



**Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Summary Report
Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 57, March 2013
Women, Peace and Security Perspective**

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1. Introduction

The 57th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) took place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from Monday, 4 March to Friday, 15 March 2013. This session focused on the theme of "the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls." An outcome document was adopted on 15 March and can be read here.¹

This summary document provides an overview of CSW57 events from a Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Perspective.

The events summarized in part 4 of this document are only a fraction of the events that were held during CSW57. To make the best use of our finite capacity, we have been selective, and attended and reported only on events strongly related to PeaceWomen/WILPF issue and geographical focus areas. Longer summaries of the events are available upon request to info@peacewomen.org.

2. Outcomes of CSW57

Despite last year's (2012) failure to reach Agreed Conclusions and continued division, States were able this year to come to consensus on the outcome document addressing the elimination and prevention of violence against women and girls. This year's political dynamics between States continued to be alarming with a conservative pushback led by Iran, Russia, Syria and the Vatican (Holy See) who supported adding controversial paragraphs about traditions and national sovereignty, which would have undermined the whole text. These paragraphs did not make the final agreement.

The final Agreed Conclusions incorporated many aspects of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, including explicit reference to all WPS resolutions (1325, 1889, 1820, 1888, 1960) in paragraph 8 of the outcome document.

¹ *CSW outcome document*: http://www.peacewomen.org/peacewomen_and_the_un/peacewomen-un-monitoring/commission-on-the-status-of-women/outcome_documents/205/agreed-conclusions-csw57-advance-unedited-version

On prevention, the Agreed Conclusions acknowledge the relationship between the “*illicit use of, and illicit trade in, small arms and light weapons and aggravated violence against women and girls*”, which was a late addition to the text and part of WILPF’s advocacy priorities.

Paragraph 5 addresses prevention of impunity and reiterates that “*the Commission recalls the inclusion of gender-related crimes and crimes of sexual violence in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, as well as the recognition by the ad hoc international criminal tribunals that rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity or a constitutive act with respect to genocide or torture.*”

There is stronger language on participation than in the zero draft, including a call for increase in women’s participation in conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes and post-conflict decision-making.

In addition there is an important paragraph on supporting and protecting women human rights defenders. For the first time ever the Commission specifically requires states to “[s]upport and protect those who are committed to eliminating violence against women, including women human rights defenders in this regard, who face particular risks of violence.”

The Agreed Conclusions also explicitly call for accessible and affordable healthcare services, including sexual and reproductive health services, such as emergency contraception and safe abortion for victims of violence. Despite this area being highly contested, states for the first time reached consensus that rape survivors are entitled to emergency contraception.

These are all significant areas of strength.

In other areas, however, there are clear remaining weaknesses. There is no new language on “gender identity” or “gender orientation” to address the protection of LGBT rights - which represents a huge gap. Proposed language on “intimate partner” or “intimate relationships” did not make the final text, which would give some recognition to violence occurring outside of marriage but within partner relations. Nor was there any language on the negative effects of military spending or military GBV, issues that have made it to the final document other years.

3. WILPF at CSW57

According to Madeleine Rees, WILPF Secretary General, “*WILPF participation in this year’s Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was historic and highlighted our global outreach as a women’s peace movement.*”

Our participation at this year’s CSW was strong in numbers (over 70) and commitment. WILPF members, staff and partners participated from every region of the world and over 25 countries: Democratic Republic of Congo, Costa Rica, Colombia, UK, US, Sweden, Canada, Japan, Australia, Lebanon, Morocco, Yemen, Tunisia, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, France, China, Kenya, Spain, Ireland, Norway, Switzerland and Nigeria.

In addition to being regionally diverse, our delegation was inter-generational. For example, participants from WILPF U.S. included 6 mature participants in WILPF’s Local to Global programme, and 15 young women from universities as part of WILPF’s annual Practicum in Advocacy.

As Maria Butler, PeaceWomen Director and coordinator of WILPF CSW engagement noted, “*Given the theme and WILPF’s work, this year, we organized and supported an impressive number of events focused on addressing the root causes of violence against women and underlining the linkages with militarism and gun violence.*”

We worked collectively on advocacy on strengthening the Agreed Conclusions with a focus on WILPF priority areas for CSW: linkage with arms, women peace and security and women’s participation. We lobbied delegations, issued numerous WILPF and joint statements and sent masses of emails. On the second to last day of negotiations, there was still no reference to arms in the draft Agreed Conclusion

despite our consistent push - but we did not give up. On behalf of WILPF and 14 co-sponsoring organizations, Annie Matundu-Mbambi (President of WILPF-DRC) delivered our joint oral statement in the official room at CSW. Our statement was direct and called to include a reference to arms in the CSW outcome document and to adopt a strong arms trade treaty with legally binding gender provisions. On the final day of negotiations with much still open and un-agreed, it was confirmed that there was a late inclusion of language recognizing that “*illicit use of and illicit trade in small arms and light weapons aggravates violence, inter alia, against women and girls*”. This reference, among others we supported, was critical especially as WILPF continued our advocacy with States the following week on the Arms Trade Treaty.

The “WILPF Strategy Orientation Day” allowed us to connect, reconnect, and discuss the upcoming session. Throughout the next two weeks, WILPFers addressed the connections to the wider political and socio-economic system, and reiterated the need to focus on human security rather than state security to eliminate violence against women and girls. WILPFers also emphasized the need for the women’s movement to be involved in the Arms Trade Treaty negotiations to ensure that the connection between gender and militarization will be addressed in broader contexts.

Members of the WILPF delegation participated in many events. Secretary General, Madeleine Rees, spoke at numerous high-level events, addressing key linkages and contributing with her expertise as a human rights lawyer. At the end of week one, Madeleine was keynote speaker at a special screening of the film “The Whistleblower” followed by an expert panel at the WILPF international’s symposium “Avenues to Accountability: Militarism, Trafficking, Exploitation and Justice.” The WILPF U.S. Section also held an event on trafficking – addressing trafficking across the US-Mexican border and the high rates of murders of women in Ciudad Juárez in Mexico.

WILPF’s cross-section coordination and partnership was in full bloom at CSW as shown by the excellent joint event with WILPF Sweden, Costa Rica, Colombia, Nigeria and the DRC on “Violence against Women – the lethal consequences of arms” which is part of an ongoing project between these sister sections.

CSW was also a time for WILPF internal strategy meetings. Our partners and staff working on the WILPF MENA project came together at CSW to move their advocacy and collective actions forward in the region. Partners from Libya, Morocco, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Yemen, and Lebanon issued a joint statement and spoke truth to power at our event at UN Headquarters on March 8th.

At these events and others, WILPFers joined with feminist allies, demanding transformation away from the current militarized and unequal structures of development, and toward peace and freedom rooted in gender equality from the personal to the international levels. As Melissa Torres and Rita Janowski-Bradley of WILPF-US demanded, when it comes to violence against women and girls, we must take action to guarantee “*¡Ni una más! Not one more!*”

On the evening of the 8 March, International Women’s Day, WILPF launched the historic movement leading to our 100th year Anniversary in 2015. At the launch, WILPF women celebrated the last century of advocacy for peace and freedom, and prepared to unleash the power of women to end war in the next century by strengthening women’s voices, challenging militarism, and moving forward together.

The PeaceWomen team also monitored events and resources specifically related to the Women, Peace and Security agenda throughout the 2 weeks. We’ve created a monitoring on www.peacewomen.org with documents and reports, as well as civil society materials.

WILPF’s statement to the UN is available online:

http://www.peacewomen.org/peacewomen_and_the_un/peacewomen-un-monitoring/commission-on-the-status-of-women/ngo_and_advocacy/200/wilpfs-official-statement-to-the-un-csw57

WILPF partners from the MENA region called for CSW to reflect on the reality for women facing increased militarization in the region, realizing that the biggest threats in the region are poverty, unregulated weapons trade, and a lack of democratic

oversight of the armed forces. Read the statement here:

http://www.peacewomen.org/portal_resources_resource.php?id=1871

See Annie Matundu Mbambi, President of WILPF DRC, giving the WILPF oral statement at CSW57 here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LitLLRrSGr8>

4. Women, Peace and Security related events at CSW57 – An overview

The official theme of CSW57 – *The prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls* – was very relevant to the WPS agenda, and a large number of events focused on issues related to gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. Many of the events were hosted by NGOs, but several WPS events were held by Member States; such as Switzerland, Liberia, Lichtenstein, Kenya, Finland and Sweden to name a few.

PeaceWomen's focus during the two-week commission was to monitor as many events as possible relevant to SCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions (SCR 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960) which make up the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) policy agenda. For further information regarding these resolutions and the WPS agenda please see this link.²

In this summary report, PeaceWomen reviews more than 70 events related to the WPS agenda. Many of these focused on violence against women in different contexts.

Consistent themes included *women's access – or lack thereof – to justice, how to ensure accountability, and implementation of laws and resolutions related to violence against women in conflict- and post- conflict settings.*

Additional recurring themes were the *need to engage men and boys in the work towards preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls* and *the need to change social norms and attitudes.*

Many of the conflict-related events dealt with the situation of women and girls in the transforming MENA-region as well as women's current and future situation in Afghanistan. Events also addressed the situation in the Caribbean/Latin American Region such as Guatemala – the most violent country in the world for women, Colombia - where peace negotiations are coming up, as well as the dangerous situation for women in some parts of Mexico. Many events were also held on conflict related violence against women in the African region – such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria and Mali. Several speakers also addressed the underreported conflict in Manipur, India, and the negative consequences of militarization in other parts of Asia.

Summaries from Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Events at CSW57

Note: Longer summaries of the events are available upon request to info@peacewomen.org

Monday 4 March 2013

Event: End Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict or under Military Presence - Give Solution to the Issue of Japanese Military Sexual Slavery (“Comfort Women”)

Date: 4 March 2013

Organized by: New Japan's Women's Organization, Japan Network against Wartime Sexual Slavery

Participants: Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, High Representative of the UN; Ms. Indai Sajor, Women International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery; Emiko Hirano, Japan's Women's organization

Theme: Violence against Women, Peace Processes

² *WPS agenda:* <http://www.peacewomen.org/pages/about-1325>

This event discussed the so-called Japanese “comfort women” – women enslaved by the Japanese military during WWII. The speakers underlined the importance of women speaking out against these acts, and that there should be an official apology issued by the Japanese state. However, the current situation in Japan is discomfiting as ultranationalist parties are gaining power. Japan does not have a NAP for 1325 and the speakers stressed the importance of one for dealing with its past and present. The speakers also argued that the term “conflict zone” should include places that have military bases, as the military almost always perpetrates SGBV. For example the Japanese city of Okinawa, where the US currently has military bases and where many Japanese women have been assaulted by the US military, should be recognized as a “conflict zone.” Ironically the US pushed the Japanese government to issue an apology to the Japanese “comfort women”, while its own military continues to commit SGBV war crimes on Japanese soil.

Event: Women's Vital Role in Confronting Violent Extremism and Building Peace

Date: 4 March 2013

Organized by: Civil Society Network for Human Security: An initiative of Cordaid and Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), Women's Learning Partnership (WLP)

Participants: Asma Khader, Sisterhood is Global Institute/Jordan (SIGI/J); Mavic Cabrera-Balleza, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP); Edward J. Flynn, Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee; Bondita Acharya, Human Rights Defender; Robert Ochola, Journalist, Writer and Commentator

Theme: Participation

This event was dedicated to counterterrorism. The panelists agreed on the importance of cooperation between governments, international bodies and civil society organizations and the value of women's involvement. However, the panelists did not reach an agreement concerning working methods: whereas some opted for including more women in the military, others argued that we need to focus our efforts on changing masculinities and its norms altogether – and argued that the military in itself produces harmful masculinities. Peacebuilding efforts were not prioritized at this event.

Event: Confronting Military Sexual Violence: Challenging Militarized Security

Date: 4 March 2013

Organized by: Canadian Voice of Women for Peace, Hague Appeal for Peace

Participants: Tamara Lorincz, the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace; Betty Reardon, Feminist Peace Educator; Dr. Rose Dyson, Canadians Concerned about Violence in Entertainment (C-CAVE); Renee Black, PeaceGeeks –Technology Enabling Transformation

Moderator: Prof. Marilou McPhedran, University of Winnipeg Global Issues College

Theme: Violence against Women

This panel discussion included the screening of the “Invisible War”, a controversial documentary on sexual violence within the US military. The film describes the military's own judiciary system (that Leon Panetta sought to change after watching the movie) through the eyes of sexually abused and raped female ex-combatants. The sex scandal in the US military revealed the unacceptable reality that rape is an occupational hazard of military work. The outstanding panelists discussed, in the context of the documentary, the problem of sexual abuse within the Canadian armed forces. The military is a state institution that upholds deep patriarchal structures. Military structures operate similarly to for example church institutions: they can both commit acts of SGBV with impunity. In Canada, reports on SGBV within the military are not available to the public.

Event: Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda: Experiences from Latin America

Date: 4 March 2013

Organized by: The Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) and the Government of Chile

Participants: H-E. Octavio Errazuriz, Rep of Chile at the United Nations; Viviana Paredes, Women of Chile (SERNAM); Carolina Contreras, Chile gov.; Hanny Cueva Beteta, UN Women; Mavic Cabrera, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders; Paola Esther Leottau, WILPF Colombia

Theme: Violence against Women, UNSCR1325

This panel discussion focused on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (SCR1325) in Latin America. The event was chaired and convened by Chile – the first country in the region to implement a National Action Plan (NAP) on SCR1325. Members of the Chilean government outlined how the NAP was developed and how it is being adapted in Chile (i.e. strengthened and improved over time, and with national and governmental consultation). Hanny Cueva Bateta of UN Women looked at how regionally a lot has been done on 1325 and the broad Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, including through peacebuilding in Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador, where implementation has been more localized and focused on women in peace processes. Some of the discussion focused on Latin America leading the way in reparations for violence against women, through findings of the Interamerican Court of Human Rights (i.e. the Cottonfield and other cases) and motioned that this be closely tied to the WPS agenda by activists. Finally, Mavic Cabrera and Paola Esther Leottau outlined the methods and outcomes of implementing 1325 in Colombia, which has focused on local level awareness raising and implementation, through work with communities, local government and then regional, national and continent wide actors.

Event: Human Security in India: Women Survivors of Violence

Date: 4 March 2013

Organized by: CordAid, WinG – India, GNWP

Participants: Asha Kowtal, Women in Governance; Anjuman Ara Begum, Human Rights

Researcher; Helam Haokip; Dr. Paula Banerjee, Conflict and Peace Researcher

Theme: UNSCR1325, Participation

This event primarily addressed the issue of women's security in the northeast region of India, specifically the region of Manipur. Enduring a globally unrecognized conflict, Manipur was technically declared a "disturbed area" which gives national armed forces the right to kill people based solely on suspicion. The presence of armed forces and their impunity clauses greatly affects the women in the area. Sexual violence is rampant in the area. Of 15 cases, only one case allotted the victim some form of reparation while all the other cases were overlooked.

Despite all that women endure in this area they are rarely given any place in decision-making bodies. Dr. Paula Banerjee, one of the panelists, offered some tangible recommendations for Indian women to get involved in decision-making processes. Women must follow a twin track strategy and allocate budget for gender mainstreaming. In order to support development and implementation of 1325, women must work to abolish any unjust acts or laws that hinder women's empowerment and equality.

Event: UN Security Council Resolution 1325 – What lies ahead?

Date: 4 March 2013

Organized by: Permanent Missions of Armenia and Estonia to the UN, NGO CSW, ARS, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, Armenian General Benevolent Union

Participants: Urmas Paet, Estonia gov.; Soon-Young Yoon, UN Rep of the International Alliance of Women; Bineta Diop, Femmes Africa Solidarite; Anne Marie Goetz, UN Women; Mavic Cabrera-Balleza, GNWP

Theme: UNSCR1325, Participation, Peace Processes, Peacebuilding

This event focused on the challenges, successes, and different experiences, within different country contexts, of implementing UNSCR1325. Panelists addressed the needs of vulnerable victims, and reparations as a way to address gender inequality. Bineta Diop representing Femmes Africa Solidarite emphasized the need to include women in peace negotiations. She was angered by the fact that individuals who own guns are invited to the formal negotiating table while individuals who work to bring durable peace to their country are not.

Mavic Cabrera from GNWP discussed the capacity of the lead implementation agents. If there is no strong civil society constituency or ownership at the community level there is no one there to push for implementation. In Burundi, Colombia, Sierra Leone, the *localization program* engaged key actors, community leaders, traditional leaders, religious leaders, local police forces, teachers, and women leaders to drive the 1325 implementation on the ground.

Recommendations from UN Women included broadening the status-quo negotiations to involve women mediators. Member states must be responsible to invite women to these negotiations and finally efforts must be made to give a voice to women civil society organizations by building their capacity.

Event: Creative Energies UNiTE to Respond to GBV

Date: 4 March

Organized by: Africa Women's Development & Communication Network, FEMNET

Selected participants: HRH Ngwan Mbanysig II of Cameroon

Theme: Prevention, Violence against Women

This side event organized by FEMNET focused on creative responses to preventing and ending violence against women. Panelists from a wide range of areas (UN, civil society, traditional community leadership, government, fashion) shared their approaches to developing and implementing programs and/or initiatives to tackle this issue. In one program, a men's group took a motorcycle trip through South Africa to challenge traditional social norms of masculinity and advocate for the prevention and elimination of violence against women by meeting with representatives from the highest level of government in each country. In another, traditional leaders worked to modify traditional policy structures and mechanisms to end violence against women and girls.

Event: Developing Justice: Transforming Development Frameworks to Address Structural Inequality

Date: 4 March 2013

Organized by: Fiji Women's Crisis Center, Asia Pacific Forum on Women Law and Development

Selected participants: Helen Hakena, Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency; Ofa

Guttenbeil-Likiliki, Women and Children's Crisis Centre, Tonga

Themes: Violence against Women, Peacekeeping

This event focused on sharing best practices from four Pacific countries in eliminating violence against women and girls. The most pervasive of challenges, shared the panelist, were the cultural norms and beliefs even among women making it difficult to combat violence against women. Many women believe that violence is a normal part of everyday life, and women as well as men believe that issues such as violence against women and domestic abuse are private matters. As a result, violence against women is usually resolved within the family rather than in court. Another pervasive issue discussed is the lack of training on gender issues within the security forces. Consequently, these organizations have focused on several aspects to improve the situation for women on the ground. Some of the best practice methods they shared included gender training for police and security forces, creating a regionally specific handbook for the Pacific on violence against women, utilizing grassroots community education workshops to educate all members of local communities on women's rights and violence against women and using the international social media to shed some light on these issues that are neither spoken about or dealt with in the Pacific region.

Event: Investing in Peace? Violence Against Women, Militarism and Budgeting for Security

Date: 4 March 2013

Organized by: WILPF, Center for Women's Global Leadership, The Global Fund for Women

Participants: Radhika Balakrishnan, Center for Women's Global Leadership; Azza Kamel, WILPF, Appropriate Communication Techniques for Development; Eleanor Nwadinobi, Sub-Saharan Africa DPI/NGO Executive, Committee & Medical Women's International Association; Madhu Mehra, Partners for Law in Development and Asia Pacific Women Law and Development

Theme: Violence against Women, UNSCR1325, Disarmament

This event highlighted the need for keeping macroeconomic policies accountable to gender equality and women's human rights standards. The panelists highlighted the high rate of military spending and how this spending takes away from resources that could be spent on improving women's rights, which would in turn foster the economic development of national economies. Instead, military investment exacerbates violence against women and girls. These priorities violate state obligations to respect, protect, and fulfill women's and girls' human rights including to equality and nondiscrimination.

The event highlighted tax policy as a feminist issue and emphasized the careful examination of monetary and fiscal policy – gender equality should not just be considered under “inequalities” focus areas but in

governance and development areas as well. Beyond this, National Action Plans for 1325 should include budgeting and finance planning – money needs to be allocated to this work.

Event: Local to Global: Community-Based Solutions for Ending Violence against Women

Date: 4 March 2013

Organized by: Women Human Rights International Association

Theme: Violence Against Women

Fellows from North Carolina spoke about their research and findings for best practices on topics related to violence against women and girls. The topics included domestic violence, rape culture in society and the media, human trafficking and legal mechanisms, violence against immigrants and refugees and engaging men and boys to eliminate violence against women and girls.

Event: How Can the Police Better Respond to Violence Against Women? The Case of Guatemala

Date: 4 March 2013

Organized by: FOKUS- Forum for Women and Development

Theme: Violence against Women, General Women Peace and Security, Protection

This event focused on the work of “Women Breaking The Silence and Impunity” – a non-governmental organization that helps the survivors of sexual violence look for justice almost 20 years after the internal conflict in Guatemala.

According to panel participants, violence against women is the main tool of patriarchy, and Guatemala is the “best” example of it. In Guatemala violence against women remains almost as high as it was during the civil war that ended in 1996. During the civil war rape was systematically used against indigenous women as a weapon of mass destruction. However, perpetrators were not brought to justice. Sexual slavery still is a hidden dimension of war and sexual violence remains underreported.

Event: Women and Violence: Human Rights Activism through Arts and Film

Date: 4 March 2013

Organized by: Women's UN Network (WUNRN), Women News Network (WNN)

Selected participants: Tiffany Hsiung, filmmaker; Reggie Littlejohn, Women's Rights Without Frontiers

Theme: Violence against Women, Justice and Security Sector Reform

The event was dedicated to the power of storytelling in combating violence against women. It involved the screening of four short films, including “It’s a Girl” on sex selective abortion in China and “Within Every Woman” on the fight for justice of the Japanese comfort women. After each screening the filmmakers shared their stories about the creation of the movies and their inspirations.

Event: Men as Allies in Ending Gender-Based Violence

Date: 4 March 2013

Organized by: Kvinna Till Kvinna American Jewish World Service

Theme: Violence against Women

Two representatives from a Liberian Civil Society Organization shared experiences from their project where they worked with both men and women to end violence against women. Their work included starting conversation circles with men and women where they, first separately, and then in a mixed group, shared experiences and perspectives of domestic violence. The project led to greater understanding between partners.

Event: Violence against Women and Girls in Conflict

Date: 4 March 2013

Organized by: The government of Mali

Themes: Violence against Women, UNSCR1325

At this event, government representatives of DRC and Mali discussed the sexual violence that women have endured during the conflicts in their countries. Women in Mali have been systematically raped in the Northern parts of the country. The government of Mali has tried to legally address this issue and emphasizes that there can be no impunity for these acts. A lot of the violence is perpetrated by the

military and armed forces, and the importance of training military and police forces on how to treat women was underlined. Current legal structures must be strengthened. It was also emphasized that we need to switch the focus from the “victim” to the “perpetrator” – SGBV in conflict is not a “woman’s issue” - but a war crime.

Tuesday 5 March 2013

Event: Interrupting the Continuum of Gender and Sexual Based Violence in the Pacific

Date: 5 March 2013

Participants: Dorosday Kenneth Watson, the Department of Women's Affairs Vanautu; Leentjie Be'Soer, Voice for Change; Brigitte Leduc, Secretariat of the Pacific Community; Lucille Sain, Chuuk Youth Council and Pacific Youth Council of Chuuk; Noelene Nabulivou, DAWN, DIVA for Equality

Themes: Violence against Women

Pacific women advocates gathered to discuss a range of experiences in advancing analysis, advocacy and movement-building in a region showing very slow and uneven progress on eliminating gender inequality and violence against women, girls and people with diverse and non-heteronormative sexual orientation and gender identity. Read more here: <http://www.dawnnet.org/advocacy-cso.php?id=285>

Event: Gendering the UN Convention Against Torture and Non-State Torture Victimization

Date: 5 March 2013

Organized by: Canadian Federation of University Women, Women Graduates USA

Participants: Jeanette Westbrooke, WG-USA Program Committee Trafficking Group

Theme: Violence against Women, Human Rights

This event focused on gendering the UN convention on torture and non-state torture. For years violence against women was not seen a human rights violation. The first time a UN mechanism declared rape as a form of torture was in 1996. Panelists included researchers, lawyers and representatives of civil society organizations. From a law perspective the development of a legal framework to the constitution is crucial while monitoring is key to gaining enough knowledge to share with donors. Feminist based advocacy is a missing link necessary to acknowledge torture in the framework.

Event: Unarmed Civilian Peacekeeping: A Successful Mechanism for Implementing UN Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security

Date: 5 March 2013

Organized by: Women Graduates- USA, Nonviolent Peace Force

Participants: Alice Dahle, WG-USA Advocacy Committee; Kathryn Horvat, WG-USA Program Committee; Mel Duncan, UCP

Theme: Peacekeeping

This event, hosted by the Women Graduates-USA and Nonviolent Peace Force, addressed civilian peacekeeping as a mechanism to implement UN Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security. In the Nonviolent Peace Force, both men and women from all nationalities work together on unarmed civilian teams, deeply immersing themselves in whatever community they are protecting. By engaging a mix of strategies, this approach is cost effective as well as efficient. Strategies include: protective accompaniment, protective presence, and the implementation of early warning/early response mechanisms. To prevent violence against women, the Nonviolent Peace Force works with local community to develop an organized women’s security movement. For example they set up a phone tree system where every woman is within walking distance of another individual with a cell phone. In addition they will monitor peace agreements to ensure nonviolent civil society participation in the cease-fire agreement.

Event: Engaging Men and Boys

Date: 5 March 2013

Organized by: Canadian Mission to the UN

Selected participants: John Hendra, UN Women

Theme: Violence against Women

This event addressed the issue of engaging men and boys as imperative in the prevention and elimination of violence against women. Panelists included both men and women representing UN entities, government missions, as well as civil society organizations. Men and boys can be engaged as peers targeting other men and boys on the issue of violence against women. These men and boys can be positive role models creating a new perspective on masculinity. In Canada, for example, there is a program that works with Canadian football teams, engaging players to speak out against violence against women.

In Nepal a civil society organization works to change the mindset and practices of men and boys by forming men's groups, training them on the different ideas of masculinity and working directly with perpetrators of violence against women.

Event: ¡Ni una Más! Not one More! Resilience and Resistance: Using Art, Protest, Education and Political Action to Eliminate “Femicide” and Human Trafficking

Date: 5 March 2013

Organized by WILPF US section

Participants: Melissa Torres, WILPF US; Rita Janowski-Bradley, WILPF US

Themes: Violence against Women, Human Rights

This event addressed human trafficking along the US-Mexican border and “femicide” in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, and connected these to the eco-social root causes, such as NAFTA and the war on drugs.

Conveners titled the panel in honor of poet and activist Susana Chavez Castillo, who coined the term “Ni Una Mas.” She was murdered because of her activism against femicide in Ciudad Juarez. Panelists highlighted the widespread impunity for these crimes in a situation where speaking out against them means putting your life at great risk, and argued that feminists should creatively support each other in these difficult situations. As Rita Janowski-Bradley said, “solidarity is the highest form of love.”

The panel also explored the many cases of human trafficking from Mexico into Houston where one of the panelists works in assisting people who have been trafficked. In conjunction with her research experience, having grown up on the border between Mexico and the USA gave Melissa Torres particularly valuable insight into the lives of people in communities controlled by cartels with the connivance of local authorities.

In this current situation we seem a long way from eradicating femicide. Panelist demanded action from the State as mandated by the Inter-American Court.

Event: Prevent, Protect and Prosecute! End Rape and Gender-Based Violence in Conflict

Tuesday: 5 March 2013

Organized by: Nobel Women's Initiative Global Fund for Women

Selected participants: Lina Abou Habib, the Collective for Research and Training on Development-Action (CRTD-A)

Themes: Protection, Human Rights

The Nobel Women's Initiative and the Global Fund for Women facilitated an interactive discussion with Nobel Women Laureates, activists and donors, focusing on ending gender-based violence and rape in conflict situations. The session brought out concrete strategies and best practices on ensuring prevention, strengthening justice mechanisms and ending impunity for these crimes. Members of the International Campaign to Stop Rape and Gender Violence in conflict made presentations about the targeted strategies that need to be put in place.

The speakers addressed the gap between law, resolutions and reality in the DRC and emphasized that resolutions without implementation are worthless. Arms and military forces pose a serious threat to women's security as evident in Burma - where the government and army forces in the Kachin province target women. This violence is perpetrated with total impunity, which breeds a culture of violence. They also spoke of the situation for women in Egypt, where rape, assault, and sexual assault (physical and verbal) has become widespread since the demonstrations began.

Event: ActionAid International Safe Cities Initiative-Sharing experience from 7 Communities of Women

Date: 5 March 2013

Organized by: ActionAid International

Theme: Violence against Women

This event presented a survey of best practices from around the world for working with local groups to bring about change and examine the similarities in their experiences.

Name of Event: Violence, Economics, and War: Innovative Solutions

Date: 5 March 2013

Organized By: United Methodist Women, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders

Participants: Genevieve Inagosi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) gov.; Rusudan Kalichava, Association ATINATI; Kazadi Musau Betty, Central Congo Conference of The United Methodist Church; Nelly Del Cid, Weaver of Dreams; Betty Reardon, the International Institute on Peace Education

Moderators: Tatiana Dwyer, United Methodist Women; Mavic Cabrera-Balleza, International Coordinator, the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, a program of the International Civil Society Action Network

Themes: Human Rights, Violence against Women, Disarmament

During this discussion, intersectional ties between violence, war and economics were highlighted. Speakers addressed the situation in Honduras (among other countries), where corruption and illegal arms trade are rampant, leading to serious violations of human rights and violence against women. According to speakers, Honduras is currently undergoing a process of militarization and is today perhaps the most violent country in the world. The US war on drugs is counterproductive, as organized crime in Honduras is getting stronger and stronger. Every 15 hours a woman is executed in Honduras.

Event: Violence against Women: the Lethal Consequences of Arms

Date: 5 March 2013

Organized by WILPF Sweden and WILPF International

Participants: Annie Matundu Mbambi, WILPF DRC; Adilia Caravaca, WILPF Costa Rica and President, WILPF International; Nina Ferrer, WILPF Colombia; Joy Onyesoh, WILPF Nigeria; Madeleine Rees, Secretary General, WILPF International; Signe Burgstaller, Rep for Sweden to the UN

Moderator: Josefine Karlsson, WILPF Sweden

Theme: Violence against Women, UNSCR1325, Disarmament

This parallel event took the form of a panel discussion where WILPF members from Costa Rica, Colombia, Nigeria and the DRC shared experiences on how the existence and proliferation of arms leads to lethal violence against women and facilitates sexual and gender-based violence. Panelists also shared experiences on how they have worked with SCR1325 in their respective countries.

WILPF's Secretary General Madeleine Rees concluded the event by highlighting the importance of including binding language on gender in the Arms Trade Treaty. The ATT was negotiated at the UN the week following CSW57 and its importance was something all panelists had emphasized during the discussion.

Event: Women Under Siege: New and Emerging Forms of Violence Against Women in the MENA Region

Date: 5 March 2013

Organized by: International Civil Society Action Network- Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (ICAN-GNWP)

Participants: Dalia Abdel Hameed, EIPR; Shareen Gokal, AWID; Razan Naeim Al-Moghrabi, Sussan Tahmasebi, ICAN

Theme: Violence against Women

This event was a discussion of the role that extremist fundamentalism plays in exacerbating violence against women around the world with a special focus on the MENA region. There has been a backlash for women's rights in the MENA region since the so-called Arab Spring began. Speakers shared examples

from their countries: in Tunisia, women are for the first time told to be veiled on the streets; in Syria, women are suffering greatly from displacement and from human trafficking; in Egypt, many women were assaulted in Tahrir Square and continue to be unsafe in public spaces.

Name of Event: Strengthening Preventive Actions to Curb Conflict-Related Violence Against Women

Date: 5 March 2013

Organized by: Femmes Solidarite

Participants: Bineta Diop, Femmes Africa Solidarite; Innocent Balemba Zahinda, Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict; Maitre Soyata Maiga, African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights; Letty Chiwara, UN Women

Theme: Violence against Women

This was a discussion-based panel in which Letty Chiwara posed questions to each panelist and then each panelist responded very briefly and audience participants were extremely involved. The speakers highlighted the importance of preventing GBV from an early age, and avoiding “preaching to the converted.” Instead, young boys need to be targeted and taught that it is not OK to rape or abuse women in other ways.

Event: Building Bridges Between Sudan and South Sudan

Date: 5 March 2013

Organized by: Clark University, The Sisterhood for Peace

Themes: UNSCR 1325, Violence against Women, Peace Processes, Reconstruction and Peacebuilding

This event focused on the strategies used by civil society organizations in Sudan and South Sudan to overcome the conflict that has plagued both nations for so long. When South Sudan gained its political independence in 2012, the run up to the referendum engaged women from both countries. With the meaningful participation of women in the processes, there was an inclusion of gender in the referendum. Panelists representing both civil society and academia addressed the idea of building metaphorical bridges, between academic and actual practice, believing that activism and academia could shape the future.

In response to the oil dispute the government introduced austerity measures, affecting wide sectors of Sudanese societies especially those already displaced and those affected by war. Panelists stressed that women of both countries must work together, despite their differences, to tackle the challenges faced by both. These include lack of access to resources, limited budget allocation for women, human rights violations (arbitrary arrests, murder, lack of freedom of speech), and the issue of returning IDP's and refugees. All panelists agreed that the outcome document on the 57th session of CSW needs stronger and more focused language.

Event: Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence

Date: 5 March 2013

Organized by: The US Mission to the UN

Participants: Tina Tchen, US gov.; Francoise Girard, International Women's Health Coalition; Michele Moloney-Kitts, Together for Girls; Bea Hanson, US gov., Thoko Majokweni, South African Acting Deputy National Director of Public Prosecutions; Kate Gilmore, UNFPA

Theme: Violence against Women, Prevention

Violence against women is a direct consequence of social arrangements. Gender inequalities increase the risk of internal conflict. This event focused on practices that can decrease the level of sexual and gender-based violence in situations of peace. The panelists highlighted the importance of working with prevention and treatment simultaneously: we cannot focus exclusively on treatment because that will not change the patterns of violence. However, when paying attention to prevention we should not leave out the victims of SGBV. We have to avoid victimizing the victims of sexual violence (first, women are victimized when they are abused and second, when they denounce it but don't get access to justice). Disabled persons should also be acknowledged, as they are particularly vulnerable. We need positive and non-violent constructions of masculinity.

Event: Countering VAW: Promoting Gender Equality: Experiences from DRC and the Great Lakes Region

Date: 5 March 2013

Organized by: Observatoire de la Parite en DRC, Centre d'Etudes sur la Justice et la Resolution 1325, Cordaid

Themes: Violence against women, Participation, Reconstruction and Peacebuilding

This event focused on promoting gender equality in the DRC and Great Lakes region. Panelists from civil society shared their knowledge and experiences on violence against women within their country context. The situation in this region is in grand part a result of the sexist stereotypes within the family. For example, the choice to send boys rather than girls to school is one of the root causes of continued stereotypes that always place the male before the female.

It is widely known that sexual gender-based violence is a problem in the DRC, but so are other forms of violence such as domestic violence, forced marriage, denied access to resources and psychological trauma. The DRC has great legal texts that ensure women's rights but the problem lies in the implementation of these laws. There are not enough monitoring mechanisms to ensure that articles are implemented correctly.

In order to end the war in DRC, women must be involved in the peace negotiations. In addition there must be an end to arming people, which implies a reform to the traditional system.

Event: The Post-2015 Development Agenda: What's at Stake for the Worlds Women?

Date: 5 March 2013

Organized by: WILPF International, Post 2015 Women's Coalition

Participants: Bani Dugal, Baha'i International Community; Rosa Lizarde, Feminist Task Force; Alejandro Scampini, AWID; Jhocas Castillo, DAMPA/Huairou Commission/Philippines; Cate Owren, WEDO; Savi Bisnath, CWGL; Sascha Gabizon, WEFC, Rio + 20 Women's Major Group; Dr. Donga Aziz, Gov. Pakistan

Themes: Human Rights, Human Security and MDGs

This event highlighted the importance of making gender equality and women's human rights central to sustainable development beyond the 2015 end of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Coalition members included leaders of the successful GEAR (Gender Equality Architecture Reform) campaign, which supported the July 2010 creation of UN women as an integrated gender entity spearheading gender mainstreaming at the UN. At the event, coalition members highlighted how the current development agenda marginalizes a broad range of groups, including women and girls, and discussed how they could work together to create a new paradigm with gender equality at its core. They agreed to demand accountability for state obligations to respect, protect, and fulfill women's and girl's human rights, and emphasized the importance of doing so not only in areas traditionally conceived of as being about human rights, but also in every other area – including macroeconomic policy, arms trade, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and beyond. As Alejandra Scampini of AWID (Association for Women's Rights in Development) declared, "this is the right moment," and as Radhika Balakrishnan of CWGL (the Center for Women's Global Leadership) stated, "now is the time." Building on the preliminary event, coalition leaders hosted two follow-up strategy meetings aimed at building the coalition and planning how to move forward effectively together. For more information or to get involved, see the coalition's website: <http://www.post2015women.com/>

Event: Literacy is a Woman's Right: Cuba's Commitment to Women and the World

Date: 5 March 2013

Organized by: WILPF International, WILPF U.S. Women and Cuba Collaboration, Bolivarian Alliance Issue Committee

Panelists: Cindy Domingo, US Women & Cuba Collaboration, WILPF Cuba and Bolivarian Alliance Committee; Caridad Morales Nussa, University of Maryland-College Park; Maritzel Gonzalez, Cuban Federation of Women (FMC), North America Region; Dra. Norma Guillard, Professor of Psychology

This event addressed the importance of literacy for women, and the successful literacy campaign in Cuba 1961, where thousands of teenage girls joined the national campaign for literacy – a life altering experience.

Wednesday 6 March 2013

Event: Human Security: The Missing Link Between Women's Rights, Conflict & Peace

Date: 6 March 2013

Organized by: Women's Learning Partnership

Participants: Jacqueline Pitanguy, Cidadania, Estudo, Pesquisa, Informação e Ação (CEPIA); Brigid Inder, Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice; Asma Khader, UN Special Investigator for Human Rights Abuses in Libya, Jordanian National Commission for Women; Aruna Rao, Gender at Work; Madeleine Rees, WILPF

Themes: Human Rights, Justice and Security Sector Reform

The point of departure for this event was the concept of "human security", the notion incorporated by the UN system in the 1990s. Despite this "new" concept, (previous ideas of security focused solely on territorial/national security) human security remains a gender-blind concept in many regards. All of the speakers tried to answer to the question: What does security mean for women? And how can we address security taking into consideration the fact that women face sexual and gender-based violence on a daily basis in every society? Justice is the pillar of peace and security; however, the high level of impunity remains a great problem worldwide. Participants addressed these questions from different perspectives, with WILPF Secretary General Madeleine Rees discussing the concept of security from a legal point of view. Following the discussion on "human security" the film *Because Our Cause Is Just* premiered. The film highlighted the unsafe situation for women in the MENA-region, the backlash on women's rights, and the targeting of women's rights defenders in the region.

Event: In Our Right Minds, Guiding Women to their Strength as Leaders, Leading Men to Strength without Armor

Date: 6 March 2013

Organized by: Montage Initiative The Guild for Service

Participants: Dr. V Mohini Giri, Guild of Service; Ingrid Stellmacher, Le Menach Foundation & The Mary Initiative; Ambassador Garcia-Gonzalez, El Salvador; Klevisa Kovaci and Sharon Pedrosa, Fairfield University

Theme: Violence against Women

The panelists discussed widow stigmas and discrimination including policy recommendations for governments and civil society organizations to give this issue priority. The panelists also analyzed violence against women from a cross-cultural religious and mystical sense to demonstrate that women have been subjected to violence and victims of discrimination all throughout history.

Event: Innovative Approaches to Challenge Cultural Practices That Promote and Fuel Violence Against Women

Date: 6 March 2013

Organized by: Open Society Foundations and International Women's Program

Participants: Inia Pitian; Monica Gabila; Tomaja Deua; Maria Adevia; Gubacha

Themes: Violence against Women

This event discussed violence against women and girls in the caucasus, particularly Chechnya. The panel discussed the high prevalence of honor killings, early marriages, discrimination from mother in-laws and how these culturally sensitive issues can be dealt with through understanding and communication.

Name of Event: Prosecuting Gender-Based Crimes & the ICC

Date: 6 March 2013

Organized By: International Alliance of Women

Selected participants: John Washburn, American Non-Governmental Organizations Coalition for the International Criminal Court (AMICC), Washington Working Group on the International Criminal Court (WICC)

Themes: Justice and Security Sector Reform, Human Rights

The panelists discussed the ICC's scope in jurisdiction and whom they can prosecute. They also emphasized the difficulties the court is currently facing with prosecution and more specifically in serving as a forum for justice for victims of war crimes including sexual and gender-based crimes during war.

Event: Innovative Approaches to Challenge Cultural Practices that Promote and Fuel Violence Against Women

Date: 6 March 2013

Organized by: Open Society Foundations, International Women's Program

Themes: Peace Processes

This event focused on the innovative approaches used by a women's civil society group in Chechnya to challenge cultural practices that perpetuate and enable violence against women. Armed conflict in the area greatly affects the women in this area. In addition, low levels of education and economic dependence on men limit women's avenues for social mobilization and as a result their only option is to marry. Domestic violence, forced early marriage and polygamy are all issues faced by the women of Chechnya. Fortunately there are civil society organizations providing educational programs teaching women their rights, as many do not even realize they are suffering from domestic violence.

One local women's group began using theatre performances to raise awareness on violence against women. Their candid depiction of what many women endure shocked audiences. The process of this performance allows the audience to see both perspectives understanding the needs and fears of both parties. For the women in Chechnya the war "closed off their feelings," holding everything in and making it difficult to express themselves. The theatre helps them express their emotions and as a result creates a space for dialogue, reconciliation and recovery.

Event: Media as an Instrument to Fight Violence Against Women in Conflict-Affected Settings

Date: 6 March 2013

Organized by: WILPF International & Peace is Loud

Participants: Abigail Disney, Filmmaker, Philanthropist and Scholar; Mavic Cabrera-Balleza, GNWP; Nina Ferrer, WILPF Colombia; Adanna Anyasodor, WILPF Nigeria

Theme: Violence against Women

This event focused on the use of media as platform to address violence against women. Filmmaker Abigail Disney spoke about how to use the *Women, War and Peace* series as a starting point for a discussion.

Nina Ferrer from WILPF Colombia shared experiences of having used alternative media integrating communication from the communities such as local newspapers, emails, and social media to campaign against domestic violence. Adanna Anyasodor from WILPF Nigeria engaged grassroots to raise awareness. She recommended using materials that women can understand as well as the use of music to attract attention. In addition she emphasized the significance of radio as a great medium and the importance of reaching out to universities in efforts to engage young women in the process and in the movement.

Event: Voices: The Views of Young People

Date: 6 March 2013

Organized by: Women's Alliance for a Democratic Iraq

Theme: Violence against Women

This event discussed the innovative approaches of young people in combating violence against women. With a panel made up entirely of men and women under the age of 25, they shared with the audience their strategies and initiatives. One woman had organized a dance program in Haiti. Dance, she believes, gives voice to young women allowing for their expression of self, identity and sense of belonging.

Another approach presented by a young man was a "good husband campaign." This program engaged husbands in passing on good information to their children particularly to their sons. These values passed will enable them to become responsible adults and address their anger management. Boy's identities are formed within family, peer group, and community so approaches must be able to intervene at every level.

Thursday 7 March 2013

Event: Efforts to Eliminate Sexual Violence in Kenya: Best Practices and Challenges

Date: 7 March 2013

Organized by: Mission of Kenya to the UN

Participants: Gov rep from the Kenyan Ministry of Gender, gov rep from the Kenyan National Gender and Equality Commission, gov rep from the Kenyan Ministry of Public Health, Rep from FEMNET

Themes: Violence against Women, Justice and Security Sector Reform

This event focused on the government of Kenya's efforts to eliminate sexual violence in their country. Panelists representing government ministries as well as civil society organizations spoke of their successes and challenges in implementing violence against women programs throughout Kenya. The Ministry of Gender emphasized ensuring the linkage between political commitments, targeted capacity building and those who are affected by the violence by offering comprehensive services for survivors.

The National Gender and Equality Commission discussed the ongoing reform that have bridged the gap between policy and institutional capacity, and created partnerships between state and non-state actors. From a civil society perspective, the FEMNET representative shared preventative measures to end violence against women, emphasizing the engagement of men and boys.

Event: Achieving Gender Justice: the Case for Reparations

Date: 7 March 2013

Organized by: Finland, International Criminal Court, Global Action to Prevent War and Armed Conflict, UN Women

Participants: Elisabeth Rehn, International Criminal Court Trust Fund for Victims; John Hendre, UNWomen; Steven Rapp, US Gov.; Luz Mendez, National Union of Guatemalan Women

Themes: Justice and Security Sector Reform, Human Rights, Repatriation

Peace and justice must come together. After conflict justice is more urgent than ever. For women, access to justice is the way to recognize their human rights and to prevent sexual and gender-based violence. At the meeting the case studies from Guatemala and Sierra Leone were discussed. The event was closed by Elisabeth Rehn who said, "We will never be able to achieve repatriation understood as the repair of the harm but let us at least do what we can".

Event: Documentary on Survivors of Violence Against Women and Panel Discussion on Initiatives for the Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls in Africa

Date: 7 March 2013

Organized by: Women's Consortium of Nigeria (WOCON), Nigerian Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

Participants: Sire Dionne Conde, UNESCO Centre for Peace, African Women for Good Governance; Bisi Olateru-Olagbegi, WOCON; Pearl Osamudiamé, Entertainment Education; Opeyemi Akindele, Nigeria Gov; Mosan Okunola, Nigeria Gov.; Hajia Mairo Bello, Adolescent Health and Information Projects (AHIP); HAJIA Zainab Maina (MFR), Nigeria Gov.

Themes: Violence against Women

The culture of silence in Nigeria prevents many victims from speaking out against gender-based violence. However there are various programs targeting women and girls to end violence against women and sexual trafficking. This event focused on initiatives developed in Nigeria with panelists from civil society organizations sharing their knowledge and preventative measures to eliminate violence against women. Authorities at school and at work, should strive to create an open communication and safe space for victims to report crimes committed.

The consequences of gender-based violence extend beyond the victim and affect society as a whole. Children may come to accept violence as an alternative means of conflict resolution and conflict management. What happens at the home is transferred to the child so preventative measures need to be taken at all levels of society, starting within the home.

Event: Reclaiming Public Spaces for Empowerment of Women and Girls

Date: 7 March 2013

Organized by: UN Women

Participants: Dr. Joan Clos, UNICEF; Suneeta Dhar, Jagori (New Delhi); Josephine Castillo, DAMPA Federation of Peoples Organizations, Huairou Commission/ Philippines; Mary Balikungeri, Rwandan Women's Network

Theme: Violence against Women, Participation

Speakers emphasized that violence against women cuts across countries, cultures and economies and the need for a multi faceted, integrated approach. The recurrent concept that emerged was "partnership". VAW cannot be fought alone, but must be done so through building partnerships, with the participation and inclusion of women organizations etc., local governments, politicians, communities and other organizations. Women's economic situation worldwide must also change; public spaces should not suppose a threat to women - but an opportunity.

Name of Event: Violence Against Women and Intersections with the Environment

Date: 7 March 2013

Organized By: Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) and Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF)

Selected participants: Sascha Gabizon, WECF International; Norma Maldonado, NGO Tierra Verde; Elina Doszhanova, Social Ecological Fund NGF; Noelene Nabulivou, DAWN/Fiji

Theme: Violence against Women

The complex interconnections between the environment and sexual and gender-based violence were discussed at this event. This panel focused on issues related to mining, water rights, climate change's effects on local peoples and nuclear radiation's negative effects on populations.

Event: Violence Against Women in Iran and Challenges

Organized by: Italian Association for Women in Development (AIDOS)

Date: 7 March 2013

Selected participants: Lopa Banerjee, UN Women; Shahla Hoveida; Akram Kheirkhah

Theme: Violence against Women

The panelists discussed violence against women and girls in Iran. Several testimonies were given from victims of domestic violence and violence against ethnic women. Panelists shared the shocking fact that 53% of Iranian women have been exposed to physical abuse. Due to discriminatory policies of certain ethnic groups in Iran, women from particular ethnic groups suffer more discrimination and violence. The family laws, passport laws, segregation of universities are perpetuating violence against women. There has been no action by the Iranian government to address issues such as the increasing violence against ethnic women, honor killings and other forms of violence against women.

Event: Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls in Afghanistan- 2014 and Beyond

Date: 7 March 2013

Organization: Women's UN Report Network (WUNRN)

Themes: Violence against Women, Peace processes

The panelists discussed Afghanistan's critical period of transition post 2014 and the progress that has been made thus far in the context of women's rights. They also presented touching anecdotes that demonstrate the progresses and setbacks on ending violence against women and achieving women's rights in Afghanistan. A Representative of Afghanistan mentioned that a National Action Plan to involve women in peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts is under way by the Afghan government.

Event: Equal power – Lasting Peace

Date: 7 March 2013

Organized by: The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, Swedish Mission to the UN and the Delegation of the European Union to the UN

Participants: Annika Törnqvist, Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation; Mr. Stavros Lambrinidis, EU Special Representative on Human Rights; Ms Zainab Bangura, UN Special Representative on

Sexual Violence in Conflict; Ms Annie Matundu-Mbambi, WILPF DRC; Ms Lina Abou Habib, CRTD.A /Lebanon

Theme: Peace Processes, Participation, UNSCR1325

After the screening of the short documentary *Six Days* a discussion followed on the obstacles for women's participation in peace processes, based on the findings in the report *Equal Power - Lasting Peace – a new report by the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation*. The report seeks to map out what the main obstacles for women's participation are and investigates the particular challenges of building a gender-equal and sustainable peace after violent conflicts. Women are important peace builders but their work is often ignored and they are locked out from formal peace processes. In a unique mapping of the experiences among female activists in five different contexts of conflict, the pattern of exclusion and marginalization becomes strikingly clear.

WILPF president of the DRC section, Annie Matundu-Mbambi, spoke about her experiences from the DRC and wondered why more has not been done on an international level to support women in the DRC and end GBV. Mr. Stavros Lambrinidis, EU Special Representative on Human Rights and Ms Zainab Bangura, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on Sexual Violence in Conflict said that they took these issues very seriously.

Event: Challenging and Preventing Hidden War Crimes: Film Screening and Panel Discussion

Date: 7 March 2013

Organized by: Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development (ACORD)

Participants: Salina Sanou, ACORD; Ousainou Ngum, ACORD

Theme: Violence against Women, Human Rights, UNSCR1325

The film "Hidden War Crimes" – portraying how women have been affected in different conflict settings especially in relation to sexual violence – was screened prior to a discussion on how to address issues of accountability for SGBV related war crimes and how to ensure an effective implementation of 1325. The panel emphasized that the problem is not a lack of laws but the lack of implementation of them. The panel underlined that "gender issues" cannot not be separated from the entire socio-economic system. We need to recognize that violence against women affects entire societies in a negative way. More needs to be done to implement laws around these issues, we need to confront our leaders with stories similar to those shown in the movie – where the pain and costs SGBV causes to women and whole communities is evident.

Friday 8 March 2013

Event: Gender-Motivated Killings of Women, Including Femicide

Date: 8 March 2013

Organized by: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its causes and consequences, UN Women

Selected participants: Rashida Manjoo, UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women; Kyung-wha Kang, OHCHR; Michelle Bachelet, UN Women; Dastic Quecedo Alfonso, Rep of Spain

Themes: Violence against Women

The panelists discussed various forms of violence against women, particularly femicide and described the role of law and legislation in curtailing and safeguarding women from these crimes. There were also several anecdotes to demonstrate the issue of impunity and lack of coordination by police personnel in protecting women from violence and femicide.

Event: Sexed Pistols Reloaded: A Case Study of Sexual Violence in the Context of Conflict in the DRC

Date: 8 March 2013

Organized by: Eastern African Sub-Regional Support Initiative for Advancement of Women

Participants: Marren Akatsa-Bukachi, Eastern African sub-regional support Initiative for Women (EASSI); Leah Chatta Chipepa, Akina Mama wa Afrika; Anastasia Olembo, Care International

Theme: Violence against Women

These panelists discussed the conflict in the DRC and the consequences of rape and sexual and gender-based violence. They also described methods they have used that have been effective in fighting sexual and gender-based violence, including men's active participation to fight sexual and gender-based violence.

Event: Powerful Voices - Women in the MENA Region Talking About Militarism, Security and Peace

Date: 8 March 2013

Organized by: WILPF International & Government of Switzerland

Participants: Huda Abuzeid, WILPF Libya; Fatima Outaleb, WILPF Morocco; Aida Elkashef, WILPF Egypt; Rzan Mohammed, WILPF Iraq; Dana Abu Sham, WILPF Jordan; Radhia Ben Haj Zekri, WILPF Yemen; Layla Hussein, WILPF Yemen, Rita Sabat, WILPF Lebanon;

Madeleine Rees, WILPF International

Moderator: Vanessa Farr, UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR)

Themes: Violence against Women, UNSCR1325

Eight women from different countries in the MENA region shared their perspectives and experiences as well as their challenges and strategies in efforts to engage women in the militarism, security and peace agenda within their countries. Speaking candidly and openly, each woman discussed a separate theme on this issue, including demilitarization, women's involvement in peace negotiation and ending violence against women.

The women emphasized the linkages between women's security and rights to international and national securities. The involvement of women in any decision making process is crucial despite the standard litany of excuses used to ensure women's exclusion such as their lack of skills, capacity and knowledge on such issues.

The tracks for action, which were shared in the final comments by Vanessa Farr and Madeleine Rees, included sharing policies with governments with particular emphasis on UN instruments.

Event: Launch of WILPF's 100th Anniversary Celebration

Date: 8 March

WILPF International and WILPF US

On International Women's Day, WILPF launched the celebration of its upcoming 100th year Anniversary. In 2015 WILPF will gather women from all over the world in the Hague to promote women's power to prevent wars and create the principles of permanent peace. At the launch, WILPF women celebrated the last century of advocacy for peace and freedom, and prepared to unleash the power of women to end war in the next century by strengthening women's voices, challenging militarism, and moving forward together.

Event: Strategic Partnership with Media on Violence Against Women

Date: 8 March 2013

Organized by: NORAD, Forum for Women

Participants: Abeer Saady, Journalist, Egypt; Ananya Chakraborti, Filmmaker, Television Journalist, and Writer, India; Birgitte Jallo, Empowerhouse, Denmark; Jennifer L. Pozner, Women In Media & News (WIMN), United States; Michele Montas, Journalist, Haiti

Theme: Violence against Women, Justice and Security Sector Reform

During this event different strategies were shared on how to use the media as a strategic partner to end violence against women. Successful strategies included short films that can be screened in cities and villages to spread positive messages, changing norms about women and thus preventing violence against women. The media's silence on these issues was also addressed, and particularly in the context of the so-called Arab Spring where many women were sexually abused – something there has been much silence about. However, as more women speak out about these crimes more women dare do so in public and to the media, although this can also suppose a big cost for women as they face stigma when doing so. However, although difficult, the panelists shared experiences on how letting women have their voices

heard through the media can actually change norms and lead to politicians and the legal system taking violence against women seriously.

Event: UN CSW 57 High Level Panel: Harmful Traditional Practices - Violence Against Women & Girls Laws vs. Practice: Rhetoric vs. Reality

Date: 8 March 2013

Organized by: Women Enabled, Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations of New York, IAC-CIAF, Forward, WUNRN

Participants: Ms. Alvilda Jablonko; Rep of Germany to the UN New York, No Peace Without Justice; Ms. Rashida Manjoo, UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women; Ms. Isha Dyfan, OHCHR Geneva; Ms. Lois A. Herman, Women's UN Report Network (WUNRN); Ms. Stephanie Ortoleva, Women Enabled; Dr Morissanda Kouyate, Inter-African Committee (IAC); Ms. Lakshmi Sundaram, Girls Not Brides Global Partnership to End Child Marriage; Dr. Tahira Khan, Professor, and Author

Moderator: Dr. Tobe Levin, WEB Du Bois Institute, Harvard University, FORWARD Germany

Theme: Violence against Women

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss measures and strategies to be implemented in order to address harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation and early and forced marriage, which constitute a violation of human rights committed against millions of women and girls worldwide. Alvilda Jablonko highlighted the significance of the recent United Nations General Assembly resolution 67/146, adopted on 20 December 2012 which called for a *Worldwide Ban on Female Genital Mutilation*. The resolution, whose adoption is the culmination of years of advocacy efforts conducted by an ever-expanding coalition of NGOs and human rights activists including No Peace Without Justice, calls on all states to address and prevent this human rights violation through “all necessary measures, including enacting and enforcing legislation to prohibit FGM and to protect women and girls from this form of violence, and to end impunity”. It is now imperative that governments and civil society around the world take urgent action to ensure that this breakthrough document realizes its full potential as a concrete tool in the fight against FGM and that it truly strengthens efforts aimed at the elimination of FGM once and for all. Many of the panelists showed images of harmful practices, including female sexual mutilation/circumcision, emphasizing that this can never be legitimized in the name of “culture”.

Saturday 11 March 2013

Event: Avenues to Accountability: Militarism, Trafficking, Exploitation, & Justice

Date: 9 March 2013

Organized by: WILPF International, Angelican Women's Empowerment, Network for Peace through Dialogue International, Institute on Peace Education, National Peace Academy, World Council for Curriculum and Instruction

Participants: Madeleine Rees, WILPF International; Dorota Gierycz, European Peace University; Lisa Davis, Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti

Moderator: Vanessa Farr, UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR)

Themes: Justice and Security Sector Reform, Human Rights, Violence against Women, Trafficking

On Saturday 9 March, WILPF Secretary General Madeleine Rees, Dorota Gierycz and Lisa Davis were guest speakers at the symposium “Avenues to Accountability: Militarism, Trafficking, Exploitation and Justice.” Vanessa Farr moderated the panel discussion. Prior to the discussion we screened “The Whistleblower”, a movie inspired by WILPF Secretary General Madeleine Rees’s work in exposing a real-life trafficking scandal within the UN system in Bosnia. Following the screening, the speakers discussed the problem of accountability for perpetrators of gender-based violence particularly focusing on reforming immunity, injustice and recommendations for the future. Each speaker addressed the problem of misconduct within the UN peacekeeping mission from a different angle: Rees analyzed the legal aspect, Gierycz focused on the role of Security Council and Davis enriched the discussion sharing experience not from conflict but natural disaster settings and specifically Haiti. Through candid conversation the speakers identified ways forward including recommendation and concrete action steps.

Monday 11 March 2013

Event: Video Advocacy and Documentation Training on Sexual and Gender Based Violence

Date: 11 March 2013

Organized by: Mission of Liechtenstein to the UN, WILPF PeaceWomen, Government of Liechtenstein, Liechtenstein Institute of Self Determination, Witness, Ludwig Boltzmann Institute, UN Peacekeeping

Panelists: Bukeni Waruzi, Program Manager WITNESS

Themes: Human Rights, Violence against Women

The workshop brought together some 20 women's rights activists from around the world to address the international legal framework protecting women and how to document sexual violence through interviews with survivors of gender-based violence. The goals of the workshop were to increase the capacity of activists to advocate effectively for social justice and build their abilities to use new technological tools in their advocacy, to increase the understanding of activists of the legal protection of women at the international level, and to facilitate proper investigation and documentation of sexual violence, acts of torture, and other ill-treatment based on gender.

Event: Elimination and Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls with Special Emphasis on the Situation of Women and Girls in Post Conflict Situations

Date: 11 March 2013

Organized by: UN-Habitat, UN Women, FORAM Mali, Arab-Yemen Women's Union and Roots (Kenya)

Panelists: Micere Mugo, Pan African Community of Central New York; Dr Joan Clos, UN-Habitat; Angela Mwai, UN-Habitat, Maite Rodriguez Blandon, Women and Habitat Network, Fundación Guatemala; Ramzia Aleryani, Yemeni Women Union; Simin Wahdat, Democracy International

Theme: General Women Peace and Security, Violence against Women

The panelists emphasized how war disproportionately affects women and girls. They also discussed the importance of women's participation in urban planning and rebuilding war-torn cities and women's lack of participation in public spaces as a critical issue that must be changed in order to end violence against women and girls.

Event: Both Men and Women Using their Inner Resources to Bring Change: Relearning peace

Date: 11 March 2013

Organized by: Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University

Panelists: Gayatri Naraine, Brahma Kumaris; Luis Mora, UNFPA; Denise Scotto, UN NGO Committee on the Status of Women, New York; Carl Murrel, UN's Rep at National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States; Nalishha Metha, Program Officer at Solidarity Center, AFL-CIO

Theme: Peacebuilding

The panelists discussed the importance of finding strength from within yourself to visualize a peaceful world and the power of introducing new ideas to communities as a tool to bring about change.

Integrating Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Women in the Post-2015 Processes

Date: 11 March 2013

Organized by: Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development (ACORD)

Panelists: Sering Falu Njie, United Nations Millennium Campaign; Ousainou Ngum, ACORD; Ngone Diop, African Centre for Gender and Social Development

Themes: Participation

The event shared feedback from consultations that have taken place in communities affected by SGBV, exploring the implications for a new framework and providing updates on ongoing post 2015 processes. It looked at how African CSOs are working in partnerships to leverage opportunities for promoting proposals for integrating GBV into a post-2015 framework, while ensuring a wide and meaningful participation of the grassroots themselves. Speakers agreed that in post-2015 period gender has to be

mainstreamed and particular attention needs to be paid to structural issues around gender and context specificity.

Event: Doha Briefing: Arab Spring, A Chance or a Risk for Women's Rights

Date: 11 March 2013

Organized by: Qatar Mission, Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development

Participants: Dr. Nadine Naber, Associate Professor in Arab American Studies, University of Michigan; Dr. Rabab Al Mahdi, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the American University in Cairo, Dr. Sophie Richter-Devroe, Lecturer in Gender and Middle East Studies, University of Exeter

Themes: Violence against Women

This event focused on the Arab Spring and questioned whether the revolutions created a chance or a risk for women's rights. When examining violence against women during the Arab Spring, the issues of culture and religion are systematically included in any discussion. Dr. Nadine Naber believes however that there is a simplistic overlapping of culture, Islam and violence against women as Islamic feminists have been saying for years that Islam and women can function as a framework for women's rights. "Conflict is much more than what meets the eye," she said. There are many forms of violence including the obvious physical as well as the more underlying cultural and structural. Cultural and structural violence can include denied access to education, economic empowerment, health access or political participation.

In Tunisia for example, there needs to be an increase in security on the streets, connected to the larger issue of authorities that are complicit. How can you expect women to call the police when the police themselves are engaging in violence against women?

Event: Gender Based Violence and Access to Justice after the Liberian Civil War

Date: 11 March 2013

Organized by: Global Network of Women Peacebuilders

Panelists: Marpue Speare, Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia; Frances Greaves, Voices of the Voiceless; Helena Gronberg, GNWP, ICAN

Themes: Violence against Women, Justice and Security Sector Reform, Human Rights

The event examined the current state of women's access to justice in Liberia. Representatives from government, civil society and UN were present. With the help of their female president, Liberia has made considerable efforts to move past the Civil War and years of violence that plagued the country and its civilians. For instance, the government has set up a "Criminal Court E" which prosecute cases of rape and GBV. Currently this court is only set up in Monrovia now but developments are being made to set up the same justice systems in rural areas. Women in rural communities should know that taking steps to prosecute a perpetrator is right they should be aware of.

Civil society organizations can influence the position of the government. For example, one organization has worked to develop a monitoring and assessment of 1325 implementation initiative. The goals of this program are to encourage women's political participation and inform advocacy efforts with the data gained from this initiative.

Event: The Role of International Peace and Development Organizations in Prevention of Violence Against Women

Date: 11 March

Organized by: International Peace and Development

Themes: Peacebuilding

Speakers from various peace and development organizations in Sudan shared methods and experiences in their work towards development – from humanitarian assistance to training and capacity building.

Event: Violence against Women Human Rights Defenders: Strengthening Protection Measures

Organized by: National Alliance for Women Human Rights Defenders

Participants: Lappin, Gheeta Lakmini Fernando, Activist, Sri Lanka, Renou Rajbhandari, WOREC Nepal; Panha Sok, Banteay Srei; Ofa Guttenbeil, Women and Children's Crisis Centre in Tonga; Bipasha Chakma, Kapaeeng Foundation

Themes: Violence against Women

The panelists of this event underlined the need to shift the current development model to one that ensures development for all. That means shifting resources and addressing structural inequalities. It means looking at how much of the budget is allocated to the military as opposed to health and education spending. Gheeta Lakmini Fernando, working with women who have been subjected to violence in Sri Lanka, addressed how sexual violence is linked to militarism and increases with military presence. She also underlined how this is a problem that extends beyond Sri Lanka; Fiji, Pakistan and Nepal are places where women and especially women human right defenders are often attacked, unprotected, and at risk because of the upholding of a system that breeds injustices and inequalities.

Tuesday 12 March 2013

Event: Women Human Rights Defenders - A Resource At Risk? Obligations And Practical Measures To Support Women Human Rights Defenders and Protect Them From Intimidation, Reprisals And Violence

Date: 12 March, 2013

Organized by: Ireland, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Amnesty International, Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition

Panelists: Cynthia Rothschild, Center for Women's Global Leadership; Helena Heckena; Fasai Moukarusa, Anne Anderson, Rep of Ireland to the UN in New York; Ivan Šimonović, OHCHR New York office

Themes: Violence against Women

This event discussed the constant risks and threats faced by human rights defenders and particularly those who defend women's rights. Women human rights defenders face serious death threats, killings, detentions and sexual violence for the nature of their work.

Event: Violence Against Women in the African Diaspora – Challenges and Progress

Date: 12 March 2013

Organized by: Sister to Sister International

Panelists: Leugenia Edwers, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.; Toks Sofola, African Women's Alliance; Irma Loemban Tobing – Klein, President, Millennium Development Global Watch

Themes: Violence against Women, Participation

Organized by Sister-to-Sister, this event featured panelists from UN and civil society as well as youths in high school and college to share their knowledge and experiences on gender-based violence. The UN representative shared the development new framework post 2015, which is transparent, inclusive and participatory. It will include mechanisms for enforceability, ensuring that there are means of verification and accountability.

In addition the forum focused on the relationship between males and females, at home and in society at large. In many communities, females are placed at a disadvantage, as families will choose to send a son to school over a daughter. What also must be taken into account are the child marriages: many young girls are forced into by their families. Before they are physically or sexually matured, child brides are forced into sexual activity and are likely to become pregnant, suffer child mortality, and suffer vulnerability to HIV/AIDS.

The resounding conclusion from the forum is that education is a major key to alleviate these issues.

Event: Impact of Violent Conflict on Women and Girls in Nigeria

Date: 12 March 2013

Organized by: Women's Right to Education Program

Themes: Violence against Women, Participation, UNSCR1325, Reconstruction and Peacebuilding

This event focused on the effects of violent conflict on women and girls in Nigeria. The first panelist represented a civil society organization in the Plateau State of Nigeria and spoke passionately for the women of this region. From this perspective, women and girls are the most vulnerable and therefore the most affected. The experiences are significantly different for men in conflict than for women. Despite this, women are rarely a part of the decision-making process and confined to marginalized roles. How do we ensure the involvement of women in pre- and post- conflict arenas? Through the implementation of UNSCR1325, linking women's experiences to the international peace and security agenda, and calling for women's engagement.

A doctor representing another civil society organization spoke of the absence of a legal framework and policies preventing VAW. She emphasized the male domination in the formal leadership process and the lack of gender mainstreaming in the process of peace initiatives and conflict resolution. This denies women the opportunity to speak out for their needs.

One strategy is to educate the youths. This must be a multi-pronged approach by tackling the personal and public sphere, both community and family level.

Event: Women, Peace and Security: Strategies To End Violence Against Women in Armed Conflict Areas and leading humanitarian disarmament

Date: 12 March 2013

Organized by: Binalakshmi Nepram, Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network Secretary General, Control Arms Foundation of India

Panelists: Dr. Swadesh Rana, World Policy Institute; Dr. Angana Chatterji, Anthropologist and Historian; Sharna de Lacy, YWILPF Australia; Dr. Walter Dorn, Professor of Defence Studies at the CFC and the Royal Military College of Canada; Binalakshmi Nepram, Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network Secretary General, Control Arms Foundation of India; Meenakshi Ganguly, Human Rights Watch

Themes: UNSCR1325, Protection, Disarmament

The panelists discussed the effects of armed conflict and the role of disarmament efforts in promoting the protection of violence against women and girls during post-conflict situations. The various issues encompassed the role of 1325; disarmament and the arms trade treaty in protecting violence against women and the importance of domestic compliance with National Action Plan Initiatives.

Event: Women, Governance and Halting Gender-Based Violence

Date: 12 March 2013

Organized by: The Hunger Project, Land O'Lakes

Panelists: Mary Munene, USAID Kenya Dairy Sector Competitiveness Program, Land O'Lakes International Development; Rita Sarin, The Hunger Project - India; Mara Russell, Food Security and Livelihoods, Land O'Lakes International Development; John Coonrod, The Hunger Project
Theme: Violence against Women

The event focused on how sexual and gender based violence influence on women's livelihood. It depicted the destructive impact of SGBV on human capital, productive capital, social capital, financial capital and natural capital. SGBV can impact women and communities equivalent to natural disasters. The second part of the event was dedicated to successful projects on the ground supported by USAID in rural areas of Kenya.

Event: Exploring the Evidence in Preventing Violence against Women

Date: 12 March 2013

Organized by: Ireland, Raising Voices

Theme: Violence against Women

The panelists for this event argued that GBV and violence against women can be prevented. Preliminary results from a SASA study indicate that programs that aim to change norms on a community level are the most effective ones. Volunteers preaching to a small group should be avoided; instead it is good to engage people from the community to spread positive messages to neighbors, friends, families and acquaintances that can have ripple effects on the whole community.

Wednesday 13 March 2013

Event: How to Protect the Right to Health of Women and Children from the Nuclear Accident in Fukushima?

Date: 13 March 2013

Organized by: Human Rights Now, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Peace Boat US

Panelists: Professor Hiroko Goto, Human Rights Now, Japan; Dr. Hisako Sakiyama. M.D., Japan; Dr. Maureen McCue, M.D., Physicians for Social Responsibility, USA

Theme: Violence against Women

Since the March 2011 nuclear disaster in Fukushima, individuals and communities in Japan continue to be exposed to high and dangerous levels of radioactivity. There are serious concerns about health effects for pregnant women, mothers, children and others in contaminated areas. Residents have a human right to live in a safe and healthy environment, however, sufficient protective measures and support are not provided. The speakers highlighted the dangers of both nuclear energy and nuclear weapons to human security. They also analyzed how the nuclear disaster has had gendered, social consequences, exacerbating violence against women.

Event: Men and Violence against Women and Girls: Seeking Solutions

Date: March 13

Organized by: UN mission to the UN, the Values Caucus at the United Nations, UNiTE to end Violence against Women and Girls

Participants: Brian Heilman, International Council for Research on Women; Quentin Walcott, CONNECT; Marlon Walker, CONNECT; Joseph Maldonado, NYC Men's Roundtable; Julio Albino Langa, HOPEM (Mozambique)

Themes: Violence against Women

At this event men from different organizations spoke about how they have worked with boys and men in trying to change norms about masculinities and ultimately end violence against women. It was highlighted that we should not talk about masculinity but rather "masculinities" in plural, and approaches thus need to be context bound, while at the same time recognizing that men often are oppressors to women. It is however also important to highlight that harmful masculinities also damage men, and it is thus important to engage men, allowing them to reject negative gender stereotypes of what it means to be a man – which is beneficial to everyone.

Thursday 14 March 2013

War against Women and the Pursuit of Peace and Justice: Sexual and Gender-Based Violence as a Method of Warfare

Date: 14 March 2013

Organized by: Liberia, Lichtenstein

Panelists: Julia Duncan-Cassell, Liberia gov; Christian Wenaweser, Rep of Liechtenstein to the UN; Emira Woods, the Institute for Policy Studies; Neimat Ahmadi, Save Darfur Coalition; Zainab Hawa Bangura, UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict; Fatoun B. Bensouda, International Criminal Court; Yael Danieli, Group Project for Holocaust Survivors and their Children

Themes: Violence against Women, UNSCR1325, Human Rights

This event brought into light how SGBV is used as a method of warfare in different settings, and how women are still being targeted after wars are formally over. Women in Liberia continue to experience gender-based violence, although the perpetrators are now intimate partners rather than members of armed forces. Liberia has done much to try to better the situation for women by establishing so-called "safe homes", centres and by changing the judiciary system. After this discussion, a video was shown depicting how rape was used systematically as a weapon of war in Darfur. The UN is failing to provide security to the most targeted in camps in Darfur; women. Thereto, women human rights defenders are continuously harassed and especially targeted. Finally, the event addressed how to hold perpetrators of SGBV in

warfare accountable. The Rome Statute sets out the framework for how to address SGBV – as war crimes, genocide or crimes against humanity.

Name of Event: Laws on Violence Against Women Presented by Women Judges

Date: 14 March 2013

Organized by: Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), US Federation for Middle East Peace

Themes: Violence against Women, Human Rights, Justice and Security Sector Reform

Women judges discussed the challenges with the laws on violence against women. They highlighted the importance of the understanding of domestic violence as a pattern of oppression, not just a battle within an intimate relationship. All of the speakers agreed that violence does not have ethnic or religious roots but rather patriarchal roots. The problem of the US jurisdiction is that laws on violence against women in many states do not address the issue of racism. Although the Congress has just recently passed the VAWA, the United States remains one of 6 countries that did not ratify CEDAW.

Event: An Opportune Time: Using the Non-Permanent Seats on the Security Council to Raise Awareness

Date: 14 March 2013

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Australia

UN Women National Committee Australia

Participants: Annie Matundu- Mbambi, WILPF DRC; Binshalaki Nepram, Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network; Elizabeth Shaw, UN Association of Australia

Themes: UNSCR1325

Young WILPF Australia arranged this event discussing how YWILPF Australia has been monitoring Australia's actions in the Security Council and how this can be done to raise awareness around resolution 1325 and the UN's work on peace and security in general. Elizabeth Shaw gave a thorough update on how Australia has acted within the Security Council since getting the non-permanent seat. Additionally, Annie Matundu-Mbambi shared experiences from the DRC and Nepram spoke about the underreported conflict in the Manipuri region of India.

Event: Effective Remedies for Victims of Trafficking in Persons

Date: 14 March 2013

Organized by: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Participants: Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, the UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children; Ms. Maarit Kohonen Sheriff, OHCHR New York Office; Dr. Jean D'Cunha, UN Women; Suzannah Phillips, CUNY School of Law; Jayne Huckerby, Associate Professor of Clinical Law, Duke University School of Law; Ms. Maarit Kohonen Sheriff, OHCHR New York Office

Themes: Violence against Women, Trafficking

This event focused on access and rights to justice for victims of trafficking, as well as effective remedies, restitution, compensation and reparation for victims of trafficking. In reality there is a wide gap between law and implementation. What is necessary is the actual implementation of laws and policies in place today rather than creating more laws and policies against trafficking. Speakers highlighted that simply focusing on restitution - the form of remedy that is aimed at restoring the situation prior to the crime - is wrong. To simply return the victim to the same situation as before she was trafficked will perpetuate the cycle. Recovery is a crucial form of remedy, but cannot be a means in itself. Other forms are needed as well and what is needed is to change the system that stigmatizes and puts women at risk. The stigma trafficking carries with it has terrible consequences for trafficked women on every level, as they are often criminalized and outcast by the entire society – from the legal and economic system to their families.

5. Background to CSW57 and WPS

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is a commission of the United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), dedicated exclusively to gender equality and the advancement of women.

CSW is held annually to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and the advancement of women worldwide.

Each year the CSW selects a priority theme for debate. In 2012 the priority theme was, “The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges”. No agreed conclusions were adopted at last year’s CSW; marking the second time in CSW history that states failed to adopt an outcome document.

During this year’s CSW, in addition to the official program of CSW and side events held by United Nations’ entities, civil society groups and grassroots organisations took the opportunity to participate and draw attention to issues related to this year’s theme - *elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls* - by hosting many panels, workshops and roundtables.

The official theme of CSW57 was very relevant to the WPS agenda, and a large number of events focused on issues related to violence against women in conflict and post-conflict situations. The WPS policy agenda is based on Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), which calls for women’s full participation in preventing conflict and building peace. The four following resolutions (SCR 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960) build on aspects of SCR 1325 focusing on the prevention and protection of sexual violence against women in conflict, and ending impunity of perpetrators of sexual violence.

Note takers:

PeaceWomen/WILPF is very grateful to everyone who represented WILPF during the CSW57 and helped us with the monitoring of the vast variety of events.

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8. Useful links & Contact

PeaceWomen UN Monitoring: the Commission on the Status of Women

http://www.peacewomen.org/peacewomen_and_the_un/peacewomen-un-monitoring/commission-on-the-status-of-women

The official website of The Commission on the Status of Women

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/57sess.htm>

The NGO Committee on the Status of Women

<http://www.ngocsw.org/>

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