



WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM
1325 PEACEWOMEN E-NEWS

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1325 & PARTICIPATION AT THE CSW

The Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, 31 October 2000.

For the text of the resolution, visit: [-/un/sc/1325-](#)

For the printer-friendly version of this newsletter and for past issues, visit:
[-/news/1325News/1325ENewsindex-](#)

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1. EDITORIAL

This month's E-News covers a broad range of issues that are all linked by the crucial issue of participation. The focus of the edition is the 52nd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women that drew to a close in early March. The priority theme of the session was financing for gender equality and women's empowerment. Of course financing for the implementation of 1325 is one part of this but women, peace and security issues also featured more extensively in the CSW (see Item 3). A major part of this was the Commission's review of its previously agreed conclusions "women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding." As is evident from this month's news section (Item 1), many challenges to meaningful participation remain. One of the major challenges noted in the CSW and in other fora is that it is difficult enough to ensure women's participation in numbers, but too often that is where things stop. Some of this was seen in the 2008 substantive session of the C34 Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations reviewed in our Peacekeeping Update (Item 7). Although progress has been seen in addressing gender in this forum, '[a]s usual, the references made to gender by member states largely focused on increasing the numbers of women deployed as peacekeeping troops and police.' Women's participation is, more importantly, about women being able to bring forward their issues and concerns and, hopefully, to forge positive social change.

As we await the results of the election in Zimbabwe, we at PeaceWomen salute the efforts of women there to bring about change through peaceful, non-violent action. Our Feature Resource *The Effects of Fighting Repression With Love* (Item 6) describes the efforts of the group Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) and the violence that they have faced in response. Women's organizations in Zimbabwe, despite such violence have, nonetheless, been campaigning for the full participation of women in elections and the YWCA support to these efforts is this month's Feature Initiative (Item 5).

Women's participation extends beyond elections to participation in the development of policy – and not just policy around gender equality but also policy around economic development and that around security and disarmament. This month's Feature Statement (Item 4) coming from the International Women's Day Disarmament Seminar and delivered to the Conference on Disarmament notes that women's voices 'are often suppressed or ignored, on disarmament, peace and security' but goes on to state that '[w]ithout women's equal participation, sustainable peace, sustainable development and true human security are unattainable. Women must be able to contribute their perspectives, help determine the direction of policy options, and have a greater say over budgetary allocations.' This participation needs to be meaningful in real and concrete situations – and WILPF notes with dismay that members of the organization who attempted to take part in peaceful demonstrations in preparation for the NATO summit in Bucarest were restricted by Romanian border authorities.

Women's participation in concrete ways by, for example, the voicing of views on European security policy is crucial if we are to move beyond viewing participation in narrow numerical terms. As Italy so aptly noted, 'the Security Council and the international community should shift gears from a mere annual celebration of resolution 1325 to its actual everyday implementation.'

Despite our aversion to anniversary celebrations, PeaceWomen does, however, wish to celebrate in May when we will publish the 100th edition of the PeaceWomen E-News. We look forward to bringing you a special edition next month and welcome your contributions and reflections. Contributions for the May 2008 100th edition should be sent to enewssubmissions@peacewomen.org by Thursday 24 April 2008.

2. WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY NEWS

NAMIBIA: WOMEN MUST STAND UP, BE COUNTED

March 18, 2008 – (AllAfrica) The South African Women in Dialogue (SAWID) recently met with women of Namibia to discuss ways in which the local women can organise themselves in their diversity and act together for a better future.

[-/news/Africa/SouthernAfrica/March08/nambiwomenunite-](#)

KASHMIR: WHAT DIFFERENCE DO WOMEN MAKE?

March 15, 2008 – (Kashmir Watch) Kashmiri scholar, journalist and former civil servant Ather Zia details the range of ways in which women participate in politics in the disputed region of Kashmir in India. Through profiles of various women activists, she shows that although women differ ideologically and in their political actions, they nevertheless participate increasingly in shaping Kashmir's future.

[-/news/SouthAsia/March08/KashmirDifference-](#)

ZIMBABWE: A SOCIETY 'NOT READY FOR FEMALE LEADERSHIP'?

March 14, 2008 – (AllAfrica) Women make up about half the population in Zimbabwe. But, they're far from accounting for 50 percent of those on the ballot for this month's general elections in the Southern African country sparking concern amongst gender activists.

[-/news/Africa/SouthernAfrica/March08/zimwomenleadership-](#)

SYRIA: MUTED CELEBRATIONS FOR WOMEN'S DAY

March 13, 2008 - (Institute for War and Peace Reporting) Syrian advocacy organisations demanded that women be granted equal rights during International Women's Day celebrations last week.

[-/news/MiddleEast/March08/Syriawomen-](#)

SERBIAN GOVERNMENT BANS PEACE MARCH COMMEMORATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY AMIDST KOSOVO BACKLASH

March 10, 2008 – (OneWorld) In a sign of the growing pressure on Serbian civil society in the wake of Kosovo's declaration of independence, the Serbian government has cancelled a peace march by Women in Black Network from Serbia, a partner of The Advocacy Project.

[-/news/CentralEasternEurope/March08/march8-](#)

FOR NICARAGUANS, INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MARKS A STEP BACK

March 8, 2008 (HRW) Until recently, Nicaraguan women had something to celebrate on March 8, International Women's Day. Nicaraguan women have fought for years to protect women's rights, not to restrict them, and decades ago the government eliminated some of the sexist laws that discriminated against women.

[-/news/LatinAmerica&Carib/March08/Nicaraguaabortion-](#)

WOMEN'S DAY, A TIME TO GRIEVE, A TIME TO BE INSPIRED

March 6, 2008 – (Reuters) Whether they're widows left destitute after decades of war, or victims of sexual violence and abuse, women are often disproportionately affected in times of conflict. In honour of International Women's Day on March 8, the media is reporting heavily on the soaring rates of violence against women around the globe. It's an important topic and a worrying trend, but it's important to remember the positive stories too.

[-/news/International/March08/WomensDay-](#)

PUSH FOR CREATION OF A CENTRALIZED UN WOMEN'S AGENCY

March 6, 2008 - (Feminist Daily News Wire) The Campaign for Stronger Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) called for the creation of a centralized UN women's agency last week. The activist groups leading the campaign include Amnesty International, Center for Women's Global Leadership, International Planned Parenthood Federation, and

Women's Environment and Development Organization. The campaign was launched last week during the 52nd Commission on the Status of Women, which ends on March 7.

[-/news/International/March08/GEAR-](#)

KENYA: SEXUAL VIOLENCE CONTINUES IN IDP CAMPS

March 4, 2008 - (PlusNews) Residents in a camp for displaced persons in Nakuru, in Rift Valley Province, western Kenya, were deeply shocked when a gang of men attacked and sexually assaulted five boys, but the health officials dealing with sexual violence during the recent political upheaval have had to become immune.

[-/news/Africa/EastAfrica/March08/idp-](#)

WOMEN OUT IN THE COLD AT PEACE TALKS

March 3, 2008 - (IPS) As the United Nations continues its two-week long discussions on the status of women worldwide, there is one nagging fact hovering around the conference rooms in the Secretariat: peacemaking is still largely in the hands of "men in suits, puffing on cigars".

[-/news/International/February08/peacetalks-](#)

SIERRA LEONE: UN RAISES AWARENESS OF LAWS TO CURB VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

March 27, 2008 - (UN News) Two United Nations agencies have joined forces with a local non-governmental organization (NGO) in Sierra Leone to heighten awareness of three new gender laws, passed by the West African nation's Parliament, in a bid to reduce the level of violence and abuse against women.

[-/news/Africa/WestAfrica/March08/3laws-](#)

LIBERIA: SPECIAL COURT FOR SEXUAL VIOLENCE UNDERWAY

March 21, 2008 - (IRIN) The Liberian government has created a special court to deal with not only rising rape cases, but also other forms of violence against women, Liberia's Information Minister Laurence Bropleh told IRIN.

[-/news/Africa/WestAfrica/March08/court-](#)

DRC: "MAJORITY OF RAPISTS GO UNPUNISHED"

March 18, 2008 - (IRIN) Sexual violence against women is rampant in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) but the majority of perpetrators, especially in "no-law" zones, go unpunished, according to a UN independent human rights expert.

[-/news/Africa/GreatLakes/March08/rapists_unpun-](#)

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For more regional women, peace and security news, please visit:

[-/news/countryindex-](#)

For more international women, peace and security news, please visit:

[-/news/International/Index-](#)

3. FEATURE EVENT

52nd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

25 February – 7 March 2008, UN Headquarters, New York

The 52nd Session of the CSW took place from 25 February to 7 March 2008 at UN Headquarters in New York. The focus of the session was on the priority theme of Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Also of interest to women, peace and security advocates was the Commission's review of progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions from the 48th Session in 2004 on "women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding."

This year WILPF's activities at the CSW centered around highlighting the opportunity cost of military spending; ensuring resources for women's equal participation; the implementation of Resolution 1325; and advocating for reform of the UN's gender equality architecture. This advocacy position is reflected in our statement to the CSW:

[-/un/ecosoc/CSW52/NGOdocs/CSW52_WILPF_Statementpdf.pdf](#)

This review of the session looks at the issue of NGO participation in this year's session and then looks at how 1325 and related issues were dealt with in the outcome documents and the statements of governments during the main general discussion segment. Also included here are links to further CSW resources and reviews.

NGO Participation

NGO participants from around the world turned out in record numbers for this year's session. Despite unacceptable logistical problems with registration (that saw many standing in lines for more than half a day) NGOs were actively engaged throughout the session. Many took advantage of the opportunity to lobby on priority issues as well as to network and connect with colleagues through the many scheduled side-events and more informally.

The importance of NGO engagement in the CSW was rightly recognized by Slovenia on behalf of the EU when it said in its statement during the general discussion that "the meetings of the Commission on the Status of women have proven that without the contributions of women's organizations and other civil society organizations we would not respond proactively to the major concerns of our time..."

That being said, it was thus particularly disappointing that NGOs were shut out of negotiations on the Agreed Conclusions almost as soon as they started. This is, unfortunately, not entirely unprecedented – NGOs have been excluded from observing negotiations toward the end of previous sessions – but the timing – on the first day of negotiations – was particularly disturbing. The Linkage Caucus, on behalf of women's organizations attending, protested this exclusion through a letter to the Bureau Chair and noted the decision as being inconsistent with the spirit of participation in the Charter. While seemingly sympathetic to this, the Chair did not formally open the sessions and access to these policy discussions remained accessible only to those few with contacts on government delegations. While the professed reason for exclusion – the need to ensure the negotiations were conducted effectively and efficiently is understandable – the exclusion of NGO observers could not and did not seem to achieve that aim (with negotiations going on until 4:30am on the Saturday following the end of the session). It is a high price for non-evident expedience when policies are negotiated away from the watchful eyes of those who are most concerned.

Outcome Documents

Alongside various thematic resolutions, the main outcome document of the session was the Agreed Conclusions on Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Links to the resolutions and the final draft of the Agreed Conclusions: [-/un/ecosoc/CSW52/UN_Resolutions_Outcomes.htm](#)

Also available at this link are the earlier versions of the Agreed Conclusions with the language proposals of the various governments and separate links to proposals by NGOs. In light of the fact that we were excluded from observing the negotiations, these early drafts are particularly valuable in tracing who was supportive of what issues and what was won or lost along the way.

An overall point to be made, is that there was a sense that the issue of financing for gender equality, rather than being an important issue to be considered as an integral part of financing for development, was used as an entry point to win points in that larger debate – points which had nothing whatsoever to do with gender equality. Also, as is increasingly the case, the concepts of national interests and priorities were put forward as overriding considerations and so the already weak operative paragraphs are reduced in impact by being actions merely *urged* and to be taken while *bearing in mind national priorities*. We already know governments will take national priorities into account, stating it in this manner in the outcome document merely reminds us how seldom gender equality itself seems to be a national priority.

Participation, 1325 & Related Peace and Security Issues at the CSW

Some have expressed serious concern that 1325 issues were not properly dealt with at the CSW. For some this concern is centered on the fact that there is no direct reference to the resolution in the Agreed Conclusions. Concerns have also been expressed at the manner in which the Review Theme on women's participation was dealt with.

The Review Theme

For 1325 and women, peace and security advocates, the most obvious focus for these issues was in the session on the review of implementation of the Agreed Conclusions from the 48th Session on "women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding." As mentioned in last month's e-news, this was discussed in an interactive session on February 29th and the outcome of the discussion was a chairperson's summary.

This is only the second year of the implementation of the CSW's new method of work (adopted at the 50th session) and the division of policy development and implementation review is not yet satisfactory. In reducing the themes on which policy is developed, there is a welcome reduction in texts being negotiated and the capacity of governments and NGOs can be more focused. In addition, and in keeping with changes in other ECOSOC functional commissions, there needs to be not only policy development but also an opportunity to take stock and measure progress and assess challenges. However, the manner in which the review theme is dealt with is less than perfect. That is not to say that there should be negotiation of

policy on the review theme – although some NGOs expressed distress that this was not happening. It is valuable to have the opportunity to review implementation of previously negotiated commitments. Certainly the negotiation of a text is not the way to perform this review. However, is a three-hour interactive dialogue really sufficient? Surely more can be made of a policy review and the theme given more attention in the general lead up to the CSW. NGOs will be following up with the Division for the Advancement of Women and the CSW Bureau on ways to improve the opportunity provided by the review theme in future years.

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Key Points from the Interactive Dialogue on the Review Theme

The summary of this session, held on 29 February 2008 is available at:
[-/un/ecosoc/CSW52/UNdocs/Summaryreview.pdf](#)

As stated in that summary, “some progress had been made in implementing the agreed conclusions, and the pivotal role of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security [was noted].”

Fortunately, the discussion went beyond simply noting achievements and looked at gaps and challenges to implementation as well as recommending steps to be taken. Key challenges included the continuing under-representation of women in peace negotiations and processes and participants called for increased resources and technical and financial support to increase and strengthen such participation. Also key was the support expressed for the development of national action plans for the implementation of Resolution 1325.

Particularly relevant to recent advocacy efforts related to 1325, the session reflected the need for *consistent attention* to be paid to gender equality issues “in the work of all intergovernmental bodies dealing with peace and security issues, and especially the Security Council...” As we have long advocated, 1325 needs to be integrated into the day-to-day work of the Council and should not just be considered as part of marking of the resolution’s anniversary. In particular, the summary notes the recommendation that “Security Council members should request that all reports by the Secretary-General to the Council reflect attention to gender equality issues, including violence against women, and Member States should include gender equality experts in country and thematic discussions.” Also significant was the support given to the SG’s call on the Security Council “to establish a monitoring mechanism for the implementation of resolution 1325, to strengthen accountability for women’s full participation in all processes related to peace and security and to address violence against women in armed conflict.”

While it was an impossible task to properly review implementation of the Agreed Conclusions from the 48th CSW in one session, the discussion was impressively interactive and productive and, if nothing more, it was made very clear that the issue of women’s participation is one that goes far beyond numbers.

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The Agreed Conclusions

Many women, peace and security advocates have expressed dismay that there is no reference to 1325 in the Agreed Conclusions on the theme of Financing for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment. Certainly the theme and women, peace and security issues are connected in many ways and having such an explicit reference to the resolution would have reinforced the link and the relevance of the resolution beyond the Council. There were several countries who supported this reference during negotiations but it was lost in the final text. However, as we noted above, we need to go beyond the numbers and, in this case, look to what was achieved that relates to the substance of the resolution and not just its call signal.

In its preambular paragraphs, the Commission reaffirms the link between gender equality and peace (para 9) and urges specific actions related to women’s participation. Importantly, these go beyond financing for participation related to conflict and peace processes (para gg) but extend also to specific funding for access to DDR programmes. The language on participation in the Agreed Conclusions also extends to participation in broader decision making spheres through urging increased participation in economic governance structures (para f) and the removal of barriers and allocation of resources for representation and participation in broader political, social and economic decision-making and in administrative entities, in particular those responsible for economic and public finance policies (para h).

Also significant for WILPF’s advocacy, is the call (in para hh) to reduce excessive military expenditures. While the paragraph is weakened by the inclusion of the language “taking into consideration national security requirements” it is nevertheless important that there is the recognition that this would be to “permit the possible allocation of additional funds

for social and economic development.” Another conflict related paragraph does give pause in its call to “ensure that adequate resources are allocated for activities targeting “persistent serious obstacles to the advancement of women in, [inter alia,] situations of armed conflict and in conflicts of other types.” It is hoped that this is considered to include expending resources to end or, better yet, prevent these conflicts which are themselves an obstacle to the advancement of women.

Extracts from the Agreed conclusions relating to peace and security and women’s participation and Gender Equality Architecture Reform can be found at: -/un/ecosoc/CSW52/wps_AC_highlights.doc

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Government Statements in the General Discussion

Far from being absent, Resolution 1325 and related issues such as women’s participation and violence against women were also raised in government statements during the General Discussion segment of the CSW. Many of the statements dealing with violence against women were endorsements of the SG’s just-launched campaign to end violence against women. Many others acknowledged the serious and wide-spread nature of such violence although some statements reflected an astounding denial of the issue – such as that of Sudan which stated that “violence against women [in Sudan] is almost extinct except in single cases deterred by law and rejected by society. Some adverse effects have emerged in conflict stricken areas.” This latter point may be the most disturbing understatement of the CSW.

At least a dozen countries mentioned resolution 1325 itself and many discussed the implementation thereof through the development of national action plans. The discussion of the resolution within the forum of the CSW was important and, as Canada noted, the Commission “has a unique role to play, particularly at this session [on financing for gender equality and women’s empowerment], in supporting the Security Council’s implementation of its commitments under Resolution 1325.”

For extracts from statements mentioning Resolution 1325 and general peace and security issues:
-/un/ecosoc/CSW52/CSW52Statements_1325.doc

For extracts from statements mentioning violence against women (particularly in conflict):
-/un/ecosoc/CSW52/CSW52Statements_VAW.doc

For extracts from statements mentioning women’s participation:
-/un/ecosoc/CSW52/CSW52Statements_Partici.doc

For extracts from statements mentioning gender equality architecture reform:
-/un/ecosoc/CSW52/CSW52Statements_GEAR.doc

For all government statements in the General Discussion visit:
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/52sess.htm#gendis>

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Gender Equality Architecture Reform at the CSW

Reform of the UN’s gender equality architecture is not only crucial in order to ensure financing for gender equality but also for more effective and full implementation of resolution 1325. As has been noted time and again, the lack of high level, coordinated action from the UN has severely hampered implementation efforts. WILPF and women’s organizations around the world have, for some time been advocating for this reform and this session of the CSW was an important moment at which to raise the issues. Much of the advocacy around the Gender Equality Architecture Reform was channeled through the Linkage Caucus (convened by CWGL, WEDO and the NGO CSW in New York) which released the statement below at the conclusion of the CSW :

WOMEN GEAR UP: GOVERNMENTS RESPOND

Statement from the Linkage Caucus at the UN Commission on the Status of Women
March, 2008

The Linkage Caucus’ clarion call to “GEAR UP” and strengthen the UN’s gender equality architecture was carried by hundreds of women at the 2008 annual session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) as well by numerous member states, and the UN Secretary General. In their national statements, over 40 countries

spoke to the need to strengthen the United Nations' institutional mechanisms on gender equality and called for a consolidated women's entity led by an Under Secretary General and with extensive country presence. The civil society GEAR (Gender Equality Architecture Reform) Campaign launched at the CSW to advance these goals now has over 240 organizations as members from all regions of the world.

Agreed Conclusions from the CSW, which were finalized in the early morning hours of Saturday March 8th, incorporated several of the key demands of the GEAR Campaign. The Conclusions noted "under-resourcing in the area of gender equality in the UN system" and stressed "the need for more effective tracking of resources... spent on enhancing gender equality..." (paragraph 19). In addition, the Agreed Conclusions called for strengthening the UN system both through more effective gender mainstreaming, and for "enhancing its capacity to effectively assist States upon request... on gender equality and women's empowerment...and to make adequate and reliable human and financial resources available" (paragraph kk). We note with appreciation that countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America took the lead in advocating for stronger institutional mechanisms. Clearly, support for a stronger women's entity is widespread. Women around the world will continue to advocate for this with their government representatives at home and at the UN General Assembly.

The Linkage Caucus is pleased that the Agreed Conclusions propose that governments "incorporate gender perspectives into all economic policy-making and increase participation of women in economic governance structures and processes" (paragraph f), carry out gender-sensitive analysis of "revenues and expenditures in all policy arenas" (paragraph o) and of "policy and programmes related to macroeconomic stability, structural adjustment, external debt problems, taxation,...and all relevant sectors of the economy" (paragraph n), "undertake gender-sensitive assessments of national labor laws..."(paragraph x), and redirect excessive military expenditures to "social and economic development, including, inter alia, for gender equality and the advancement of women (paragraph hh). The Linkage Caucus supports the call for governments to "integrate gender perspectives in the preparations for and outcome of the 'Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus', to be held in Qatar in 2008" (paragraph 23).

However, women around the world present at the CSW remain deeply concerned that there are few meaningful commitments in the Agreed Conclusions related to financing for gender equality, with no concrete targets or timetables and no strong mechanisms for effective tracking or monitoring of financial resources spent on gender equality. Despite repeated calls by civil society and governments noting the importance of investing in women, it is widely recognized that the allocation of financial resources has been insufficient at all levels for real progress toward realizing the twelve critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action. In addition, progress toward meeting Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 3 on gender equality and MDG 5 on maternal mortality have been lagging behind progress made with respect to the other MDGs due to insufficient financial and political investment in women. Moreover, the Agreed Conclusions fail to address the need for adequate resources and funding mechanisms to support the indispensable role of women's organizations as the driving force for gender equality and the empowerment of women at all levels.

We look forward to continuing advocacy in support of a strengthened gender equality architecture within the UN system. The GEAR campaign will advocate for this goal with national governments, at the General Assembly, and with the facilitators of the process to follow up on the recommendations of the High Level Panel on System-wide Coherence. Advocates can build on the CSW's broad support from governments and civil society for moving forward on creating stronger institutional mechanisms for women that can deliver real improvements in women's daily lives. The time to act to create a new women's entity is now!

One important step that can be taken toward this end immediately is the appointment by the Secretary General of a strong Executive Director of UNIFEM. The Linkage Caucus notes the urgency of this matter, and encourages the SG to make this appointment without further delay.

**The Linkage Caucus is coordinated each year during the CSW by the Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL), the NY NGO Committee on the Status of Women, and the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO).

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Further Resources:

Several NGOs have written reviews and issued statements on the CSW session:

Statement by CSW Linkage Caucus : [-/campaigns/global/GEARlinkagestatement.doc](#)

AWID Review : [-/un/ecosoc/CSW52/NGOdocs/AWID_Review.doc](#)
 femTALK ENews : [-/un/ecosoc/CSW52/NGOdocs/FemLINK_Review.doc](#)

For more resources and links related to the 52nd Session visit the web pages developed by the PeaceWomen Project featuring :

- UN Documents & links,
- NGO Documents & links,
- Governmental Participation

For these pages please visit : [-/un/ecosoc/CSW52/index.htm](#)

For the official UN website for the CSW 52: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/52sess.htm>

For the NGO Committee on the Status of Women please visit : <http://www.ngocsw.org/>

4. FEATURE STATEMENT

International Women's Day Disarmament Seminar Statement and Report

Statement to UN Conference on Disarmament

We, women from many parts the world, take this opportunity to raise our voices, which are often suppressed or ignored, on disarmament, peace and security. The 2008 International Women's Day Disarmament Seminar highlighted the crises of human security and sustainable development caused by military spending, war and weapon profiteering, and the persistence of ideas and expectations of gender that shape how war, women, and peace are considered.

This year's Seminar included over 100 participants from non-governmental organisations from more than 40 countries and marked two significant anniversaries. The first is the 30th anniversary of the First Special Session on Disarmament of the UN General Assembly, possibly the highest point of consensus and vision ever achieved in multilateral disarmament diplomacy, which created the Conference on Disarmament we have today and set out its ten-part agenda.

Our seminar was directly linked to neglected items on the Decalogue, namely the reduction of military spending, the linkage between disarmament and development, nuclear disarmament, conventional weapons, and disarmament as confidence building. We struggle to find language to express our dismay, our anger, at the failure of governments over the last eleven years to advance these agenda items, and their commitments made by consensus thirty years ago.

A 40 year-old treaty was also discussed; a treaty that has inhibited nuclear proliferation somewhat, but that has not yet delivered on nuclear disarmament. If, indeed, "life begins at 40", then the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) must gain a new lease on life if it is to deliver tangible results at the 2010 Review Conference. The CD's contribution to the success of this meeting is to start negotiating a verifiable Fissile Material Treaty. States Parties must get serious about compliance with the disarmament obligation and commence negotiation of a Nuclear Weapon Convention.

Civil society has documented how small arms and light weapons are killing and wounding hundreds of thousands of people every year and how they threaten sustainable development throughout the world, but still this issue has met with a less than adequate international response. The unexploded remnants of cluster munitions, attractive in size, shape, and colour to children and other unwitting civilians, continue to kill for decades after conflicts are over, as do landmines that lay hidden in the earth. Conflict goods that fuel wars, repression and environmental damage are traded on our markets almost completely unhindered. There are stricter international regulations on the trade of old postage stamps than on conventional armaments. And we are now witnessing another escalation of the nuclear arms race and the potential weaponization of outer space.

We are women from countries that experience war and peace, from countries that produce weapons and from countries that pay the high economic, social and human price of receiving them. We, as women, unanimously call on governments to abandon narrow concepts of military security and instead focus our human and economic resources on addressing the real daily threats to the security of their citizens, such as poverty, hunger, insecurity, HIV and AIDS, climate change, and environmental degradation.

Weapons can do nothing to alleviate these security problems. Instead, the acquisition of arms diverts enormous financial, technical and human resources from where they are really needed. This has been true for a long time, but the situation has

never been more urgent than it is today. What is preventing progress? Who benefits from business as usual? We reject the idea that the military industry, the weapons trade, brings jobs, prosperity or security. The arms trade has turned people into mercenaries and parts of our planet into cemeteries. The military-industrial-academic complex, that we were warned in 1961 as having the potential for a disastrous rise of misplaced power has truly achieved its potential when military spending exceeds \$1204 billion annually in 2006 prices.(1) Reducing military spending is on your agenda, you are mandated to address and curb this disastrous and misplaced political and economic power that military corporations exercise.

Reversing a real security threat, catastrophic climate change, for example, will require a paradigm shift in resource allocation. We can meet this challenge, but only if we are prepared to face the fact that bombs, guns and landmines will not deter or remove the threat of a Tsunami, a hurricane, a flood, a virus, or a water shortage. To do this we have to bring a halt to the organized crime of weapons profiteering and the CD has a role to play. 8 million lives could be saved with an investment of \$57 billion. We could achieve by 2015 the MDGS with \$135 million in overseas development assistance. These levels of investment are tiny in comparison with the level of military expenditure.

Compare military spending with efforts to finance gender equality for half the human population:

- The combined budgets of UN bodies working on women's issues is \$65 million, (2) is only 0.005% of world military expenditure; (3)
- The World Bank estimates the cost of interventions to promote gender equality under MDG 3 is \$7-13 per capita. The world's military expenditure in 2006 amounted to \$184 per capita; (4)
- Of \$20 billion in bilateral aid in 2001-2005, an OECD DAC study reports that only \$5 billion was allocated to projects promoting gender empowerment; the cost of approximately 2 weeks of the occupation of Iraq. (5)

Article 26 of the UN Charter emphasizes the need to stop wasting human and economic resources on armaments. It is time for the Security Council to act in compliance with Article 26 by delivering a plan for reducing armaments. If the Security Council had fulfilled this task, the disarmament machinery would not be so overburdened or stuck as it is today.

Conflict prevention involves confidence- and trust-building, and begins with reducing the role of nuclear and other weapons in security policies. Everything flows from this first step that, when taken, will move security thinking beyond the capacity to destroy to the capacity to share this planet's finite resources sustainably, to enjoy life with the full spectrum of human rights. Rather than being utopian, these goals are entirely achievable, but trends in military spending must be reversed before they can be realised.

Participants in the 2008 International Women's Day Seminar focused on the roles and responsibilities of women, outlined in Security Council 1325, to participate in conflict prevention, disarmament and all levels of security decision-making. Since the adoption of this resolution these issues have been newly and more deeply understood, governments and NGOs have undertaken some laudable work to implement it, we have seen some more highly competent and intelligent women appointed to engage in security and disarmament – of course we would like to see more because as the President of Chile said recently, "A woman who enters politics changes; a thousand women who enter politics change politics." Without women's equal participation, sustainable peace, sustainable development and true human security are unattainable. Women must be able to contribute their perspectives, help determine the direction of policy options, and have a greater say over budgetary allocations.

We need to examine the relationship between masculinity and war as much as the relationship between women and peace. Men and women experience war very differently, from war-making to peace-building and everything in between. In any given army, 90 percent of the soldiers are men while in any given refugee camp, 80 percent of the adults of women. Gender roles help to explain why this is so - good human qualities like strength and honour get allocated to men and deformed into tools for violence and domination. Good human qualities like tenderness and care get allocated to women and deformed into the badge of submission. Both parts of humanity end up as less than fully human. If we want security for all, we need both women and men, working as equals, to take responsibility for our common security. Wisdom about gender roles will contribute to the peace that can be achieved.

We women will continue to advocate for the vital changes – in terms of military budgets and doctrines - that must be made to achieve genuine human security. We as citizens hold you responsible, and we recommit to supporting and encouraging the CD in its work, and to educating our constituencies about its vital role. We as women have addressed this body since 1984. We would like to be able to do this ourselves rather than through an intermediary. Indeed, not allowing us to read our own statement undermines the seriousness of CD in the eyes of people around the world. In this year of the 30th anniversary of SSOD1, is it not time to allow civil society organizations they chance to address the CD on a regular basis? We understand the danger inherent in armament, and we will continue for another 24 years, and as long is necessary, to

advocate for disarmament negotiations in the CD, and for security and disarmament decision-makers to be accountable, transparent and democratic. We value all those of you who are helping in this endeavor and salute your efforts.

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For other WILPF statements, please visit : <http://www.wilpf.int.ch/statements/index.htm>

5. FEATURE INITIATIVE

World YWCA to observe women’s participation in Zimbabwe general elections

Zimbabweans voted in a general election on March 29, 2008. The World YWCA and the YWCA of Zimbabwe in partnership with the All Africa Council of Churches observed the elections as part of an initiative coordinated by the Zimbabwe Council of Churches. The YWCA of Zimbabwe has trained 100 women, including young women under 30 years old, to serve as election observers. The women observed the election process guided by the organisation’s commitment towards achieving the United Nation’s Millennium Development Goal 3 on gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Women’s organisations in Zimbabwe have been campaigning for the full participation of women. ‘Women Can Do it!’, a nation wide campaign, has trained and supported hundreds of women candidates for public office. The YWCA election observers contributed to this effort by focusing their exercise on gender issues such as access to adequate civic information for men and women voters; the extent of a level playing field for men and women electoral candidates; and the degree of violence and intimidation experienced by candidates and voter, especially women candidates and voters.

For more information, please visit : http://www.worldywca.info/index.php/ywca/world_ywca/ywca_news/world_ywca_news__1/world_ywca_to_observe_zimbabwe_general_elections

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For more Global & Regional Initiatives, please visit: [-/campaigns/global/index-](#)

For more Country-specific Initiatives, please visit: [-/campaigns/countriesindex-](#)

6. FEATURE RESOURCE

The Effects of Fighting Repression with Love *Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA), March 2008*

Introduction

This report describes the violence that has been visited upon the members of Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA), a movement founded in 2003 to create a voice for women to speak out about the injustices they encounter in their every-day struggle for survival.

Working on the principles of strategic nonviolence, through peaceful civic actions, WOZA aimed to create space to allow Zimbabweans to articulate issues they have been too fearful to raise alone. Since its formation five years ago, WOZA has conducted over 100 demonstrations, peacefully marching on the streets to voice its displeasure with the political, economic, and social state of affairs in Zimbabwe. The denial of the right to social justice has motivated the women to become human rights defenders and to confront the government, demanding the internationally guaranteed rights to expression, assembly, education, health and an adequate standard of living. The government of Zimbabwe, instead of addressing the issues that the women are protesting about, has responded by using brutal force and attacking anybody who engages in even peaceful demonstrations and protests. The members regularly experience ill treatment at the hands of the Zimbabwean police when they are arrested for what, in most democratic countries, is normal civic activity. Over 2,500 women have spent time in police custody, most more than once, willing to suffer beatings and unbearable conditions in prison cells to exercise their constitutional rights and fundamental freedoms.

In mid-2007 research was carried out to establish the nature and extent of violence experienced by WOZA women at the

hands of state agents. The survey covered the period from 2000, before WOZA was formed, but also included questions relating to earlier periods in their lives, dating back to the 1970's, during the liberation war. Many of the women active today in WOZA were active in the political opposition from 2000 and suffered violations during the elections in 2000 and 2002. Many were also victims of violence during the liberation war and/or the Gukurahundi period of the mid 80's in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces. The aim of the research was not only to record the violations suffered as a result of WOZA activities, but also to obtain a profile of women's experiences of organised violence in the context of Zimbabwe's violent history.

To read the full report, please visit : [-/resources/Zimbabwe/WOZAfighting.pdf](#)

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For more women, peace and security resources, visit :
[-/resources/resourcesindex-](#)

7. GENDER AND PEACEKEEPING UPDATE

UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C34) 2008 Session

The 2008 substantive session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations began with a General Debate that took place on 10-11 March. In this session, representatives from troop and police-contributing countries delivered statements regarding their position on current peacekeeping issues.

The session opened with remarks by Mr. Jean-Marie Guehenno, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping operations. Mr. Guehenno noted that despite progress in strengthening peacekeeping abilities, namely the creation of the Department of Field Support, the goals of peacekeeping missions would not be reached without the sustained international support and interest, which is faltering in several of the most crucial conflict areas. Additionally, Mr. Guehenno mentioned the importance of gender perspective in peacekeeping missions, including strategies to combat sexual and gender-based violence. Ms. Jane Lute, the Assistant Secretary-General for Field Support, addressed the budgetary goals and concerns of peacekeeping operations and the newly created Department of Field Support.

As usual, the references made to gender by member states largely focused on increasing the numbers of women deployed as peacekeeping troops and police. However, many countries mentioned the need to appoint women to leadership positions within peacekeeping missions. This followed a pattern of relatively stronger gender language than has been seen in past years, which is likely attributable to the recent briefing conducted by gender advisors of the DPKO to members of the C34.

The theme of sexual exploitation and abuse was also highlighted during the session, and many member states affirmed their support for the recent Victim Assistance Strategy. The issue of accountability for abuse also was raised, with a few member states calling for implementation of the model MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) between the UN and member countries that will ideally strengthen the methods for prosecuting personnel involved in misconduct. For selected references to gender and sexual exploitation/abuse, please see below.

References to Gender

Mr. Jean-Marie Guehenno, Under-Secretary General of DPKO

I am pleased that the Special Committee recently had the opportunity to be informally briefed by gender advisers. These gender advisers remind us what it means to look at issues from a gender perspective and of how conflict impacts differently upon women and men, girls and boys. I continue to learn the myriad ways in which a gender perspective is crucial to how we go about peacekeeping, be it increasing the role and contribution of women in the political process, for instance the election of women officials at the municipal level in Haiti, or the development of strategies to combat gender-based violence, including patrolling of IDP camps by peacekeepers, in Darfur.

Over the coming year, we will focus in particular on addressing gender issues in security sector reform, in electoral processes, and in efforts to support national capacities to address gender-based violence. We continue to count on Member States to ensure that pre-deployment gender training is provided to all military and police personnel and that greater numbers of female personnel are deployed to peacekeeping missions. This will better equip us to respond to challenges on the ground, and allow the UN to serve as a model for the principles that we espouse. We still have far to go, however, I do believe that progress is being made both at Headquarters and in our field missions.

Indeed, I am pleased to inform you that over the past year there has been a 60% increase in the number of women appointed to key leadership functions in peacekeeping, including such posts as SRSG in Liberia, DSRSGs in Burundi, Liberia and the Sudan; the Police Advisor in Burundi; and the Deputy Police Commissioner in Darfur, and the Deputy Police Advisor at DPKO Headquarters, who will be arriving next month.

European Union

Women, together with children, comprise a large proportion of civilian victims of conflicts and, compared to men, have less access to resources, power and decision-making before, during, and after conflict, while their experiences in these situations are significantly different. Ensuring full participation of women in conflict prevention and resolution, and addressing specific needs of women in conflict and post conflict situations, are key aspects of mainstreaming a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, in line with Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000).

India

The emphasis by the Secretary General on his commitment in ensuring increased participation of women in operational peacekeeping is welcome. India has traditionally been contributing lady military and police officers to a number of UN missions. We are particularly honored to have provided the first full Female Formed Police Unit for peacekeeping work. The unit completed its first year in January in assisting the UN mission in Liberia and has been highly appreciated for its outreach to the most vulnerable sections of society, i.e. women and children, in a post-conflict environment.

Nigeria

My delegation wishes to recall Security Council resolution 1325 which provides very important mandate for mainstreaming gender perspective in peacekeeping operations. We recognize the contributions of women to the maintenance and promotion of peace and security while acknowledging their specific needs and concerns in armed conflict and its aftermath. Nigeria has considerable number of women in both military and police establishments with the right training for deployment to peacekeeping operations.

Norway

We look forward to receiving a report on the Standing Police Capacity's (SPC) first year of operation. We are pleased to note that approximately 25 per cent of the officers in the SPC are women. We hope to see a similar development in the overall recruitment of police and military personnel to UN operations, as one of many means of ensuring that UN operations contribute to the implementation of UN SC resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security.

[...] To be successful, SSR must reflect the interests of all citizens. Norway has contributed to the financing of an SSR toolkit that has been developed by the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces. The purpose is to mainstream gender issues into SSR, to ensure that the needs of women are addressed, and to increase their representation in SSR institutions.

References to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Mr. Jean-Marie Guehenno, Under-Secretary General of DPKO

During the past few years, we, the Secretariat and the Membership, have tried to tackle the issue of misconduct comprehensively and decisively. Considerable efforts have been made in the past 12 months to prevent and address misconduct, and, in 2007, incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse decreased from previous years.

It remains essential that the Secretariat and the Membership continue to exercise constant vigilance, so as to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse. I therefore count upon your continued support to ensure that your troops and police fully understand the behavior expected of them as UN Peacekeepers; that commanders ensure good conduct, and the appropriate disciplinary or criminal action is taken against perpetrators after repatriation.

[...] I would like to express my appreciation for the inclusion of conduct-related language in the model MOU and for your efforts in contributing to the adoption by the General Assembly of the Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance and Support to victims of sexual abuse and exploitation by UN staff and related personnel. As part of the package of initiatives aimed at tackling conduct issues, I would also urge you to favorably consider the welfare and recreation proposals of the Secretary-General.

European Union

At the end of last year we achieved the finalization of work on the revised draft model Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and asked for its expeditious implementation. We also welcomed the adoption of the General Assembly resolution on the United Nations Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Staff and Related Personnel. We are looking forward to an early implementation of this important strategy.

The EU has always been strongly supportive of the UN policy of zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse and we believe that prevention must be one of our priorities.

India

As regards conduct and discipline of troops, we are convinced that sexual exploitation and abuse are totally unacceptable forms of behavior. We fully support the implementation of a policy of zero tolerance and encourage raising the awareness of those with managerial and command responsibilities and the establishing of standards of conduct, training, and investigation. Careful preparatory training in terms of a multi-cultural, pluralistic and tolerant outlook is as important as subsequent swift punitive action, once culpability is established. We welcome the General Assembly approves resolution on draft MOU and call upon the DPKO to implement it at the earliest.

Israel

We wish to stress the importance of clear standards of conduct being made binding on all peacekeeping categories, and note the need to use preventative training more extensively and to strengthen the capacity for conduct and discipline teams in the field. We emphasize the importance of the full implementation of a victim’s assistance strategy, and the DPKO should continue to offer guidance to public information experts on sexual exploitation and abuse aimed at improving the flow of information to communities on these issues.

Kenya

We must continue addressing problems relating to sexual abuse and other indiscipline cases in the UN missions. We must emphasize discipline not only on the part of troops, military observers, police and prison officers, but also on civilian officers. It is imperative that we provide leadership and show good examples to the people we are assisting. My delegation therefore welcomes the initiatives that are being put into place to strengthen mechanisms geared towards avoiding the pitfalls that have scandalized peace keeping missions in the recent past. In Kenya we have emphasized awareness training before deployment and timely rotation of troops to minimize such incidences. We support the inclusion of such measures in the Draft Model MOU being used by the Secretariat as the basis for the Status of Force Agreement negotiations with the TCCs.

Switzerland

We have already to a certain extent made progress-and are aware of the need for further substantial progress-in areas as important as the fight against serious offences such as sexual exploitation and violence by adopting in December 2007 a global strategy of aid and support for the victims of sexual exploitation and violence committed by United Nations and affiliated personnel.

Turkey

Turkey has been a staunch supporter of the UN policy of zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse. We therefore, particularly welcome the adoption of the General Assembly resolution on assistance and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff and related personnel. Full implementation of this strategy is a must. Yet what is more important is the prevention of misconduct in the first place. This brings to the fore the importance of the training of peacekeeping personnel. Likewise eliminating the root causes of misconduct deserves the utmost attention.

For more information on the 2008 session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping, visit Peacewomen’s C-34 index: - /un/pkwatch/Events/C34/2008/sessionindex-

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For Gender and Peacekeeping news and resources, please visit : -/un/pkwatch/pkindex-

8. TRANSLATION UPDATE

Korean and Tigrinya (Eritrea) Translations Now Available!

Total number of available 1325 translations: 84

Korean is the official language of North and South Korea. It is also one of the two official languages in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture in China. 80 million people speak the Korean language. The Korean translation was done by Reverend Joo H. Yi

Tigrinya is a Semitic language and is one of the main working languages in Eritrea. Tigrinya is also spoken by the Tigreans in the northern region of Ethiopia. The Tigrinya translation was done by Rahel Tewelde. Ms. Tewelde is a screenwriter. She wrote the script for the movie “Hid’get” – “Forgiveness” and in addition, wrote and directed “Shikorinatat” – “The beautiful ones.” She currently resides in Eritrea.

For more information on translators, please visit : -/1325inTranslation/sources-

Korean and Tigrinya are among the languages identified as a priority for translation by women, peace and security advocates. For other languages on the priority list visit : -/1325inTranslation/index-

If you know of existing translations of 1325 which are not among the 80 on the PeaceWomen website, or would like to volunteer as a translator, suggest potential translators or add languages to the list for priority translation, please contact info@peacewomen.org

To view the 84 translations, visit : -/1325inTranslation/index-

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USING 1325 IN TRANSLATION

As part of its 1325 Translation Initiative, PeaceWomen is soliciting information on how translations of Resolution 1325 are being used and the impact of these translations on the work of women peace and security advocates.

We invite anyone who has used translations of 1325 for outreach, advocacy or other purposes, or who may know how translations of the resolution are being used, to provide us with information detailing among other things:

- Which particular translation(s) of 1325 you have used or know are being used
- Who carried out the translation (if known) or how the translation(s) was accessed
- The types of activities for which this translation(s) has been used (e.g. workshops, radio programs) and your views about the impact of such activities in promoting resolution 1325
- What you believe to be the importance of translating Resolution 1325 into local languages ?

Kindly contribute to the “Using 1325 in Translation” effort by responding to these questions or submitting any other information on translating UNSCR 1325 to info@peacewomen.org

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For more information on the “using 1325 in translation” initiative, please visit : - /1325inTranslation/using_1325_translations/index-

9. WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY CALENDAR

The Politics of Participation: Women and Transformative Leadership

Women’s Learning Partnership

April 3, 2008, 5-7 pm, Kenney Auditorium of the School for International Studies at John Hopkins University, Washington, DC

Women leaders from Kyrgyzstan, Palestine, Pakistan, Mauritania, Nicaragua, and Nigeria will share culture-specific initiatives and practical strategies that they have used to encourage women to participate in making the decisions that affect their lives, families, and communities.

For more information, please visit : <http://www.learningpartnership.org/en/news/enews/2008/iss19/politicsofparticipation>

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The Sexuality, Gender and Rights Institute: Exploring Theory and Practice

April 7-14, 2008, New Paltz, New York

The Sexuality, Gender and Rights Institute is an annual, week-long, residential course that focuses on a conceptual study of sexuality. It examines the links between sexuality, rights, gender, and health and their interface with socio-cultural and legal issues. Participants will critically analyze policy, research and program interventions using a rights-based approach.

For more information, please visit : [-/frame/calendar/Aprilo8/CREA2008.pdf](#)

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“He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not: Men’s Role in Ending Violence Against Women”

April 10-11, 2008, PLU University Center, Tacoma, Washington, United States

Pacific Lutheran University Men Against Violence

The conference will focus on innovative best practice models of ways that men can and have taken steps to end violence against women. Dr. Sut Jhally, founder of the Media Education Foundation will give the keynote address and Ben Atherton-Zeman will present “Voices of Men”. Workshops will offer a range of information, from research on abusive men’s self referral for treatment, a father’s campaign to teach about domestic violence after the murder of his daughter, to programs that work with men to end sexism and a roundtable discussion and sharing session.

For more information, please visit : <http://www.plu.edu/%7Emav/mav-conference/home->

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For the complete calendar, visit: [-/frame/calendar/calendar-](#)

PeaceWomen is a project of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom: <http://www.wilpf.int.ch/>.

Previous issues of 1325 PeaceWomen E-news can be found on-line at [-/news/1325News/1325ENewsindex-](#)

Questions, concerns and comments and other submissions should be directed to: enewssubmissions@peacewomen.org

Best Wishes,
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