

## Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Summary Report

### Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 55 Women, Peace and Security Perspective

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#### 1. Introduction

**This document provides a summary of CSW55 events from a Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Perspective.** The official theme of CSW55 (*Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work*) did not specifically focus on the WPS agenda, although a large volume of events (approx. seventy) directly involved main themes related to women in conflict and post-conflict. The majority of the WPS events were arranged by NGO’s, but some Member States, such as Canada, Ireland, Lichtenstein, Norway, South Korea and Turkey also organized/hosted events.

The events summarized in part 5 (WPS) and 6 (general) of this document are only a fraction of the events that was held during CSW55. It is recognized that other events not summarized here dealt with issues relating to the WPS agenda, directly and indirectly. However, due to limited capacity we have been selective, and attended and reported from events with topics strongly related to PeaceWomen/WILPF issues and geographical relevance. Longer summaries of the events are available upon request to [info@peacewomen.org](mailto:info@peacewomen.org).

#### 2. Background on CSW55 and Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is a commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), dedicated exclusively to gender equality and advancement of women. CSW is arranged annually to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and advancement of women worldwide<sup>1</sup>.

The 55<sup>th</sup> Commission on the Status of Women took place between the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February and 4<sup>th</sup> March 2011. Representatives from Member States, the United Nations and the civil society gathered to discuss the theme of this session; “*Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work*”. In addition to the official CSW events and the United Nations’ parallel events, civil society arranged many Panels, workshops and roundtables. These provided a unique forum for the global civil society to voice issues regarding gender, education, science and technology.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/>

The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) policy agenda is based on Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), which calls for 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.

### 3. Highlights from WILPF and CSW55

**WILPF's statement** was submitted to the CSW and is available online<sup>2</sup> (ref: E/CN.6/2011/NGO/49). The statement is co-authored with Femmes Afrique Solidarité, International Association of Lawyers against Nuclear Arms. **WILPF organized two main events** at CSW55. In the first, WILPF partnered with UN Women and OneVoice to discuss "*Gender, Technology & Peacebuilding: Bridging the Israel-Palestine Divide*," on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. The event featured the voices of two extraordinary young women peace leaders, Roza Helou and Dana Sender. See full summary>>.<sup>3</sup> WILPF also partner with Global Action to Prevent War (GAPW) and Soka Gakkai International (SGI) to host a reception and discussion on peace activism and women's leadership on February 24<sup>th</sup> with Felicity Hill and Gillian Kitley.

**Regarding the official outcome documents from CSW55**, the Commission requested that its agreed conclusions (E/CN.6/2011/L.6)<sup>4</sup> be transmitted to the General Assembly for official endorsement, as per UN protocol. The Commission welcomes the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). It also reaffirms the importance of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA), CEDAW and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Negotiations leading up to the agreed conclusion proved difficult, as the Holy See (the Vatican), with observer status, attempted to narrow the scope of interpretation for the word "gender". Delegations worked to maintain agreed language and advancement of the women/gender agenda.

The Commission drafted, negotiated and voted on **three resolutions** (to be recommended by ECOSOC): "Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women" (E/CN.6/2011/L.2),<sup>5</sup> "Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS" (E/CN.6/2011/L.3),<sup>6</sup> and "Mainstreaming gender equality and promoting empowerment of women in climate change policies and strategies" (E/CN.6/2011/L.1).<sup>7</sup> Regarding the resolution on the situation of Palestinian women, there is clear mention of the need for women in decision-making, as well as a reference to SCR 1325: "*Emphasizing the importance of increasing the role of women in peacebuilding and decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of conflicts as part of efforts to ensure the safety and well being of all women in the region, and stressing the importance of their equal participation and involvement in all efforts for the achievement, maintenance and promotion of peace and security...*". The voting pattern differed little from CSW54; United States and Israel voted against the resolution, and about ten Member States abstained. Among those abstaining was the European Union, with an "explanation of vote".

#### **All documentation and statements are available on UN CSW Website:**

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw55/documentation.htm>

Event highlights from the CSW55 included the launches of the new UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), and Nepal's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. Both events reaffirmed the commitment to the advancement of women.

<sup>2</sup> View online at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw55/documentation.htm>

<sup>3</sup> View online at: [http://www.peacewomen.org/publications\\_initiative\\_document.php?id=49](http://www.peacewomen.org/publications_initiative_document.php?id=49)

<sup>4</sup> View online at: [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=E/CN.6/2011/L.6](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/CN.6/2011/L.6)

<sup>5</sup> View online at: [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=E/CN.6/2011/L.2](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/CN.6/2011/L.2)

<sup>6</sup> View online at: [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=E/CN.6/2011/L.3](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/CN.6/2011/L.3)

<sup>7</sup> View online at: [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=E/CN.6/2011/L.1](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/CN.6/2011/L.1)

**The official Launch of UN Women: “Honoring the Past – Envisioning the Future for Women and Girls”** was held on 24 February 2011 in the UN General Assembly Hall<sup>8</sup>. It was hosted by Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women. Several high-level keynote speakers made statements and videos were also presented. Bandana Rana of Saathi-Nepal and GEAR Campaign Focal Point made a statement<sup>9</sup> as representative of civil society at the event. USG Bachelet laid out a 100-day action plan today, embracing a full spectrum of issues from supporting national partners to promoting coherence within the UN system. In her remarks, she stated that UN Women will focus on five areas:

- 1) Expanding women’s voice, leadership and participation;
- 2) Ending violence against women;
- 3) Strengthening women’s full participation in conflict resolution and peace processes;
- 4) Enhancing women’s economic empowerment; and
- 5) Ensuring gender priorities are reflected in national plans and budgets, including capacity to support CEDAW reporting.

Also during CSW 55, **the Nepal’s National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security**<sup>10</sup> was launched (internationally) on 22 February 2011. The event was organized by: Permanent Missions of Nepal and Norway to the UN, UN Women and UNFPA and panelists were: Gyan Chandra Acharya (Ambassador & Permanent Representative of Nepal); Dhruva Prasad Sharma (Secretary, Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, Nepal); Sadhu Ram Sapkota (Joint Secretary, Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, Nepal); Bandana Rana (Nepal civil society representative); Ingrid Fiskaa (Norwegian State Secretary for International Development); Purnima Mane (UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme)); Anne F. Stenhammer (Regional Programme Director, South Asia Sub-regional Office). Nepal is the first country in South Asia to adopt a NAP on UNSCR 1325 and 1820. The National Plan of Action came to power on 6. February 2011. It was stated at the Launch that significant to Nepal’s NAP process was that it was developed through an intensively collaborative and participatory process across the country; including women and girls affected by conflict to representatives from the government, civil society, and development partners. Consultations were held in 52 of 75 districts covering all five development regions, making Nepal’s NAP process the most consultative and inclusive globally. As such, both the process and the product of the NAP contribute towards the goals of sustainable peace and establishing a just society. The NAP is shaped by the voices of women and young girls who demand accountability and justice. It is built on 5 pillars, including:

- Participation: To ensure participation of women at all levels of decision making, conflict transformation and peace process.
- Protection and Prevention: To ensure the protection of the rights of women and girls and prevention of violations of these rights in conflict and post-conflict situations
- Promotion: To promote the rights of women and girls and mainstream gender perspectives in all aspects of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace building
- Relief and recovery: To address the specific needs and ensure participation of women and girls in the design and implementation of all relief and recovery programs.
- Resource management and monitoring and evaluation: To institutionalize a monitoring and evaluation system and ensure required resources for the implementation of the NAP through collaboration and coordination of stakeholder.

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<sup>8</sup> UN Women is known formally as the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. It was merged with four former UN agencies and offices: the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, and the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW).

<sup>9</sup> View online at: [http://www.gearcampaign.org/news\\_events/faq/statement-made-by-bandana-rana-gear-campaign-focal-point-at-the-launch-of-un-women/](http://www.gearcampaign.org/news_events/faq/statement-made-by-bandana-rana-gear-campaign-focal-point-at-the-launch-of-un-women/)

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.norway-un.org/NorwayandUN/Selected\\_Topics/Peace\\_Efforts/Nepals-National-Action-Plan-on-women-peace-and-security/](http://www.norway-un.org/NorwayandUN/Selected_Topics/Peace_Efforts/Nepals-National-Action-Plan-on-women-peace-and-security/)

## 4. Overview Women, Peace and Security at CSW55

A large volume of events (approx. seventy) directly involved main themes related to women in conflict and post-conflict societies. Some of the WPS events took up the official theme of CSW55, which intersected with WPS mainly with regard to **participation** and how **education and training in Information and Communication Technologies** (ICT-training) can empower both women and men to further strengthen the pursuit of the WPS policy agenda. As stated during the Global Women Parliament: *“The concept of participation needs to be expanded to include not only women’s presence, but access to real, meaningful power. Participation must be about strategic presence in order to successfully maneuver a typically male-dominated arena.”*

- **Participation, Education and ICT-training**

Women’s participation received greatest attention among WPS topics discussed. Several NGO’s presented research, programmes and initiatives, which focused on women’s participation in peace processes and in decision-making. Education and ICT-training were often presented as essential means to enhance women’s empowerment, capacity and awareness rising. In contemporary socio-economic and political contexts, meaningful participation is dependent upon having access to ICT tools.

Women’s access to media and the representation of women in media represented a dimension of the ICT-participation discussion. For example, WILPF’s event, *“Technology & Peacebuilding: Bridging the Israel-Palestine Divide”*, showed how gender inclusive media can enhance women’s participation in the peace movement. Similarly, the event *“Empowering Women to Document”*, showed how basic ICT-training enable rural and/or illiterate women to find tools to get their voices heard. Other events presented education and ICT training from the prevention dimension of WPS, particularly the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, by explaining how ICT training facilitates early warning systems.

A large majority of the WPS events did not directly intersect with the CSW55 theme but instead dealt more generally with the **implementation** of 1325 and **other subthemes** of the agenda. The organization of civil society organisations around 1325, conflict and post-conflict issues during this year’s CSW demonstrated once again civil society’s commitment to move the WPS agenda forward. As stated by representatives from Femmes Afrique Solidarité (FAS): *“It is important to continue to advocate for SCR 1325 and the prevention, participation, protection of women in the context of human rights and security”*.

- **Implementation**

The official CSW events largely referenced WPS in the context of the new UN entity UN Women, which announced the full implementation of SCR 1325 (2000) as one five core areas of work. Subsequent CSW events discussed agency, political will, and the balance of responsibility between Member States, UN offices, and civil society. Civil society voiced their concerns relating to the policy implementation, both within the UN and among Member States, of 1325 (2000), CEDAW and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA). The event *“Implementing UNSCR 1325 on Women and Peace and Security”*, Global Network for Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) presented an open letter<sup>11</sup> to the Member States of the Security Council on SCR 1960 (2010).

- **Legislation**

Several events focused on national legislation specific to the needs and rights of women and women’s subsequent access to justice. Notably, the event *“Protection and Restitution for Survivors of Sexual and Gender Based Violence”*, given by the Agency for Co-operation and Research in Development (ACORD) presented the findings of a judicial audit, conducted in five African countries, regarding laws against sexual and gender based violence. Echoing the conclusions of other CSW55 Panels, ACORD stated that though countries have existing laws prohibiting sexual and gender based violence, institutional gaps inhibit the implementation of existing legislation. Furthermore, insufficient political will to ratify and implement international laws such as CEDAW perpetuates the legal disempowerment and insecurity of

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<sup>11</sup> View online at: <http://www.gnwp.org/uns-cr-1960-and-the-need-for-focus-on-full-implementation-of-uns-cr-1325>

women.

- **Violence against Women (VAW)**

Violence against Women received much attention among CSW events. Although significant efforts have been done by both civil society and the international community, this problem continues to have a severe impact on women and girls. In conflict and post-conflict countries, women are uniquely at risk of and targeted by violence and human rights violations, including sexual and gender based violence and political violence.

- **Protection and Impunity**

CSW55 events addressed impunity for VAW in the context of the protection dimension of WPS. Panelists discussed how civil society could train women to protect themselves, through early warning mechanisms and documentation. In parallel to CSO efforts, speakers cited the roles and responsibilities of governments, international organizations and religious leaders.

The CSW55 highlighted numerous country and region-specific issues. Geographic focuses included:

- **Nepal**, which internationally launched their first National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security at CSW55.
- **Middle East**, due to the recent uprisings in the Egypt and countries in the region. Women's participation and civil society organizing drew much discussion, particularly the topic of young women organizing through social media, and concerns for regression in the participation and inclusion of women and their rights.
- **Sudan**, after a peaceful referendum, which finalized the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, many discussions stressed the importance of including women and civil society in the organizations of the two new states. Participants emphasized that in Southern Sudan, efforts are needed to ensure the continued advancement and participation of women.
- **Israel and Palestine**: Civil society in New York and the region demonstrated the engagement of individuals from both sides of the conflict in the promotion of a two state solution as well as the efforts to include women in the peace movement.

## 5. Summaries from Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Events at CSW55

Note: Longer summaries of the events are available upon request to [info@peacewomen.org](mailto:info@peacewomen.org)

### *Tuesday 22 February 2011*

**Event:** UN CSW High-Level Opening Session

**Date:** 22 February 2011

**Panelists:** Member State Delegations; Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro (Deputy Secretary-General of UN); Michelle Bachelet (First Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women); and Lazarous Kapambwe (President of Economic and Social Council, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Zambia to the United Nations)

**Themes:** UN Women, 1325, UN Implementation, VAW, Participation

The 55<sup>th</sup> CSW theme, "Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work" represents and pursues a process of gender mainstreaming. Carrying expectations of leadership for this process, UN Women introduced the main goals of this CSW session as well as submitted a statement, which featured content on the women, peace and security agenda.

Michelle Bachelet voiced the ambition to fully implement SCR 1325 (2000) and the WPS agenda as well as to end violence against women, increase women's participation and women's leadership skills, and support international partners' national action plans. UN Women, Member States and civil society have responsibility to

work strategically and collaboratively to realize these goals. As such, the new UN entity announced plans to appoint NGO advisory board to advise UN Women leadership.

**Event:** Gender, Technology & Peacebuilding: Bridging the Israel-Palestine Divide

**Organized by:** OneVoice; WILPF; UN Women; Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations

**Date:** 22 February 2011

**Panelists:** Roza Helou (OneVoice Palestine); Dana Sender (OneVoice Israel); Joanne Sandler (UN Women); Ambassador Anne Anderson (UN Permanent Mission to Ireland)

**Themes:** Participation, Civil Society, Women friendly media

Civil society and Member States gathered to speak upon discuss women's participation in peace-building. The event focused on the Israel and Palestine conflict and the unique work of OneVoice, which unites young people from both sides of the conflict, through the common goal of a two-state solution. OneVoice serves as a model for women's participation in peace movements and grassroots implementation of the WPS agenda. OneVoice's initiatives include training youths to become leaders within the organization. An impressive 70% of youth leaders in OneVoice are women.

Relating to the theme of CSW55, technology enables a unique way for women to participate from their computers in a virtual sphere, lacking in the structural barriers to equal participation that women face in the public sphere. Participants at the event described internet technologies as women-friendly due to their ability to give women a voice that they may not have out in public. Internet creates a nondiscriminatory space in which women can discuss and participate in the activist community.

**Event:** Investing in Peace: Financing 1325

**Date:** 22 February 2011

**Organized by:** International Civil society Action Network (ICAN); Global Network for Women Peacebuilders (GNWP)

**Panelists:** Cordaid; Catherine Mabobori (Former MP Burundi); Sarah Lulu (Avon Foundation for Women: Global Center for Women and Justice: Cornell University Law School); Greg Stanner

**Themes:** WPS, NAP's

This Panel presented the key findings of the "Financing 1325" study and the progress of the National Action Plan (NAP) in Burundi. All voices spoke on the subject of financing efforts to implement Security Council Resolution 1325. Unique to this type of discussion was the focus on entry points for coordination with the Private sector. Although peace and security agendas have been traditionally regarded as too political for private sector engagement, the Corporate Social Responsibility movement has motivated increased participation of and coordination with this stakeholder.

The event nevertheless remained grounded in the WPS agenda by presenting gender initiatives in Burundi, including the forthcoming NAP. Particular to the context of gender-based violence, Catherine Mabobori, a former Burundi Member of Parliament, explained that although Burundi has good laws in place, the implementation of these laws remains insufficient.

*Wednesday 23 February 2011*

**Event:** Implementing UNSCR 1325 on Women and Peace and Security - Strengthening the CSW55 Agenda

**Date:** 23 February 2011

**Organized by:** International Civil society Action Network (ICAN); Global Network for Women Peacebuilders (GNWP)

**Panelists:** Mavic Cabrera-Balleza (GNWP); Marta Cantero (National Network of Women, Colombia); Jasmin Nario-Galace, (IANSA Women's Network, Philippines); Cora Weiss (HAP); Betty Reardon; Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury

**Themes:** 1325, Implementation, political will

This event focused on the implementation of UNSCR Resolutions on Women and Peace and Security (WPS), particularly resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent NAPs. Global Network for Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) presented an open letter to the Member States of the Security Council on SCR 1960 (2010). The panelists explained that SCR 1960 enhanced the potential of 1325 as a catalyst for women's rights. As such, all Security Council Resolutions, when relevant, should reflect the WPS agenda.

Also of interest was the discussion on the importance of the work of civil society. The potential and need for civil society actors to be an integral part in the UN work with WPS emerged as a focal point of discussion. The panelists also discussed the difficulties of working in highly militarized societies, thereby connecting the WPS agenda to disarmament.

**Event:** Panel 1: Key policy initiatives and capacity-building on gender mainstreaming: focus on science and technology

**Date:** 23 February 2011

**Organized by:** Official UN CSW Event

**Panelists:** Gulser Corat (UNESCO); Ntlhoi Motsamai (National Assembly of Lesotho); Mevlut Cavusoglu (Turkey); Michelle Bachelet (First Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women)

**Themes:** UN Women, 1325, Implementation

The Panel considered UN Women's engagement in the WPS agenda, and its responsibility to develop indicators to the peace and security agenda within the implementation of SCR 1325. The responsibility and accountability of Member States also received emphasis. The Panel discussed how normative and operational activity could be better integrated in order to diminish the gap between recommendations and "real practice".

**Event:** Parity, Peace, and Security in Senegal<sup>12</sup>

**Date:** 23 February 2011

**Organized by:** Permanent Mission of Senegal to the United Nations

**Panelists:** Fatou Kiné Diop (President of the Senegalese council of women); General Kanchi (General from the Central African region); Representative from Italy

*Notes provided by the Global Action to Prevent War (GAPW)*

The Panel held a discussion on Parity, Peace, and Security. The dialogue focused on the Senegalese Bill on Parity and how the world can use the structure of that bill as a guide to achieving gender parity. Ms. Diop stated the necessity of strengthening the participation and role of NGOs and other organizations in order to help achieve the sought after results of UNSCR 1325. Ms. Diop cited the need for more women in mediation as well as better mediation for women

General Kanchi, spoke about his experiences with UNSCR 1325 on the ground. He stated four pressing needs that undermine the effectiveness of the Security Council Resolution. A pressing need for full integration of women on the ground, a prevention and management resolution, a need for more people on the ground to protect citizens and food security as well as clean air and shelter.

The Italian representative shared her country's NAP and how that provided positive contributions to implementing UNSCR 1325. She stated that real protection of women is not possible without their participation in peacekeeping and decision making.

**Event:** The Precarious Progress of Women, Peace and Security

**Date:** 23 February 2011

**Organized by:** The Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice (IPJ)

**Panelists:** Dee Aker (Deputy director of the IPJ); Jennifer Freeman (Program officer for the Women PeaceMakers)

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<sup>12</sup> [http://www.globalactionpw.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/csw\\_side\\_events.pdf](http://www.globalactionpw.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/csw_side_events.pdf)

Program, IPJ); Malika Bhandarkar (Project management expert, Governance, Peace & Security Section, UN Women); Sarah Taylor (Executive coordinator, NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security); Jasmin Nario-Galace (Associate director, the Center for Peace Education; Board Member, Philippine Action Network to Control Arms; IANSA-Women's Network); Marion Arnaud (Senior outreach officer, International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect); Agnès Marcaillou (Director, Regional Disarmament Branch, UNODA); Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice

The Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice (IPJ) and co-conveners of the 2010 "Precarious Progress" international working conference on U.N. Security Council Resolutions on women, peace and security presented updates on the implementation of SCR 1325 since October 2010. The event also served as the launch of the final report highlighting the work of 175 leading activists from 47 countries.

**Event:** Using Technology to End Violence against Women and Girls

**Date:** 23 February 2011

**Organized by:** UN Secretary-General's Campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women

**Panelists:** Aldijana Sisic, Moderator (UNiTE Campaign Manager); Lauren Nishikawa (Project Manager, Breakaway Video Game); Nanette Braun (Chief of Communications, UN Women); Kristen Morrissey Thiede (Principal, New Business Development & UN Focal Point, Google)

**Theme:** Communicating the WPS agenda, VAW, civil society

This Panel focused on initiatives that used technology to fight violence against women and girls. However, discussion explored the dual nature of technology, namely that it can be used to abuse women as well as fight against abuse.

The video game "Breakaway", presented at the event, was designed as a tool for ending violence against women internationally. The project's goals are to increase awareness and accountability, change attitudes and behaviors, and advocate for an end to violence against women and girls. "Say No," which is part of the UNiTE Campaign, is UN Women's global platform for advocacy and action. It is meant to increase public awareness and enhance social mobilization. The website also fosters grassroots actions and uses social media networks to spread the word about ending violence against women and girls.

**Event:** UNSCR 1325 and Prevention: A Hybrid for Utilising Human Rights and Early Warning Frameworks in the Campaign to End Violence against Women

**Date:** 23 February 2011

**Organized by:** Femmes Afrique Solidarité (FAS)

**Panelist:** Bineta Diop (Executive Director of FAS); Nyaradzai Gumbonzvanda (General Secretary of the World YWCA); Christiana George (UN Office for Africa, Gender Affairs Advisor); Harriette Williams (Advocacy Officer) (Moderator)

**Themes:** Civil society, Advocacy, Participation, Peacekeeping

Focusing on 1325 in the African continent, this Panel launched the book "UNSCR 1325 and Prevention: A Hybrid for Utilising Human Rights and Early Warning Frameworks in the Campaign to End Violence against Women". The book provides tools and mechanisms for women in civil society organizations advocating around SCR 1325. It provides early warning frameworks, to enable and empower women's groups in conflict zones with tools to alert peacekeepers. The book distinctly links peace and security to human rights, proclaiming that prevention of war is about promotion of human rights.

The Panel stated that it is "*important to continue to advocate for SCR 1325 and the prevention, participation, protection of women in the context of human rights and security*". There is a need of women's participation in human rights and security institutions, and those institutions need to be more transparent and easier to access. An important process towards this pursuit is to educate and empower young women to become leaders of the advancement of WPS within the human rights agenda.

*Thursday 24 February 2011*

**Event:** Official CSW Meeting cont. Official Theme  
**Date:** 24 February 2011  
**Organized by:** Official UN CSW Event  
**Panelists:** Various Member State Representatives  
**Themes:** Implementation, 1325, Impunity, Participation, Legislation

This CSW session featured a strong focus on the challenge of overcoming entrenched patriarchal systems. With regard to WPS, many Member State Representatives reaffirmed their commitment to UNSCR 1325. Of particular interest were the statements of Israel, Maldives and Kazakhstan.

Israel's statement described the establishment of a new official body has been established to investigate claims of discrimination. Also a new law stipulates the importance of women needing to be involved in peace building initiatives, especially working on the Israel-Palestine issue. The representative of the Maldives stated that one third of women experience sexual violence in their lifetime, which has serious impact on their lives, particularly their ability to remain in school and complete an education. The representative stated that the country needs a better public justice system so that perpetrators are brought to justice. Kazakhstan announced that women are increasingly participating in all levels of government.

**Event:** Protection and Restitution for Survivors of Sexual and Gender Based Violence  
**Date:** 24 February 2011  
**Organized by:** Agency for Co-operation and Research in Development (ACORD)  
**Panelists:** Annette Msabeni (HIV/AIDS and Gender Thematic Manager at ACORD International); Leonie Abela (Programming Officer, ACORD)  
**Themes:** VAW, SGBV, Impunity, Protection, Legislation

ACORD conducted a judicial audit regarding laws against sexual and gender based violence in the DRC, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. In addition to the social normalization of sexual and gender based violence, insufficient legal protections perpetuate impunity for such violence.

The analysis revealed that all four countries have laws prohibiting sexual and gender based violence but none of the laws have robust provisions for reparations. Reparations include restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and a guarantee of non-repetition of the crime. ACORD also identified that there are weak institutional linkages that do not facilitate the collection and preservation of evidence needed for a successful court case. Finally, the analysis highlighted that there is insufficient political will to demonstrate and implement ratified international laws such as CEDAW. Such a gap in the judicial system facilitates impunity.

**Event:** Sustaining Women's Participation in Post-Conflict Institutions: Peacekeeping & Beyond  
**Date:** 24 February 2011  
**Organized by:** Peacekeeping Best Practices Section, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations  
**Panelists:** Honorable Idelta Rodrigues (Sec. of State for Promotion of Equality, Timor Leste); Marie Françoise Vital (Gender Officer UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti); Najwa Juma Mursal (Sec. Foreign Relations of Sudanese Women Central Union, Sudan)  
**Themes:** Participation, SSR

This Panel reviewed progress in strengthening women's participation in post-conflict institutions in three countries with peacekeeping missions, Timor Leste, Haiti and Sudan. It assessed progress & strategies in enhancing women's participation in political processes, in security sector reform (SSR) and in the protection of women and girls.

The thematic areas of participation in Timor Leste included peace negotiations, judicial reform, combating sexual violence and refugees. In Sudan, women play a significant role in the recent referendum, especially by

making an agenda for helping women in election laws and increasing numbers in Parliament. The post earthquake situation in Haiti relates to WPS through the high vulnerability of women to sexual and gender based violence, displacement and a weakened infrastructure that has disabled the work of women's support networks.

**Event:** Voices of Activism: An Informal Networking Reception to Discuss the Women, Peace & Security Agenda with Women Leaders in the Movement

**Date:** 24 February 2011

**Organized by:** Global Action Prevent War (GAPW); Soka Gakkai International (SGI); Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)/ PeaceWomen

**Panelists:** Emily Ayoma (SGI); Jenneth Macan Markar (GAPW); Gillian Kitley (Senior Officer within the Office of Francis Deng, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide at the United Nations); Maria Butler (PeaceWomen/WILPF); Felicity Hill (Women's rights activist and former vice-president of WILPF)

This event aimed to stimulating dialogue on youth leadership by bringing together leading women's rights activists, policymakers, youth and women's groups. The discussion focused on the importance of young women's leadership and the need for participation in women, peace, security and disarmament issues. It was stressed that there is a need for more women to become actively involved in all aspects of human security and peacebuilding efforts.

Ms. Kitley stressed that the United Nations and the civil society need to work together to have the best possible results in peace and security. She explained that the UN needs to expand its reach and can do so with the assistance of civil society organizations on the ground. Ms. Hill spoke about the importance of women in every age group working to promote peace and security and the need to do it, not always through harsh criticism, but with a sense of humor. She spoke about the progress made by women in disarmament affairs, acknowledging that there is still a long road ahead.

**Event:** Women in Iraq Voice Concern: Achievements and Challenges in Iraq

**Date:** 24 February 2011

**Organized by:** Hope Medical Enterprises, Ltd

**Panelists:** Ambassador Dr. Hamid Al-Bayati (Perm. Representative of Iraq to the United Nations); Janet Benshoof (Esq. President and Founder, Global Justice Center); Carole Basri (Adjunct Professor UPenn Law School, Pres of Corporate Lawyering Association and the Corporate Lawyering Group); Margaret Owen (Director of Widows for Peace Through Democracy); Dr. Amal Hakki (Professor at Honors College of the University of Florida); Judge Zakia Hakki (Former Member of Iraqi Parliament)

**Themes:** WPS, 1960, 1325

"The post-conflict reconstruction period is the time to ensure a rule of law that is founded on human rights and women's rights", stated the Panel. The implementation of UNSCR 1325 is central, particularly increasing political participation to ensure gender parity, gender-sensitive laws, and bring about the end to impunity and corruption.

Since 2003, women in Iraq are playing an active role in virtually every aspect of society and are important political actors. The constitution has a law stipulating that a minimum of 25% of Parliamentary seats must be allocated to women and in many elections that has been surpassed.

### *Friday 25 February 2011*

**Event:** Masculinities and Small Arms: Mentoring young Leaders to address gender dimensions in Eastern Africa

**Date:** 25 February 2011

**Organized by:** Eastern African sub Regional Support Initiative (EASSI)

**Panel:** Eastern African sub Regional Support Initiative (EASSI)

**Themes:** VAW, Disarmament, Participation

In Sub-Saharan Africa, generational gaps are developing between those who are fighting for a return to peace and those who have never experienced peace. Within this gap the subordination of women, gender-based violence, as well as the possession and use of small arms and light weapons are normalized. Participants at the event discussed possible ways of combating the perpetuation of these issues. Representatives of EASSI argued that nations, in which there is gender equality, are less likely to engage in armed violence and fall into crises.

**Event:** Security, development and gender: partners in implementing Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security

**Date:** 25 February 2011

**Organized by:** Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations

**Panelists:** the Minister for Gender, Children and Social Development of Kenya; Dr. Naomi Shaban; a high-level representative of Nepal (TBC); Dr. Paula Banerjee

This event launched an independent study on the implementation of 1325 as part of Finnish development cooperation. The study focused on Nepal and Kenya and made suggestions on areas where development partnerships could efficiently promote 1325. The speakers discussed how Kenya and Nepal have implemented resolution 1325 and the challenges that stakeholders have experienced.

**Event:** Taking Action on Political Violence against Women

**Date:** 25 February 2011

**Organized by:** Inter-Parliamentary Union & UNDP

**Panelists:** Margaret Mensah-Williams (VP of the National Council of Namibia); Julie Ballington (Gender Advisor Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support, UNDP); Sonja Lokar (Executive Director of the CEE Network for Gender Issues); Loga Virahsawmy (Gender Links Director, Pres. of Media Watch Org)

**Themes:** VAW, Participation, Impunity, WPS Implementation

The most common form of political violence is electoral violence, which is an act/threat of coercion, harm, or intimidation with the intent to disrupt the political or electoral outcome. In relation to women there are not universally agreed upon indicators to measure electoral violence, even though women are most often targeted by such violence. Work around UNSCR 1325 and CEDAW should give particular note to political violence, both as its own concern and also in connection with broader patterns of violence against women, disarmament and protection of civilians.

In fighting political violence, gender activists can use the media to hold governments accountable, especially during the election period. The definition of political violence, one of the Panelists argued, should also include acts of indirect violence such as: tolerance of impunity, systematic exclusion from political decision-making, politics of greed, economic and social inequality which makes women vulnerable to human trafficking, harassment & degradation.

**Event:** Religion, Women & Armed Conflict: Faith Agency to End Violence & Secure Maternal Health

**Date:** 25 February 2011

**Organized by:** Religions for Peace

**Panelists:** Delores Scott Brathwaite (Commissioner of Westchester County Human Rights; Jasmin Nario Glace (Center for Peace Education, Miriam College Philippines); Urjasi Rudra (Campaign Coordinator, Say No, UNIFEM & UN Women); *Sarah Masters*, (LANSAs Women's Network Coordinator); Layla AlKhafaji (Al-Hakim Foundation); Sister Leonida (WFWIA Chairman)

**Themes:** VAW, Peacekeeping

In some countries, projects on combating violence against women have a greater impact when involved with religious communities. Panelists described the unique impact of these communities. It is a key to understand that several religious communities have condoned gender-based violence as an accepted norm.

For example the Center for Peace Education in the Philippines aims to develop women peace-builders, targeting both Muslims and Christians. The education campaigns for women's awareness of resolutions 1325 and 1820, recognizing that both men and women are victims of psychological and structural violence.

**Event:** Women and girls in situations of armed conflict in the Asia Pacific Region<sup>13</sup>

**Date:** 25 February 2011

**Organized by:** Salvation Army; Asia Pacific Women's Watch

**Panelists:** Ms. Anjana Shakya; Ms. Naw Htoo Paw; Ms. Maksuda Aitieva; Ms. Chinara Kartanbaeva.

*Notes provided by the Global Action to Prevent War (GAPW)*

This Panel discussed women and girls in situations of armed conflict in the Asia Pacific Region. Post-conflict sexual violence proved to be the greatest issue of concern, followed by the disappearances of women.

In the context of peacebuilding, the media can spread the message about the violence and crimes committed against women and raise awareness for lack of resources and compliance from the victims and their families. There is a need for more female security groups and activists in order to enable women and their families to publicize the issues in their respective communities.

**Event:** Women, Security and A Just Peace: Research and Action

**Date:** 25 February 2011

**Organized by:** International Sociological Association (ISA)

**Panelists:** Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury (Former Under-Secretary General and High Rep. of the UN; President of the UN Security Council March 2000/June 2001); Jan Marie Fritz (Professor University of Cincinnati/ Sr. Research Fellow with the Centre for Sociological Research); Rosemary Barberet (Associate Professor and Director of International Crime and Justice Masters program at John Jay College); Pernille Brix Jorgensen (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark, Head Section International Gender Issues)

**Themes:** 1325, Implementation, Monitoring

The presentation focused on 1325 in the context of implementation, its true impact on peace and security for women, and what steps need to be taken at the UN level as well as the Member State level to make 1325 a reality. Panelists stressed that the main goal with 1325 is to end war, not make war safe for women.

The Panel emphasized the importance monitoring the implementation of the 1325 initiatives. Civil society must pressure Member States to create national plans, to collect data on all Member States progress; and to hold Member States and the UN accountable. Furthermore, full implementation of 1325 initiatives requires more research on perpetrators of sexual violence as well as increasing men's involvement in ending violence against women.

### *Monday 28 February 2011*

**Event:** Educated Women in Sudan: Best Practices

**Date:** 28 February 2011

**Organized by:** Izza Peace Foundation

**Themes:** Participation, Humanitarian Security, Women's Rights

Izza Peace Foundation's ultimate goal is gender equality; they look on education as a vehicle to women's empowerment and this discussion focused on their initiative in Sudan, Educated Women and Campaign against Illiteracy. This project focuses on training women from villages and small towns to be leaders. The women are organized into small study groups where they discuss three main topics: women's rights at home, in the community and at the country level; the importance of education; and legal rights. The local men are also

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<sup>13</sup> [http://www.globalactionpw.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/csw\\_side\\_events.pdf](http://www.globalactionpw.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/csw_side_events.pdf)

engaged and invited to attend the women's meetings; this seeks to address gender norms and gender cooperation at a larger scale.

The aim of this initiative is to increase the number of women in higher education; in turn, it is hoped that once women are educated, they return home to proliferate the importance of school and spread their newfound knowledge. The broader goal is to empower women to face their daily challenges, while also increasing the participation and involvement of women at the state level. IPA is advocating for women to be represented in all peace processes. There must be an attitudinal shift in the way in which society views women; women must be seen as capable and competent leaders who are able to make advantageous decisions at the political and peace negotiations.

**Event:** Global Women Parliament

**Date:** 28 February 2011

**Organized by:** Initiatives: Women in Development (IWID)

**Panelists:** Dr Pam Rajput (India); Dr. Sepali Kottegoda (Sri Lanka); Ms. Nurgul Djanaeve (Kyrgyzstan); Dr. Neelavalli (India); Dr. Jean Shinoda Bole (USA); Ms. Jane Prichard, (the Pacific)

**Themes:** 1325, Participation

This event was centered on the need for women's political participation and the need to increase women's representation in all levels of decision-making bodies. Therefore, the discussion focused primarily on the implementation of Resolution 1325 and the importance of gender equality in the political sphere and in peace processes. The speakers advocated for the implementation of SCR 1325 within each country, and importantly, also within the UN system. The concept of participation needs to be expanded to include not only women's presence, but access to real, meaningful power. Participation must be about strategic presence in order to successfully maneuver a typically male-dominated arena.

The event also touched upon contemporary issues in Kyrgyzstan and Sri Lanka. The speakers stressed the importance of having women at the peace tables so they can be a part of the reconstruction of their countries. It is also important to work on women's empowerment and awareness-raising in order to enhance women's knowledge of and access to political participation.

**Event:** Violence against Women in Iran

**Date:** 28 February 2011

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

**Themes:** Human Rights, Impunity, VAW, Legislation, Participation

This event illustrated the degree to which the suppression of women's rights is institutionalized in Iran. The discussion outlined the ways in which impunity is rampant and how the Iranian legal system protects perpetrators of sexual violence, perpetuates such abuse, and disempowers women. This stems in large part from the unequal legal status of women under Iranian Islamic Criminal Code and underlying patriarchal gender norms. This biased legal framework institutionalizes violence against women, making it even harder for women to come forward or receive justice.

Furthermore, the Iranian legal code impedes the rights of women and girls. Women do not have the right to education, the right to choose their residence, the right to inheritance or divorce. Gender inequality is exacerbated and accepted by the law when implemented and exercised under a strict and literal interpretation of the text. The speakers highlighted how women's rights need to include land rights, freedom of movement and mobility, and participation; policies thus need to address the root causes of gender insecurity. Women's rights need to be seen as human rights.

*Tuesday 1 March 2011*

**Event:** Are Women Human?

**Date:** March 1, 2011

**Organized by:** Mercy International Association

**Panelists:** Roselyn Cosantino (Guatemala); Lee Ann De Reus (the DR Congo); Carol Rittner (Religious Sisters of Mercy, RSM); Deirdre Mullan (RSM - Director, Mercy Global Concern)

This Panel discussion focused on Violence against Women, especially the use of Rape as a Weapon of War. The Panelist presented the history, context and current reality of violence against women in Guatemala and DR Congo. The speakers also underlined the links to militarism/war and violence against women, particularly rape.

**Event:** The Impact of South Sudan's Referendum on the Status of Women

**Date:** 1 March 2011

**Organized by:** The Women Organization for Development and Capacity Building (LABENA)

**Panelists:** Dr. Mohammad Elfatih Braima (Deputy Director, Peace Research Institute, University of Khartoum); Ms. Hanan El Zubai (Director, LABENA); Ms. Nagwa Mursal (General Union of Sudanese Women)

**Themes:** Participation, Peacebuilding

This event focused on the need for women's participation in all levels of the peace process, including peacebuilding and peacekeeping. Women's participation is critical in the post-conflict phase at the national, community and family level. The government of Sudan has recognized the benefits of civil society participants in its reconstruction and has invited women's groups to be a part of the restructuring process; however, the international community needs to contribute technical resources.

There is a great need to enhance women's rights in the upcoming legislation negotiations and drafting procedures. There is a quota of 25% women in parliament from the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement that needs to be upheld in Southern Sudan. Other challenges include border disputes, mass return of refugees, and issues surrounding natural resources, in particular oil. Furthermore, the lack of education, accommodation, and health services has a special impact on women. These deficiencies can lead to increased poverty and a rise in violence. The government must remain committed to addressing these concerns; likewise, civil society has an important role to play in educating and empowering women in economic and political life.

*Wednesday 2 March 2011*

**Event:** Empowering Women to Document Their Experiences Peace and Security as a Research Tool

**Date:** 2 March 2011

**Organized by:** African Leadership Center (ALC)

**Panelists:** Haja Saramba Kandeh (Sierra Leone); Phidelia Amey (Ghana); Selam Terefe (Ethiopia); Vicky Karim (Kenya); Toyin Ajao (Nigeria); Shuvai Nyoni (Zimbabwe)

**Themes:** Reconstruction, Participation, WPS Resolutions

This event focused on the importance of documenting women's stories and capturing the reality of women's lived experiences and daily lives. Through this documentation, women's voices can be heard and their needs can be met. This is particularly important for policy-makers, especially those that work with the Women, Peace and Security Resolutions, because they can learn from women's stories and better understand their interests, demands, and welfare; thereafter, they can formulate programmes and policies that address these needs. It is also beneficial to the women as documentation often acts as form of empowerment, especially for women who have experienced sexual violence. It enhances, and transforms, their role of victimhood into one of agency. Technology, education and social networks play an important role in documenting women's experiences. Cell phones, cameras and dramas are good examples of methodologies that can be employed to record women. On the other hand, it is also important to wield the media in a beneficial, constructive, and women-friendly manner; the

images of women in the media influences gender norms, gender stereotypes and gender behavior, quite often, with a disparate impact on women.

It is important to integrate an accurate gender perspective into the media. Although it may operate only one space, it is important to train young women to compete with a male-biased media. Women need to be trained in how to penetrate a patriarchal system and they need to be trained in how to be vocal and articulate on the women, peace and security agenda. This will aid the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Resolutions and make them more adaptable to local contexts. Donors can assist with the technology and training needed for women of conflict to document their lives and hence give them authenticity and agency.

#### *Thursday 3 March 2011*

**Event:** Livelihoods in Displacement Settings: What Does it Mean for Women? What Does it Mean for Youth?

**Date:** 3 March 2011

**Organized by:** The Permanent Mission of Canada; the Permanent Mission of the Principality of Liechtenstein; and the Women's Refugee Commission

**Panelists:** Jina Krause-Vilmar (Senior Program Officer, Protection Women's Refugee Commission); Josh Chaffin (Senior Program Officer, Economic Strengthening and Child Protection)

**Themes:** Displacement, Protection, SGBV, Reconstruction

There are 40 million refugees and IDPs worldwide, with 80% of them being women and children. These situations, which on average last 17 years, is rife with exploitation, harmful practices, survival and transactional sex, child labor, and gangs. Thus, it is increasingly important to draw the links between livelihoods and gender-based violence, as well as livelihoods with education and skills. Women's economic empowerment is most often viewed as the remedy to humanitarian crises and post-conflict scenarios. However, in order to empower women economically, it is first important to address the underlying causes of women's poverty; there needs to be an assessment of gender inequality and gender norms. These tensions need to be integrated into both short-term and long-term displacement solutions as a holistic package. There are also embedded assumptions about women that need to be unpacked. It is not just about giving women access to jobs and income, but also access to power, decision-making, and control over their assets. Gender-based violence in displacement settings also resulting from entrenched gender inequalities and discrimination, compounded with a culture of impunity, patriarchal traditions, and shifts in gender norms that stem from situations of crisis.

When women's roles and women's employment changes, it often causes a paradigmatic shift that increases the occurrence of sexual violence. In addition to the aforementioned underlying causes, there are trigger factors that exacerbate violence against women in the workforce; these include, lack of legal rights, widespread impunity, weak systems of justice, and accepted cultural practices that hinder gender equality. However, the largest trigger for sexual violence in displacement settings and post-conflict zones is poverty. With a lack of economic choice, and a lack of opportunity, poverty forces families to sacrifice education in order to work, engage in transactional sex, early marriages and other decisions that can be very detrimental to women and children. Thus, economic programs and any organization that works with women in conflict-affected areas needs to not just look at short-term resolutions; the policies need to be more comprehensive and transformative for them to be viable in the long-run. Women's empowerment will not come only from economic empowerment, but needs to coincide with poverty alleviation, political participation, legal reform, and shifts in power relations.

#### *Friday 4 March 2011*

**Event:** Disarmament through Education: Women Take the Lead

**Date:** 4 March 2011

**Organized by:** IANSA Women's Network; UNODA; the Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nations; and Religions for Peace

**Themes:** Disarmament, Participation, Peacebuilding

This Panel spoke on the involvement and leadership of women in disarmament education. It focused on the structural inequalities and gendered social norms that inhibit the institutionalized participation of women in armed conflict. One representative proposed two approaches to ending armed conflict: through international law and through education, which has the capacity to shape minds, build concern, and form critical masses who demand change. Women in particular need to be engaged in education and disarmament programmes; this helps to create safe spaces for women's dialogue and allows women to discuss the power relations that surround the use of weapons.

These discussions advocate for alternative paradigms of peace-building and post-conflict resolution, which in turn, offer unrestricted opportunities for women's participation. Women on the ground are at the front lines of disarmament and reintegration. As such, they are uniquely positioned to teach disarmament and change social norms around the use and possession of weapons. Women, in their diversity, can be put to use in disarmament education. Ultimately, the Panel questioned how the international community is thinking about the prevalence and misuse of weapons and argued that development, humanitarian work, and gender perspectives need to gain relevance to tackle disarmament concerns.

**Event:** No Peace Without Women: An Urgent Call to Help Women of Afghanistan Build Bridges of Peace and Prosperity for their Country

**Date:** 4 March 2011

**Organized by:** Women for Women International

**Panelists:** Nasrine Gross (Founder Roqia Center for Women's Rights, Studies and Education); Saba Ghori (Senior South Asia Specialist & Violence Against Women Advisor, U.S. Dept of State Office for Global Women's Issues); Lyric Thompson (Senior Policy & External Relations Officer, Women for Women International)

**Themes:** Participation, UNSCR 1325, Disarmament, SSR

This event focused on the need to reform and rebuild Afghanistan; it focused on women's rights as the linchpin of positive change and democratic transition. Participants discuss pillars that frame the ideal future for Afghanistan and thus, Afghan women. First, Afghanistan needs to be free from extremism and terrorism. To do this, security sector reform, disarmament and human security need to be addressed. Diplomatic efforts need to include women as players at all levels. Furthermore, the lack of basic services and needs, the lack of education, great poverty, and fear of the Taliban maintain a culture of war and desperation that is disparately unfriendly to women. Building democracy is also in jeopardy; the separation of powers, rule of law, and a functioning judiciary currently does not exist. Legal reform and election monitoring is thus essential. Afghanistan therefore needs to develop a robust multi-party system that allows for several political parties, engages women as candidates and as voters, and one in which supports the growth of a human rights culture codified in law. Along these lines, the misconception that modernization is equivalent to Westernization needs to be debunked. Afghanistan can go through social change and transformation while still maintaining its unique identity. It is important to empower the new governments of the Arab world and to empower Arab women.

## 6. Summaries from other Events at CSW55

Note: Longer summaries of the events are available upon request to [info@peacewomen.org](mailto:info@peacewomen.org)

**Event:** The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child

**Date:** 21 February 2011

**Organized by:** NGO Consultation Planning Committee

**Panelists:** Winifred Doherty; Rima Salah

This Panel discussed the agreed conclusions from CSW51 (2007), and whether they have made any difference in the life of girls in the world. The two panelists stated that the number of girls in education has increased. Nevertheless they acknowledged persisting cultural and economic obstacles to achieving the CSW51 conclusions. Ways forward include pushing for better quality schools and teachers; developing programs for men and boys to increase their awareness of discrimination and violence against girls; and increasing CSO

engagement in these efforts to promote the empowerment of the girl child. Finally, military expenditures must be diverted to fund gender equality.

**Event:** CSW55 2<sup>nd</sup> Parallel high-level round table. Theme: Access & participation of women & girls to education, training, science & technology, incl. for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment & decent work.

**Date:** 22 February 2011

**Organized by:** Official UN CSW55 Event

**Panelists:** Josefina Vasques Mota (Mexico Minister of Education); Jane Hodges (USA ILO Interagency Network on Gender Equality); Deepali Sood (India Planning International/Because I'm a Girl Campaign); European Union EU Representative; Holy See Representative; African Union AU Representative; Israel Representative

This Panel gathered to discuss the obstacles women face in pursuit of education, often rooted in gender inequality and poverty. Participants voiced their expectations for UN Women's leadership in removing these obstacles. The Panel stressed the importance of women's participation in policy making and other political processes. Discussion explored contrasting dimensions of ICT-training, namely that it can serve as a key to freedom for girls as well as a source of potential risk, such as exposure to trafficking and solicitations.

**Event:** Because I am a Girl: Urban and Digital Frontiers

**Date:** 22 February 2011

**Organized by:** Plan International, Fit for Kids (Austria)

**Panelists:** Sarah Hendricks (Global Gender Advisor for Plan International); Tanushree Soni (Program Coordinator at Plan International); Keshet Bachan (Project Coordinator at Plan International); Fabiana (age 16, from Cameroon); Inge Jensen (UN Habitat)

This Event brought up issues of women, girls and security in the realm of technology & the internet. The Panel discussed ways to ensure that women and girls are empowered to use technology without being at great risk of harm or manipulation. Participants introduced issues of unequal access to education and ICT-training, stating that girls' access to ICT is limited by lack of support, confidence, free time, money & other resources. Conclusions stressed the need for greater access, ability and affordability in the context of girls and technology.

**Event:** Breaking the Cycle of Poverty of Women and Girls through Education and Training

**Date:** 22 February 2011

**Organized by:** Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation

**Panelists:** Alvaro Pereira (Exec vice president, Food for the Poor); Sheila Gladys Ngema and Tolakele Maria (Commissioners of Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation); Linda Raftree (Social Media, New Technology); Ellen Marea (UN High Commissioner for Refugees)

This event discussed the impact of education on poverty. Panelists described education as an essential key to sustainable development and to breaking structures of poverty. Major efforts are thus needed to find creative solutions for children to go to school.

**Event:** Gender, Science, and Technology in Agriculture

**Date:** 22 February 2011

**Organized by:** International Federation of Agricultural Development (IFAD); Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO); World Bank

**Panelists:** Maria Pierella Paci; Maria Hartl; Irene Annor-Frempong (Forum for Agric. Research in Africa); Teddy Amuge (Uganda); Patricia Biermayr-Jenzano (CIAT, Argentina); Marcela Villareal (FAO, Rome); Ellen McCullough (Gates Foundation)

This event sought to establish a link between the CSW55 and women and girls, and technology, science, and agriculture. Panelists introduced issues of participatory food security, gender mainstreaming. The Panel stated that facilitating women's access to agriculture friendly technology is an important key to reducing poverty. Speakers provided insight on how women and men adopt new technology at different paces, due to diverse

resources, priorities, costs, labor, and secure land tenure. More technical research is needed on commodities and production processes dominated by women, as well as empowerment of women in agriculture.

**Event:** Tier 1 Session

**Date:** 22 February 2011

**Organized by:** Official UN CSW55 Event

**Panelists:** Diana Serafini (Paraguay); Dr. Subhangi Herath (Sri Lanka); Ilze Trapenciere (Latvia)

This event featured the theme of women in employment with special emphasis on discriminatory laws, and restrictive social norms. The representatives presented obstacles and measures to overcome these, specific to their own countries. All converged on the importance of enhancing skills and training for women, in order to facilitate their access to decent work. Major obstacles for women gaining employment could include inadequate IT experience, unsafe learning environments and cultural practices. UNESCO has dedicated a \$36 billion budget for women's education in poor countries. Innovative financing programs are an integral part of achieving gender parity in employment.

**Event:** Women's Studies from Turkey

**Date:** 22 February 2011

**Organized by:** Permanent Delegation of Turkey

**Panelists:** Meral Hacipasaoglu; Burcu Eyisoy; Fatma Sahin; Hon Alev Dedegil; H.E. Emine Erdogan; H.E. Ertugrul Apakan; H.E. Selma Aliya Kavaf

The Panel discussed the situation of women in Turkey, stating that the country is active in the process of improving the status on women. Representatives highlighted the many changes in the implementation in policies, penal codes, Turkish civil codes, and constitutional amendments that strive to increase gender equity as it relates to property rights, education, health care, and violence prevention.

**Event:** Women Taking The Lead: Education, Entrepreneurship and Opportunity for All

**Date:** 22 February 2011

**Organized by:** Women's International Center

**Panelists:** Abigail Disney (Producer of Pray the Devil Back to Hell); Dr. Preeti Gupta (Senior VP of New York Hall of Science); Deanna Kojarusu (VP of Programs, Institute for Women and Technology); Ezinwa Okoroafor (Int'l Federation of Women Attorneys, Nigeria); Kimberly King (Moderator, Women's International Center)

This event discussed women and STEM-careers (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) possibilities. Panelists gave a historical brief of women with technical carriers, and also spoke about the current situations in low-income countries vice versa developed countries. The Panel stated that there is a need to encourage girls and women to further educate themselves in STEM, and to challenge the male-biased stereotypes within this area of expertise.

**Event:** Item 2 of the provisional agenda

**Date:** 22 February 2011

**Organized by:** Official UN CSW55 Event

**Panelists:** UN Secretary General; Various Delegates

Under the lead of UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, several Member State Representatives gathered to share their experiences, lessons learned and good practices in relation to the implementation of previous commitments made in line with the CSW55 priority theme. Representatives shared success and challenge, including a lack of security, lack of family teachers, poverty and poor facilities.

**Event:** Panel 1: Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work

**Date:** 23 February 2011

**Organized by:** Official UN CSW55 Event

**Panelists:** Sesae Mpuchane (University of Botswana); Hagit Messer (Tel Aviv University); Anne Miroux (Director Anne Miroux); Roy Bunker (The Barefoot College); Londa Schiebinger (Professor of History of Science, Stanford, School of Humanities and Sciences)

The Panelists represented a variety of Universities from around the world, in order to discuss women and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). All participants agreed that there is an underrepresentation of women in science. Obstacles to these fields and to basic education often derive from country legislation, educational system, parents' attitude and sexual harassment. To facilitate women participation in STEM education and employment, there is a need to fix institutions, such that they cater to not only men, but also women's needs and wants in higher education and the workplace. The Panel also voiced issues of gender mainstreaming, social justice and economic development.

**Event:** CSW55 Caucus: Women and Climate Change

**Date:** 23 February 2011

**Organized by:** NGOCSW Subcommittee on Women and Climate Change

**Panelists:** Rachel Harris (Advocacy Coordinator WEDO.org NYC); Beth Larson (Director, Earth Day Network Washington DC)

This Caucus gathered to speak about gender and climate change. Panelists shared their experiences from various global climate meetings, such as Kyoto 1997 and Cancun. Unique to this CSW session and of special interest, was the advocacy work of getting human rights and gender equality language in to the international Cancun text.

**Event:** Homophobia, Transphobia, Sexuality, Employment

**Date:** 23 February 2011

**Organized by:** International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA)

**Panelists:** Thomas Lambert (Mission of Belgium); Jonah Nylund; Diane Schneider; Gill Greer (IPPF); Hannon; Representatives from Namibia 7. And Cambodia

The Panel presented different projects and programmes regarding to young LGBTQ youths, and also gave a brief of what governments are doing to ensure secure spaces for this group within education and employment. LGBTQ persons are often subjects for ritualized discrimination, homophobia and transphobia. Greater effort from government and civil society is needed, including attention to the creating and effect of norms.

**Event:** Let's Talk About Gender and Rights

**Date:** 23 February 2011

**Organized by:** IPPF; Ipas

**Panelists:** Marissa Billowitz; Nicole Haberland; Mona Kadthy; Rada Elenkova; Laura Hunt

This Panel discussed human right's connected to factors as gender, sexual practices and reproductive health. Panelists stressed the importance of educating people on rights, health and protection in addition to establishing the close connection between right's, gender and the Millenium Development Goals.

**Event:** Panel discussion: STEM: Expanding opportunities for women and girls with disabilities in education and employment

**Date:** 23 February 2011

**Organized by:** DESA; Global Partnership on Disability and Development; the Permanent Missions of Argentina, the Philippines, and South Africa

**Panelists:** Harilyn Rousso; Linda P. Thurston, Ph.D.; Ivonne Mosquera; Rangita de Alwis de Silva

This event discussed women and girls with disabilities in education and employment, and the importance of securing their rights by increasing their access to education and training in STEM fields. According to the Panel, women make up three-fourths of persons with disabilities in low and middle-income countries. Additionally, a very high percentage of children with disabilities do not attend school, are less likely to start school, or have lower rates of staying and being promoted in school than their peers without disabilities. Girls and women with

disabilities experience significantly more violence, different forms of discrimination, and face unique barriers as they navigate in a world that privileges a particular kind of body – namely a male body without disabilities.

**Event:** Media Monitoring During Elections with a Gender Lens

**Date:** 23 February 2011

**Organized by:** UN Women

**Panelists:** Gladys Acosta; Beatriz Llanos; Massimo Tommasoli; Begona Lasagabaster

This Panel featured election coverage in a gender perspective. Most speakers presented research on how media addresses women through interviews and editing processes of political campaigns. Findings revealed that questions posed to women largely feature content on sexual habits, mothering and term of office, and how to juggle female duties with holding an office. The research also looked at the treatment of gender in the media and gender mainstreaming in countries where there has been a women in office.

**Event:** Quality Education for Girls Leads to Decent Jobs for Women

**Date:** 23 February 2011

**Organized by:** United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and International Labor Organization (ILO)

**Panelists:** Liz (Australian Representative, Sex and gender Commissioner); Jen Eastman (Educational International Secretary General); Jane (Director of the Gender Bureau of the ILO)

This Panel discussed the quality of and access to education for girls around the world as well as the opportunities for enhanced participation of girls in education and improved quality of education. Panelists stressed that mere access does not guarantee learning and enrollment does not guarantee completion. Awareness of the quality of teachers in education and implementation of policy and programmes is necessary.

**Event:** Trafficking, Prostitution and Work<sup>14</sup>

**Date:** 24 February 2011

**Organized by:** The Coalition Against Trafficking Women (CATW)

**Panelists:** Vednita Carter (Founder and Executive Director of non-profit Breaking Free); Sigma Huda (Former UN Special Rapportuer on Trafficking Persons); Representatives from several NGOs

*Notes provided by the Global Action to Prevent War (GAPW)*

This event aimed to create a discussion around the persistent conceptual divide between prostitution as work and sex trafficking as exploitation. While human trafficking has received much international attention in recent years, prostitution remains seen in many circles as a nuisance, not a human rights violation. The Panel passionately argued to for greater condemnation of prostitution and to dispel the view that prostitution constitutes legitimate employment. The discussion attempted to bridge prostitution and human trafficking together as troubling modes of abuse that must be properly addressed.

**Event:** A Case Study on Training for Women Led Business in Post- conflict Reconstruction in Africa

**Date:** 24 February 2011

**Organized by:** Femmes Afrique Solidarité (FAS)

**Panelists:** Bineta Diop (Executive Director of FAS); Appolonie Kalinganire (Participant of Women Led Business (WLB) programme of the PanAfrican Centre for Gender, Peace and Development (PAC) of FAS, and founder and Manager of Clean A9 and Garr Hotel); Amany Asfour (President Egyptian Business Women Association)

The event presented best practices for empowering women in post-conflict societies as well as the results of a case study and training programme for Women led Business in post-conflict reconstruction in Africa. Ms. Asfour spoke on the importance of mentorship and also raised the question of power, stating that power is

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<sup>14</sup> [http://www.globalactionpw.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/csw\\_side\\_events.pdf](http://www.globalactionpw.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/csw_side_events.pdf)

“potency; the capacity to act; and to implement”. She stated that financial independence is the way to choice, voice, and power.

**Event:** Access to Education = Access to Employment: A discussion on experiences from the Pacific

**Date:** 24 February 2011

**Organized by:** The Permanent Missions of New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific Islands to the United Nations

**Panelists:** Trine Lunde (Economist, Gender and Development Unit, World Bank); Anne Kauta (Senior Women’s Development Officer, Gender Division, Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs); Rowena Phair (Chief Executive, Ministry of Women’s Affairs, New Zealand); Ms. Pauline Winter (Chair of the National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women)

This Panel gathered to discuss women, education and employment in the Pacific. Focus lied on women and girls’ access to higher education, challenges in accessing higher education and pursuing stereotypically male careers; and the gender wage gap. The World Bank’ presented its flagship program, in promoting economic empowerment among an adolescent girls. Panelists stressed the need to develop programmes around the needs of youth in post-conflict and conflict settings.

**Event:** FGM/FGC

**Date:** 24 February 2011

**Organized by:** The Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations, UNICEF, UNFPA

**Panelists:** Minister of Equality Opportunity for the Government of Italy; Spokesman of Inter-African Committee; Egypt Minister to UN; Minister of Gender from Senegal; Seline Ayuda

This event discussed female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/FGC) as a severe violation against women. The Panel presented different initiatives taken to fight FGM/FGC, and briefed on the current situations in various countries. They discussed the role of law and education in eliminating FGM and called for financial support to continue/strengthen programs who work against eliminating FGM/FGC. There is also a need for political support, enhanced partnerships and further networking/support for these projects.

The Panel mentioned that nine countries passed legislation banning FGM/FGC. In most countries that engage in FGC, FGC has been declining due to the “holistic approach” in discrediting the practice. In countries with anti-FGC legislation the general population must be aware of these laws, that violators will be prosecuted, and of the health risks related to FGM/FGC. Education and discussions at community level, is necessary.

**Event:** Panel for 2012: The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges

**Date:** 24 February 2011

**Organized by:** Official UN CSW Event in Collaboration with UN Women

**Panelists:** Michelle Bachelet (First Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women); Emma Sil Prandi (NEPA Brazil, UNICAMP); Marzia Fontana (ILO researcher); Godavari Dange (Groups International, India); Marcela Villareal (International Fund for Agricultural Development, World Food Program); Member State Delegates

This Panel sought to provide guidance for the 56<sup>th</sup> session of the CSW; Next years theme is: the empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges. Some of the Panelists stated that this theme is long overdue, since 70% of those living in poverty are rural, and 2/3 of African women are in the agricultural sector. Representatives stated that economic empowerment creates more tools for women to tackle other issues, such as health, violence, unequal access to decent work, development, and social empowerment. Participants acknowledged that initiatives on the theme for 56<sup>th</sup> session of the CSW from civil society are equally important as those from public policy.

**Event:** Gender Violence and its Impact on Girls' Education

**Date:** 24 February 2011

**Organized by:** Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations

**Panelists:** Sylvie Cohen (deputy director, UN Women); Roselyne Bachelot (French Minister for Solidarities and Social Cohesion); Yoda Konkobo (Burkina Faso Minister for the Promotion of Women); Aicha Bah Diallo (former Minister of Education in Guinea and Vice Chairperson of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE))

The Panel promoted the education of girls, eliminating the forms of violence and sexual harassment in schools, increasing sport installations, improving and making transport safer, ensuring security of the trips between schools and houses for girls and young women, and integrating questions of non violence in the curricula of primary schools. All Panelists briefed participants on the actions and measures taken to establish relevant norms and commitments in their respective country or organization.

**Event:** Medicine: The Pink Collar Profession

**Date:** 24 February 2011

**Organized by:** Medical Women's International Association

**Panelists:** Dr. Shelley Ross (US); Dr. Afua Hesse (Ghana); Dr. Gail Beck (Canada); Dr. Eleanor Nwadinobi (Nigeria); Dr. Kimberley Templeton (US); Mary Singletary (RN US); Dr. Claudia Morrissey (US); Dr. Mercedes Viteri (Ecuador); Dr. Eliza Chin (US)

This Panel featured members of the Medical Women's International Association, which advocates on issues of birth control, reproductive choice, prevention of violence against women, health care reform, elimination of disparities in health care, and preventive medicine. The Panel discussed the increased participation of women in medicine, juxtaposed to the lack of education on women's specific health care issues in medical schools, as well as the lack of awareness among female medicine students of history of women's struggles in the profession. Panelists stated that there is a need to change the culture of medicine, and to systematically fight and change women doctors' relative status.

**Event:** The two sides of gender: gender equality through youth education

**Date:** 24 February 2011

**Organized by:** UN Programme for Youth

**Panelists:** Gabriella Mora (Director, Axios); Elizabeth Niland (Associate Social Affairs Officer at the UN); Ravi Karkara; Olivia Nunez (Institute for Family Policies, Spain); Enrique Perez Ocejo

This Panel firstly stated that children have the right and responsibility to fulfill their potential and secondly, that Gender Based Education (GBE) can help reset negative gender norms. GBE encourages students to think about masculinity and femininity differently and to find new ways to express identities. GBE provides safe space for students with questions about gender or sexual orientation to ask questions. Participants cited the underrepresentation of gender issues by men and boys in the media. In order for change to materialize, GBE work needs to engage boys at the primary level of education. Engaging and focusing on men and boys (as well as women and girls) on gender equality and gender sensitization is crucial. Dialogue is essential to peer-based gender education; youth can help bring about gender equality in education by disrupting prescribed societal norms.

**Event:** Girls Voices, Promises Made

**Date:** 24 February 2011

**Organized by:** Permanent Missions of Zambia and Ireland to the United Nations

**Panelists:** Winifred Doherty (Congregation of Our *Lady of Charity* of the Good Shepherd); Pauline Moreau (Civil Servant of Ireland); Daphne Nawa-Chimuka (FAWE in Zambia); Monde Mwala Na (Gender Specialist, Zambia); Lungowe Mfungula and Chelenga Mgumi (Young women from Mongu, Zambia)

This Panel reviewed the results of a 2008 CSW Indicator toolkit that was distributed to girls and women so they could monitor the status of women's rights in their countries. The three areas of indication are Finance, Health

and Poverty, Migration and Trafficking. General progress has been made in order to prevent exploitation and trafficking, due to the use of TV. The tool serves as a mean to raise awareness and safe havens and girls' hostels to provide protection. Panelists stressed that governments need to continue to allocate funds for these projects.

**Event:** Developing and using technology: Women leading the way

**Date:** 25 February 2011

**Organized by:** United States Mission to the United Nations

**Panelists:** Melanne Verveer (Ambassador-At-Large for Global Women's Issues and Representative of the United States to the CSW); Dr. Kerri-Ann Jones (U.S. Delegation to the CSW); Gina McCarthy (Global Alliance for Clean Cookware); Trina DasGupta (GSMA, Mwomen); Pierre Liautaud (VP of Trilogy International); Valeria Merino (VP for venture and fellowship integration for Ashoka); Geena Davis (U.S. Delegation to the CSW)

This Panel gathered to discuss the role of women as leaders in development and in the use technology. Panelists described women as inventors as well as users of technology. As such, development projects must value indigenous knowledge. Participants described economic development as a means to empower women, highlighted the need to make mobile technology accessible with illiteracy, drew attention to the gender gap in mobile phone ownership and general ICT-access, and cited the stark differences in representation of girls and boys as well as women and men in media made for young children.

**Event:** Girls' Right to Education Including Science and Technology

**Date:** 25 February 2011

**Organized by:** Republic of Korea and National Council of Women

**Panelists:** Junhui Joo (Moderator); Monica Tolman (ICW-CIF Coordinator of Status of Women Standing Committee); Marilyn Foot-Hudson (Executive Director of North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation, established to support health/science education programs for girls)

This Panel discussed girl's rights to education, including subjects of science and technology. Literacy is key for interacting with our surroundings, participating in community and exercising control over our lives. Some of the barriers and obstacles to education include cultural factors; communications and media are controlled by men and perpetuate unhelpful stereotypes; social position of widows and child brides is unfortunate, since they have little control over their own access to education; and menstruation and poor sanitary conditions are also genuine barriers to girls' education. The Panel presented key steps to advancing women in science; Mentoring, which helps combat the "leaky pipeline" and connect science education to real life issues: Role modeling and Networking.

**Event:** Global Network Women in ICT

**Date:** 25 February 2011

**Organized by:** Permanent Mission of Serbia to the United Nations

**Panelists:** Jasna Matic (Minister of Telecommunications and Information Society, Serbia); Michelle Bachelet (Executive Director, UN Women); Melanne Verveer (US Ambassador-at-Large, Global Women's Issues); Trina DasGupta (Marketing & Strategy Consultant, mobileWomen); Coumba Touré (Africa Staff, Ashoka)

This Panel stated that ICT is still a male-dominated field (there are only 20 female UN ICT ministers). The launching of the Global Network Women in ICT is an opportunity for undeveloped countries to achieve greater parity through mentoring and shadowing initiatives. The Panel encouraged women to work together and discussed the use of technology as an international network for empowerment. Participants explored the potential of increased access to mobile technology and improved sense of safety and security among women.

## 7. Reporters

PeaceWomen/WILPF is very grateful towards all of you who represented WILPF during the CSW55 and helped us with the monitoring of the vast variety of events. Also, we would like to thank Global Action of Preventing War (GAPW) for contributing with event reports. Our sincere thanks.

**Note takers:**

*Anne Hoiberg*  
*Barbara Gonzalez*  
*Grace Ochieng'*  
*Heather Mooney*  
*Isabelle Cutting*  
*Jan Slagter*  
*Jordan Tompkins*  
*Katie Boober*  
*Kirsten A. Zeiter*  
*Lauren Ramanathan*  
*Lianne Wilson*  
*Lindsay Padilla*  
*Lissa Place*  
*Marisela Cabrera*

*Marta Hanson*  
*Megan Couture*  
*Nicole Bianchi*  
*Rebecca Norlander*  
*Rita Jankowska-Bradley*  
*Sarah Klein*  
*Shirley Lin Kinoshita*  
*Stephanie Bloom*  
*Zoe DuPree Fine*

**Report author:**

*Nicole Bianchi*

**Co-editor:**

*Isabelle Cutting*

## 8. Useful links

The official website of The Commission on the Status of Women  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/>

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

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