEKS

21 February	International Mother Language Day	
8 March	United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace	
21 March	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	
21 March	Begins Week of Solidarity with the Peoples Struggling against Racism and Racial Discrimination	
22 March	World Day of Water	
23 March	World Meteorological Day	
7 April	World Health Day	
23 April	World Book and Copyright Day	
3 May	World Press Freedom Day	
15 May	International Day of Families	
17 May	World Telecommunication Day	
21 May	World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development	
22 May	International Day for Biological Diversity	
25 May	Begins Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self Governing Territories	
29 May	International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers	
31 May	World No Tobacco Day	
4 June	International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression	
5 June	World Environment Day	
17 June	World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought	
20 June	World Refugee Day	
23 June	United Nations Public Service Day	
26 June	International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking	
26 June	International Day in Support of Victims of Torture	

(UN Diary 2004)

### *Working Together, continued from pg. 10*

IFAD has made, identifying areas where more must be done to reduce rural poverty and promote rural development. He provided a few examples of significant achievements:

1. A growing number of donor countries have revised agricultural and rural development strategies including Canada, Australia, Norway, Finland, the Netherlands, and U.S.
2. The Group of Eight industrialized countries adopted the G-8 Africa and Famine Action Plan to raise agricultural productivity and promote rural development in food insecure countries.
3. African leaders at the July 2003 meeting of the AU in Maputo, Mozambique, pledged to allocate 10% of national

budgets to increasing agricultural production.

4. The World Bank recently revamped its rural and agricultural development strategy. Subsequent World Bank lending for rural development increased by almost 50% in FY 2003 to more than USD 7 billion.

Collaboration among all relevant development partners is critical for ensuring that the rural poor are benefiting as much as possible. IFAD's cooperation with NGOs and rural peoples' organization is equally critical. Since July 2001, IFAD has teamed up with more than 750 NGOs. Program commitments need to be translated into concrete action, backed with adequate funding.

*\* The President's message was delivered by a representative of IFAD.*



### Upcoming Events

- September 22-26, 2004  
**5th WFWP Intl. Leaders Workshop**  
 Vienna, Austria  
 ※
- September 24, 2004  
**A Workshop on NGO and UN Cooperation and Perspectives of UN Department of Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**  
 United Nations, Vienna, Austria  
 ※
- March 8, 2005  
**International Women's Day**  
 ※
- March 21, 2005  
**International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**  
 ※
- March 2005\*  
**Forum on Elimination of Racial Discrimination/ Interracial Bridge of Peace**  
 UN HQ New York, USA  
 (\*date tentative)