



network

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Letter from the Focal Point for Women

Dear Friends,

Welcome to this issue of network.

First and foremost, please accept our sincere gratitude for the many words of kindness and interest that we have received from so many readers. Everybody needs encouragement and positive feedback. We are no different. Therefore, on behalf of network, thank you sincerely.

Second, please note that this issue brings three particularly relevant pieces:

- *An interview with the former gender and diversity adviser of IMF, Ms. Leena Lahti. Given her wealth of experience and selfless and total dedication, her views simply cannot be ignored. We honour her as an individual who has single-handedly, in many instances, served as a tremendous source of inspiration and knowledge to all the other gender and diversity advisers who comprise the Organizational Gender Issues Network (ORIGIN). She overcame, through her work and beliefs, that which many others would not have. It is with pride, therefore, that we share a piece of Ms. Leena Lahti's heart, mind and insights with our readers.*

- *A joint letter of 19 September 2005 signed by 15 Women Ministers for Foreign Affairs addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and the President of the General Assembly. The letter unequivocally supports the centrality of the integration of the gender perspective into the design and work of the Peacebuilding Commission and articulates a few guiding principles to this effect.*

- *A short summary of a study undertaken on teleworking by the OECD in support of the policy and practice of teleworking. The message is clear — organizations will have to adopt the work method if they are to adapt to the expectations and needs of the future workforce.*

- *Finally, let me address a criticism that is commonly received about the tardiness of the publication. Please note that network is essentially prepared ex post facto after every*

quarter. While substantive preparation time is generally reasonable, publication time is not. Lacking a budget to outsource the publication, the office must rely on internal publication systems which prioritize the system's work independently. In terms of printing schedules, therefore, the urgent seems more often than not to overtake the routine. We attempt to compensate by putting out an electronic version much prior to the hard copy. Nevertheless, the time lags are considerable. Most certainly, however, we will try to continue our best to improve.

In solidarity,

Aparna Mehrotra

INTERVIEW WITH LEENA LAHTI **Former Senior Adviser on Diversity,** **International Monetary Fund**



1. Please tell us briefly about yourself.

My professional experience began as an Acting Program Manager for The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare, an NGO, in Finland, where I worked for six years. The next six years were spent holding positions in human resources in Pohjola Insurance

Dr. Leena Lahti, a Finnish national, was appointed as the first Senior Adviser on Diversity at the International Monetary Fund in 1995, to advise management, departments, supervisors and staff on how best to promote staff diversity and ensure equal opportunities and fair treatment of all staff, representing 140 nationalities out of the 184 member countries. Dr. Lahti has pursued a career in the field of human resources in both the private and public sectors. She is strongly committed to justice and fairness for women and men of all races, religions, ages, ethnic backgrounds and sexual orientations. She has written a number of publications and articles based on her own research and operational projects. Prior to joining IMF, she was the Executive Director of the International Women's Management Institute in Finland (1988-1995), and during 1982-1988, she held several positions in the field of human resources and organizational management in the Pohjola Insurance Group in Finland. She is married with three children.

Company in Helsinki. Following that, I was appointed as Executive Director of the International Women's Management Institute from 1988 to 1995, spending time also as a Visiting Scholar at Stanford University in California. Even though I juggled work, children, marital life, household duties, I was able to obtain a Ph.D. in Management Values in 1992 and in 1995 was appointed as the Senior Adviser on Diversity at the International Monetary Fund. This assignment ended in October 2005 and I will next be embarking on a new career as a consultant.

2. You have been tremendously successful. To what personal philosophy do you attribute such success?

It is difficult to say! So much happens and evolves during a lifetime! By nature I am a curious and adventurous person, willing to try new things and take risks. This certainly drove my parent crazy years ago! I want to stretch my limits and strongly believe that hard work pays off. I also believe in being true to myself, my own values and

doing what I feel is right. I was also very lucky. I was born in a country which has high quality education, free of charge and available for all. My husband was very supportive and shared family responsibilities. I have also had some exceptionally supportive supervisors and professors at critical moments in my life.

3. What do you consider two elements vital to success for women?

Regarding all professional fields and in general, I believe that there are some elements that are more important than others; in particular, a sound education, combined with diverse and expanding work experience, as well as personal commitment, hard work, and supportive supervisors and mentors.

When we talk about gender and diversity in particular, the most important elements that come to mind are: first, professional (theoretical, technical and analytical) skills that help the organization develop an objective and strategic approach to diversity, and secondly, persistence in dealing with resistance and denial, which are essential elements in any change. Anyone in a change agent

Contents

Letter from the Focal Point for Women 1
Interview with Ms. Leena Lahti 1
Congratulations to 4
Farewell to 6
Around the UN 7
Women, peace and security 7
Letter by the Women Ministers
for Foreign Affairs 9
In your interest: reports 10
Gender Equality: Striving for Justice
in an Unequal World 11
Distance learning for UN staff 12
In your interest: SGBs, AIs, ICs and others . 13
Work-life 14
Summary of a study on telework 14
Violence against women 14
Around the world: gender news 15
Women's health 16
Recommended reading 16
Websites 16

position should have a mentor, support group and ongoing professional training; without support, the diversity field can be a very lonesome career path.

4. What might be two or three pitfalls that women should look out for in the development of their careers?

Women should be watchful of accepting standards and expectations that may conflict with their own life goals; that are badly timed or force them to compromise on something important. To avoid disappointment and resentment, women should not try to please others and be available without asking for professional and career credit in return. And finally, women should try to avoid being trapped into jobs where they feel needed and rewarded, but not recognized enough to advance in a career.

5. What challenges do you feel women in particular will face in the next decade and how can they best meet these challenges?

Work-life increasingly requires skills and experiences that women tend to develop, such as interaction, communication, languages, multi-tasking, involving others in planning and making decisions. The qualities improve women's career opportunities. However, I believe that women will continue to face numerous challenges as in the past: stereotypes at work and in society, set both by ourselves and others, double standards, competing priorities, exclusion from career-relevant networks and lack of acknowledgement for non-traditional experience, skills and career paths. And women's challenges will become increasingly difficult as we venture into a fast-paced international work environment, if men do not start sharing family responsibilities better.

Women's education, experience and perspectives must be better utilized; we have to work harder to market ourselves. Professional networking, mentoring and coaching are critical in order to learn unwritten norms, codes and practices. Careers do not simply evolve; we have to be strategic.

Women's networks still tend to focus more on social and psychological support, while men's networks are more career-oriented, offering opportunities for competing, trading information and services. For me, the international diversity advis-

ers' network ORIGIN has been an invaluable support system professionally and psychologically for the last 10 years; it has ensured access to information and contacts, but has also offered friendship and support during difficult times.

6. What challenges to achieving gender balance will we face in the next decade?

One continuing obstacle facing women is the inflexible bureaucratic male culture found in many large organizations; the policies may be changing, but the spirit is not. Highly educated young women are selective and have the confidence to set their own standards for an employer; younger generations are free souls and dare to explore new horizons and opportunities, take turns with their spouses, work and study in cycles, and change careers. Because women rarely have top positions, they tend to make non-traditional career choices, which employers cannot control with outdated instruments.

Gender balance will not be attained by teaching women the rules of the game; it takes power holders to change their individual and institutional mental geography, management paradigm, performance standards, interviewing and selection procedures, vacancy announcements, outreach and marketing, rewards systems, compensation structures and many other elements. Practically everything has to be reconsidered, made more transparent and flexible to meet the needs of the new workforce. It takes both formal and informal changes: policies, practices, procedures and standards, as well as individual communication, behaviour, and thinking.

7. Please describe the purpose of achieving the goal of gender balance representation in organizations.

The business case for diversity in private institutions is driven by the bottom line: survival and success. For the international public sector, global stakeholders, members, donors, lenders, clients and employees set the purpose. They expect to be represented, taken into account, and recognized fairly and equally, women and men of all races, for the best outcomes, which may be hard to measure. The international institutions also have a moral responsibility to serve as role models for the rest of the world.

Research indicates that diverse and inclusive workplaces tend to be more flexible and adaptable to changes, have broader perspectives and tool-kits, and are better equipped to make sustainable decisions and implement them. However, the benefits can only be gained by strong diversity management; otherwise, diversity may create cliques, tension and confrontation between majority and minorities, “in-groups” and “out-groups”. The more diverse a workforce is, the more complex a manager’s daily work is, and consequently we have to appoint and train managers well. Diversity has its price. On the other hand, the less diversity and equity, the harder it is to attract and retain talented staff.

8. What elements of policy would best meet the purpose of achieving gender balance?

To attract today’s young generation of women and men, flexible work arrangements are critical, and supervisors’ behaviour has to be in line with the spirit of the policies. Gender balance in senior levels can only be reached by transparent, objective and diversity-sensitive recruitment and promotion standards, consistent performance competencies, and transparent and structured review processes, and monitored through diversity-specific statistics. Every candidate has to be treated as a valuable client. Every appointment and promotion counts and even a single incident of biased treatment can destroy efforts made. Diversity management has to be a clearly defined measurable competency for each manager; good performance and results must be recognized and poor ones must not be accepted. Oftentimes, management’s attention and firm feedback works as well as instruments.

9. As a professional who has combined work in the formal sector (in institutions) with work in the informal sector (motherhood and family), what advice or perspective would you like to leave us with?

I believe that no one should stay in a job or in an organization (or family situation for that matter) that compromises one’s dignity, well-being, ethical norms or life goals. Whenever it is possible, strive to change the situation or leave it. We tend to be afraid of the unknown and prefer to stay even when we are unhappy, but we should remind

ourselves that we only have one life to live. Making our own goals clear to ourselves makes it easier to accept the trade-offs. It also builds a respectful dialogue and fair play with people we have to deal with on a daily basis.

10. Advocates for gender balance are stereotyped sometimes as “whining” rather than as advocates for productive changes. How can we better communicate to the staff at large the value of a diverse and gender-balanced workforce? There seems to be more rhetoric about gender balance than real commitment among managers, but also among staff at large. How can we get beyond that?

Promoting diversity, inclusion and gender balance means a change and change creates resistance; it is the nature of this work. The more employees are involved with the process, the more they can see their personal interests being met, and it reduces the resistance. Ultimately, I cannot see this work being successful without management commitment and full accountability from every supervisor. This type of work is an ongoing process of effort and perseverance and will never be fully “accomplished”.

CONGRATULATIONS TO

UN-related

- Ms. **Angela Kane** (Germany) for her appointment as Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, on 22 September 2005. Ms. Kane was previously Assistant Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management. This past February she led a multidisciplinary team of investigators from the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to investigate misconduct among peacekeepers. Ms. Kane also has served as the Secretary-General’s Deputy Special Representative for the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). Ms. Kane replaced Danilo Türk.
- Ms. **Jan Beagle** (New Zealand) for her appointment as Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources on 22 September 2005. Ms. Beagle was previously Director of the Division for Organizational Development.

In 2000, she was Vice Chairperson of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ), where she was responsible for raising human resources issues regarding women to the highest levels of management. Ms. Beagle replaced Rosemary McCreery.

- Ms. **Patricia Waring-Ripley** (Canada) for her appointment as Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) on 15 August 2005.
- Ms. **Gabriele Voigt** (Germany) and Ms. **Anita Nilsson** (Sweden), scientists at the **International Atomic Energy Agency** (IAEA), who were among 14 eminent women honoured earlier in September 2005, at the 30th Annual Symposium of the World Nuclear Association (WNA), an organization seeking to promote the peaceful use of nuclear power as a sustainable energy resource for the coming centuries.
- Ms. **Inga Bjork-Klevby** (Sweden), who was appointed Deputy Executive Director of the **UN Human Settlements Programme** (UN-HABITAT) on 20 October 2005. Ms. Bjork-Klevby, a trained economist, was Ambassador of Sweden to Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone and has an outstanding international career in diplomacy, international finance and development cooperation.

UN bodies

- The **Committee of Experts on Public Administration** nominated, on 7 July 2005, 24 experts to serve on the committee in their personal capacity for a four-year term beginning 1 January 2006 and expiring on 31 December 2009. Six women were nominated: Ms. **Marie-Francoise Bechtel** (France); Ms. **Emilia Boncodin** (Philippines); Ms. **Jocelyne Bourgon** (Canada); Ms. **Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi** (South Africa); Ms. **Barbara Kudrycka** (Poland); and Ms. **Gwendoline Williams** (Trinidad and Tobago).
- The Secretary-General appointed 25 experts to the newly renamed **Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters** to serve in their personal capacity for a four-

year term commencing on 1 July 2005. Four women were appointed: Ms. **Rowena G. Bethel** (Bahamas); Ms. **Patricia A. Brown** (USA); Ms. **Nahil L. Hirsh Carrillo** (Peru); and Ms. **Habiba Louati** (Tunisia).

- The Chairman of the sixty-first session of the United Nations **Commission on Human Rights**, Mr. Makarim Wibisono, announced on 28 July 2005 the appointment of a number of experts to occupy positions in fact-finding mechanisms of the Commission focusing on specific human rights issues or on situations in individual countries, including the appointment of Dr. **Sima Samar**, of Afghanistan, as Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Sudan. Dr. Samar is the former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Women's Affairs in the post-Taliban Afghan Government and chair of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission. Ms. **Michèle Picard** of France was also appointed as the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Uzbekistan. Ms. Picard is also an alternate member of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, the Commission's subsidiary body.
- The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) appointed Ms. **Gay McDougall** (USA) on 2 August 2005 as the **world body's first independent expert on minority issues**. Ms. McDougall is a seasoned veteran in the fight against racism and the promotion of women's rights. Her mandate includes promoting the implementation of the 1992 UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, which affirms the right of all people to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, and to use their own language, in private and in public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination. In the past, as an alternate member of the Sub-Commission on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, Ms. McDougall served as Special Rapporteur on the issue of systematic rape, sexual slavery, and slavery-like practices in armed conflict. She presented a groundbreaking study to the Sub-Commission that called for international

legal standards for prosecuting acts of systematic rape and sexual slavery committed during armed conflict.

- The General Assembly elected, on 24 August 2005, 27 *ad litem* judges for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Out of 26 judges, 9 were women: Ms. **Elizabeth Gwaunza** (Zimbabwe); Ms. **Tsvetana Kamenova** (Bulgaria); Ms. **Flavia Lattanzi** (Italy); Ms. **Janet Nosworthy** (Jamaica); Ms. **Choma Egongu Nwosu-Iheme** (Nigeria); Ms. **Prisca Matimba Nyambe** (Zambia); Ms. **Michèle Picard** (France); Ms. **Kimberly Prost** (Canada); and Ms. **Vonimbolana Rasoazanany** (Madagascar).

Others

- Ms. **Angela Merkel** (Germany) was elected to the post of Chancellor on 22 November 2005,

making her the first woman Chancellor to head the German Government. Ms. Merkel is a former physicist who became chairwoman of the Christian Democratic Union five years ago.

- Justice **Desiree Bernard** (Guyana) has been selected as the eighth recipient of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Triennial Award for Women. Justice Bernard was the former Chief Justice and Chancellor of the Judiciary of Guyana and the first female judge of the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ). She was the chairperson of CEDAW from 1985 to 1988.
- Ms. **Marin Alsop** (USA) was recently appointed music director of the Baltimore Symphony in the United States, becoming the first woman to head a major orchestra in the country. Her appointment was reportedly greeted in silence by the orchestra.

The world's top 10 most powerful women as published by *Forbes* magazine on 28 July 2005

1.	Condoleezza Rice	USA	Secretary of State
2.	Wu Yi	China	Minister of Health
3.	Yulia Tymoshenko	Ukraine	Prime Minister
4.	Gloria Arroyo	Philippines	President
5.	Margaret Whitman	USA	Chief Executive, eBay
6.	Anne Mulcahy	USA	Chief Executive Officer, Xerox
7.	Sallie Krawcheck	USA	Chief Executive Officer, Citigroup
8.	Brenda Barnes	USA	Chief Executive Officer, Sara Lee
9.	Oprah Winfrey	USA	Chairman, Harpo
10.	Melinda Gates	USA	Co-founder, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

FAREWELL TO

- Mr. **Olara Otunnu** (Uganda), the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Children and Armed Conflict, retired on 1 August 2005. Upon the adoption of Security Council resolution S/RES/1612 (2005) to establish a monitoring and reporting mechanism on safeguarding children during armed conflict, the Secretary-General **Kofi Annan** praised him as its

architect and for raising the profile of UN child protection efforts. Ms. **Karin Sham Poo** (Norway) heads the programme until a successor to Mr. Otunnu is found. Ms. Sham Poo is the former UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) Deputy Executive Director.

- Ms. **Rosemarie McCreery** left her assignment as Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources on 22 September 2005 to serve as Chief of Staff for United Nations Children's

Fund (UNICEF) Executive Director Ann Veneman.

AROUND THE UN

- The **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)** held its 33rd session from 5 to 22 July 2005, in New York. The Committee examined the report of eight States parties. The Committee also issued a note in relation to the preparation of a new Constitution for Iraq. It called on Iraq as a State party to the Convention to ensure that the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination are fully reflected in the new Constitution, including in the family and personal status laws (<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/33sess.htm>).
- The **Security Council** in a landmark resolution (S/RES/1612 (2005)), on 26 July 2005, unanimously condemned the **continued recruitment of child soldiers and approved the setting up of a mechanism for monitoring, reporting and punishing those responsible**. The Council will monitor grave violations by both Governments and insurgents including crimes of recruiting child soldiers in violation of international instruments, killing and maiming of children, rape and other sexual violence mostly committed against girls, abduction and forced displacement, denial of humanitarian access to children, and attacks against schools and hospitals, as well as trafficking, forced labour and all forms of slavery.
- **Internal Literacy Day** was observed on 30 August 2005. Experience and research show that literacy can be a major tool for eradicating poverty, enlarging employment opportunities, advancing gender equality and improving family health, among other benefits. There are an estimated 800 million illiterate adults, two thirds of whom are women.
- Ten years after the United Nations conference on women in Beijing and just weeks before a summit of world leaders at the UN Headquarters in September 2005, the Secretary-General stated that the international community must turn its commitments into action to

achieve full gender equality. The message was delivered by High Commissioner for Human Rights **Louise Arbour** at the opening of the tenth anniversary commemoration of the Fourth World Conference on Women organized by the Chinese Government. The message continued, “What were once called women’s issues have been transformed into matters of primary national and international significance. Stronger women’s networks and alliances have taken shape across issues and borders alike. And no single policy ensures gender equality; rather, a comprehensive policy approach is needed.”

- The world’s leading maternal, newborn and child health professionals formally joined forces on 12 September 2005 to establish **The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health**, a milestone in a growing global focus on the health of women and children that aims to achieve two (maternal and child mortality) of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Partnership unites developing and donor countries, UN agencies, professional associates, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academic and research institutions and foundations to intensify and harmonize national, regional and global progress towards the two MDGs and will be hosted by the World Health Organization (WHO) (<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2005/pr41/en/index.htm>).

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

- The **Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women**, Ms. **Rachel Mayanja**, visited Sudan from 4 to 11 September 2005 to assess the situation of women and girls in the country, and their real and potential role in implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. In a press conference, Ms. Mayanja said that although the Sudan’s interim national constitution showed an openness to gender equality, there was a stark contrast between gender-friendly policies and their implementation. Violence against women, including rape, and impunity for perpetrators of violence were still widespread, especially in the Darfur region.

- The Special Rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. **Yakin Erturk**, carried out a fact-finding mission at the invitation of the Government of Afghanistan in July 2005. She held meetings with Government officials, members of the judiciary, prosecutors, police officers, doctors, and representatives of non-governmental and international organizations in Kabul, Kandahar and Herat. She also visited prisons and shelters for women and received testimonies from women victims of violence. In her press statement of 18 July 2005 the Special Rapporteur noted that although considerable change in the legal and institutional framework concerning the situation of women in Afghanistan had occurred in the past three and a half years, violence against women remained dramatic in

its intensity and pervasiveness in the public and private spheres of life. In particular, she highlighted widespread forced and child marriages as one of the primary sources of violence against women.

- International awareness of gender dimensions of conflict has increased thanks to Security Council resolution 1325. Nevertheless, in a statement issued on 19 July 2005, the **United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)** called on the international community to go beyond mere awareness of these gender dimensions of conflict, and buttress women's participation in preventing and resolving national and local conflicts. It stated that while a few women have been able to take part in peace processes in different capacities over the past decade, it was still rare for women to be involved alongside men at every stage, including the implementation of peace agreements.

You can find a monthly list of senior vacancy announcements (P-5 and above) at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/>

You can read **network** online at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/Network>
To receive hard copies of **network** please send an e-mail request to network-newsletter@un.org

Letter by the Women Ministers for Foreign Affairs • 19 September 2005

H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations,
H.E. Mr. Jan Eliasson, President of the General Assembly,

Last week, our Heads of States or Governments agreed on how to strengthen the United Nations to the benefit of all people—women and men, girls and boys. The outcome document is a road map, a call for swift action in a number of areas, including the establishing of a Peacebuilding Commission. It is also a compass, a set of principles that should guide all actions and efforts. One is gender equality and the full and equal participation and involvement of women in promoting peace and security. When meeting yesterday, we—the Foreign Ministers of 14 countries and the EU Commissioner for External Relations—discussed concrete ideas on how to merge these two central decisions to ensure that a gender perspective is integrated in the design and work of the Peacebuilding Commission. The details of the composition and working methods are now to be developed by the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. As a guide for this work, we agreed that:

Representation is essential. The Organizational Committee must include a good balance of Member States, including countries with experience of conflict as well as donor countries and troop-contributing countries. However, a well balanced Peacebuilding Commission also demands a fair representation of both women and men. We urge Member States, the UN system, regional and subregional organizations and international financial institutions to nominate women as representatives in the Organizational Committee and to country-specific meetings. Women and representatives of women's organizations in countries under considerations must be heard and participate. The goal must be to form a Peacebuilding Commission that in all its aspects has an equal representation of women and men.

Knowledge is key. The Commission must have an in-depth knowledge of the roles, experiences and needs of women in post-conflict situations. When deciding on details of the design and working methods of the Commission and its support office, particular attention must be paid to including knowledge and understanding of the participation, empowerment and special needs of women in post-conflict and peacebuilding.

Funding is crucial and mainstreaming a must. The needs and roles of women and girls must be taken into consideration when designing and developing activities funded by the standing Peacebuilding Fund. Furthermore, a gender perspective must be thoroughly integrated in all recommendations, activities, reports, strategies and best practices analyses from the Commission, the Fund and the Support Office.

By deciding to establish a Peacebuilding Commission, we have shown our determination to prevent old conflicts from relapsing, and to promote reconstruction, institution-building and sustainable development. The challenge ahead is to make sure that these efforts embrace, and improve, the daily life of both women and men. The ideas above are one contribution to that process.

Sincerely yours,

H.E. Ms. Ursula Plassnik, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria

H.E. Dame Billie Miller, Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Barbados

H.E. Ms. Antionette Batumubwire, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burundi

H.E. Ms. Carolina Barco Isakson, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia

H.E. Ms. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Croatia

H.E. Ms. Salomé Zourabichvili, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia

H.E. Ms. Fatoumata Kaba-Sidibe, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guinea

H.E. Ms. Rita Kieber-Beck, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Liechtenstein

H.E. Ms. Ilinka Mitreva, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

H.E. Ms. Alcinda Abreu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mozambique

H.E. Ms. Leila Rachid de Cowles, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Paraguay

H.E. Ms. Micheline Calmy-Rey, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Switzerland

H.E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa

H.E. Ms. Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden

Ms. Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner of the European Commission

IN YOUR INTEREST ... REPORTS

Thematic

- The **Report on the World Social Situation 2005: the Inequality Predicament** issued on 25 August 2005 sounded the alarm over persistent and deepening inequality worldwide. The report focuses on the chasm between the formal and informal economies, the widening gap between skilled and unskilled workers, and the growing disparities in health, education and opportunities for social, economic and social participation (www.un.org/esa/socdev/rwss/rwss.htm).
- The report **The Promise of Equality: Gender Equity, Reproductive Health and the Millennium Development Goals** released on 12 October 2005 by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) shows that investment in the education, reproductive health and economic opportunities of women and girls will have immediate, longer-term and intergenerational payoffs. It contains a simple but powerful message: Gender equality reduces poverty and saves and improves lives. The report explores the degree to which the global community has fulfilled pledges made to the world's most impoverished and marginalized peoples. It tracks progress, exposes shortfalls and examines the links between poverty, gender equality, human rights, reproductive health, conflict and violence against women and girls. It also examines the relationship between gender discrimination and the scourge of HIV/AIDS. It identifies the vulnerabilities and strengths of history's largest cohort of young people and highlights the critical role they play in development. Worldwide, women and girls continue to suffer horrifying levels of violence, poverty and discrimination and 60 per cent of those with HIV/AIDS are women, with the majority of new infections occurring in young women between the ages of 15 and 24 (<http://www.unfpa.org/swp/swpmain.htm>).
- The UN **World Youth Report 2005** released on 5 October 2005 gives an overview of the global situation of young people providing a snapshot of the 1.2 billion young people aged 15 to 24. It states that more than 500 million

youths live on less than \$2 a day and a record 88 million are unemployed. The report highlights, among other issues, the impact of globalization on young people; HIV/AIDS; armed conflict as both victims and perpetrators; and ageing society. Among some of the report's findings:

Poverty: Over 200 million young people, or 18 per cent of all youth, live on less than one dollar a day; 515 million live on less than two dollars a day. It is unclear if the poverty situation of young people worldwide has improved or deteriorated since 1995.

Girls and young women: There has been greater awareness of gender issues among Governments. However, equal access to higher education and labour markets continues to be a concern, and negative stereotypes of women continue to persist, in reality and in portrayals in the media.

HIV/AIDS: Ten million young people currently live with HIV/AIDS, mostly in Africa and Asia. The spread of the virus has had a devastating impact on young people's sexual and reproductive health. Young people are particularly vulnerable to contracting the virus.

Youth and conflict: Young people have been disproportionately involved in conflicts over the past decade. Despite the international legal framework to protect minors and prevent their engagement in conflict situations, there has not been an improvement on the ground (<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/wyr05.htm>).

Administration

- The report of the Secretary-General (A/60/365) of 20 September 2005 on the **Amendments to the Staff Regulations** contains amendments to the Staff Regulations that are needed to enhance the accountability of United Nations staff with respect to both financial accountability of staff involved in the management of the Organization's resources

and disciplinary accountability of UN staff members who commit sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Gender Equality: Striving for Justice in an Unequal World

Summary of the report

United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) www.unrisd.org

by Silvia Liu

The report **Gender Equality: Striving for Justice in an Unequal World** was released by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) earlier this year. It states that although there is much to celebrate in the progress toward gender equality, there is also much at risk a decade after the Fourth World Conference on Women (September 1995). The Beijing Conference constituted an apex in international efforts to advance women's human rights in all dimensions and today, 10 years later, progress has been achieved in many areas, such as education and participation in the labour force and political life. However, women still face serious and significant inequalities in income, authority and power. In addition, the past decade has given rise to new manifestations in the struggle of gender equality—HIV/AIDS, human trafficking, violence and conflict. The report is divided into four broad sections:

- **Macroeconomics, well-being and gender equality:** The analysis of macroeconomic policies from a gender perspective begins by reviewing the many areas of contention thrown up by the neoliberal agenda, the currently dominant economic policy model. There has been a tendency by mainstream analysts to treat macroeconomic policy as a gender-free or gender-neutral zone, and to ignore the gender impacts of policy choices; yet, all outcomes in terms of growth, structural transformation, equality, poverty and social protection have implications for gender equality or for lessening gender inequality. The review also examines whether heterodox macroeconomic policies have performed any better than neoliberal models
- in achieving growth and social equity, and if so whether they have served the goal of gender equality any more effectively.
- **Women, work and social policy:** The section considers how policy reforms associated with the liberalization of the economy have transformed the world of work and people's access to social security more broadly and the implications for low-income women in particular. The past decade has seen the emergence of women as the dominant workforce in various sectors of the economy, with many potentially positive implications. However, much depends on what kind of work is available to them, and the degree to which seeking paid work represents a distress strategy to sustain family livelihood. At the same time women have been facing additional burdens in their domestic management and care roles. The key question posed is whether some of the opportunities that have recently opened up for women compensate adequately for the burdens and risks that the same policy agenda has thrust upon society, and particularly upon women. While numerous innovative initiatives by civil society organizations, social movements and government bodies address the insecurity of livelihoods confronted by informal women workers, the standard reforms in social security (such as pensions) and service provision (such as health sector reforms) have tended to widen gender gaps. Gender analysis rarely informs social policy, and tends to remain a "silent term", marginalized from policy debates.
- **Women in politics and public life:** The section strikes a different note: in these two contexts, women's increased visibility is conspicuous. The section begins by holding a magnifying glass to one of the great achievements of the last decade, women's increased prominence in formal political institutions and elected assemblies. Enthusiasm for the greater show of female hands in representative bodies, however, needs to be tempered by the recognition that entrenched male biases and hierarchies still exist, and there is a long way to go before anything resembling parity is reached in most political environments.

Another focus of the section is on women's activism within civil society, especially in the light of political movements which mobilize around faith, ethnic identity or nationalism, and which have their own reverberations concerning femininity and women's rights. Female visibility in this context has ambivalent characteristics. On the institutional side, the current enthusiasm for "good governance" and the associated institutional reform agenda, especially the decentralization of decision-making structures, comes under scrutiny; are women making real or superficial gains by such devices as quotas and "reservations"?

- **Gender, armed conflict and the search for peace:** The proliferation since the end of the cold war of internal or civil wars, the holdover conflicts from the postcolonial era, and the major military incursions associated with the contemporary "war on terror" have important implications for women. The 1990s saw widespread recognition that rape was commonly used as a weapon of war, and that sexual assault was a feature of any setting engulfed by turmoil and armed violence; but the implications of modern forms of war for women in their socially constructed and livelihood roles have not been given similar attention. Women have been noticed as programmed for peace—as instigators of peace initiatives or conflict resolution; this chimes with the idea of the quintessentially pacifying female presence. But they are often ignored in the formal negotiations which bring post-conflict institutions into being, and therefore lose out from peace settlements. The chapters in this section inspect the gendered battlefield during war, during the search for peace, and in the post-conflict environment. The limited extent to which peace secures women's interests is another example of the convenient oblivion to which gender considerations are so often confined.

DISTANCE LEARNING FOR UN STAFF

by **Mallica Vajrathon**

Tutor, UNFPA/DLPI Course on Gender Mainstreaming 2002-2005

Mallica Vajrathon (Thailand) is a former UN senior staff. She has served as consultant to the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) in preparation of the fifth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security in the fall of 2005. She was also Principal Adviser to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1993-1995); Senior Technical Officer, UNFPA Technical and Evaluation Division (1975-1993); Regional Information Officer of UNICEF/Coordinator, UNDP/UNICEF Development Support Communication Service in Asia (1963-1974); and a UN/DPI College Student Intern (1958). Ms. Vajrathon's hobby is painting where she promotes the safeguarding of the environment.

One innovation in the United Nations system concerning staff training is the **UNFPA Distance Learning Courses on Population Issues (DLPI)**. This project began in 1999 at the United Nations Staff College in Turin, Italy, when UNFPA received a three-year grant from the United Nations Fund to implement the Programme of Action of the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, and in the following years the related outcomes of other United Nations World Conferences, including the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women.

The courses on advocacy, adolescent sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS prevention, reproductive health/family planning, maternal mortality, and, the most recent one, gender mainstreaming, provide in-service training to a large number of UN staff working in programmes and projects around the world. The aim is to address the need of the global shortage of people trained in population and development issues, offering an alternative and cost-effective solution to the need

of training not only UNFPA staff, but also other United Nations project personnel, officials of Governments and NGOs.

DPLI is based on the concept of supported self-learning. Each course takes place outside the normal classroom or campus situation in the learner's own home or place of work with the help of trained tutors to be "facilitators of learning" rather than traditional teachers or lecturers. Students are given a chance to evaluate the performance and knowledge of their tutor and also of the course administrator. UNFPA will drop tutors who receive low evaluation points from students. Selected tutors are technically competent in their particular field. The tutor's role of the gender mainstreaming course is to:

- Guide students through the course content, methodology and requirements;
- Provide personal support which may be of an informal nature or act as resource person;
- Provide remedial tutoring for students with difficulties;
- Provide helpful feedback on assignments;
- Assess student progress;
- Provide advice and support on academic issues related to the course;
- Use the course to promote an understanding of gender concepts in population and development within a human rights framework.

Students taking DLPI are required to spend 40 hours of their time, 5-7 hours per week for 7-8 weeks in total per semester. Since it is self-programmed learning, the students manage their own time. The reading materials consists of three modules:

- Understanding Gender Concepts;
- Using Gender Analysis and Indicators;
- Gender Sensitive Advocacy.

While it is not compulsory, students may receive a certificate at the end of the semester upon completion of two successfully graded assignments.

In completing the course, the students:

- Gain knowledge of gender terminology;
- Enhance their ability to conduct gender analysis on policy and family levels;
- Better understand gender indicators and decide when they need to use them for programme goal;

- Learn to mainstream gender more effectively in the programme process;
- Learn to prepare gender-sensitive advocacy plans. Improve general gender advocacy skills.

Those interested in the DLPI Courses should contact Dr. Carmen Marin, distancelearning@unfpa.org.

IN YOUR INTEREST

Secretary-General's bulletins, administrative instructions, information circulars and others

- **Joint Disciplinary Committee (ST/IC/200249/Add.1)** of 20 July 2005 on the composition of the new JDC.
- **New mechanisms to strengthen the executive management of the UN Secretariat (ST/SGB/2005/16)** of 22 August 2005 established two new high-level committees, namely, a Policy Committee and a Management Committee, and amends the terms of reference of the Senior Management Group.
- **Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters—1 January 2004—30 June 2005 (ST/IC/2005/51)** of 30 August 2005 informed staff members of misconduct and its discipline consequences. It provides examples of misconduct and corresponding legal actions.
- **Oversight Committee (ST/SGB/2005/18)** of 7 September 2005 was established to ensure proper implementation of all oversight recommendations. It would also provide independent advice to the Secretary-General on all Secretariat activities relating to internal and external oversight and investigations, including internal controls and monitoring of corrective actions recommended by internal and external auditors.
- **Joint Appeals Board (ST/IC/2005/47)** of 9 September 2005 established the composition of the new JAB. The JAB reviews administrative decisions that affect staff members and makes recommendations to the Secretary-General.
- **Integrity awareness initiative (ST/SGB/2005/17)** of 12 September 2005 describes the principles set for the purpose of strengthening accountability in the Secretariat and raising

awareness among staff of their roles and responsibilities for maintaining their own integrity and that of the Organization.

- **Operating guidelines for the 2005 voluntary lateral reassignment programme for P-3 and GS-7 Pilot** of 30 September 2005 refers to the mobility policy that was established as an integral part of the staff selection system, with the aim to move people within and among functions, departments, occupational groups, duty stations and other organizations of the UN system to develop flexible, multi-skilled staff and fill vacancies globally. Voluntary reassignment exercises for all professional staff, Secretariat-wide, and for General Service staff at Headquarters are coordinated by the Office of Human Resources Management. Programmes for General Service staff at offices away from Headquarters are coordinated by the respective local HR offices.

WORK-LIFE

Summary of a study on telework

- Telework is the new world of work. The work environment is changing at a faster pace than ever and society is searching for means to keep up with the pace. Telework is one of these means.
- Teleworking is increasingly a major factor in the construction of new relations between employment providers and the demands of employees. Many decisions must be made at both the executive and governmental levels taking into consideration the direction of future work needs. Companies need to implement human resource structures which will compensate for the needs of new worker demands. The evolution of employment market needs is exploding in telecommunications and information-provider sectors. Teleworking is directly linked to this evolution.
- Governmental legislation has been highly developed to address and protect the rights of both teleworkers and employers in several of the countries studied (Europe and North America).

Current benefits of telework include:

- Additional flexibility in organizing work and personal lives;
- Decreased expense in commuting and professional wardrobe;
- More time with family;
- Higher levels of employment that teleworking can bring to rural areas;
- Transportation and pollution-related questions were prevalent in all surveys;
- Reduction in overhead costs for companies;
- The heightened production capacity due to less interruptions and a less stressful work environment;
- Telework means potential work opportunities for the handicapped;
- Companies are currently using teleworking on a *voluntary basis* to supplement flexibility to the employee;
- Addresses problems of relocation and the paucity of skilled worker in some areas;
- Permits flexibility and more effective scheduling of workers to accommodate lulls or peaks in the demands of its workforce;
- Ability to accomplish work “when the work needs to be done”.

(Based on a study prepared by Robert A. Lewis, consultant for OECD/DAC, Paris, France.)

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

- The report **Access to justice for victims of sexual violence**, prepared at the initiative of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and issued on 1 August 2005, looks at patterns of rape in Darfur. The conflict between the Government, allied militias and rebels has killed at least 180,000 people and driven 2 million more from their homes in the past two and a half years. The report states that armed elements including law enforcement officers and the military, in Sudan's strife-torn region, continue to perpetrate rape and sexual violence. The report also notes that many women do not report incidents out of fear of reprisals and the lack of any effective redress mechanisms for sexual violence.
- The Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) hosted a three-week online discussion on **Galvanizing action to combat violence**

against women from 26 September to 14 October 2005. The online discussion was held in conjunction with the Secretary-General's in-depth study on all forms of violence against women (resolution 58/185) (<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/>).

- **Victims of gender-based violence in Kosovo**, including victims of human trafficking, will soon have additional recourse for aid. An agreement was signed on 19 July 2005 by the United Nations Interim Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and local postal authorities to establish a toll-free "**HelpLine**". The "HelpLine" was set up by The Victims' Advocacy and Assistance Unit (VAAU) of UNMIK Department of Justice and the Post and Telecommunication of Kosovo (PTK) to access justice for victims of crime more effectively. The hotline provides awareness to law enforcement authorities, and medical, legal and psychological services.
- Each year in October, the **Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation** dedicates one day for a national fund-raising campaign to benefit a "good cause". This year the campaign "**A world without violence against women**" focused on four topics: violence against women during and after armed conflicts; trafficking in women; female genital mutilation; and violence in the family and other intimate relationships. In addition to national coverage as part of the campaign, all households, most workplaces and public areas will be visited by volunteers asking for contributions to anti-violence projects within the framework of the campaign theme. The campaign is coordinated by FOKUS, Forum for Women and Development, a network of women's organizations in Norway. The proceeds are to finance women's projects to combat violence against women in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. In line with Security Council resolution 1325, emphasis is placed on women as active peacebuilders rather than as victims (http://www.fokuskvinner.no/TV-aksjonen_2005/4205/TV-campaign_20051.pdf and/or <http://www.fokuskvinner.no>).

AROUND THE WORLD: gender news

- Since 1987, **Catalyst** (a United States research and advisory organization working with businesses and the professions to build inclusive work environments and expand opportunities for women) annually honours outstanding initiatives and efforts of companies and firms that result in women's career development and advancement. The 2005 Catalyst award was given to Georgia-Pacific Corporation for its initiative *Bridging cultures, leveraging differences* and Sydley Austin Brown & Wood LLP for its *Strategies for success: an ongoing commitment to diversity* (<http://www.catalystwomen.org/>).
- A new UN initiative in Latin America sponsored by UNIFEM **will calculate women's unpaid and volunteer work** with a view to improving their chances for resources allocation, reported UNIFEM Executive Director Noeleen Heyzer on 4 October 2005. The project will be carried out in five Latin American countries where women's participation in local decision-making represents best practice examples, such as the Municipalities of Rosario in Argentina and Cuenca in El Salvador. Since budgets are used to shape policy and provide the means for achieving social and economic objectives, they must take account of the women who often provide services that are not documented or remunerated (press release only).
- **The United Nations Children's Fund** (UNICEF) opened a **policy review workshop on girls' education in Liberia** on 23 August 2005. It brought approximately 50 participants to finalize a policy aimed at promoting the full cycle of schooling by girls. The workshop focused on issues of modifying old values and attitudes while promoting respect for gender equality, on ensuring that early childhood socialization processes tackle gender discrimination and on making sure that families and schools are sensitized to the creation of new values and patterns of behaviour that support girls' education.
- **Nine Roman Catholic women** have been unofficially ordained as priests and deacons in

North America, risking excommunication by the Vatican. The ceremony took place in Ottawa, Canada, on 26 July 2007.

WOMEN'S HEALTH

- The **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** issued its report **Progress for Children** on 20 September 2005. It states that vaccine-preventable diseases kill approximately 1.4 million children under five annually. In addition, an estimated 27 million children and 40 million pregnant women are not immunized each year and 41 countries are protecting fewer youngsters than a decade ago. The major killers are measles, haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), whooping cough and neonatal tetanus, all of which are preventable with vaccines that are currently available at low cost (http://www.unicef.org/progressforchildren/index_28408.html).
- Nations have effectively ignored the problem of obstetric **fistulas, an injury related to childbearing**. Two years of a global fund-raising campaign by the **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** have netted only \$11 million for this problem. It is estimated that more than 2 million women are living with obstetric fistulas. The problem is most concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa, where poverty and rudimentary health care combined with the traditions of home birth and early pregnancy make women especially vulnerable. The number of cases is far outpacing those effectively and medically attended to. It is estimated that at the current rate of medical intervention and social awareness-raising it will take decades to end fistulas.
- Scientists appeared to have found a reason why women are more vulnerable to **coronary heart disease**. University of Bonn research shows that a **receptor for the female sex hormone estrogen plays a key role**. It is hoped that with a more thorough understanding of sex differences in the maintenance of normal heart rhythm, it would be possible to develop gender-specific therapies. The findings are to be presented at the Federation of European Physiological Societies in Bristol.

RECOMMENDED READING

- **Women "Take Care," Men "Take Charge:" Stereotyping of U.S. Business Leaders Exposed**. Catalyst released the first in a series of reports addressing the top barriers to advancement that women face in the workplace (<http://www.catalyst.org/headlines/stereotype.html>).
- **Women Leaders and Organizational Change** by Robin Ely and Debra Meyerson. The book examines the correlation between women in leadership positions and organizational change. It argues that expanding only the number of women in leadership roles does not automatically induce organizational change and that fundamental changes to transform organizations is needed (http://hbswk.hbs.edu/tools/print_item.jhtml?id=3796&t=bizhistory).

WEBSITES

http://untreaty.un.org/UNAT/main_page.htm
The United Nations Administrative Tribunal (UNAT) has launched a new website to provide information about the Tribunal, including its history and role in the Organization and how to contact the Tribunal secretariat. The website operates in English and French, the working languages of the Tribunal.

<http://www.id21.org/insights>
Newsletter of the Institute of Development Studies.

network—The **UN Women's Newsletter**
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United Nations, Two UN Plaza, DC2-1290, New York, NY 10017
Telephone: (1) (212) 963-6828; Fax (1) (212) 963-9545
E-mail: network-newsletter@un.org
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