



Women's

Federation for World Peace International

United Nations Office Newsletter

Spring 2008

Mobilizing Grassroots Partners to Finance Empowerment and Change Lives, One Woman at a Time

A Parallel Event at the 52nd CSW

March 5, 2008 - UN Church Center, New York



By Bonnie Berry

The WFWPI parallel event highlighted successes of the diverse women panelists and their organizations, making a positive difference in the lives of women in need. In particular, microcredit projects have impact that is sustainable. Small amounts of money in the hands of motivated women and their families make a lasting difference in lives by empowering women to start small, successful businesses. Financing for these endeavors came largely from project initiators' own friends, family and community in the developed world. In addition, a young woman participant of a WFWPI USA volunteer trip to Africa presented her experience in this inaugural service learning trip.

Moderator Ms. Bonnie Berry, WFWPI UN Representative, welcomed those present and introduced the panelists.

Panelist Ms. Susan Bradbury, Founder and Director of the Sound Essence Project emphasized the connection between women's economic empowerment and peace. From her

personal experience with microcredit projects in Mongolia, Burundi and Ethiopian refugee women in Beer Sheva Israel, she has seen hope restored. In Burundi, Susan and her small team asked a gathering of about 300 women what their problems are. Without exception, they answered not enough food and water. One hundred women in three villages received \$50 loans to start small businesses like selling sugar, oil, bananas and charcoal. Susan reminded us that, "Real change can be small scale and still powerful. All it takes is an ability to see other possibilities and the willingness to help others see them. When women listen to each other's stories and share their own, growth happens and confidence grows." Only a month after the microloans were given, the recipients were reporting that their children were no longer crying at night from hunger. Also during the Burundi trip, Susan and her group met with a circle of women refugees from genocide in Rwanda. These women longed for a communal farm. They had no means to survive and some had turned to prostitution to earn enough to feed their children. The women were asked to

Contents

- WFWPI Parallel Event at the 52nd CSW ----- 1
- At the UN in New York**
- NGO Briefings----- 2
- Reports from Special Events----- 3
- At the UN in Geneva**
- CEDAW----- 4
- Human Rights Council----- 4
- At the UN in Vienna**
- Reports: CTBTO, UNGASS----- 5
- At the UN in Bangkok**
- Reports----- 6
- Activities Around the World**
- Schools of Africa Project, USA ----- 8
- WFWPI Int'l Convention----- 9
- 52nd CSW Report----- 11
- Upcoming Events ----- 12

create a simple business plan, find land to lease and negotiate the lease. Hoes, machetes, shovels and boots were provided for the women to get started. In less than a year's time, over a third of the loan has been paid back.

Susan began working in Mongolia in 2005. Mongolia's pace is slow, the landscape wide and the people, generous. Following the downfall of Communism in 1989, the economy was unstable. People accustomed to rations from the government could not fend for themselves. Susan met with five women in Erdenet living in a rundown apartment building. Only one woman had an oven. The women brainstormed and decided to begin a bakery. A \$500 loan was given to start the bakery. Every morning the women bake bread and cookies, weigh and package their goods, and sell them at a nearby kiosk. Repayment is on pace and a second bakery was formed last summer, with one of the original women serving as mentor. The most recent project has provided industrial sewing machines for Ethiopian women in Israel. There are cultural and language barriers preventing the women from entering the workforce. The women will sew and embroider cloth shopping bags to market. This cottage industry allows them to attend to cultural norms and still earn a living. Susan has raised funds in her community through auctions, donation drives and selling small jewelry items made by the Burundi

Mobilizing Grassroots, continued on pg. 10



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.

WFWPI International is a non-profit, non-governmental international organization in General Consultative Status of ECOSOC and DPI Associates with the United Nations

Motoko Sugiyama

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At the UN in New York...

Reports of NGO Briefings

Addressing the Challenges & Opportunities of Aging: Empowering Older Persons

October 4, 2007 - Conference Room 2, UN HQ, New York

By *Motoko Sugiyama*

This Briefing commemorated the 17th Annual Celebration of the International Day of Older Persons. A day long forum by the UN/NGO Committee on Aging, the UN Department of Public Information, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the UN Population Fund was held. The morning briefing included a plenary session, tributes to Julia T Alvarez and keynote addresses.

In the Plenary, Mr. Kiyotaka Akasaka, Under Secretary-general for Communications

and Public Information, UN gave opening remarks and Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon's Message. SG Ban emphasized that the aging population creates significant economic and social challenges for developed and developing countries. Statistics show that 80% of the world's people have no social protection in old age. Providing economic support for growing numbers of older persons is daunting, particularly in developing countries. SG Ban acknowledged improved standards of health

Aging, continued on pg. 7

Linking Human Rights and Extreme Poverty

October 18, 2007 - UN HQ, New York

By *Cynthia Shibuya*

The connection between poverty and human rights was examined. How organizations and humanitarian agencies can help achieve MDG 1, eradication of extreme poverty and hunger was explored. Speakers were: Ms. Elizabeth Gibbons, Chief of Global Policy, UNICEF, Ms. Catherine Barnett, Vice President, Project Enterprise, Ms. Nina Lim Yuson, President, ATD Fourth World, Mr. Adonis Salas, Community Activist and Member of Int'l ATD Fourth World

Ms Gibbons stressed that poverty is a violation of human rights. Extreme poverty deprives people of basic rights to food, health and education. Although wealthy countries experience poverty, generally it is not as extreme

as in a developing country. But because poor people in wealthy nations often live close to the rich, the disparity intensifies their experience of poverty. The poor need social services and attention. When basic needs are met prosperity advances. Ministries of Finance, civil society and private sector are needed partners. In UK, the government took immediate action after a survey on poverty. Civil society engagement created the most improvement.

Ms. Barnett reported on Project Enterprise's microcredit programs in New York City. The organization gives loans, often without background or credit checks. They also offer

Extreme Poverty, continued on pg. 12

Report from NGO Meetings with UN General Assembly President

November 9, 2007 - Conference Room 2 at UN HQ, New York and

February 7, 2008 - Trusteeship Council Chamber at UN HQ, New York

By *Motoko Sugiyama*

On November 9, 2007, GA President, HE Mr. Srgjan Kerim explained the work and priorities for the 62nd Session of the General Assembly. Chairpersons of the Main Committees of the GA updated the NGOs on status of each committee's work. The GA Committees are: First Committee (Disarmament and International Security), Second Committee (Economic and Financial), Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural), Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization), Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary), Sixth Committee (Legal).

Mr. Kerim emphasized that civil society is inseparable from state and people. State means nothing without people. People support the state and the states should serve the people. Major priorities of the 62nd session of the GA are: Climate Change, Millennium Development

Goals, Financing for Development and Counter terrorism. Questions were regarding NGO participation in decision-making, interfaith peace initiatives, issues of indigenous people and more. Mr. Kerim stressed that without NGO participation in all areas, nothing can be done. He encouraged NGOs to work alongside the UN.

Presentations from GA committees included Ambassador Paul Badji of Senegal, Disarmament Chair and Ambassador Kirsti Lintonen of Finland, Economic Chair, who explained the Monterey Consensus on Financing for Development. Ambassador Raymond Wolfe of Jamaica, Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Chair's committee deals with the most difficult issues including human rights, advancement of women, racial discrimination, and children's rights. Very sensitive dialogues for humanitarian

GA President, continued on pg. 7

61st Annual DPI/NGO Conference

Planning Committee Meetings

January 4 and January 31, 2008 - ECOSOC Chamber, UN HQ, NY

By Merly Barlaan

Since its beginning, the DPI/NGO Conference has been held at the UN's New York Headquarters. In recent years, the conference has welcomed up to 2000 NGO representatives. The 61st Annual DPI/NGO Conference will be held in Paris from September 3-5, 2008 in commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

On January 4, 2008, the 61st Annual DPI/NGO Conference Planning Committee (100 NGO representatives) met. Ms. Shamina de Gonzaga, Chair of the 61st Annual DPI/NGO Conference and Mr. Juan Carlos Brandt, Chief of the NGO Section of the Department of Public Information, Co-Chairs of the Planning Committee welcomed everyone. According to Ms. Gonzaga, the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides an opportunity to reach out to all members of society and reflect on the values set forth in the UDHR, and its relevance today. It is vital to create an inclusive and action oriented forum. Through the 61st Annual DPI/NGO Conference, we can create framework for forward thinking and exploring civil society contributions to advancing respect for human rights.

Ms. de Gonzaga reported on the fact-finding mission to Paris and Geneva. Meetings were held with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNESCO, UNESCO's NGO Liaison Committee, the Commission Nationale Consultative des Droits de l'Homme; the

International Federation for Human Rights in Paris, and in Geneva with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the UN Office in Geneva, NGOs brought together for an informal consultation by UNOHCHR and the Lutheran World Federation (also Chair of the NGO Committee on Human Rights). All were receptive to holding the 61st Annual DPI/NGO Conference in Paris at UNESCO Headquarters. The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs also expressed willingness to host the Conference in Paris and affirmed the Conference dates. The OHCHR hopes to collaborate on topics for the meeting and in outreach to Geneva based NGOs that work with the OHCHR. UNOG will collaborate in press and communications. Ms. de Gonzaga proposed a structure for the planning committee. The goals are: to create an action oriented Conference, to strengthen civil society efforts to advance respect for human rights, to reach out to civil society beyond the UN NGO community, to increase awareness and sensitize society globally to human rights issues, to enhance civil society engagement with the existing international mechanisms for Human Rights.

The planning committee will have branches in New York, Paris, and Geneva, and Focal Points in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Eastern Europe.

61st DPI/NGO Planning, contd. on pg. 12

Women in Leadership: Breaking the Glass Ceiling

United States Committee for UNIFEM Annual Luncheon

February 27, 2008 - UN HQ, NYC

By Hannah Alexander

The mood was festive in the UN Delegates Dining Hall. There were engaged discussions and exuberant greetings. There was reason to celebrate. The United States Committee for UNIFEM (UNIFEM USA) was hosting its annual event, and recognizing achievements in women's leadership. "There has been progress," announced Linda Basch, President of the National Council for Research on Women, a network of more than 100 leading US research, advocacy and policy centers that advance the debate, policies, and practice to build a more equitable world for women and girls. "Women leaders are on the rise," added Basch.

The crowd of more than one hundred fifty guests included First Lady of the UN, Madame Ban. Leslie Wright, President of the Metro NY Chapter of UNIFEM USA inaugurated the event. "We have women leaders from all around the world - as far as Australia and Germany - here with us today. We are truly honored by your presence and championing of

the most crucial women's issues of our time," Ms. Wright announced. Representing the UN community, Joanne Sandler, the interim Executive Director of the United Nations Women's Fund (UNIFEM), subsequently stated, "A strong UNIFEM is needed to anchor the effort of advancing women's leadership and we can only do it with your help". Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, similarly remarked, "Every UN activity can benefit from women's involvement, especially in peacekeeping and international conflict resolution... Women are the peacemakers". The room roared with applause, providing the perfect opportunity for UNIFEM-USA to present Dr. Migiro with a commemorative scarf. Without wasting a minute, and as a show of support, Dr. Migiro proudly placed the scarf around her neck.

Following Dr. Migiro's inspiring remarks, Linda Higdon, of Peace x Peace, a global network that connects individuals and circles of women throughout the world for mutual

Forum at Four: Making Prevention Possible

Planning Committee Meetings

February 14, 2008 - UN HQ, NY

By Karen Judd Smith

Concurrent with the February 13-15, 2008 Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking, the Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (the Alliance) held a Forum at Four for the UN community in New York on February 14th, 2008 entitled, "Making Prevention Possible."

In New York, the Alliance's Forum at Four provided an outline of proven strategies for reducing crime that Dr. Irvin Waller presents meticulously in his highly praised book, *Less Law, More Order: The Truth about Reducing Crime*. Waller is a professor of Criminology at Ottawa University, founding CEO of the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime and leader in efforts to stimulate partnerships and mobilize citizens. He exhorted those present to use the book as a roadmap for implementing change. He contended that his roadmap will reduce crime and save ballooning expenses of failed systems that focus on incarcerating more people.

The Forum at Four was dignified by the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, Ms. Ismat Jahan, who urged all to build a Culture of Peace as a strategy shift away from problems and toward solutions. She praised successful initiatives like Bangladesh's Grameen Bank's micro lending, overcoming poverty by providing women with access to small business loans and education in basic business competencies. The focus on solutions was the theme for the evening. Dr. Waller stressed that the creation of healthy, learning environments

Prevention Possible, continued on pg. 7

support, offered Peace x Peace's vision for global peace and its relationship to UNIFEM's mission. Women's groups and perspectives must be joined together to bring about a shift in societies around the world, a tipping point away from violence and war towards peaceful resolution. Together we can create a world where women are central to building sustainable peace, person by person...peace by peace.

A presentation on "Gains and Gaps: A Look at the World's Women", a study undertaken by the National Council for Research on Women, wrapped up the event. On a global level, we now have six female presidents and six prime ministers, affirmed Basch - a positive move forward with women's leadership.

As the luncheon drew to a close, hope and determination abounded. While great strides have been made with women's leadership, much remains to be done. (For more information on UNIFEM USA, visit: www.unifemusa.org)

At the UN in Geneva ...

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

January 2008 - ECOSOC Chamber, UN HQ, Geneva

By Yvonne von Stedingk

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the monitoring body of the treaty, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, moved its headquarters to Geneva in January 2008 from its previous base in New York.



The UN works to translate principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into international treaties that protect specific rights. A non-binding Declaration on the rights of women in 1967 set the stage for adoption of CEDAW in 1979. The importance cannot be over emphasized. State parties to this Convention (or treaty) have an obligation to eliminate discrimination against women through legal, policy and programmatic measures. In 2000, an Optional Protocol was

added, i.e. another legal instrument, addressing issues not sufficiently covered in the original convention. These issues came to the attention of the committee through complaints and inquiry procedures.

CEDAW is a monitoring mechanism composed of 23 experts, elected by secret ballot for four year terms with an opportunity for a second term. The Committee meets three times a year and operates based on reports of progress in implementing the treaty submitted by states and NGOs. States submit status reports on achievement one year after ratifying CEDAW and every four years thereafter. One hundred eighty five States are party to CEDAW. NGOs influence reporting through “shadow” or alternative reports. This information, often from grassroots, is most useful to the Committee. The reporting process is dynamic, balanced and relates to national implementation of the Convention. NGOs can participate in pre-session working groups, where five of the experts develop questions to

ask during the state’s review.

In January, the first hearing was held in Geneva, with representatives from Saudi Arabia and Sweden, very different legal systems, particularly regarding women’s rights. The hearing with the respective government representatives, CEDAW experts and NGO representatives was interesting and promising. Problems and questions were discussed in a frank but friendly atmosphere.

Information on the process and guidelines for reports can be obtained from the nearest national Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) or through NGO representatives at the UN in Geneva. It is IMPORTANT that NGOs realize their informed perspective can make a difference in the implementation of this important mechanism, concerned with human rights of women. All who can should make use of this chance to improve life for those whose rights are disrespected.



High Level Panel on

Integrating a Gender Perspective in the Work of the Human Rights Council

September 20 - 21, 2007- UN HQ, Geneva

By Caroline Handschin

HRC Resolution 6/30: Integrating the human rights of women throughout the United Nations System was adopted without a vote on December 14, 2007, “to incorporate into its programme of work sufficient and adequate time to discuss the human rights of women, including measures that can be adopted by States and other stakeholders, to address human rights violations experienced by women”.

The global framework of international and regional charters, declarations, conferences, programs and processes outlined in the resolution only begin to chart the long haul to accelerate the process that formally began in 1975 which was proclaimed during International Women’s Year by the UN and opened a door to put women’s issues on the agenda.

A significant high level panel discussion on “The integration of a gender perspective in the work of the Human Rights Council (HRC)” was held on September 20-21, 2007 during the sixth session of the HRC and led to its decision to “institutionalize it as an annual event including a discussion on violence against women”. The debate, mandated by the General Assembly in Resolution 61/143 of 19 Dec. 2006 and building on the work of the former Human Rights Commission’s agenda item, was aimed at establishing a platform for the long-term process of integration of the issue

in the Council’s work program. The resolution invited the Human Rights Council to discuss by 2008, “the question of violence against women in all its forms and manifestations, and to set priorities for addressing this issue in its future efforts and work”.

The panel was chaired by Kenyan Ambassador Maria Nzomo, who explained that gender was not about women, but social relationships concerning all of humanity. “Today’s discussion is not about specific violations, but about how to begin to move forward on this issue, on how to address it.”

The first panelist, Kyung-wha Kang, UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights said that integrating women’s rights and the gender dimension into the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is a priority, especially for its new unit on women’s rights and gender issues. A decade after its formal introduction by the Economic and Social Council, the gender mainstreaming strategy remained largely on paper, superficially understood and ineffectually implemented. “We are in need of a two-track approach for the UN system: redoubling the mainstreaming effort throughout the system and rallying around the entities in the system in charge of gender issues,” Ms. Kang said. OHCHR hopes to assist in this endeavor.

Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict,

Radhika Coomaraswamy expressed the need to move on, to monitor and implement the normative frameworks agreed upon. It is time to move beyond promises and to translate realities in daily life into real change on the ground.

Miloon Kothari, Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing, said applying gender perspectives meant making a “particular examination of situations where women, girls, men or boys experienced specific issues with respect to the enjoyment of their human rights on the basis of gender”. Gender perspectives are critical for a comprehensive understanding of the right to adequate housing and land particularly regarding economic and social policies and their impact on violence against women. These insights are shared by Mr. Kothari and his colleague, the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women. He also reaffirmed that the work of the HRC to identify protection gaps should include gender analysis to ensure more comprehensive treatment of this issue in the future.

“Nothing could be more urgent than improving women’s access to human rights at the local level”, said Charlotte Bunch, Founder and Executive Director of the Centre for Women’s Global Leadership. The Human Rights Council, as the United Nations’ premier human rights body, is in a consummate position to address this. Rapporteurs should

High Level Panel, continued on pg. 5

At the UN in Vienna...

WFWPI Delivers NGO Statement on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)

September 17 - 18, 2007

By Lilly Gundacker

The 2007 Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) UN Review Conference hosted by the Austrian Government in the historical Royal Imperial Palace in Vienna on September 17-18, 2007 was attended by WFWPI Representatives Elisabeth Riedl, Irmgard Maentler, and Lilly Gundacker. Annika Thunborg, Chief of Public Information of the Vienna based UN Agency; Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) presented an NGO Briefing in the morning on September 17th. Daryl Kimball, executive Director of (ACA) Arms Control Association based in Washington DC, requested that Lilly Gundacker (WFWPI) read the joint statement signed by 44 NGOs at the general conference on September 18, 2007.

There was a press conference with the Foreign Ministers of Austria, H.E. Dr. Ursula Plassnik and Costa Rica, H.E. Bruno Stagno Ugarte, Co-chairs, before the opening session. In opening remarks, Dr. Plassnik said, "This shared Presidency by two CTBT Member States representing two different geographic regions symbolizes the global support for the Treaty". Ambassador Peter Shannon of Australia, outgoing Coordinator of efforts to facilitate the entry into force of the Treaty, also welcomed the joint presidency by Costa Rica and Austria by saying, "the geographic diversity of this arrangement is a positive reflection of the growing universality of the Treaty". Referring to the remarkable increase from 125 to 140 ratifications over the past two years, Shannon emphasized the effectiveness

of sustained pressure on States Signatories to ratify the Treaty.

Speaking on behalf of the European Union, H.E. João Gomes Cravinho, Portuguese Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, said that each new signature and ratification to the CTBT brought the world closer to universal adherence to the Treaty and to a safer world. Reflecting the European Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, he said that a multilateral approach provided the best means to counter threats from which no State was immune. The EU holds a unique position to promote the CTBT since all 27 Member States have signed and ratified the Treaty. "Future generations depend on the wisdom and courage of today's leaders to protect them from the effects of the most dangerous weapons ever to curse humanity..."

The Treaty opened for signature eleven years ago. The 177 signatures and 140 ratifications bring the treaty close to universality. Particular attention is being directed toward the forty four Annex 2 States whose ratification is a precondition for the Treaty's entry into force. Only thirty four of the forty four have already ratified the Treaty. The ten remaining States are: China, Colombia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India and Pakistan have not yet signed the Treaty.

Presentations on September 17 included a progress report. A discussion by ratifiers and signatories on facilitating the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty followed. On Tuesday September 18th, there were official statements by non-signatory States and a workshop sponsored by the Arms Control Association and VERTIC (an NGO focused on promoting effective verification of arms control and disarmament compliance). This was followed by the Statement on behalf of NGOs in the general conference.

WFWPI is also a member of the UN NGO Peace Committee in Vienna, a forum dealing with alternative approaches to peace and human security. The WFWPI Signature Bridge of Peace Sisterhood project which promotes reconciliation and post-conflict transformation was held at the UN in Vienna.

Please find full text of the NGO Statement: http://www.ctbto.org/reference/article_xiv/2007/statements/1809_pm_session/1809_ngo_statement.pdf. www.ctbto.org ; www.herzundhand.at/UNO_CTBT-2007.htm



High Level Panel, contd from pg. 4

integrate work on gender by exploring how "the particular theme of their work affected women specifically, and should engage in research and investigation that facilitated this goal, including visits with a range of women's organizations".

The ensuing discussion involving government representatives and NGO's highlighted several very important points, including how progress in gender equality issues might be monitored in the reporting during the Universal Periodic Review process. Original proactive strategies to promote gender equality in the economic and social areas should be developed. There were questions on how Special Procedures might systematize gender perspectives in their work, especially in light of the Universal Periodic Review process.

A joint NGO statement read by Conchita Poncini (IFUW) on behalf of several NGOs including Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) stated that it was not enough to have a gender balance composition in the Special Procedures, Expert Advisory Services or the Universal Periodic Review and Complaints Procedure, but that a "gender-equal perspective in the Universal Periodic Review should be scrupulously respected by a systemic method of gathering and reviewing data and information disaggregated by sex and age".

(Complete text of the NGO statement can be accessed in the archives at www.wfwp.org)



Beyond 2008: Civil Society Contribution to the UNGASS Review

By *Mirella Dummar Frabi*, Civil Affairs Officer-Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

In June 1998, the United Nations General Assembly held a special session on illicit drugs ("UNGASS") which resulted in 150 Member-States agreeing to achieve significant and measurable results in reduction of supply and demand of illicit drugs by 2008. This year, the U.N. will review its progress and in 2009, the UN will identify what future steps need to be taken to combat the world drug problem.

In recognition of the key role played by civil society in fighting illicit drugs, the Vienna NGO Committee on Narcotic Drugs, in conjunction with its sister organization in New York and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime have created the "Beyond 2008" project. "Beyond 2008" brings together civil society organizations from around the globe in nine regional consultations (eight of which have been successfully completed) to reflect on their experience of UNGASS and to develop recommendations for the U.N. review and

refinement process. This consultation process will culminate in a Global NGO Forum to be held in Vienna, Austria on 7-9 July 2008 where the results of the regional consultations will be discussed, synthesized and presented to Member States in 2009.

[WFWPI-UN Representatives in Vienna Elisabeth Riedl and Lily Gundacker serve on the NGO Committee on Drugs. Elisabeth serves on the Working Group on "Rules of Procedure". Lily serves on the "Hospitality Committee" in preparation for the March 12th "Not so Silent Partners"- NGO contribution to the 1988 UNGASS targets" session during the High Level Segment of the 52nd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, March 10-14, 2008.]

More information on: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/ngos/Beyond2008.html>. Ms Frabi (UNODC): tel.: 0043 1 26060 5583, mail: mirella.frabi@unodc.org



At the UN in Bangkok...

By Delia Capa Javanasundara, WFP Representative to UNESCAP

First Observance of International Day of Non-Violence

October 2, 2007

In June 2007, the General Assembly of the United Nations designated October 2, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, leader of the Indian independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence, as the International Day of Non-Violence. All governments, organizations of the United Nations system, regional and NGOs were invited to commemorate the day. Four representatives from WFP Thailand attended the first observance of the International Day of Non-Violence on October 2, 2007 at the UN Conference Centre, Bangkok, organized by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), in cooperation with the Embassy of India. India's Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports and Development for Panchayati Raj, the North Eastern Region, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar, unveiled a bust of Mahatma Gandhi, a gift from India to UNESCAP and shared about Gandhi's life. Ms. Noeleen Heyzer also gave her first address as the new Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of UNESCAP at the event.



United Nations Day 2007

October 24, 2007

WFP sent twenty participants to attend the observance of UN Day on October 24 at the UN Conference Centre in Bangkok. H.E. Gen. Surayud Chulanont, Thailand Prime Minister, Mr. Shigeru Mochida, Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP and Ambassador Manaspas Xuto, President of the UN Association of Thailand were the main speakers. The event began with a flag raising ceremony, and performances by

Jiranant "Me" Kijprasarn, a popular Thai singer, Satri Wat Rakhang School marching band, Orchestra of Mater Dei Institute, and children from American School of Bangkok.



International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

October 17, 2007

Nine representatives from WFP attended the 20th anniversary of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on October 17, 2007. Noeleen Heyzer, Under-Secretary-General of the UN and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and Gwi-Yeop Son, UN Resident Coordinator & UN Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative in Thailand and Khunying Dhipavadee Meksawan, Minister to the Prime Minister's Office were among the main speakers and led the human chain to take part in the global Stand Up and Speak Out against poverty program.



Celebration of Universal Children's Day

November 20, 2007

3rd Annual Contest - Color my Heart with Peace Drawing

WFP Thailand organized the "3rd Color my Heart with Peace 2007 drawing contest. The Award Ceremony was held November 20, 2007 in Conference Room 3, UNCC Bangkok in celebration of the UN observance for "Universal Children's Day". The Chairwoman of the Color my Heart with Peace Project, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Virachada Buasri welcomed everyone, followed by the opening address by WFP

Thailand president, Mrs. Kamoltip Phayakvichien.

A number of committee members for the Color my Heart with Peace contest were artists from Thaksinawat Group: Asst. Prof. Suwat Saenkattiyarat, Mr. Thanee Chinchusak, Mr. Chatchawan Rodklongtan, and Mr. Ekasit Jirattikanon. They presented a panel discussion on "Art and the Child" chaired by Ms.

Wasakorn Pinyosinwat, WFP Thailand, also a committee member. The speakers shared their life stories as artists and even showed their first drawings. They inspired and encouraged both the young artists and their parents.

Students from Yothinnukul School performed a traditional Thai dance. Students from the KIS International School offered songs to congratulate the winners of the drawing contest. Mr. Philip Bergstrom, Programme Specialist, Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific, UNESCO gave congratulatory remarks. He reminded us about ongoing wars and religious conflicts and concluded by quoting verses from different



Mr. Philip Bergstrom, Programme Specialist, Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific, UNESCO

religious faiths about the meaning of peace.

Winner of the four to six year old group was Wikawee Rattamancee, age six from Darunothai School, Trang Province. Winner of the seven to ten year old group was Thunya Thumson, age nine, from Yothinnukul School, Nakorn Ratchasima Province. The parents and teachers were so proud of their children. One of the objectives of these drawing contests is to create awareness about peace, love and the concept of living for the sake of others to these children.



Aging, contd from pg. 2

care are reflected in extended life expectancies nearly everywhere in the world. Older persons should be recognized as an asset, not a burden. In conclusion, Ban believes that if we work together to approach the challenges and opportunities of aging; we can achieve our shared vision of a society for all ages.

HE Srgjan Kerim, President, UN General Assembly and Ms Florence Denmark, Chair, NGO Committee on Aging, NY greeted the group. Mr. Kerim stressed that respect for elders should be a global priority. Since 2008 is the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is appropriate to reflect on the human rights of older persons as well. Ms. Denmark thanked the NGO Committee on Aging and the UN system for their successful collaboration.

The tributes to HE Julia T. Alvarez, former Permanent Alternate Representative of the Dominican Republic to the UN, included words of commendation on her work from four speakers. HE Eraso Lara-Pana, Ambassador of Dominican Republic commented that Ms Alvarez was like an earthquake for the aging. Mr Alexandre Sidorenko, UN Focal Point on Aging, DESA commented that Ms. Alvarez was called "UN Ambassador on Aging". Mr Alexandre Kalache, Director of WHO Aging and Life course programme and Ms Helen R. Hamlin, former Chair, NGO Committee on Aging, NY and Main Representative of the International Federation on Aging to the UN were other speakers who had worked with Ms Alvarez. They testified that she had focused and lobbied tirelessly to establish the UN "International Day of Older Persons", achieved in 1992. The first "International Year of Older Persons" was declared in 1999. Ms. Alvarez' daughter responded to the tributes. She explained that her mother had foreseen the aging problem three decades ago. This petite woman from a small island country took on this big issue. HE Alvarez worked for solidarity to face the issue. Therefore, the younger Ms Alvarez was so grateful for the beautiful solidarity demonstrated in the formation of the day's event.

HE Juan Antonio Yanez-Barnuevo, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Spain to the UN reviewed progress since the 2002 implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Aging. Mr. Robert Vos, Director of the Development Policy and Analysis Division, DESA UN explained that today, one in ten people are over age 65. In 2050, one in five people will be over 65 years old. Strong collaborative efforts are needed among Governments, NGOs, and Civil Society to build momentum for alignment with the UN Principles for Older Persons, adopted by the UN G.A. (resolution 46/91) on Dec 1991. The five main principles are independence, participation, care, self-fulfillment and dignity. Mr. Vos expressed concern that without policy change, 1.2 billion older persons may face income insecurity by 2015. He emphasized that

pension reform is urgently needed everywhere. He concurred with SG Ban that the UN must encourage governments to incorporate the five principles into national programs wherever possible toward creation of a society for all ages. NGOs and Civil Society also have a role in creating a society for all ages.



President of GA, contd from pg. 2

and human rights are being held with Darfur, Sudan, North Korea, Iran and Myanmar (Burma).

Ambassador Abdalmahmood Abdalhallem Mohamad of Sudan, Special, Political and Decolonization Chair explained that 2 ml. people are still under colonization and there are sixteen nongovernmental territories. The Committee's role is to modify these to decolonization. Ambassador Alexi Tulbure of Moldova, Chair of the Legal Committee and Ambassador Hamidon Ali of Malaysia, Chair of the Admin. and Budgetary Committee stated their committees are on track and will have good results in 2009.

February 2, 2008 Briefing Meeting

GA President, Mr. Kerim outlined six work agenda topics for the General Assembly:

- **Topic # 1** Financing for Development: Ambassador Maged Abdelaziz of Egypt and Ambassador John Lovald of Norway reviewed progress in implementing the Monterrey Consensus and GA plans for a related draft resolution by the end of July.

- **Topic # 2** The 2008 High Level meeting on HIV/AIDS: Ambassador Samuel Outlule of Botswana and Ambassador Tiina Intelmann of Estonia briefed on the meeting at UN HQ on June 10-11, 2008.

- **Topic # 3** International Environmental Governance: Ambassador Claude Heller of Mexico explained the history of the process for a more coherent and integrated environmental framework. The main proposals from member states attempted to capture and consolidate member states' vision for the UN's creation of an environmental governance infrastructure. They were: The need for scientific evaluation of dramatic environmental events, the need for better coordination between institutions, a review of resources and a strategic plan on technological improvement.

- **Topic # 4** UN System wide Coherence: Ambassador John Kavanagh of Ireland and Ambassador Augustine Mahiga of Tanzania announced that the Permanent Representatives are negotiating an agreement on modalities and obstacles for further implementation of the recommendation contained in the Secretary-General's (SG) report on system-wide coherence. Progress has been slow on System wide coherence in the GA.

- **Topic # 5** Mandate Review: Ambassador Rosemary Banks of New Zealand explained that the UN has 900 Mandates to oversee. Prioritization is needed. A Mandate Review process would reduce pressure on the Secretariat,

highlight priority mandates and remove outdated and duplicate mandates.

- **Topic # 6** The Revitalization of the General Assembly: Ambassador Eladio Loizaga of Paraguay and Ambassador Andrzej Towpik of Poland pointed out that revitalization of the GA has been discussed for seventeen years. The 62nd GA decided to establish an ad hoc working group on the revitalization of the GA. It is open to all member states covered under resolution 61/192.

The 62nd GA Session will hold an Informal Thematic Debate on Climate Change and a Thematic Debate on internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs, and examine human trafficking/human security and public /private partners.

These two NGO meetings show that even though NGOs officially affiliate with ECOSOC or DPI, increasingly, the whole UN System needs partnership with NGOs to achieve its goals. We are one global community, without exception. As SG Ban Ki Moon stated, "we deliver as one". Therefore it is crucial to work together and cooperate however we can to bring the eradication of poverty and peace for all.



Prevention Possible, contd from pg. 3

for youth is one of the most effective ways to reduce crime and its cost to society. He showed in detail how and why this common sense approach makes economic and legal sense.

Dr. Paul McCold, a long-time activist and expert in restorative justice, expanded upon the need for change in our concept of justice. He showed that tracking, detention and incarceration of perpetrators is far from the whole story of justice. Our current system ignores justice for victims and the communities that pay directly and indirectly for crimes. McCold demonstrated that full justice requires attention to the victim, the perpetrator and the community. Full justice must address the harm done by crime. He illustrated how the restorative justice paradigm is a more thorough version of justice for all. McCold also described how restorative justice is highly relevant to developing and post-conflict nations and developed, stable nations alike.

The Forum provided sound resources and specific actions to take in our communities and nations that make significant difference in people's lives and in the overall health of our families and communities.

Dr. Yael Danieli, Chair of the Alliance moderated the Forum. Ms. Karen Judd Smith, Chair of the Alliance's Working Party on Prevention that organized the Forum (and representative of the WFP to the UN) introduced the Forum at Four as an ongoing venue that will continue to highlight effective preventive practices.

For more information about the Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, NY, please visit www.cpcjalliance.org or send inquiries to: prevention@cpcjalliance.org

Activities Around the World in 2007

WFWP USA - Schools of Africa Project -

WFWP believes that the education of women and children are the keys to eradicating poverty and building a better future. Women form the majority of the world's population that is suffering from absolute poverty. In order to resolve this disparity, it is necessary to empower women through education. When women are educated, the family stabilizes, which leads to increased opportunities for children to become educated. Studies have shown that women are the best recipients of economic aid in developing countries, because women tend to reinvest their earnings into their families' wellbeing and education.

A Legacy of Service

The seed for the Schools of Africa Project was sown in 1994, when 1600 of WFWP volunteers were dispatched throughout the world to initiate service projects. These projects became established with the help of local participants and the local population. Today, there are 12 types of service projects in over 50 countries worldwide, in the areas of education, vocational training, microcredit, nutrition, basic medical care, AIDS prevention education, scholarship funds, and sponsorship programs.

In 2002, WFWP, USA began to raise funds for six WFWPI-supported schools in five countries in Africa. This effort developed into the Schools of Africa Project, whereby local chapters of WFWP, USA raise funds through annual benefits to help maintain, as well as expand, these schools. Approximately \$140,000 has been raised toward the overall goal of \$1 million. These seven schools were established:

- Sun of Mozambique Secondary School, Beira, Mozambique
- New Hope Technical Institute, Kigali, Rwanda
- Kizinda Parents Vocational High School, Ishaka, Bushenyi District, Uganda
- Katwe Parents Kindergarten & Elementary School, Mahungye Village, Uganda
- Handow Secondary School, Marakusi, Lugari District, Kenya
- Sunac Elementary School, Bissau, Guinea-Bissau
- Motoko Shiroma Kindergarten & Elementary School, Malabo, Equatorial Guinea

Through various academic and vocational tracks, over 14,000 students have received education at the schools, since their founding.



Mozambique



Uganda



Kenya



Guinea Bissau

Study Tours and Service Learning Trips

Those who have visited and served in Africa with WFWP found themselves profoundly moved and awed by the desperate situation of many Africans living in conditions of extreme poverty, malnutrition and low levels of education. Yet they also found themselves touched by the drastic improvement in quality of life that results from offering opportunities for academic and vocational education.

One young WFWP volunteer, Miki Saito, has visited the school in Rwanda several times and has become a sponsor to several children who are studying there, affectionately calling them "my son" or "my daughter". She found her service in Africa to be a life changing experience.

Members of the WFWP chapter from the Upper Midwest area have supported two visits to one of the schools of Africa, an elementary school in Guinea Bissau. Kathleen Sometani and her daughter found the people of Guinea Bissau to be so hungry for education that the elementary school included a large number of eighteen to twenty-year-olds studying at a fourth-grade level. Although Guinea Bissau as a nation is considered very poor, they found it to be rich in heart. They were welcomed wholeheartedly wherever they went.

The people of Guinea Bissau customarily take in those who are in need. Every family they visited, from the wealthiest to the poorest, had some unrelated refugee of war living with them. During their stay, they also had the opportunity to visit governmental offices, UN officials and the families of students and teachers.



Service Learning Trip to Kenya: Han Dow School



Activities Around the World in 2007



WFWP International Workshop and Convention

South and North Korea
❖ Oct 28-Nov 1, 2007 ❖



Candlelight Ceremony for Unification, Mt. Kumgang Convention
October 30, 2007 Mt. Kumgang, North Korea



WFWPI Representatives with the Delegation from the North
October 30, 2007 Mt. Kumgang, North Korea



The 8th International Leaders Workshop October 29, 2007
Cheonga Camp South Korea

Schools of Africa Project, continued from page 8 Service Learning Trip to Kenya



For two weeks in August, 2007, WFWP, USA sponsored its first African service learning trip for five young women aged 16 to 23 and a WFWP, USA member who served as the coordinator. They participated in a service project at the Han Dow Marakusi Secondary School in the Lugari district of Kenya. The purpose of the trip was to provide the young women with a hands-on experience of service to others across national and cultural boundaries. In addition to working at the rural school, they were each paired with a Kenyan "sister"; visited other NGO projects such as an orphanage for HIV positive children orphaned or abandoned by their families; and also experienced another dimension of Kenya through a brief safari. Each participant felt that she received more that she could actually give and encourage WFWP, USA to expand the program.

"Actually, it really did not hit me that I was in Africa until we were leaving the Han Dow School to go back to our hotel and

we ended up getting stuck in the mud, I was so surprised to see how many people came to help us to get out of the ditch. It seemed as if the whole village was there supporting us. This experience helped me to understand something about the heart of the Kenya people and their desire to help one another." *Kayo, 22, Ohio, college student.*

"I have always been interested in service work and this trip reinforced my passion to continue doing it. It allowed me to re-evaluate my life and realize how much I have taken for granted." *Kay, Virginia, 23, teacher.*

"I really learned to treasure what I had been given in life, especially after working and helping at the school. I was able to see how very serious the students were in their studies and how grateful they were to receive an education. I also saw that the school had very little resources. The library had very few books, the floors in the classroom were uneven and rocky, and they had no plumbing. I ever thought before how lucky I was to have all these things." *Athia, New York.*



Mobilizing Grassroots, contd from pg. 1

women. Susan reflected, "Women are the fabric that holds families and communities together. Microfinance helps create pathways to success. Minds are nurtured and prepared, capacities developed and gradually a comprehensive development process is in place."

Youth Panelist Athia Shibuya, a high school junior from Tarrytown, New York presented her service learning trip to Kenya with a group of young American women during summer 2007, to support the Schools of Africa Project. They repainted walls and laid new concrete floors in classrooms in a school sponsored by WFWPI. In addition, the women visited an orphanage for HIV positive children. Blankets were donated to the orphanage. Athia expressed gratitude to WFWP USA for their financial sponsorship. She reflected about how her world view had expanded by experiencing a culture so different from her own. In addition, she is more deeply grateful for much in her life that she had taken for granted, like access to education. Athia emphasized that giving financial backing for girls from developed nations to serve communities in the developing world is another way to finance women's empowerment and gender equality. Each woman on this trip met and befriended a young Kenyan woman of similar in age. Everyone realized many similarities with their friends and some differences as well. The American women came to understand that these friends in Kenya are part of the human family whose needs must be remembered and addressed.

Ms. Motoko Sugiyama, VP of WFWP International and Director of the UN Office of WFWPI, gave a brief overview of WFWPI overseas poverty eradication projects and the peace building, Bridge of Peace Sisterhood Projects. (Complete reports available www.wfwp.org.) Ms. Sugiyama emphasized that poverty eradication and peace building are inextricably linked. She shared success stories from WFWPI microcredit projects in Jordan. These projects in Jordan represent a very small number of the microcredit and economic empowerment projects that WFWPI volunteers have initiated and are investing in since 1994. Microcredit projects in Amman, Jordan were initiated in 2000. Jordan's economy has faced many years of shaky ground due to the volume of Palestinian refugees, the 9/11/2001 terrorist attacks drop in tourism, and the Iraq war due to Jordan's dependence on oil from Iraq. Currently, about 30% of Jordan's population lives below the poverty line. Unemployment in 2005 was at 15%, and doubles for young people. Jordanian culture encourages women to stay home but often families have many children, making it difficult for men to fully support the family. Japanese volunteers discovered that women hoped to start small home-based businesses. In order to fund the microloans, volunteers held bazaars in their home communities and solicited donations from businesses and individuals in Japan. Loans were from \$150

to \$1000 depending on the scale of the business. Relationships between borrowers and the volunteers strengthened through home visits by WFWP volunteers who offered advice on life and business management. Borrowers started beauty salons, boutiques, a children's clothing store, cosmetic shops, grocery stores, vegetable stands, second-hand clothing shops, perfume shops, sweet shops, kitchen tool shops, tailors, stationery shops, blanket and carpet shops, knitting shops, small restaurants, photo studios, drug stores, poultry stores, advertisement stores, small shops selling milk, oil, lunch, artificial flowers, diapers, computer parts, goat milk, etc. Since 2000, about 100 women a year have received loans, with about 1000 loans made since the program inception through 2007. Repayment rate is nearly 100%. In 2007, microloans were extended to the city of Madaba. A widow with eight children prospered when her teenage son received training and a loan to start a cosmetic shop. Later the family requested a loan for a second business, a grocery store. The enterprise has been expanding. Another woman had tailoring skills but only a small home use sewing machine. Her husband had been ailing with kidney disease so could not work. A loan from WFWP to purchase an industrial sewing machine allowed her to take high volumes of orders from wholesale houses. She has hired three employees. Although her husband has since passed away, she is able to feed her nine children. A third woman had a very run down beauty salon. She used her small loan to fix up her shop, upgrade equipment and the atmosphere. Customer volume increased dramatically. This woman is now teaching hair styling at a WFWP technical school as well. The microloans have assisted many women and families in improving their financial circumstances. The women have gained stature and a sense of independence. They are more confident, wiser, stronger and better able to support their husbands and children. Empowering women economically through micro loans increases domestic and social stability. These projects can meet the needs of an Islamic culture like Jordan. The happiness of the women and their families is the best reward for the WFWP volunteers.

The final speaker, Ms. Zahra Nuru, Director/Senior Advisor to the Undersecretary General and High Representative for the Least Developed Nations, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and Special Advisor on Africa has an extensive resume dedicated to development that spans almost four decades, beginning with her two



WFWPI Parallel Event during 52nd CSW

decades of work for the government of Tanzania in the Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Community Development, Culture, Youth and Sports. After these posts, Ms. Nuru spent fourteen years in the field with UN Development Program in Gambia, Malawi and Sierra Leone. She praised the grassroots efforts and experiences of WFWPI volunteers, and commented on the importance of the microcredit projects discussed by Sugiyama and Bradbury because of how the projects empower women economically, and the ripple effect that has on families and communities. She also expressed appreciation for our youth speaker and her colleagues for their commitment, expressed by traveling to Africa to serve others. Ms. Nuru illustrated the importance of taking into consideration the gender perspective on projects and taking time to figure out what is really needed in a community rather than assuming as an outsider that you know. She told a story of a project that she had been involved in that aimed to teach women crafts skills such as soap making, tie dying and others. There were difficulties getting the women to schedule these trainings and engage in them. What the planners came to understand is that the women could only gather in late evening after daily tasks were complete. The problem was it was dark by then. The women couldn't see to learn or do anything. Consequently, Ms. Nuru provided solar lamps for the women, to illuminate their training sessions. This was all it took for the women to get going on the training. Ms. Nuru told of driving toward the community one evening, and seeing the dots of light throughout the community as she approached from a distance. Her colleague reminded her that these were the lamps burning, indicating the women were involved in the learning that would give them skills to make products to sell. Ms. Nuru also urged patience. She affirmed that small investments now in the lives of women would bear fruit continually and create a ripple effect.

One of the most impressive comments following the program was from a woman who

Mobilizing Grassroots, contd. on pg. 12

Financing for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality

52nd Commission on the Status of Women

February 25 - March 7, 2008 - UN HQ, New York City

By Bonnie Berry

In the opening session of the Commission on the Status of Women, Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon launched a campaign to end violence against women and girls. SG Ban acknowledged that gender inequality hampers progress toward the Millennium Development Goals. He emphasized that violence against women and girls only compounds the enormous toll of gender inequality on families, communities and nations. He insisted that violence against women is never acceptable, excusable or tolerable. He committed himself to a series of specific actions worldwide aimed at ending violence against women and girls. He gave credit to women's groups for progress in the past and offered to work directly with these groups. *SG Ban asked for partnership with all society to achieve the goal. He asked that*



all pledge together. He closed with, "United We Shall Succeed."

This year's theme, Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women speaks to the reality that policy change regarding women's empowerment and gender equality is not enough. Women need to be involved in financial and budgetary processes on all levels. Political will to make changes must translate into funding and financial resources. The current work of the Commission is closely aligned with the Beijing Platform for Action which stated the necessity of resources and mechanisms on the country levels that would foster the advancement of women. In addition, the Commission was mandated in 1995 by the UN General Assembly to review critical areas of concern and to act as catalysts for mainstreaming a gender perspective into all UN activities. This is the first time the Commission dealt directly with issues of financing for the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.

Unfortunately, deliberations of national delegations toward agreed conclusions on the theme were closed to NGO observers. NGO interventions to the deliberations were very limited. This decision was met with frustration by many of the nearly two thousand NGO representatives present. None the less, thematic and regional caucusing was very active. Suggestions for the agreed conclusions from the NGO community were channeled through supportive delegations. Reports of progress on deliberations came during daily briefings.

Parallel events sponsored by NGOs and UN Missions were abundant. Many UN professionals spoke at parallel events sponsored by NGOs. Partnerships between the UN and NGOs are growing stronger. Parallel events left time for questions and interventions from the audience. This added enrichment of success stories from an array of stakeholders. One UNIFEM event showed short documentaries telling stories of poor women who learned to advocate during budgeting processes in their municipalities. The women lobbied for basics like regular clearing of storm drains so water no longer collected on streets. This improved community health and safety. Other women lobbied for volleyball equipment for parks. The only equipment available was for soccer and basketball, but girls don't play these games. Girls like to play volleyball. They were sidelined by no access to sports equipment. Some women were empowered by the successes so they ran for political office.

A parallel event sponsored by the Education Centre for Women in Democracy in Nairobi, Kenya celebrated Women's Transformative Leadership. ECWD provides education for women who continue the work of attaining gender equality and women's empowerment through development. Several women parliamentarians spoke on how they learned from ECWD about how to run for office, how to represent and serve their constituencies and how to mentor other up and coming women leaders. One of the parliamentarians from Kenya reported that a group of women leaders met with former Secretary General Kofi Annan's mediating team in Kenya to inform and guide negotiations to resolve and reconcile the recent crisis.



In addition to the WFWPI parallel event, WFWPI's own Ms. Motoko Sugiyama was invited as a panelist by International Federation of Women against Fundamentalism and for Equality (WAFE) President, Elizabeth Sidney from UK for their parallel event. Ms. Sugiyama presented WFWPI's work of reconciliation



through the Bridge of Peace Sisterhood Project as well as the International Service Projects that benefit women and children from diverse cultures, religions and nations.

The UN Foundation, Nike Foundation, Girl Scouts, UN Interagency Task Force on Adolescent Girls and the Working Group on Girls of the NGO Committee on UNICEF cosponsored a parallel event called "The Agenda for Adolescent Girls: A Case for Investment and Action" which served as a launch for the research based report, Girls Count, by the event cosponsors and UNESCO, the Population Council and the International Center for Research on Women. Speakers stressed the reality that adolescent girls in developing nations, often invisible due to lack of documentation and no presence in the public environment, actually reflect a benchmark when measuring development. Empowerment and education of adolescent girls brings improvement across the development environment. Adolescent girls in extremely poor nations bear a major burden for domestic responsibilities, which interfere with education and other opportunities. Higher rates of marriage before the age of eighteen, early childbearing and childrearing for adolescent girls occurs at a much higher rate in developing nations, vastly impacting girls' health and mortality. In Sub-Saharan Africa, girls age 15-24 have the highest rate of HIV/AIDS infection. What can organizations concerned with development do? Count girls, invest in girls, and give girls a fair share. Civil society can promote transformation of society norms, encourage delaying marriages and childbirth as well as harbor girls, protecting them from harm, educating and teaching them life skills. Donors can support and advocate for girls, foster and subsidize female teachers. Governments can protect girls by establishing national identity card programs (girls without papers are not eligible for services) and provide tuition assistance programs. The panelists offered some successful projects. A center for low income, out of school girls age 10-19 provided a safe place

52nd CSW, continued on pg. 12

EMPOWER TO ERADICATE POVERTY

Since 1994 WFWP has dispatched volunteers worldwide, to implement development assistance projects based on local needs.

Support the efforts of
WFWP volunteers worldwide:

Women's Federation for World Peace International
4 West 43rd Street
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(Make checks payable to WFWP International)

Dedicate your donation to a specific project by noting on memo line:

- Schools, ● Scholarships, ● Nutrition, ● Sanitation,
- AIDS Prevention, ● Medical Aid, ● Vocational Training, ● Micro Credit

For more information about projects, see Biennial Reports at www.wfwp.org



WFWPI is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization

52nd CSW, contd from pg. 11

to go, adult mentors, literacy training, social connections and education on HIV and gender based violence. The opportunities for these girls helped to empower them. Another project was a first time parents project that gave married girls in isolated rural villages small groups to participate in, learn about sexual reproductive health and receive other services crucial to young first time mothers. The camaraderie of the small groups had significant positive outcome including improved roles in household decision making (reported by all the women), improved social connections, increased use of contraception and ability to voice opinions even if disagreeing with their husbands. One important global improvement cited was that 118 countries have achieved gender parity in primary schools. Inadequate funding was cited as one of the biggest barriers to achieving progress for adolescent girls.

Other parallel events included panels of women business executives discussing ways to nurture the pipeline of young women entering the corporate realm, as well as ways for women to continue penetrating the glass ceiling of the corporate executive suite.

Extreme Poverty, contd from pg. 2

training in childcare, vending and baking. Loan recipients have increased their income by as much as 40%.

Ms. Lim and Mr. Salas partner in the Philippines with All Together in Dignity (ATD) Fourth World. ATD Fourth World works to break the poverty cycle. The movement is also in Brazil, India, Thailand, France and Guinea. Ms Lim emphasized poverty cannot be solved only through charity. Fulfillment of the right to food, health, education, and to live as a family requires help from government, civil society and NGOs. A woman asked, "What is the Fourth World?" It is the world of the impoverished. Mr. Salas, a young man, shared that he came from a homeless community where people live under bridges. He works with the abandoned people of this community. Mr. Salas generates interest and volunteerism in Manila by telling his own

The theme of the Women's Day commemoration was Investing in Women. During the March 6th commemoration, S G Ban ki-Moon announced he doubled the budget of the UN Division of Advancement of Women. What an inspiration to see that the Secretary General is not just a man of words, but a man of action. Also, the CEO of Goldman Sachs announced a one hundred million dollar Goldman Sachs initiative called 10,000 Women. Women beneficiaries from developing countries will have the opportunity to gain business knowledge.

At the final NGO briefing of the CSW, Friday morning March 7, sense of community had formed as NGO representatives gathered, acknowledging the hard work of advocacy, networking, sharing success stories and caucusing on how best to strengthen agreed conclusions for the sake of women's empowerment and gender equality. (Complete Draft Agreed Conclusions available at www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/). WFWPI was a signer to two joint statements submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women. (Full text of the statements are available in archives www.wfwp.org).

story to groups, then asking for their help. He spoke deeply about the power of volunteerism to eradicate poverty.

Other questions were: What can be done about child trafficking? How to put pressure on local governments? How to support the Jubilee Act to Eliminate Debt in poor countries? Suggestions to prevent trafficking: Educate people about the traps to take children. Have police give child trafficking awareness training. Establish tighter regulations for schoolchildren and family court, involve the Attorney General. To pressure governments: educate people about situations and approach the local government in numbers by phone calls, signature campaigns, etc. Regarding debt relief legislation: Call your congress people and encourage them to support this Act. Panelists encouraged listening to the poor and connecting with and supporting organizations working to eradicate of poverty.

Mobilizing Grassroots, contd from pg. 10
was inspired by the simple, practical, replicable projects. She gained confidence through the presentation that she could initiate a project that would make a difference in the lives of women and girls in her own community.

61st DPI, contd from pg. 3

The 2nd Planning Committee meeting was held on January 31, 2008. Ms. de Gonzaga introduced Mr. Ramu Damodaran, Chief of the Civil Society Service, DPI. Mr. Damodaran acknowledged guests including representatives of UNESCO, the OHCHR, the French Permanent Mission to the UN, the Slovenian Permanent Mission to the UN and Kyung Hee University of Seoul. He proposed Conference monitoring by NGOs worldwide, building on the success of last year's 60th Annual DPI/NGO Conference. He mentioned sensitivities surrounding the topic, human rights. He urged NGO representatives to make memorable, action-oriented contributions. Ms. de Gonzaga reported on her second mission to Paris and Geneva. The purpose was to engage NGOs and other partners, receive input on thematic development of the Conference and identify areas of collaboration. Ms. De Gonzaga appealed to NGOs to tap existing resources and networks to maximize outreach and inclusiveness and address questions relevant to constituents on the ground. Consultations with NGOs, business schools, UN Agencies including UNESCO NGO Section, UNOHCHR Civil Society Service, ILO Communications, and UNAIDS Civil Society Service were held. The Office of the Mayor of Paris, Graduate Institute of International Studies, Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Bertrand Ramcharan, and expert on civil society in the Arab world, Mr. Salam Kawakibi were also held. The High Commissioner on Human Rights, Louise Arbour has already accepted an invitation to speak at the 61st DPI/NGO Conference.

Upcoming Events

- ❖ April 10: 16th WFWP Anniversary
- ❖ May 15: International Day of Families
- ❖ June 30 - ECOSOC Substantive Session in New York
- ❖ July 24:
- ❖ Aug 12: International Youth Day
- ❖ Sep 3-5: 61st DPI/NGO Conference, Paris
- ❖ Sep 16: Opening Day of 63rd Session of the General Assembly
- ❖ Sept 21: Int'l Day of Peace
- ❖ Oct 22-26*: WFWP 9th International Leaders' Workshop in Sydney
*tentative