



# DAWN INFORMS

Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era

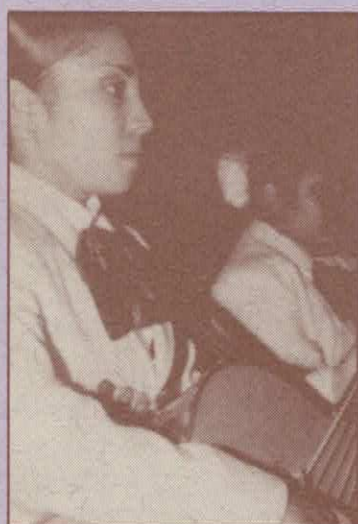
## Genderscapes in paradoxical times and spaces

*DAWN organised a panel on Genderscapes in paradoxical times and spaces at the AWID 9<sup>th</sup> International Forum on Women's Rights and Development: Reinventing Globalisation, held in Guadalajara, Mexico, 3-6 October 2002 with Peggy Antrobus, Gigi Francisco, Vivienne Taylor, Sonia Correa and Fatou Sow in the chair.*

Peggy Antrobus set the context for how DAWN is working on making analytically clear the links between gender justice, economic justice and democracy, and how religious/national/ethnic fundamentalism and economic fundamentalism intersected. DAWN began in the 1990s to define, strengthen and deepen understanding of these linkages. In the ICPD process, DAWN linked economic justice and an enabling environment as the key to gender justice; in DAWN's Political Restructuring and Social Transformation work leading to the World Summit on Social Development, the links were made between economic justice, democracy and governance. The panellists expanded on these linkages in their papers on the paradoxes facing feminist strategists.



November 2002



DAWN met the women mariarchis of Mexico (above) while there to attend the AWID 9th International Forum in Guadalajara (P1 - 15) and the Steering Committee Meeting in Cocoyoc.

The 5th Asian and Pacific Population Conference in Bangkok 11-17 December 2002 - another battle for the sexual and reproductive rights that were hard-won at ICPD - P2.

### Paradoxes for Gender in the Social Movements:



Gigi Francisco spoke about DAWN's ongoing interrogation of the paradoxes that challenge the women's movement at the present conjuncture, which she said springs out of a perspective constituted along three interactive core ideas.

"The first is 'women's agency'. As feminists, women's autonomy and self-determination are core values to our empowerment and to our struggle in reforming gender power relations as these are embedded in power compacts found in institutions and social relations. For us in DAWN, the women's movement is not just about women per se. Our analysis and advocacy is about freeing women as constructed, disciplined and objectified beings, and nurturing our agency in both private and public spaces. Moreover, gender power inequity cannot be separated out from but is entangled with other power inequalities. Thus, it is futile to address gender issues singly, exclusively and in isolation from other struggles against unjust and undemocratic power systems.

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Why we should not have another UN international women's conference at this time - P6

## SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AT RISK

The United States Government is seeking to undermine the hard-won sexual and reproductive rights enshrined in the language of the International Conference on Population and Development's Programme of Action. The US has taken its attacks forward both on the home front and in to the international conference arena, including the 5th Asian and Pacific Population Conference in Bangkok, 11-17 December 2002.

At the October 2002 PrepCom for the 5<sup>th</sup> Asian and Pacific Population Conference, the United States took a non-negotiable position of refusal to support the ICPD Plan of Action that it had not only helped to write eight years ago, but had consistently reaffirmed. The document was endorsed by 179 nations, but there is serious concern that repressive countries will follow the US in its decision to withdraw support and that progress on ICPD implementation will cease.

The Bush administration contends that reproductive health services and reproductive rights can be construed as promoting abortion and has demanded the removal of key concepts and language referring to reproductive health services, reproductive rights and sexual health. The US wants to replace them with terms such as "basic health care including reproductive health", or referring only to family planning and maternal and child health. It seeks to replace language about preventing the public health problem of unsafe abortions with "minimise the incidence of abortion."


The 5th Asian and Pacific Population Conference is the first of several regional population meetings scheduled to take place before April 2004, the half-way point for the 20-year ICPD Plan of Action. There appears little doubt that battles over ICPD language will take place at each. A petition in support of the Plan of Action circulated in November 2002 and signed by community, health and women's networks said one of the most powerful countries in the world, whose national and foreign policy had become actively anti-abortion, anti-sex education, anti-reproductive health and increasingly restrictive of family planning provisions under George W. Bush, was posing a major threat to the global consensus on the ICPD Programme of Action.

The dispute over the ICPD programme is only the most recent example of the Bush administration efforts to withdraw American support from United Nations programmes that it claims promote abortion. In July 2002 the administration decided to withhold US\$34 million in previously approved aid to the UN Population Fund because of claims that it helped Chinese Government agencies that forced women to have abortions. At the UN General Assembly special session on children, the Bush administration, the Vatican and some Muslim countries tried to push for a policy to prevent teenagers from getting abortions.

Over the past year, the Bush Administration has quietly expunged public information about sexual health and rights and begun waging what a Newsday report describes as 'a covert war on condoms'.

"The start of hostilities wasn't announced from the Oval Office. Nor was it put to a dramatic vote in the Congress. This is a guerrilla war. The insurgents inch forward with determined steadiness, and a certain stealth. A fact sheet on the effectiveness of condoms in preventing the transmission of the AIDS virus has disappeared from the Centers for Disease Control web site. According to lawmakers who have protested, the missing sheet was based on public health data showing that "latex condoms, when used consistently and correctly, are highly effective in preventing transmission of HIV" and other sexually transmitted diseases. In its place is a notice: 'Being revised'."

President George W. Bush has begun appointing critics of condoms to a presidential advisory panel on AIDS. They include social conservatives who question the international scientific consensus that condoms are highly effective in AIDS prevention. Instead, they emphasise failure rates from slippage, breakage and not using condoms every time.

Abstinence-only programmes, which promote sexual abstinence and do not provide information on contraception or AIDS prevention, are the administration's pet projects, slated for more and more funding every year. So far, studies on their effectiveness are incomplete or inconclusive. 

**From P1**

"The second is the recognition of the multi-centric character of power structures and relations that span various institutional spaces and cut across several issues. The life world has become more volatile. Struggles are more complex and varied and structural shifts are made more intractable by the



*Fatou Sow, who was a member of the AWID Internet Planning Committee, was chair of the DAWN panel and introduced the session by referring to DAWN's previous work and the focus of its advocacy and research in the 1990's on four major issues: Political Economy of Globalisation; Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and gender justice, and more recently Political Restructuring and Social Transformation, and Sustainable Livelihoods. She said DAWN's current challenges include refining its analysis and linking the research themes in order to progress women's agency without being instrumentalised by the State, the United Nations system or international aid organisations; to reinforce human rights; and to promote a vision for the future. More information about the AWID Forum and the papers presented can be found on DAWN's website and on [www.awid.org/](http://www.awid.org/)*

speed or rapidity with which changes are taking place. A gain in women's equality in one space may matter little or become altogether meaningless in another space that is itself undergoing a dynamic shift. This multi-centricity challenges the women's movement's ability to deploy our energies in different spaces simultaneously, even instantaneously, as well as stretches our capacity for sustained inter-linkage so as to avoid eventual fragmentation.

Finally for DAWN, inter-linking spaces and issues is never just a purely intellectual exercise. It is at once political, active and transformatory. It demands of us the ability to transport into the frontier of discursive and political spaces women's perspectives and issues that continue to be sited in or shifted back to the margins. While clearly it is important for this to take place in all sites and spaces that we are able to reach, it is especially critical that this takes place in sites where progressive agendas of critique, resistance and reconstruction are central.

### **Negotiating Gender in the Malestream**

"Post-Beijing, DAWN has been active in inter-linking with social movements and male-led NGOs in what we refer to as negotiating gender in the malestream at the global, regional and national levels. DAWN sees increasing intersections of analysis and actual interconnections and collaboration taking place among the movements for economic justice, people-centred social development, and recently for peace, civil liberties and democracy. These have been

heightened by the series of costly contradictions, disasters and crises arising from the various effects and ramifications of the global integration of markets, together with the resulting reactions and counter-reactions by states and the multilateral system to this globalisation process. The domination of societies, communities and peoples by a few transnational

corporations symbolically represented by the "Devos Men" and legitimised by parts of the multilateral system, serves to unite the various fragments of critique from social movements that were once lodged in their distinctive struggles and spheres.

This closing in of social movements has been further consolidated by the rise of a fundamentalist unilateralism as well as of various fundamentalist reactions to globalisation that have interacted to unleash a heightened threat of wars and virulent attacks on democracy and civil liberties even within societies whose people the global and communal wars purportedly wished to protect.

This frontier space of resistance and transformation creates possibilities for locating women's critical perspectives on transformation, and for engaging in contestatory dialogues with progressive forces and excluded peoples worldwide.

Some of the paradoxes include:

- On the one hand feminist critique places us in opposition and resistance to the dogmatic intensification of free trade, while on the other hand we are engaged in a struggle against old and patriarchal notions of statehood and sovereignty in which the citizenship rights of women are severely circumscribed and the control of resources remain in the hands of men.
- While we are resisting the marking of women's bodies and agencies by consumerism and the symbolic control by the capitalist market of the

notion of multiculturalism, we are at the same time opposing the marking and disciplining of women's bodies and agencies by fundamentalist communitarian ideologies and resistance struggles that, just like the state, turn women into motherhood idols and icons.

- Even as we critique and oppose packaged westernised notions of good governance in which the concept of democracy is limited to formal procedures of participation, we are advancing and radicalising the concept of democracy to include feminist perspectives on evolving rights, including sexual and reproductive rights, and citizenships nationally and trans-nationally.
- And as we support the collective right of excluded peoples to self-determination that has been guaranteed as part of civil and political rights, as feminists we are interrogating the oppression of women within groups claiming the right to self-determination, and insisting that this form a part of the validity of their claim and of the form self-determination should take.

In short the struggle of the worldwide women's movement for piecemeal and issue-focused compensatory rights and entitlements can no longer be the central political project of the women's movement. The complexities and paradoxes spawned by globalisation have created a crisis of legitimacy for institutions, for the states, and even for the women's movement as currently constituted. Rather the challenge lies in the capacity of feminist interrogation and activism to produce fresh analyses and critiques that account for the transboundary paradoxes opened up in the current conjuncture, as well as to situate ourselves within the frontier of a people's movement for Another Possible World!"

### Governance and Human Rights

Vivienne Taylor: "The complex power relations and realignments that we observe at global level are mediated in various ways at regional and national levels. In trying to make sense of the paradoxical times and spaces we have been engaging in, DAWN's critical perspectives on globalisation were linked to an analysis of state governance, citizenship, democracy and social movements in 2000 (under the theme of Political Restructuring and Social Transformation).

As we engaged with women in the PR&ST process we noted gains made by the women's movement on women's rights as human rights. We began to interrogate what this meant to the lived experiences of poor women specifically and people generally. Our

analysis found that the rhetoric of rights and democracy masked the continuing violations of women's rights and marginalisation of women.

Across regions of the South we found that the state/government and its role in public provision was being reorganised to support economic and trade liberalisation and that the capacity of the state to provide for its citizens was being eroded. The remodelling of the state, cutbacks of its revenue-earning capacity and privatisation of core public goods and services had major implications in terms of social justice. At a distributional level it reinforced patterns of inequality, squeezing out poor people. Goods and services for human development were being squeezed by global competition, resulting in a fiscal squeeze on public goods, a time squeeze on care activities, and an incentive squeeze on the environment. The actual costs to the economy are being largely borne by women.

The market, instead of being regulated by the state to serve the public interest was actually dictating political and social outcomes. Which identity dominates power relations still needs to be understood.

Since the PR&ST analysis and post-11 September, there is a new urgency in understanding the role of the state and human security. At the same time as states are upholding rights of citizens, what constitutes a national state needs interrogation. As women continue to confront the state, challenge the state, and at times complement the function of the state, we also have a very ambivalent relationship with the state. At the same time as we are engaging with the state, we are finding that we cannot legitimise our own governments at international level because they do not represent the interests we believe are essential for economic justice, gender justice and social justice.

At the global level, we find that the whole arena of government has shifted. We find the emergence of different structures of global governance, governments with partners in civil society and with the private sector. We find increasing formal or functional coalitions across geographical borders and traditional political lines to shift public policy. A new diplomacy is emerging, a diplomacy of the coalition. But how do we begin to engage in a common agenda for a new form of governance that does not shift the objective of women's emancipation; that does not shift objectives to serve the interests of the market instead of the interests of people and human security.

Another issue is the institutionalisation of gender within national governments. What has institutionalisation actually meant? Is it a fundamental



transformation of power? Or has it meant the mainstream containment of women's challenging of the state, the use of women's agency to serve the objectives of markets and governments?

We must also ask the question to what extent having a critical mass of women participating in decision-making fora has actually effected change in terms of social justice and in terms of feminism. We find that in some cases there has been change over a period of time, that micro-level change has occurred through challenges. More women are engaging in feminist projects, analysis of national budgets and a gender budget process. Women need these new skills to engage in paradoxical spaces and paradoxical times."

### At the human rights site

Sonia Correa: "If the focus on women's agency is the guiding principle in reframing the social contract, human rights clearly constitute one strategic location in which this transformation has been taking place and the United Nation necessarily appears as a strategic location. But human rights are more than the UN, they are also a discourse that provides multiple spaces from where women and other actors (excluded or misplaced by the existing social contract - black, ethnic indigenous groups, sexual dissidents) gain individual and collective agency and raise their voices to challenge states and private agents.



In light of this understanding, one of the paradoxes we have experienced during the last decade is that — while market fundamentalism deepened its inroads and effects — we also witnessed clear breakthroughs with respect to human rights. Starting with Vienna this expanded towards other crucial definitions regarding women's human rights, including the acknowledgement that sexuality and reproduction are domains to which human rights can and should be applied. Within that, abortion became a global policy issue, even if this was achieved through a public health frame. This is not trivial, as sexuality and reproduction are the domains in which women's agency is constantly and everywhere constrained. Much was at play that can explain these achievements, especially including the global tragedy of HIV-AIDS that placed sexuality and gender power at the centre of policy debates. But this would never have happened if it was not for women's — and other actors' — political agency. Particularly in relation to sexuality, one important aspect to be underlined is that the discourse is moving away from health and violence rationales to a

perspective of non-discrimination and agency. To understand what this means for potential, prospective re-construction of social contracts, suffice to remember that abortion and homosexuality belong to criminal codes and not civil legal statutes. In addition, if a transformed social contract must provide sustainability for social reproduction and resolve its gender imbalances it is not possible to move into that direction without principles of sexual and reproductive rights. Last but not least, human rights in the domain of sexuality also implies the deconstruction of normative heterosexuality, which is, as we know, one pillar of gender-based power.

It is not therefore surprising that these dimensions have been terrains of political struggle — and that at the UN level, between Cairo in 1994 and Johannesburg a month ago, they also became a battleground. Since the mid-1980's, DAWN has called attention to the resurgence of fundamentalisms world wide and to the fact that transformed women's role was becoming a target for these forces, which in the 1990s and 2000s became really virulent. In global arenas this virulence can be interpreted as a response to "our agency". At the ground level, the growth and violence of these forces are directly related to the outcomes of market-oriented globalisation. At this new stage we face the paradox of watching fundamentalist governments position themselves against globalisation, while at the same time doing their best to attack women's human rights. This is another critical linkage between economic and gender (erotic) justice that is not understood by other progressive forces with which we are engaged in our struggle against globalisation.

In 2001 the Bush administration entered this scene. Even before refusing to ratify the Kyoto protocol it issued the gag rule which restricts funds for NGOs that include abortion on their agenda. This was followed by US policy proposals and funds for the promotion of abstinence; by the exclusion under US pressure of Cairo-Beijing targets in regard to sexual and reproductive rights from the UN Millennium Development Goals; and the systematic blocking of related language in UN documents; not to mention direct attacks on some basic human rights principles in the name of the war against terrorism after 11 September 2001. During the past year, on many occasions I felt myself facing a reality that had somehow escaped from a 1970s feminist text book: a male dominated capitalist empire, motivated by greed, banging the drums of war and lambasting women's

To P6

# Questioning a 5th UN women's conference

*As the debate intensifies over whether there should be another conference for women, DAWN is positioning itself firmly against proceeding with any meeting that involves inter-governmental negotiations because of the serious risks this would pose to gains already made. DAWN feels strongly that these are dangerous times in which to risk agreements reached through earlier UN conferences, as demonstrated in the preparatory processes for ICPD+10 where reproductive rights language is being targeted by the US Government for exclusion (see P2). DAWN proposes the alternative of technical or cluster theme meetings in different parts of the world that will include an assessment of implementation of the Beijing Programme of Action in order to improve the process.*

Speaking at a panel on "The Great Debate: do UN conferences benefit women?" at the AWID Forum chaired by Zonny Woods (Director ACPD), DAWN's Sonia Correa, a veteran lobbyist at ICPD, Beijing and the +5 review conferences, spoke of the gains achieved through the conferences in human rights for women in reproduction and sexuality, and in legitimising of gender. There was also the important matter of women learning how to understand and handle geopolitical forces at play in the UN arena and to analyse their strategies. On many occasions, in Cairo and Beijing, feminists have been involved in difficult efforts to build bridges between North and South so as to achieve agreements with respect to gender equality. These have not been trivial

experiences. They involved critical learning with respect to the functioning of the global governance system, in which the United Nations is a key piece.

She reminded everyone that apart from the gains, there were also many obstacles. They included the opposition of regressive forces to consensus, but more importantly many limits in terms of implementation of commitments made by governments in the conferences. These limits often derived from absence of political will, but they were also directly related to lack of resources within the neo-liberal economic model adopted by most countries, that usually privileged fiscal stringency to the detriment of investments in social sectors.

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agency in sexuality and reproduction. One advantage of a decentred and combined feminist frame of analyses and action is that it adds complexity to this picture and helps us overcome the paralysis that arises from it. We are clearly experiencing a "trench position". But through a decentred lens we can see that it is urgent to openly name, face and directly confront this terrifying geopolitical reality, while at the same time identifying other sites from where this reality is being or can be countervailed. This means identifying disjunctures and paradoxes, not merely as an analytical exercise but to find paths that can enable us to move strategically from one place to another in order to act or regain force.

This decentred and flexible lens is vital to sustain our vision and agenda in all areas, particularly in regard to sexuality and reproduction, which belong to the daily endeavours of women's agency. This is not simply a blind drifting looking for positive signs to appease our anxieties, but a permanent exercise of strategic re-positioning that requires political clarity

and sharp principles of transformation that can take us beyond the current trenches.

New research and a new thinking through of the relationship between gender, the environment and development is required to be able to come up with ideas for a new social contract. The pillars of a new social contract should include:

- A focus on protecting social reproduction. The care/reproductive economy is the domain of women due to unequal gender relations and division of labour, asymmetries in voice, access to resources, rights and responsibilities. The costs and time burden of social reproduction should be shared by men, women, households and public funds.
- In order to safeguard social and environmental reproduction, the precautionary principle should be integrated in all areas of governance including those such as toxics, policy projects such as PRSPs, health sector reforms, infrastructure and other development projects." 

Recognition of these limitations led women's organisations to understand that it was not enough for women to go to the UN, they had also to take their struggle to sites such as the World Trade Organisation, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. There had also been dramatic changes in the political and policy climate within and outside the UN.

"In earlier years the UN was wide open, women's agenda was highly valued, governments themselves were more open. But from 1995, negotiations at the UN became increasingly problematic as a result of the reaction of conservative forces, some of which have been brutal. In Cairo+5 and Beijing+5, deliberate efforts were made to destroy the agreements adopted in 1994 and 1995. After 2001, under the Bush administration, the United States openly allied with the Vatican and other conservative forces, such as the Islamic countries that are otherwise their adversaries or enemies. The current global political climate clearly places the women's agenda at risk at the United Nations level and this should caution us against another UN negotiation on gender issues in the short term.

"However, I do not think that the recognition of these difficulties should make us move into an open and harsh criticism of the UN. Let us remember, among other things, that such a discourse may simply add grist to the mill of those forces that consider the UN useless and ineffective. I do not think that in the current global geopolitical scenario we, the feminists, would like to see the UN simply disappear. To the contrary, I am convinced that in these challenging times we must push strongly for more multilateralism, for more democracy and effectiveness, not just in the UN but also in the WTO and other global governance bodies. The challenge to the women's movement is therefore to move beyond a frame that asks "what can we take from the UN?" towards the construction of our own vision of global governance.

What are our proposals for a global system of governance than can guarantee economic and social justice, as well as gender justice? In saying that a new negotiation on gender issues should not be devised for the next few years, I am not suggesting that nothing is to be done with respect to the contents of the Beijing Platform of Action. In fact, we also face the great

challenge of reaching consensus amongst ourselves and moving forward towards a new and creative strategy to properly assess implementation at global, regional and national levels. Women's organisations must call on institutions and governments and tell them what we think should be done to evaluate both achievements and bottlenecks of Beijing implementation. I would say that the stakes are currently much more in our hands than in the hands of governmental and intergovernmental institutions. It is up to us to say what we want."

AWID has subsequently opened an on-line continuation of the debate on whether or not a 5th UN World Conference on Women should be held. Those who wish to join in can subscribe through [lists@awid.org](mailto:lists@awid.org), leaving the subject line blank and writing "subscribe 5worldconferencewomen" (without quotes) in the text of the message.

Other panellists, including Lydia Alpizar Elige of the Mexico Youth Network on Reproductive and Sexual Rights, Francoise Girard of the International Women's Health

Coalition, Susana Fried, and Hilkka Pietila also spoke of the important gains women had obtained from UN conferences and the need to work with national governments for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of commitments. Several of them talked too of the enormous risks to these gains if they met at UN level, and suggested other ways for women to engage with the UN and to get together that would generate ideas without the risks. Women had been unable to make advances on Beijing+5 and there was a feeling that the UN women's conference process had run its course in that particular format and was unable to address some of the current issues.

Other feminist voices have added to the debate, a wide range of opinions appearing in a discussion forum on the WIDE website, [www.eurosur.org/wide/](http://www.eurosur.org/wide/) which states that there is no clear consensus from the women's movement to support another high level UN conference on women in 2005. Some voices have expressed concern that there is a backlash against women that could lead to an erosion of position and that any conference should be postponed until better global conditions exist, while others say they would support a conference if women in the developing world wanted it. Maria Suarez from FIRE (Feminist International Radio Endeavour), has promoted a proposal for a women's conference about the state of the world, convened and organised by the women's movement independently from the UN and other institutions.

Only the Government of Finland is so far supporting the idea of a 5th conference. 🌸

# BEYOND ADVOCACY: Challenging globalisation



*DAWN's Bene Madunagu was invited to speak in the opening plenary session of the AWID Forum on the theme Re-Inventing Globalisation.*

"The current deteriorating levels of poverty, violence against women, gender discrimination and injustices, male dominance and power in interpersonal relationships and other forms of inequalities between women and men, within nations and among nations, have been the results of failure to invest in social development. Globalisation lays emphasis on economic growth for the South and conspicuous consumption for the North through the market system of governance.

The fundamental goal of globalisation is to lay the ground for total domination of the world economy by giant multinational corporations and international financial speculators. Its essence is the promotion of unfettered capital movement, the removal of protection for local industries, maximum deregulation of labour markets, the privatisation of economic and social activities where the state still has a stake, and the adoption of global free trade and open market competition. For the pursuit of these objectives, state controls and intervention have to be destroyed - the phenomenon now described as the weakening of the state. This marketisation of governance results in the partial or total privatisation of public services such as health, education and transportation, and public utilities such as electricity and water supplies. The immediate impact of this is the increased unequal distribution of income and fewer opportunities for women in particular.

In the 1980's, many countries of the South experimented with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund prescription of Structural Adjustment Programmes that started the current erosion of human well being throughout almost all the Southern hemisphere. SAPs came into existence within the socio-political context of patriarchy, neo-colonial globalisation, new forms of imperialism and capitalist exploitation that already placed women at huge social disadvantage.

Furthermore, in the aftermath of the independence of African countries in the second half of the 20th century, former colonialists designed subtle but vicious policies through the World Bank and IMF to tighten their political and economic control

over their former territories and resources. They also maintained linguistic imperialism through colonial languages that continue to pose challenges to the solidarity of African feminists. In addition, new forms of religious fanaticism are being introduced, financed and marketed widely in poor communities under the cloak of globalisation to sedate people against drives for critical consciousness and resistance.

American President George W. Bush's version of globalisation appears to be a war against women and the poor. The neo-Bushian ideology of terrorphobia, of repressive international policies, has turned the gains of Vienna 1993, Cairo 1994, Beijing 1995 and the +5 reviews upside down.

Women do not form a homogenous group just as men don't. But they are united by the exploitation that all women suffer in the capitalist, neo-liberal, post-modernist, process of globalisation on the basis of being female. This gives them the right to collectively develop strategies against gender discrimination, exploitation and poverty. Women have come a long way with innovative and creative strategies to break out of sexist, patriarchal clutches. What seem to be lacking are radical criticism, challenge and confrontation of the status quo.

It seems to me that feminist response to globalisation needs to go beyond advocacy, lobbying and partnership into radical or even revolutionary challenges if there is to be substantive, substantial social advancement, sustainable human development, social and gender justice. Feminists have made gains in global policy within the past decade, but the architects of globalisation have no intention of implementing such policies. It therefore becomes clear that the only effective alternative is in redirecting our energies and working along with our allies to create popular democratic models of development oriented towards peoples' wellbeing, with gender justice and social justice informing policies. Feminists have no option but to apply their force consciously for radical and fundamental social, political and economic changes, and not just reformist palliatives. The key to re-inventing globalisation lies in radical popular democracy." 🌸



*The statement by Ewa Charkiewicz, DAWN Coordinator for Sustainable Livelihoods, on behalf of the Women's Caucus at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, 2 September 2002.*



## Sustaining free trade or sustainable livelihoods?

The governmental delegation gathered at the WSSD should be discussing the follow up on Agenda 21. What we actually get is sustainable development redefined as sustainable free trade. The Johannesburg Agenda promotes unfettered inequitable globalisation. Neo-liberal globalisation is colonialism by new means.

Agenda 21 married environment and development; promised to eradicate poverty and to change consumption and production patterns; established common but differentiated responsibilities; legitimised precautionary measures, the citizens' right to know and to participate in decision making; and reaffirmed the rights of women and their role in sustainable development. It contained lists of actions that governments, international organisations and major groups would have to undertake to move to sustainable development. It provided cost estimates for these actions. Agenda 21 was not without weaknesses, but it set out a framework for transition to a more fair globalisation. This framework was based on recognising social as well as ecological limits to economic growth. After Johannesburg, sustainable development will no longer be an alternative framework.

Given how negotiations proceed, the discussion on sustainable development has been re-crafted into debating trade and hedging positions for the next WTO ministerial in Cancun. The debate is not about sustainable development, it is about who controls developing countries' markets, and who gets a larger piece of the global cake.

Much is said on poverty reduction (no one talks of poverty eradication any more) but the only solution proposed to poverty and environmental degradation is more trade liberalisation on current terms, and more market access. Partnerships are promoted without discussing accountability and rights. In this form private/public partnerships will lead to further privatisation of the state and whatever remains of global and local commons. The precautionary principle and the principle of common and differentiated responsibilities that all governments signed up to in Rio are passé. Paragraph 47 on health promotes traditional healing practices (read: female genital mutilation), and religious values (read: stoning of women in Iran or Nigeria, denial of abortion in cases of incest or rape by the Catholic Church in Poland, or terrorist attacks on abortion clinics in the USA). Human rights, including women's human and reproductive rights are not addressed.

Women have come to the UN conference with sincere missions to assure a rights-based approach to sustainable development; to lobby for a binding agreement on corporate responsibility and accountability; to lobby for cancellation of developing countries' debt and recognition of the ecological debt; to make sure trade agreements are compatible with sustainable development; to get a fairer deal for developing countries; to get rid of dirty subsidies; to promote fair trade; and to lobby for shifting resources from military purposes to sustainable development. Our goals are to promote peace, safeguard the environment, obtain economic and gender justice, ascertain human rights, including women's reproductive rights, work for accountable and rights-based partnerships, and promote changing consumption and production patterns as a way out of poverty and a means for safeguarding the environment.

Women's organisations strongly disagree and warn about the effects of dismantling the social and ecological basis of sustainable development. Sustainable development is not about sustaining free trade and inequitable, unfair globalisation. It is about participatory governance, and recognition of rights and responsibilities; it is about sustainable livelihoods and a living planet.

We need a Johannesburg Plan of Action that builds on Agenda 21. We need to promote alternative policy frameworks, as well as local alternatives such as local sustainable production and consumption systems, and local markets. Sustainable production and consumption is not only the way to safeguard the environment but also a way to prevent poverty by keeping control of resources within local communities. Both alternative policy frameworks and community alternatives need to place greater value on women's caring and reproductive work and take into account health and safety issues, in particular women's reproductive health and rights. Gender equality is not only the business of women. On the road to sustainable alternatives, women need as partners caring ecological men committed to gender equality, and governments with the political will to make the necessary changes. 🌸

*The Women's Caucus was struggling for a re-wording of Paragraph 47 in the Johannesburg document and sought a meeting with the G77, EU, and the US if the harm done to women in the paragraph was not reversed. Ultimately, this 11th-hour battle was won with the inclusion of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the wording of Paragraph 47.*

## FROM DOHA TO CANCUN

*Gigi Francisco of DAWN and the International Gender and Trade Network reported on the WTO at a workshop on Giving Ourselves a Voice: Taking on the WTO at the AWID Forum:*

From a feminist perspective the WTO trade regime is one in which global corporate capital is enabled to move, accumulate and reproduce around the world. An inherent element of this process is not only capital's sustained exploitation of men's and women's labour — it is also that capital extracts profit from the externalisation of environmental costs as well as its externalisation of the costs of social reproduction, to households and to national budgets.

The speeding up of profit generation stands as the reason for our increasingly threatened life world. The WTO trade rules are aimed at removing all regulations and barriers so that companies can make fast profits. It is also breaking down environmental protection which is seen as a barrier to trade. Social protection is likewise eroded and people, particularly women, are asked to assume care from the market, at their own cost. With an increasingly globalised world, companies compete with each other by moving and accumulating capital faster in such a way that environmental and human reproduction are increasingly jeopardised.

### Advocacy towards Cancun

The WTO Ministerial meeting in Doha in November 2001 was a point for consolidation of the WTO. It put the WTO back on the road of “business as usual”, from which it had been momentarily derailed in Seattle. Doha enabled the WTO to re-assert the supremacy of the global market based on free trade over international development issues and to align these – financing poverty eradication (ODA), achieving sustainable development, and managing debt and financial markets — with the requirements of free trade.

Three reasons account for this consolidation in Doha.

The first is the context. It was at a time just after 9/11 when developing countries were being told by the rich countries, the USA in particular, that if countries did not get together there would be not only anarchy, but also war. It was at the time when US President Bush was speaking with presidents and prime ministers from developing countries at the United Nations. It also took place one week after the USA dangled the passage of the African Growth and Opportunity Act in front of African trade ministers who were invited to Washington enroute to Doha.

The second reason is that the European Union went to Doha dangling the concept of a “development round” that is pegged on a single message: “we can (still) make free trade work for the poor”. A part of this development round is the expansion of WTO rules to include new issues: government procurement, competition policy, investments. Together with Agriculture, TRIMs, TRIPS and GATS, these would complete the elements for global regulation of the free trade regime. At the conclusion of the Doha negotiations, it was agreed that at the next Ministerial meeting a consensus would be reached regarding the modalities on these new issues.

The final reason has to do with the fact that the EU, USA and other rich countries, together with the WTO secretariat, put all pressure possible on country negotiators to agree to their proposals.

The next WTO Ministerial Meeting takes place in Cancun and social movements have vowed to stop it from reaching an agreement on the new issues. Why?

- ◇ There continue to be unresolved issues within the WTO, e.g. AoA, TRIPS, TRIMs, GATS.
- ◇ Implementation issues related to committed schedules for tariff reduction lodged by developing countries remain unaddressed.
- ◇ The negotiation process remains undemocratic, rules remain skewed against the interests of developing countries, and double standards are blatantly practiced by developed countries.
- ◇ Evidence of increased doubts on the promised growth through trade liberalisation for developing countries.

For these and other more specific concerns, the position on the WTO is to reduce, regulate and resist! 🌞

# Naming the real alternatives

*Gigi Francisco gave this paper at a panel on Naming the Real Economic Policy Alternatives at the recent AWID Forum in Mexico. It is based on earlier presentations by Marina Durano, also of DAWN-South East Asia, at the Asian Social Movements Meeting in Bangkok, 10-12 August 2002 and the Social Watch Strategy Meeting in Morocco, 20-22 June 2002; and paper published as the WIDE Information Sheet, August 2002.*

Together with other women's groups and social movements in the region, we are continually monitoring developments on new trade and investment rules in national, bilateral, regional and international arenas. Through our links with the International Gender and Trade Network, we have conducted small-scale studies on the impact on women's work in both the productive and social reproductive spheres of trade and investments liberalisation.

*What informs our analysis and advocacy on trade and investments?*

1. There is greater uncertainty over the prediction and management of economic instability that has devastating consequences for under-resourced developing governments.

The hyper-mobility of finance capital has led to an increase in economic instability where growth and recession cycles come in greater frequency and wider amplitudes. In addition, economies and peoples in one region are not immune from crises experienced in another part of the world. One can imagine an earthquake in one part of the world is experienced as a tsunami (a very large tidal wave) in another part engulfing entire islands. By and large, developing countries have had extreme difficulty insuring the real economy against finance and monetary risks.

2. There is a global shift from a manufacturing-led economy to a services-led economy that is marked by inequality between developed and developing countries.

In developed economies and newly industrialised economies, we are seeing a shift in their industrial and employment structure from manufacturing to services mainly due to technological advances and ever-increasing specialisation. Such a process is also taking place in many parts of the developing world where employment trends show a decrease in manufacturing and an increase in the services sector. The decline can be traced to greater importation brought on by trade liberalisation.

The new services sector in the developing world is markedly different from the character of the services sector in the developed countries. The new jobs in the services sector are more similar to the lost jobs in the

declining manufacturing sector – these are low skilled and low waged jobs that predominantly women fill. Even in developed countries the new services industry has spawned a chain of service-providers that mainly employ migrant women's cheap labour in the informal market.

3. Foreign direct investment is linked to the increased use of global production chains as a production strategy by transnational companies.

Export-oriented manufacturing has been linked to the carving out of enclave production zones in many parts of the developing world, together with flexibilisation and home-based work. Both areas of production use women as the main labour force.

Much of trade today is a trade of intermediate products where components produced in one country are traded with another for further processing or assembly. Intra-firm trading, as this is called, is made possible by location choices made by foreign direct investments.

4. There are increased tensions at the divide of the productive and socially reproductive spheres that women straddle.

Where tradition has dictated that women fulfil their caring responsibilities in the household, the nature of the production process has forced many women out of this role. At the same time, neo-liberalism has imposed privatisation and liberalisation of the provision of services. Thus as women are enticed to join the labour force, women are at the same time, being asked to assume services as part of their out-of-pocket expenses.

Adding to this is the rise in market participation of women that has not found a corresponding rise in the non-market participation of men. Our societies today have only two choices in supporting social reproduction: to continue to rely on unpaid women's work in the household, or to leave caring functions to the market. For DAWN, this is not much of a choice and DAWN sees the alternative as lying in the governance of the market. We differ from the multilaterals' conception of governance that is seeking guarantees for the more efficient functioning of the



# Cartagena Feminist Initiative in Guadalajara

*In search of an alternative development paradigm: feminist proposals from Latin America', was a panel organised by the Cartagena Feminist Initiative members at the AWID Forum.*

Speakers said that Latin America was in crisis, that growth was not enough, inequalities had to be addressed, and a more balanced means of generating and distributing wealth developed. People needed economic democracy to generate enough income for a decent lifestyle.

Cecilia Lopez Montano said the region had suffered the terrible consequences of macroeconomic populism and that the Washington Consensus represented a technocrat-for-technocrat-made recipe. Key elements for a new paradigm included accepting the failure of some policies and recovering the right to make mistakes. It also required recognising the advantages of other development models and realising the need for a new form of capitalism. Countries needed general guidelines that could respond to world reality, rather than a single model.

Alma Espino described the Financing for Development conference as a complete failure in relation to moves to reduce poverty and integrate

developing countries into the global economy. There remained a lack of intent to improve availability of resources and commit to improved market access, and a lack of capital regulation mechanisms that would allow flexibility in the types of economic policies adopted by different countries. South American economies had deteriorated, the political systems were made more vulnerable and the democracies more fragile. The imbalances between countries in the region had to be considered in any proposals to make the continent more viable. It was not only the differences between the wealthy and the poor, but also gender discrimination and related forms of discrimination (e.g. racial and religious), which could undermine policies. The region either grew with equity, or it did not grow.

Rosalba Todaro tackled the crisis in normal labour patterns. She said the broadening of atypical employment since the 1970s amplified the gap between norm and reality. The institutional

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market and the operations of companies. Our conception of governance over the market is pulled by a desire to put in place a more socially-oriented macroeconomic policy package. Some elements are:

### *At national-level*

1. Participatory social and gender budgets based on a progressive and re-distributive asset and income taxation system. (Putting resources in the command of women)
2. Employment-protective monetary policy (keep interest rates low to make credit more affordable and, hence, encourage domestic investment). Implementation of demand-management policies that support the removal of supply-side constraints to production.
3. Reconsideration of protectionist industrialisation that promotes greater linkages between agriculture and manufacturing, to strengthen the domestic market.
4. Remove subsidies to capital and transfer these to the social sector.


### *At global level*

1. Reduce the role of the WTO and expose the double

standard being applied by developed countries on the developing countries.

2. Serious consideration of the Precautionary Principle in trade and investments to protect the erosion of people's access to social reproductive resources.
3. Serious pursuit of a global currency transaction tax as a source of financing for poverty eradication.
4. More radical and thorough-going debt reprieve.

In the end, the regulation of run-away liberalisation at both national and global levels will demand a radical democratisation of all forms of power and disciplines that are in the hands of elites. It will require, as well, the transformation of rigid institutions that have dictated the assignment of caring functions solely to women. Without serious attention to the institutions that perpetuate the unequal division of labour between women and men, economic policy will always fail women. In the worst cases, these policies will use women to run production and to socially care for future generations of low-paid workers.

Finally, securing our place in the resistance movement against unfettered accumulation and blind legitimisation of a system (particularly in property rights) that compromises people's well-being, is our way forward. 

*The Cartagena Feminist Initiative panel in Guadalajara, from left, Alejandra Scampini of DAWN/REPEM Uruguay, Norma Sanchis of Argentina, Ana Falu of UNIFEM Argentina, Cecilia Lopez of Colombia, Alma Espino of Ecuador, and Rosalba Todaro of Ecuador.*



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standard system to regulate and protect labour was losing its capacity and ruled over only some groups of workers. There were important changes in gender relationships linked to economic needs of families that were interrelated with financial crisis, marketisation of public services, employment insecurity and instability, and also with changes in the expectations of women and their questioning of traditional divisions of labour. There was a need to re-regulate working relations and social protection according to the new forms of organisation of labour and new gender relations, while recognising not all could be reduced to paid work but had to include a whole range of activities. The working institutions required for the new forms of labour would be the result of a new social contract to be constructed. There was currently an imbalance of power amongst the different actors who should be involved that needed to be overcome to achieve construction of new regulations.

External debt, trade and equity were discussed by Norma Sanchis, who said the advice of experts in the 1990s to link growth, competition and equity, and to develop policies to absorb informal work and marginalisation, had been progressively disregarded. Instead, trends developed in the 1990s still contributed to characterising the Latin American region as one of the most unequal in the world. The region's debt was greater than 20 years ago, despite having paid back five times the value of

the original debt. Asymmetry between countries was revealed also in international trade, in which mechanisms of exchange-related negotiations analysis often left aside the dimension of power. Growth itself was insufficient; institutions that promoted social and gender equity were needed.

The Cartagena Feminist Initiative held an evaluation meeting in Guadalajara just prior to the AWID Forum, at which members expressed their intention to continue working together. They reviewed their activities throughout the FfD process and beyond, the creation of an e-group coordinated by REPEM and translations of documents in English and Spanish. The CFI identified its mission as promoting critical analysis of the current economic paradigm and advancing an alternative feminist development perspective with a view to the reconstruction of Latin America. A current objective is to publish a book with a political economy perspective that considers gender as a key element for economic sustainability and social justice. A number of DAWN representatives also in Guadalajara for the AWID Forum participated in a session of the CFI meeting. The CFI developed from a seminar organised by DAWN and REPEM in coordination with UNIFEM in July 2001 as part of preparations for FfD. 🌻

*DAWN-SEA Regional Coordinator, Gigi Francisco, gave two papers at the ASEM4 People's Forum in Copenhagen, 19-20 September 2002. Here are highlights from both papers (P14-15) - the full papers are on the DAWN web site.*

## Towards a world where human dignity and sustainable life reign

While we will have no problem accepting the principle of human rights, we will nevertheless fail to reach complete agreement on what this means. The disagreement spans both the vertical and horizontal reach of international law and is beyond this forum to reconcile.

### Human rights in retreat

We know only too well the controversies surrounding international human rights, in particular challenges to its universal character and applicability. The real political project of imposing a universal culture is taking place not on the human rights front, however. Rather a universal moral, political and social order is being instituted based on the logic of free trade combined with the notion of righteous militarism.

Ever since we first heard of globalisation and the benefits of growth and prosperity that it purportedly holds for developing countries, the international community has been constantly privileging the requisites of international trade and capital above all other values and duties.

We are seeing how human rights have clearly taken a back seat to other indeterminate 'rights' - the right of corporations, the right of the state, even the right of pre-emptive attack by a righteous force to annihilate evil. More than ever, people of the non western world have every reason to believe that the notion of 'rights' and the 'rights' language in general have been used indiscriminately by the west to justify ends to their pernicious interests.

This is where the real project of instituting a universal culture lies. It is in the political project of putting in place an international order that follows the logic of the free market framed by a single set of valid rules that are enforceable effectively and efficiently across all cultures and nations.

### The rights approach to development

A seemingly counter universal logic emanating from global institutions, principally the United Nations and its attached agencies, is the rights approach to development. The central idea of this logic is that poverty is incompatible with human dignity and if not substantially minimised or altogether eradicated, will

continue to undermine the validity of claims to the universal good that a global free market brings to all cultures and societies. Hence, the shift in the UN language of 'needs' to that of 'rights', 'freedoms' and 'entitlements'.

The task is daunting and marred by a number of challenges. The first and perhaps the most critical one is that the UN must undertake a major global effort at truly and effectively instituting human rights as a universal point of reference of all actors in development. As it is, however, the rights approach to development does not constitute a real alternative to the logic of neoliberal or corporate-led globalisation. Rather the rights approach has been packaged and promoted as a built-in mechanism for the self-regulation of the forces of globalisation. It is not intended to be a substitute for corporate-led globalisation.

Relatedly, siting human rights at the center of global reference will also mean undertaking a period of debates aimed at what legal pundit Pannikar insists on - i.e. the identification of the trans-cultural elements of what may indeed constitute the specificities of a set of values and standards acceptable / common to all peoples in these contemporary times.

This effort would necessitate mustering enough political will at the global level, co-determined by all of the states in the United Nations and by non-state actors such as civil society organisations, including the international women's movement, the peace movement, the indigenous people's movement, the workers' movement and so on. Indeed a difficult political project to launch, given the current preoccupation of states on security issues and what economist Dani Rodrick describes as the mind-boggling fixation on trade intensification among developing country governments.

### Asia and Europe

Asia and Europe do not have to wait for the United Nations to embark on a worldwide debate on the rights approach to development. We need to begin several processes and stimulate various sites where we can further promote the debate on these issues in

## A deafening silence on women's human rights

The emergence of women's rights within the rubric of human rights came much later in the body of rights as a corrective measure to the gendered character of early human rights conventions.

Moreover when the 'collective' right to self-determination was guaranteed as part of civil and political rights, another layer of invisibilisation of women's experiences and realities was instituted.

Human rights are not just a matter of language and rules; they are embedded in institutions, processes and organisations. At the international level, states that are mostly governed by men – and even when governed by women are nonetheless constructed along masculinist lines – are important actors in the determination of what constitutes human rights. The emergence of contemporary Asian women presidents or prime ministers or of women candidates for public positions may be traced, by and large, to filial duty, clan loyalty and wifely devotion, rather than to women's personal agency and assertion of a right or of freedom of choice.

The role of non governmental organisations in the human rights movement cannot be overemphasized. While there has been honest persistence within the human rights movement to account for women's human rights, this has been fraught with dilemmas. The rhetoric of the indivisibility of human rights that reverberates within the human rights movement has not effectively transformed the "pick and choose" approach to the menu of rights that NGOs working on human rights issues have often fallen back on.

Even within the intense challenge lodged against the individualism of Anglo-Saxon rights as well as against the paternalism of northern-based organisations, which is being pushed forward by human rights progressives and social movement activists from the south, the silence on women's human rights, unfortunately, remains deafening.

Finally, the judicial system plays an important part in ensuring that human rights, women's rights included, are implemented. A litany of cases from both South and Southeast Asia have illustrated how judges sitting in court to hear rape cases have prejudged matters on the basis of subjective constructions of a woman's propriety or inpropriety.

*Women's rights in the period of the global war against terror*

The global war against terror where the hegemonic rhetoric of 'good and evil' predominates


is a dangerous business for all of us. The tightening of the security lid is bad for the human rights of all women and men in general.

Another point is that the war on terror has resulted in an over-valorization of cultural identities in this period. I submit that this has had a more insidious trampling effect on Asian women's human rights whether the women are positioned in their home countries, in their liberated areas, in their particular struggles for social justice, or overseas as migrants and refugees.

With culture as the primary overarching identity that is presented as a contest of but two types – the "good" and the "evil", there are two processes that affect Asians that are simultaneously promoted. One is the privileging of religious beliefs and age-old customary laws and practices as a basis for the consolidation of difference that is emphasized as a trajectory for resistance and self determination. Women's differentiated position, rights and duties, including their historical subordination to masculine authority or the control of women's reproduction and sexuality by males and the religious, tend to be idealised as part and parcel of an alternative, more egalitarian and communitarian system.

The other is similar to what has been referred to as the "whitening process" among European immigrants in the United States, in which Asians find ourselves uncritically echoing the voice of the hegemon, in an effort to be identified as being part of the "good forces of nature". Proponents of international women's human rights in Asia, in fact, have come under subtle but intensified criticisms from some sections of the mass-based social movements as having swallowed 'hook, line and sinker' western notions of women's equality and with it, the political project of neo-liberalist globalization.

The age-old tension within the women's movement that historically has had a north-south profile has been transposed into the south where heightened debates have been stimulated by the patriarchal project of a global war on terror that has superimposed and politically constructed a tension between two polarities of women's representations and voices (a center/periphery dichotomy).

It is only through a critical interrogation of the intersections of women's rights, identities and power can we move forward in siting women's human rights in our current broad-based struggle against neo-liberal globalization and militarism.  *Gigi Francisco*

## BAD FAITH AT THE UN - and a tribute to Mary Robinson

The non-renewal of Mary Robinson's term as UN Human Rights Commissioner and the appointment of her successor appears to reveal rather strange goings-on at the UN and the over-weening power of the United States. As we see it, the sequence was this:

DAWN was alerted in March by a Human Rights Watch circular forwarded by the IWTC that the UN Human Rights Commissioner was a target of the US, saying that Mary Robinson had "paid a price for her willingness to stand up to powerful governments that violate human rights" and had "set a standard of candour and strength for future High Commissioners." DAWN responded immediately with a letter to Mary Robinson on 22 March that said: *"We add our voices to the chorus of disappointment that you will not be continuing as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Over the years we have followed with interest and admiration the exemplary way in which you have undertaken your duties and raised the profile of human rights and of women. We are proud of you and wish you all the very best for the continuing 'good fight' that lies ahead."*

Magaly Pazello of DAWN Brazil then wrote an article which we published on our website in late March (and printed in the *DAWN Informs* May 2002) anticipating the appointment of a UN career diplomat from Brazil, Sergio Vieira de Mello, to replace Mary Robinson. Her article connected the case of a Nigerian woman sentenced to death by stoning with strong United States pressure against the reappointment of Mary Robinson and for the removal of a Brazilian diplomat from the United Nations commission that controls weapons inspections. The three seemingly unconnected

matters exposed serious contradictions at play in global politics relating to human rights and the atmosphere in the UN after the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001. Her analysis and predictions would prove accurate.

Meanwhile on 19 June, IWTC sent a note asking for support for Judge Navanethem Pillay, President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and a South African with a long history of struggle for human rights, for her candidacy for the post of High Commissioner when Robinson stepped down. DAWN faxed a letter to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on 24 June strongly supporting Judge Pillay, and received a response the next day from the Chef de Cabinet, S. Iqbal Riza, thanking DAWN and saying that Judge Pillay's candidature would be "reviewed carefully" along with those of other nominated candidates. "The candidates are remarkable and present the Secretary-General with opportunity and challenge in further narrowing the field." The field, however, appeared to have been long ago narrowed to one in a seemingly successful "collusion" amongst at least the US Government, Brazil Government and the UN. It was a *fait accompli*.


As predicted in Magaly Pazello's article, Brazil's Ambassador Bustani was removed from OPAQ, ostensibly for financial mismanagement although the core of the conflict was believed to lie in US disagreements with his approach in dealing with Iraq. Also as predicted, Brazilian de Mello was named in July as successor to Mary Robinson.

Sergio Vieira de Mello, with a 33-year UN career, is respected for his work as head of recent UN missions to East Timor and Kosovo and his quietly effective closed-door diplomacy, but is thought to lack hands-on human rights experience and the assertiveness of his predecessor. It is unfortunate that his appointment is perceived as a trade-off for Bustani's removal and is evidence of the growing disregard of multilateralism and participatory democracy.

Mary Robinson frequently played a critical role in reminding governments and others that human rights include sexual and reproductive rights, such as those that were brought under threat when Nigerian Safiya Hussaini was given the death sentence for adultery under the Islamic code of Sharia.

High Commissioner Robinson called for prosecutions for death squads and war crimes in Guatemala, Sierra Leone and East Timor, but also spoke strongly about the treatment of refugees in places like

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order to put substance to the rhetoric of a rights approach to development. The ASEM People's Forum can be one such institutional mechanism and site for doing so. Outside of institutional sites where the interests of states tend to predominate, social movements joined by ordinary people everywhere have launched our own people's initiatives toward a definition of Another Possible World - a world where people are at the center of development and where the dignity of persons wherever they are found is pivotally situated in a vision of a just social order. Leaders in both Asia and Europe and from the rest of the world for that matter need to listen to the voices of citizens gathered at the World Social Forums. We are inter-connecting, deepening the debates, finding convergences, enlarging the platform and increasing our numbers for resistance and re-construction. The social movements, trade unions and progressive peoples in this global movement for Another World is Possible are showing the way. The time has come for the enlightened leaders to be on the side of the people and on the side of a more secure future where human dignity and sustainable life reign. 



Italy, Denmark and Australia, treatment of religious and political dissidents in China, and Russia's conduct in Chechnya, she refused to operate under double standards.

She also spoke out against the death penalty in the United States and the US rejection of the international treaty establishing the International Criminal Court, and drew US criticism of her handling of the UN conference on racism. But it was her insistent questioning on aspects of the US war on terrorism after 11 September 2001 that completely soured the United States. She continued to decry the erosion of civil liberties in the name of combating terrorism.

*One of Mary Robinson's final assignments as Human Rights Commissioner was to address the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, 26 August - 4 September 2002. DAWN publishes these highlights from that address as a tribute to her:*

"A human rights approach is being increasingly adopted by development agencies and donors as well as in development work. This was reflected in the Human Development Report 2000 that stated poverty eradication was a major human rights challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Recognition of the linkage between democracy and development has led to the emphasis on building democratic institutions, the rule of law and effective legal systems that function to protect the human rights of all without discrimination.

The human rights approach to sustainable development adds value because it provides a normative framework of obligations that has the legal power to render governments accountable. The human rights approach is focused on the individual, seeing poverty in terms of the individual's right to food, clean water, shelter, health and access to work opportunity. Empowerment of the poor flows from the recognition that they experience the non-fulfilment of their rights. The point of poverty reduction strategies is not only that the poor have needs, but is based on their rights as entitlements that give rise to legal obligations on the part of others and guarantees them their freedom to pursue the fulfilment of their rights.

A further contribution to sustainable development comes from the international and national human rights protection systems. Beyond the rhetoric, this international machinery is quietly working away with the cooperation of States and civil societies to advance human rights and sustainable development.


At national level the protection system embraces not only the courts but an array of other bodies. These systems have reached a considerable maturity in both the analysis of the components of all rights and in identifying what constitutes their violation, and what action needs to be taken to remedy violations. The human rights approach is concerned to focus not only on violation but also on prevention, which is a major part of the OHCHR work.

The next stage in pursuing sustainable development should be integration of human rights into the Millennium Development Goals. This could be best achieved through the drafting of human rights guidelines for the implementation of each development goal. This can be illustrated by current OHCHR work on one of the Millennium goals, poverty reduction. The guidelines are developed from an analysis of human rights treaty provisions; the jurisprudence of the human rights treaty bodies, including their general comments and concluding observations; the findings and evaluations of special rapporteurs, and other human rights experts, including their identification of best practices. Such guidelines would help strengthen the rights based approach and place the individual at the centre of sustainable development efforts.

The Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 did not contain many explicit references to human rights. Nor did the 1933 Vienna Human Rights Conference contain many references to the environment. The Rio summit in retrospect may have placed too much emphasis on environmental sustainability without regard to the human dimension, while the Vienna conference may be faulted for having placed too little. But it is a positive gain to note that in the decade since Rio, there has been continuous progress in bringing together the human and environmental dimensions with the concept of sustainable development.

An example of that progress was the Expert Seminar convened by my Office and the UN Environment Programme in Geneva in January 2002. Reading the conclusions it is striking how at every level, international, regional and national – there is a greater nexus between human rights and environmental themes, especially when considered in the context of sustainable development.

At international level a number of important human rights treaties take into account the environmental dimensions of human rights. At regional level a number of instruments have addressed the linkages, including the 1998 Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental matters. It is at the national level some of the most striking developments have taken place, with the right to a healthy environment formally recognised in over 90 national constitutions enacted since 1992.

I would identify the prime goal for the immediate future as achieving a deeper understanding of the links between human rights and environmental protection. It will involve a significant effort on the part of both human rights and environmental practitioners to come to grips with the values, methodologies and comparative advantages of each other. It will also involve a continued effort on the part of institutional actors, such as my Office and the UN Environment Programme, to foster this understanding." 

## DISCUSSING GENDER IN SWEDISH POLICY

*Gita Sen was asked to address a meeting of the Policy Department of the Swedish International Development Agency, SIDA. Some 60 participants from all sectors of Swedish society were invited to listen and discuss the possible consequences of removing gender equality as a goal in Swedish international development cooperation policy. The meeting was held as a result of a publication by Globkom, the Swedish Parliamentary commission investigating future Swedish policy on international development. Gender equality used to be a goal in Sweden's international development cooperation. The Globkom suggested reducing it to a crosscutting issue in future, while promoting poverty reduction as the overall aim. Q Web, a Swedish women's empowerment base at <http://www.qweb.kvinnoforum.se> reported on Gita Sen's address:*

Remember how we came to Beijing and what the outcomes were, Gita Sen reminded the meeting, and urged participants to keep their historical perspective.

The two main goals of Beijing and the previous women's conferences were the support for women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming. What happened was that women moved from being regarded as victims to being agents and full partners. This had the result of women becoming regarded as less the problem than part of the solution.

If women wanted gender mainstreaming to really happen, there had to be structures and guidelines on how to make change happen. Gender units needed resources and sanctioning power to be able to act. There must also be incentives built in for everyone to take gender mainstreaming seriously.

Sweden's role had been important in that the country had gender equality as an explicit goal in its policy. This was a signal to the international community that made it possible for many others to push for gender equality. The issue was not money, but strategic action at the right time. Swedish leadership needed to stand firm because now, more than ever, there was a need for gender equality. There was a serious backlash at international level, within the UN system, and the space for action was narrowing drastically. Looking at the political winds in fundamentalist societies, European societies and in other societies it was easy to see how fragile the gains were in terms of greater equality between women and men.

Gita Sen argued that the situation had returned to "pre-WID", when children, the disabled and gender equality was put in the same sentence, as it was in the Globkom publication. She said that "gender equality is fundamental for all global public goods", but in the Globkom publication it is not even mentioned as part of global public goods.

A former Swedish parliamentarian, Barbro Westerholm, commented on Gita Sen's address, pointing out that as gender equality was a goal of Swedish policy, it should also be a goal of Swedish development cooperation policy. She said the consequences of turning gender equality into a crosscutting issue was that Sweden, instead of playing a leading role internationally, would be regarded as a country that no longer considered gender equality important. 🌻



### AWID Pictorial

*The opening plenary session of the AWID Forum, from left, AWID President in Mexico Lucia Rayas, 2002 Forum Chair Zonny Woods, Cecilia Lopez Montano of the Cartagena Feminist Initiative, DAWN's Bene Madunagu and AWID Executive Director Joanna Kerr.*

# World Summit on the Information Society



*DAWN representative Magaly Pazello of Brazil, centre, Anne Walker of the International Women's Tribune Centre, left, and Karen Banks of the Association for Progressive Communications described preparations for the World Summit on the Information Society at a workshop in Women Shaping ICT Policies in the Global Arena held at the AWID Forum in Mexico.*

They were concerned with the speed of ICT developments and with placing gender on the WSIS agenda. WSIS is an initiative of the International Telecommunications Union, an organisation of the United Nations, the first phase of which is to be held in Geneva in December 2003 to adopt an action plan. A second phase to assess progress and focus on development themes is to be held in Tunis in 2005. Regional conferences and prep-coms are being held to lead up to the first phase meeting.

Magaly Pazello drew from her involvement in the preparatory process so far and concentrated her address on WSIS in Brazil, of which one of the most important events was the Forum International: Latin America and Caribbean in the Information Society, a meeting held in Brazil last September. Magaly's main concern was the general lack of understanding about the impact of "digitalisation of life", the implications for the kind of development that is pursued (e.g. e-commerce and e-health), the absence of a gender perspective in the process so far, and the issues relating to ICT and the WTO. 🌟

## WSIS Calendar

Asian Regional Conf., Tokyo, 13-15 January 2003

Latin America and Caribbean Regional Conference

Santo Domingo 27-30 January 2003

PrepCom 2, Geneva, 17-28 February 2003

PrepCom 3, Geneva, September 2003

More information at the International Telecommunication Union website,

<http://www.itu.int/wsisis>

## THOUGHTS ON THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S HEALTH MOVEMENT

*Alessandra Sampaio Chacham of Brazil was amongst about 300 women who attended the 9<sup>th</sup> International Women's Health Movement meeting in Toronto in August. The experience left her concerned about the movement and she has expressed the hope that the problems she perceived will function as a wake-up call for members to work more closely together. Here are some extracts from a short paper reflecting her thoughts on the meeting.*

"The lack of political focus was worrisome at a time when rights are more under attack than ever. The impact of growing fundamentalist forces that was central to the previous IWHM meeting held in Rio de Janeiro in 1997 was barely mentioned at the Toronto meeting. Nor was abortion made a central issue and it would not have made it on to the main floor without the efforts of the 28 September Campaign for decriminalising abortion in Latin America and the Caribbean, who pushed for a public reading of the Guanabara Manifest. Given the feminisation of AIDS in several countries and the devastation it is causing in Africa, there were too few panels or workshops dealing with the pandemic from a feminist perspective.

Because of the large number of simultaneous sessions, the late afternoon discussion groups held to review the issues presented during the day suffered from not having topics in common. Discussion was therefore loose and tended to be an enumeration of difficulties, with much less analyses and fewer proposals. In reaction, Latin American women grouped together in one room, which helped focus discussions but isolated them from the unique opportunity of a wider discussion with women from Asia and Africa. The meeting gave a clear perspective that the advances in women's health and rights in Brazil in the past 10 years had come from an ability to work together in networks. The need for an effective global network involving especially countries from the economic South seems crucial in a time of scarce funding and fundamentalist backlash.

On the positive side, there was an emergence of new leadership among younger women and the strong and meaningful presence of a lesbian caucus." 🌟

## AMANITARE CONFERENCE

DAWN has accepted an invitation to participate in the conference that AMANITARE, the African Partnership for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of Women and Girls, is holding on African women's sexual and reproductive health and rights in Johannesburg, 4-7 February 2003.

Bene Madunagu is on the technical advisory committee. Sonia Correa will give a presentation in a session comparing regional experiences in sexual and reproductive health and rights advocacy. Peggy Antrobus, Vanita Mukherjee and Fatou Sow are also attending.

Additionally, DAWN will support the participation of a group of young women in the conference.

The conference, "*Prosperity through Empowerment*", is the first to be held by AMANITARE. It is intended to provide an opportunity to bring together African women's health and rights movement activists with policy makers, researchers, health care providers, youth representatives and the media from all sub-regions of Africa to create a forum for debate and creative strategising around gender and health in Africa. The focus of the conference will be on youth, sexual health, and health sector reforms. Another aim of the conference is to institutionalise African Women's Health Day, to be celebrated annually on 4 February.

AMANITARE has 42 partners from 16 countries in all sub-regions of Africa. Further information is available from the AMANITARE website, <http://www.amanitare.org>



## Caught between underdevelopment and counter-terrorism

*The 23rd SID Congress was held in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, 4-7 July 2002. DAWN Africa's Bene Madunagu, who reports these highlights, Fatou Sow and Fatma Aloo all attended.*

The overall theme of the Congress was "The Quest for Global Human Security: Challenges to Governance in the Search for Social Justice." The goal was to define the SID strategy and framework plan of action for the 2002-2005 period

At the opening event there was a panel to honour the late President Nyerere, with presentations by Ali Mazrui, the former OAU secretary-general Salim, and others. There was a very strong and progressive address by the Tanzanian President who chaired the panel and who in fact joined the congress again in the evening for the usual Barbara Ward Congress lecture, which at this event was delivered by Ali Mazrui.

The address of the president was very critical of the current NEPAD programme of African heads of state. NEPAD is an acronym for New Partnerships for African Development. It is a highly top-down process by heads of African states without involving consultation with civil society and was made in response to the marketisation of governments as a starting point. The address critiqued the G8's position on NEPAD which was characterised as: Go home and ensure you have good governance and transparency in place, then come back and we will give you assistance on our market terms — and this after ENRON and WORLD.COM.

The Barbara Ward lecture by Ali Mazrui was on "The Global Hostage Crisis: The South between Underdevelopment and Counter-terrorism. The main thrust can be summarised as follows:

Mazrui made the observation that millions of poor people in developing countries were constantly held hostage by US policies and this had been further reinforced by the wider environment of globalisation. While the South was burdened by continuous and perennial economic backwardness, the North was pushing backwards into undemocratic states. September 11 demonstrated that it is not only capitalism that can be globalised, but that instability can also be globalised. September 11 thus represents the first step of political despair in the North as a result of US foreign policy. Terrorism is not a child of evil but of despair and frustration. There is a rapid decay of democracy in the US, with thousands of people in detention without trial.

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## ROLE OF WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS IN DEVELOPMENT

*DAWN Anglophone Africa Regional Coordinator, Bene Madunagu, spoke on women's organisations in Nigeria at a seminar on Women and Trade Unions held in Lagos. This is a short extract from her presentation, which can be read in full on the Dawn website at [www.dawn.org.fj](http://www.dawn.org.fj)*

"The mass poverty created by globalisation has also created such a level of intellectual poverty that even the left movement is now largely reconciled with and integrated into the new world system. We live in a social nightmare in which ancient customs, patriarchal culture and tradition are mixed with high-tech forms of exploitation. Women's lives are entangled in this mesh. Women face medieval feudal practices and rising religious fundamentalism while at the same time there is imperialist exploitation — all in the name of globalisation. Yet these same women are called upon and expected to be active members of organisations that should play meaningful roles in national development. Additionally, in both rural and urban areas women carry the burden of all

housework and caring within the household, combined with informal or formal work.

Women's contributions continue to be largely unrecognised and undervalued because of male dominance in all spheres of life. The electoral process in Nigeria takes place in an environment of undemocratic gender relations in which patriarchy places women fifth in the hierarchical structure. It is assumed women do not play a role in national development because they are not in powerful organisations or elected positions of decision-making.

Sexist education continues to perpetuate women's self-perception and their view of other women in a negative and inhibitive way. Yet women have always individually and collectively sustained society by their labour.

Lack of social and governmental accountability in the face of excruciating poverty has led many women to form non-governmental organisations to respond to immediate needs in their communities. Most NGOs came into being from the conceptual framework of welfarism and are therefore not constructed to struggle for transformation. The benefiting communities are also unable to articulate the basis of their poverty, beyond seeking amelioration. Thus there exists a real danger of government abandoning its primary responsibility to NGOs and for the organisations to get bogged down with what should be government responsibilities. The organisations need to step back to address political restructuring and to mobilise their constituencies in a demand for rights of access and representation. Women have always devised means to sustain social and national development, but lack the power and resources to achieve their objectives.

Despite all odds, women have formed various kinds of political organisations to marginally enhance their visibility and role in social, political and economic development, even where these organisations are strictly professional and interest area formations. By their actions and through their organisations, unions and associations they have struggled to establish milestones in spite of obstacles. 🌻

### **From previous page**

The remainder of the of the Congress featured many workshop sessions, some running concurrently, followed by plenary sessions for reporting back.

On the objective of Quest for Global Human Security, the congress re-affirmed SID as an asset with the social capital of 43 years experience of diversity of composition, shared vision of development, shared values and commitment to social justice. This is coupled with its multiple channels of communication involving individuals, chapters and institutional members and partners.

On human security and governance, it was pointed out that in both the national and international arenas, efforts were being made on these issues.

Globalisation was seen as bringing some positive things but it had a lot of risk content for human existence. There was therefore the need to refocus to minimise the risks of losing identity, values and human culture. There was need for enlightened political leadership that could accommodate the diverse voices of expression for equality of opportunities for all.

The general concept of solidarity, which is based on justice, was upheld as against charity, which derives from love and compassion. The need for the democratisation of international institutions was stressed. The Group of 8 needed to be made to listen to other voices on the way the world is being managed towards decay today. 🌻

## ASIA SOCIAL FORUM

DAWN is participating in the Asia Social Forum, to be held in Hyderabad 2-7 January 2003, and is supporting the Women's Initiative. DAWN representatives at the ASF will include Gigi Francisco and Vanita Mukherjee.

The Women's Initiative is a grouping of locally-based women's organisations who are planning a four-hour women's conference as part of the ASF programme. The broad theme of the conference is women and globalisation and there will be four main topics of discussion led by panels on:

- Working women as generators of wealth - covering all sectors including agriculture, unorganised and organised work, private, public and household, how the produce has been appropriated by other sections of society, the further marginalisation of women, increasing problems due to globalisation, rollback of laws for working women, and their search for justice, etc.
- Women, their basic needs and natural resources - that will cover security, food security, health, education, social support structures, access and rights to land, seed, private property, etc.
- Women and violence - to deal with sectarian, communal, ethnic and religious violence, militarisation & war, state violence, patriarchal & domestic violence etc.
- Women's fight for democracy and freedom - covering neo-colonialism, facism, imperialism, freedom struggles, fight for equality, social justice, human rights, etc.

The ASF will have two plenary sessions, two conferences daily, and up to 25 parallel seminars and 50 workshops daily. The main themes include Peace and Security; Ecology, Culture and Knowledge; and Alternatives and People's Movements. 🌟

## WORLD SOCIAL FORUM

There is likely to be a far higher profile of feminists at the next World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, 23-28 January 2003. Women, including DAWN representatives Gigi Francisco and Celita Eccher (REPEM), have been active in the WSF International Committee, and women have taken responsibility for two of the five themes of the 2003 Forum.

These themes are

- Principles and Values on Human Rights and Democracy; and
- Political Power, Civil Society and Democracy.

Leading feminists will



participate in these sessions.

The other three themes are Democratic and Sustainable Development, Media and Culture: countering hegemony, and Democratic World Order and Peace.

DAWN is also supporting efforts for a better space to allow women to dialogue and strategise.

The DAWN team to WSF 2003 will include Sonia Correa, Vivienne Taylor, Gita Sen, Celita Eccher, Gigi Francisco, Magaly Pazello and Marina Durano. 🌟

### CAMPAIGNS

DAWN has supported the following campaigns and petitions since May this year:

- Global Compact sign-on letter, meeting of NGOs campaigning on corporate power, Girona, Spain, 1 May 2002.
- Protect the Children: call for action against the abuse of children by Roman Catholic priests, Catholics for a Free Choice, 4 May 2002
- New US policy approach to Africa's development challenges and increased US public investment in social development in Africa, Africa Action, TransAfrica Forum, 6 May 2002.
- Girona Declaration on Rio + 10 and beyond: Strategies against the greenwash of corporate globalisation, Girona, Spain, 24 May.
- Halt premature use of Quinacrine sterilisation in Florida, CWPE, 30 May 2002.
- Support for Amina Lawal Kurami, sentenced to death by stoning in Nigeria, UK Amnesty International, 6 June 2002.
- Report sought on genetically engineered corn in Mexico, coalition including Greenpeace, 7 June 2002.
- Support for nomination of Judge N. Pillay as new High Commissioner for Human Rights, International Women's Human Rights Law Clinic, 24 June 2002.
- Make GATS requests public, WTO International Group, 24 June 2002.
- Thai Government to stop violence against villages and implement land reforms, Assembly of the Poor, 25 June 2002.
- Concern on vicious media attacks against Afghan Women's Affairs Minister, Sima Samar, AWID and WLML, 18 July 2002.
- Support for health activists Romeo Quijano and Llang-llang, Pesticide Action Network, Africa, 15 August 2002.
- Keep water services out of WTO, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, August 2002.
- WTO rules to respect multilateral environmental agreements, group including Friends of the Earth International, 30 August 2002
- Reject WTO mini-ministerials and Green Room meetings, Focus on the Global South, 7 November 2002.
- Reject USA and EC efforts to limit solutions for TRIPS and public health issues, Consumer Project on Technology, 15 Nov. 2002
- ICPD Programme of Action support, FEIM and ARROW, 15 November 2002. 🌟



DAWN Francophone Africa Coordinator, Fatou Sow, received an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Ottawa at the Spring Convocation in June. DAWN celebrates this recognition of Fatou's achievements. Fatou Sow is a Sociology professor who is Research Director of the National Centre of Scientific Research at the University of Paris, attached to the Department of Social Sciences Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire of the Universite Cheikh Anta Diop in Dakar, Senegal. Her work has been in the area of development, science and reproductive health and she is active in the Association of Senegalese Researchers; Women, Development and Enterprise in Africa; Gender, Science and Development Network (Toronto); and Research Network on Reproductive Health in Africa, amongst other organisations. Fatou recently arranged the French translation and publication of DAWN's book, *Marketisation of Governance*, and edited the translated manuscript.

## Steering Committee Notes

DAWN held a Steering Committee meeting in Cocoyoc, Mexico, 7-12 October 2002, preceded by a special two-day meeting on the present global conjuncture with Mariama Williams, Marina Durano and Magaly Pazello. There was an in-depth discussion and analysis of the issues, politics and processes of FFD, WSSD and WTO, as well as a discussion of the experience of the AWID Forum and the significance of the upcoming WSIS.

Among decisions taken by the Steering Committee were:

- To launch the first of a series of in-depth, month-long training modules to develop capacity in a new generation of feminists on whom DAWN can draw for future engagements, to be held between May-June 2003, with Barbados as the proposed venue.
- Continued involvement with social movements working against economic globalisation through WSF (including support for and participation in the ASF in Hyderabad, see P22), and OWINFS.
- Engagement in the AMINATARE conference 3-7 February 2003 (see Page 20), and with the International Association For Feminist Economists conference, 27-29 June 2003.

Changes to note include Yvonne Underhill-Sem stepping down from joint research coordinatorship of Sustainable Livelihoods; and Sonia Correa (and Magaly Pazello) moving from IBASE to ABIA, the Brazilian Interdisciplinary Association on AIDS.

DAWN will be celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2004, and plans are afoot to make it a milestone event.

*Those who gathered for the DAWN Steering Committee meeting, from left, back, Magaly Pazello, Peggy Antrobus, Gita Sen, Vivienne Taylor, Vanita Mukherjee, Mariama Williams (behind), Bene Madunagu, Fatou Sow, Gracie Fong, Marina Durano, (front) Yvonne Underhill-Sem, Seona Smiles, Sonia Correa, Ewa Charkiewicz, Claire Slatter and Gigi Francisco.*



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Subscriptions for printed version: Free to women based in the South. Friends based in the North are asked to make an annual minimum contribution of US\$20.00. Please notify any change of address by contacting [seona@dawn.org.fj](mailto:seona@dawn.org.fj) or fax (679) 314 770. Now available also on email, pdf or Word document, by sending your email address to [seona@dawn.org.fj](mailto:seona@dawn.org.fj)

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