



# DAWN INFORMS

Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era

## MARKETISATION OF GOVERNANCE NEW DAWN ANALYSIS CHALLENGES STATES

**D**AWN launched a new global analysis, *Marketisation of Governance, Critical Feminist Perspectives from the South at Geneva 2000 on 25 June. Political Restructuring and Social Transformation Research Coordinator Vivienne Taylor produced the book from some 30 research papers and a process of consultations and collective analysis and debate ongoing since 1998.*

*A documentary film with the same title, produced for DAWN by WAYANG of Malaysia and launched simultaneously at Geneva, audio-visually captured the DAWN analysis and gave voice to some of the issues and concerns expressed by researchers on the project. Here are excerpts from the book and from Vivienne Taylor's address at the Geneva 2000 event.*

**T**he rhetoric of governance was bandied about at the World Summit on Social Development, but today women in both the North and South talk about not just a casino economy, but also casino political systems in which the powerful gamble with their lives.

The rapidity and scale of change, permeable borders, the emergence of profound inequalities in both North and South and the apparent inability of state machinery to manage or influence the direction of change to benefit the poorest characterise the current phase of globalisation. The state is under threat and some argue that it is being reorganised to serve market interests, evidenced by the increasing influence of international financial and trade institutions such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organisation.

The WTO is the commanding institutional expression and a key instrument for creation and consolidation of an increasingly integrated and liberalised global economy and accompanying system of global government. Feminists see these emerging from and driven by interests in and needs of the most industrialised countries.

Structural Adjustment Programmes under the auspices of the IMF and World Bank are justified as necessary liberalisation measures to allow countries to integrate themselves into the global economy. In practice, SAPS mean opening up the South to exporters and investors from the economic North. Industrialised countries have pro-active and protective motivations in the promotion of new global rules to push their new industries and protect vulnerable sectors.

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## USING A GUISE OF DEMOCRACY

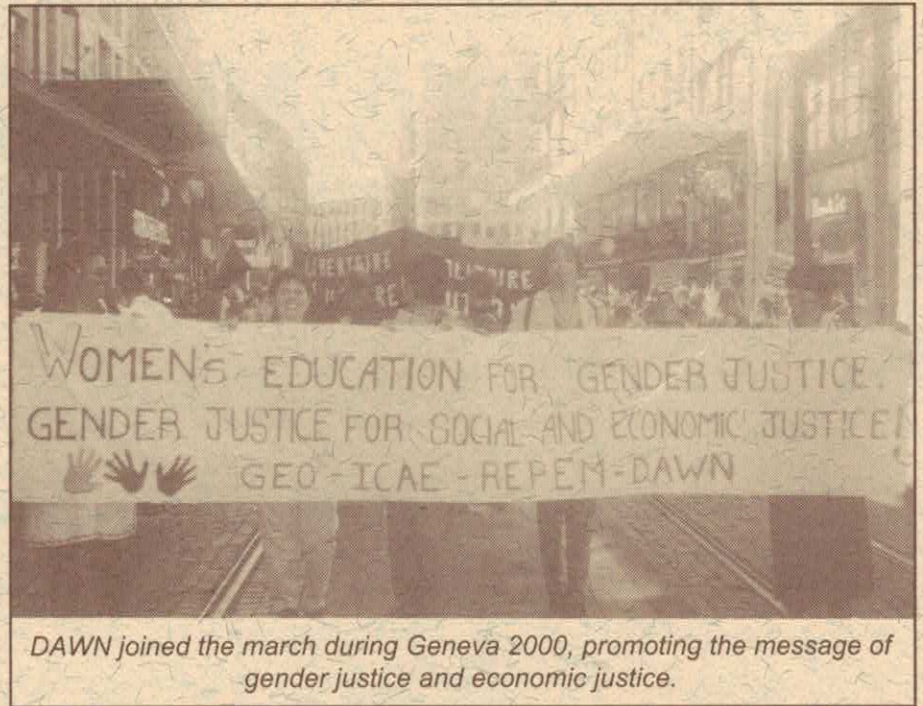
The rolling back of the state in the form of deregulation from public interest to regulation in terms of private interests is a major cause for concern. With the privatisation of state assets and industries there appears to be less direct involvement of states in the production and distribution of goods and services. Alongside this has been a rise in new state regulations, subsidies and institutions that are designed to promote an enabling environment for newly privatised industries.

The reality for poor women across countries reveals that the reorganising of the state bears little relation to any process of social transformation. That the power of the state is being eroded in relation to public interest is more and more evident, but shockingly the state and governance are being marketised and depoliticised under the guise of democracy.

## LEARNING TO CHANGE THE RULES

Nationally, women have learnt to deal with the parliamentary side of the State, but executive and judicial power has each a different logic that women have to decode to understand and take action. Rights discourses give women a broader field of action, but there is the challenge of rebuilding citizenship and women's subjective citizenship, which is undervalued. Legal or constitutional effectiveness is not only the State's responsibility, but also civil society's responsibility, and mechanisms must be created to achieve this. Electoral participation through quotas is a good example, but is not enough to result in gender equity. Both macro and micro powers must be worked on, and although local powers may have greater possibilities of exerting influence than the processes of a country as a whole, many micro-processes are very conservative.

There is a series of problems linked to specific historical experience and political culture. For example, in many countries of the South citizens associate poor people's welfare with a strong authoritarian government and gains are not identified with democracy. Many of these issues have not been understood in all their complexities by the women's movements.



*DAWN joined the march during Geneva 2000, promoting the message of gender justice and economic justice.*

Political openness offers new possibilities for women, but feminists are more fragmented than before and are losing emancipation potential due to the diversity of claims. Feminists need to create alternative development courses of action and work towards progressive democratic governance, linking their claims to inequalities of class, race, gender, ethnicity and religion. The challenge is for feminists to not only make proposals for women, but for the development of all in society, and not be content with just "a room of their own."

Other challenges include the process of inventing and restructuring the state — not dangerous in itself, but what is dangerous is the manner in which forms of cultural politics and the issue of narrow identities promote racism and other divides in opposition to globalisation.

## COLLABORATION AND CONFLICT

There is some degree of collaboration between the state apparatus and women's movements, yet conflicts are experienced since the ideology of the state remains fundamentally patriarchal and the state's engagement with women tends to be to use them for development purposes. Alongside these difficulties women have to deal with bureaucratic sexist attitudes on a daily basis.

While increasing numbers of women engage in politics and decision-making the quality of their participation and capacity to present a direct challenge to dominant political values and male-dominated processes needs improvement if strategic gains are to be made. Despite obstacles, abandoning the project of

**D**AWN has produced a vital document to expand the global debate on governance, democracy and social development, the Chair of the United Nations Commission on Social Development, Dr Zola Skweyiya, said at the launch of *Marketisation and Governance: Critical Feminist Perspectives from the South* and the accompanying video documentary. Dr Skweyiya, who is the South African Minister for Welfare, Population and Development, said DAWN could not have chosen a more relevant topic, or a more appropriate venue than Geneva 2000 for launching the platform document.

"Today we are witnessing various forms of political conflicts and governance, and crises all over the world. While some of these are ongoing people's struggles for democracy and liberation, many more are assaults on hard-won democratic processes and institutions," Dr Skweyiya said.

"There is a crisis in global governance. We see the expanding governance role of non-transparent global institutions that have become critical in shaping national policies. There is also concern that the United Nations, which is supposed to be the site for global governance, is itself grappling with framing international policies and agreements, that will ensure peace, democracy, equity and social justice.

"The critique and challenges that you offer in your platform document will be vital in further expanding the global debate on governance, democracy and social development."

Dr Skweyiya said he agreed with DAWN's strong call for women's rights and gender justice to be placed at the centre of political restructuring for social transformation. "I laud your call for a recasting of power and politics based on new global ethics for economic governance, and the reclaiming of the state for human development.

"To all the women from the South who participated in this important project on governance, particularly its global coordinator, Vivienne Taylor, I would like to offer my sincerest admiration and congratulations."

institutionalising gender is not an option. Success in legislative and policy advocacy indicates that contestation and negotiation can take place.

Global space provides opportunities to express new ideas, recast democratic practices of women's movements and to push the advocacy agenda. It has resulted in the possibility of forming new strategic alliances at global levels to push gender equality to the core of political restructuring. Moreover it provides channels to consolidate a global system of guarantees of people's rights against which to hold states accountable.

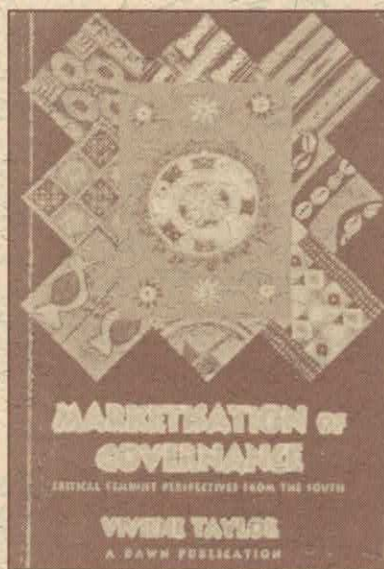
Challenges confronting feminists include how those who aspire to democratic forms of governance can work with authoritarian systems; what are the conditions under which feminist/women's movements can retain their autonomy from the state but still use political spaces for new gains; and how to engage in order to make change without becoming co-opted. To ensure accountability, transparency and representivity within the women's movement while pushing for these within the state is also a challenge to the women's movement.

## MOVING FORWARD

The feminist movement and progressive organisations need to push to the centre of debate that

there are certain non-negotiables fundamental to people's survival. These are food security, health care, education, the right to participate in decision-making that affects every sphere of people's lives, work that is humanising rather than dehumanising and that is valued. This is the core of the objective of reclaiming and transforming the state for people-centred development.

Women in the South have been the losers in the trade-offs that have taken place in the WTO and the economic systems of governance at global level. As women reclaim governance and ensure that states act in the interests of their citizens they realise that the whole terrain is a shifting site of struggle. But as they engage in this process it is necessary to ensure that the objectives of the collective struggles are not diffused and weakened. We reassert that the state is not a monolithic structure, that governance systems can be changed so that the dream of attaining personal liberation as well as national and international liberation can be achieved.



**D**AWN's reasons for entering the debate and the process leading to the new global analysis were described by Vivienne Taylor at the Geneva 2000 launch: "DAWN and women of the South noticed trends after the collapse of the Eastern bloc: the changed



*DAWN was honoured to have the Deputy Governor of Rio de Janeiro, Benedita Souza da Silva Sampaio, to launch DAWN's global analysis, The Marketisation of Governance. Deputy Governor da*

*Silva is a black feminist who rose from the slums to become a senator. With great tenacity and strength she promoted popular education and took on political leadership. She had to confront a macho society and racism to become the first black woman in the senate.*

### *From P3... Global Analysis launch*

political landscape, the rise of fundamentalism, the discrediting of state-led development, and the ascendancy of neo-liberal economics. Our engagements with women at global and national levels revealed the contradictions and fractures within global institutions and the ways these affected our countries and regions.

We felt we were entering a contested terrain. As we began we felt, most importantly, that women from the South have to articulate a vision that would recast the analytic frameworks that influence political restructuring. DAWN constantly reflected on and reviewed, through a collective process, the lived experiences of women from the South.

DAWN began to claim our footprints, all the journeys we had begun over the years. In doing this we were challenged to examine how we engaged within the United Nations and other global institutions of governance, the gains from UN conferences and the differences they made to the lives of poor women. There were gains, especially through women's movements at Cairo, Beijing and Copenhagen, but they were being lost because they were not being translated into real change at local level.


DAWN was mindful of the dual nature of our engagements, located as a relevant force in the different spaces at global, regional and national levels, at the same time maintaining a critical distance to make sure that in using global space, our struggle for gender justice did not become weakened.

While national governments, we found, are expected to be accountable, transparent and responsive to people's needs, institutions of global economic gov-

ernance remain unaccountable and unresponsive to the crises of governance that are features of our states.

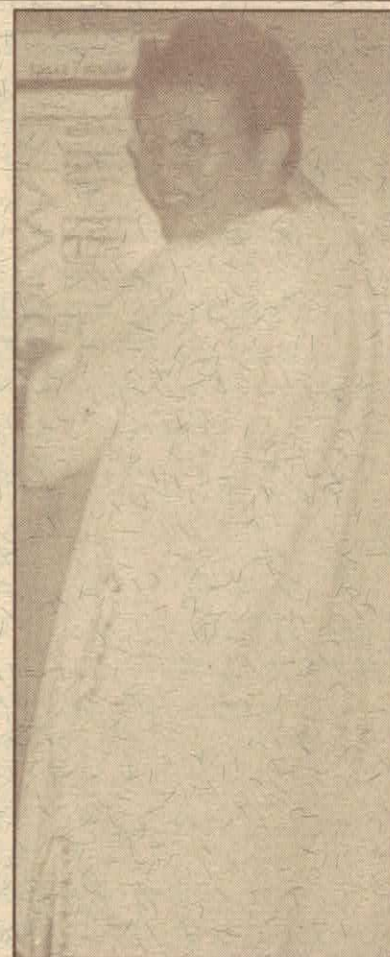
In the search for power and control, emerging democratic processes are reversed overnight, as in the cases of Eritrea, Fiji, Sierra Leone and Solomon Islands, amongst others. Poor people, especially women, are either bludgeoned into submission or become the dice in a game they can never win. Reversing the process means having to learn the rules of the game and how to change them - a constant thread throughout our discourse on governance.

There is a demobilisation and a depoliticisation of movements for change, especially the women's movement, as we adjust to maintain our donor bases. How do we move beyond this mantra of efficiency, marketisation of governance and marketisation of social justice objectives so that we can reclaim the space within global and regional and national arenas that will actually be used to bring people who have been marginalised back into the centre of governance?

We have found that at different moments of the governance process there are points of historical convergence and points of disjuncture that indeed provide strategic opportunities in the restructuring and transformation process that can be used to secure women's and poor people's rights for full social citizenship." 

## **POSTERING THE PANEL**

*Yvonne Underhill-Sem, Pacific Regional Coordinator, puts up a poster to announce the DAWN panel to launch the new platform document and video, Marketisation of Governance, at Geneva 2000.*



# GLOBAL ANALYSIS IN WORDS AND PICTURES

A 34-minute documentary video, *Marketisation of Governance*, was launched simultaneously with the new DAWN global analysis in Geneva in June 2000. WAYANG, an award-winning, Malaysian-based, alternative communications operation produced the documentary for DAWN.

WAYANG has engaged in community work with NGOs since the mid-1970s to empower women and build their participation through alternative communications, in a new information era in which access to information and ability to communicate remain problematic to the majority of the world's people. Alternative video is a tool for conscientisation, empowerment and solidarity actions.

The videography, directed by T. Chee and S. Nye, was primarily done in South Africa and Thailand during consultation processes on Political Restructuring and Social Transformation in the regions of the South, and includes scenes from the two consultations and workshops.

## VOICES FROM THE VIDEO

*In reality, government institutions equate gender equity with providing access and opportunities for women to participate in the production of goods and services that can contribute to the economies, GNP, trade and dollar reserves. Maloy Tiongson, Philippines*

*Talking of globalisation, one of the first things that strikes us in South Asia particularly is the increasing poverty. Indu Agnihotri, India.*

*The decisions that are made by the WTO have an impact on rural women, on the food they produce, when competition comes so close to their village. N'dri Assie-Lumumba, Cote d'Ivoire.*

*The problems for women in Latin America are poverty, marginalisation and violence — not only private violence but also at the level of internal wars. Celita Eccher, Uruguay.*

*The state will certainly exert control on social movements because they don't want 'unrest', because that disrupts the market and disrupts investors, and we will see more of this happening. Chanida Bamford, Thailand.*

*One of the key impacts of globalisation that we have seen in South Asia is certainly the fracturing of the nation state. But to me that is not all a bad thing because I think there are many things that are wrong with the nation state that could perhaps be put right if there is this process of transformation of the nation state itself. Sunila Abeysekera, Sri Lanka.*

*Wayang means image, often in the context of shadow play.*



The video critically examines the erosion of state power and with it the state's ability to provide for the basic needs of people. Issues of globalisation, the power of international institutions, governance, democratisation and gender are discussed by a number of researchers from each region. Additional videography was drawn from India, Nepal, South Korea, Philippines, Laos, China, Fiji and the United States of America, and presents images of protest action by poor and marginalised people, of women injured by armed conflict, women taking political action, some of the difficulties people face in obtaining basic necessities such as queueing for water, fuel and transport, and the exploitative working conditions under which women are working in the era of globalisation.

After the premier of *Marketisation of Governance* during WSSD+5, the film was shown at the World Expo in Hanover and subsequently launched in Bangkok at the time of the DAWN Steering Committee Meeting in July 2000. It has generated a lot of interest and received good responses. 🌟

Copies of the video are available for \$US25 (bank cheque only, packaging and postage inclusive) from DAWN Secretariat, c/- The School of Social and Economic Development, University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji; email dawn@is.com.fj

*Marketisation of Governance: Critical Feminist Perspectives from the South*, by Vivienne Taylor, Research Coordinator for Political Restructuring and Social Transformation, is published by DAWN/SADEP (Southern African Development Education and Policy Research Unit, University of Cape Town). The 90 page, A5 volume, ISBN 0-7992-2019-1, is available from DAWN Secretariat, c/- The School of Social and Economic Development, The University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji, for US\$10 (bank draft only), or it may be downloaded for the DAWN web site, www.dawn.org.fj. For further information contact dawn@is.com.fj

## DAWN PANEL AT GENEVA 2000

To launch its new global analysis, DAWN held a panel discussion at Geneva 2000. Panelists were Linette Vassell, a Jamaican social development consultant working on gender and community development issues, Shirkat Ghar Coordinator Farida Shaheed of Pakistan, with closing remarks by PR&ST Coordinator, Vivienne Taylor and chaired by South Asia Regional Coordinator, Vanita Mukherjee.

Farida Shaheed highlighted issues of particular concern to women of South Asia. Foremost was the rise of essentialist, exclusivist, identity-based politics which the world called fundamentalism. She said identity-based politics were based mainly but not only on religious or ethnic identity. In South Asia the increasing ability of groups and movements to attract women militants was puzzling, because their agendas seemed so anti-women, anti-democratic. These groups projected an identity and people who agreed to their definitions would have not only a sense of self but also access to privileges, benefits, safety and employment - things which surely states were supposed to provide.

In a world where social identities were being defined, women were being bound into frameworks of what someone else thought was their identity, so that other avenues and choices were cut off. Identity-based politics were not about traditions, they were about accessing power and exercising control, she said. The roll-back of the state was selective, the state did not give up its right to control its people, to exercise power over those who questioned and opposed. The state also had a selective interaction when it came to issues of groups that defined themselves and justified their agendas by reference to religion and tradition. A frightening example was the increase in honour killings in Pakistan.

"Women had to fight for the right to define who they are. In Pakistan optimism is not a choice, it is a necessity, and networking has begun with girls in the villages. The only answer to globalisation is the globalisation of solidarity."

Linette Vassell said she could comment on the platform document with a sense of optimism, because it spoke correctly to the wider international issues 'politics with a big P'. "But I believe an important element of our reconceptualisation and our activism has to be concerned with thinking about the politics with a little 'p', the politics that are grounded in the growing confidence so many have that we can make a difference in our lives. It is an approach that redefines politics altogether and I was happy that in so many places of the document this concept of redefining spaces

and politics and negotiation has been projected. The whole business of renegotiating spaces has to rest on recognising that the people have the possibility to do their own negotiation." She gave examples drawn from efforts of a Jamaican rural community group to negotiate with local authorities for a water supply.

She said that in Jamaica women were aware of the influence of globalisation following structural adjustment, aware of what had happened to them. "But we believe an important space for engagement is to say yes, and what shall we do about that." There was a need also for the women's movement in the Caribbean to grapple with issues of racialism and discrimination before being able to credibly challenge structures of domination.

In discussion, a former General Coordinator and one of the founders of DAWN, Devaki Jain, spoke of the urgency to consolidate the world-wide women's movement because of the rapid increase in violence against women. She also spoke of the importance of alliances, for instance with the workers' movement and indigenous movement, to politically broaden the women's movement, and suggested a return to terms such as politics, elections and administration, rather than wrapping them in the new terms of market efficiency.

In closing the discussion, Vivienne Taylor said that urgency had underpinned the project, not just to voice concern but to claim space within the highest decision-making bodies. There was a need not only to consolidate world-wide women's initiatives, but to build coalitional forces that would not be trapped in orthodox positions that hold back and create new fractures within the struggle for gender and social justice.

She agreed that issues raised were also experienced by women in the North, which was why DAWN asserted North and South were development designations and no longer only geographical locations. But what was significant and distinctive for DAWN was a need to assert that women from the South have a different vision of what they want to see happen, and that vision speaks to many diverse and different experiences located within very local, micro-contexts. ☀

*"The only answer to globalisation is the globalisation of solidarity."*

# SURVIVING BEIJING+5

by Gita Sen, Political Economy of Globalisation Research Coordinator and part of the DAWN group involved in the Beijing+5 NGO Working Session, 2-3 June, and UNGASS, 5-9 June 2000 in New York. The focus of DAWN's Beijing+5 efforts was on economic issues.

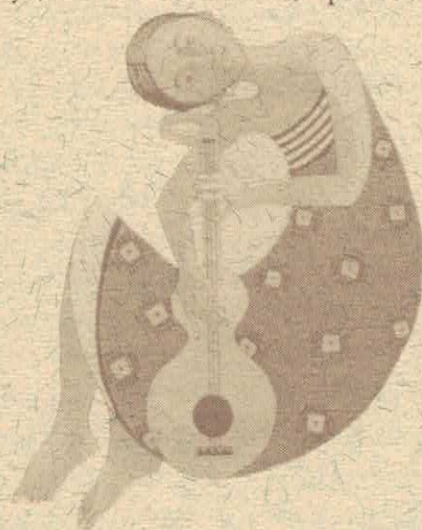
In the end I suppose the most important thing about Beijing +5 is that we survived. And the Beijing Platform for Action (PFA) survived as well. Despite a concerted attack by the anti-women's rights brigade, the document was not watered down, and in some instances we actually made some gains.

The DAWN team for Beijing +5 had reported previously (DAWN INFORMS, April 2000) that there were some serious risks to the negotiations that had already surfaced during the prepcom in March. The presence of large numbers of religious fundamentalists, the inherent diffusion of energy caused by the Beijing PFA's own diffuseness, the weakness of the secretariat for the conference (given that there is no major UN agency focusing on women's rights), the weakness of many government delegations, and the ambivalences within the women's movement itself, all helped to make the task of the negotiators and their NGO supporters extremely difficult. On top of this, South-North tensions continued to run high, fueled by continuing North intransigence regarding trade, debt and other economic issues.

Smelling blood, the forces of reaction (the religious fundamentalists and their allies led and fed by the Vatican) attempted to prevent any kind of negotiated document being completed. As a result, stalemates and time-wasting dragged on endlessly as the clock ticked away and the Secretariat watched, seemingly helplessly. As usual, it was the women's coalition that struggled hard to call the different parties - the UN bureaucracy, the governments, other UN agencies - to account. The document was finally completed in a final heroic 25th hour effort that stretched the abilities of both NGOs and negotiators, even the most experienced, to the maximum.

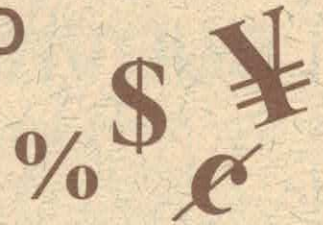
Of the 12 areas of concern in the Beijing PFA, some such as the environment and sustainable development received short shrift in the +5 Outcomes document; others such as health, violence, trafficking, and human rights fared better, while issues such as the economy and political empowerment received some, though not enough, attention. Most importantly, none of the key gains of Beijing in the area of health and rights were lost, something which was itself a major victory given the climate of the +5 negotiations.

One of the most important political occurrences was the emergence of the group of countries calling itself SLACC (Some Latin American and Caribbean Countries). This group emerged out of frustration among more gender-progressive governments with the tactics of the conservatives within the G-77 who were holding the entire group to ransom. Whether or not the SLACC grouping is simply a flash in the pan or a more permanent phenomenon remains to be seen; but the group combined during Beijing +5 a refreshing combination of South-oriented economic positions and support for women's rights. For those of us who have been arguing for some time that the need of the hour for women in this era of globalisation is a combination of economic justice and gender justice, the emergence of SLACC and its ultimate victory in negotiations was an important vindication. 🌞



# FROM GLOBAL NEGOTIATORS TO GLOBAL REGULATORS:

## *which way world financial liberalisation?*



*Excerpts from a paper on DAWN website, [www.dawn.org.ff](http://www.dawn.org.ff), by South East Asia Regional Coordinator, Gigi Francisco, who attended a recent briefing at the United Nations on the Financial Stability Forum.*

The 1990's ushered in an era of global players. Transnational corporations became global competitors. Global communications and computer information technology emerged as the new king makers. Country diplomats in their stylish pantsuits became skilled global negotiators. Civil society groups launched their global campaigns. And the global trading system that led to the founding of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) zoomed into the limelight the indispensable role of global trade negotiators.

Now the buzzword is global regulators. But this is in no way a victory for NGOs that want to put a rein on global trade and financial systems. These global regulators - who were last estimated to number around 250 staff - are lodged within the International Monetary Fund. They are joined by regulators working in two emerging and influential organisations, the Financial Stability Forum (FSF) and the Financial Stability Institute (FSI), both created upon the urging of the G7 countries.

The FSF is comprised of the ministries of finance, central banks and supervisory authorities of the G7 countries and the central banks of Australia, Hongkong, Netherlands and Singapore, as well as the IMF, WB, Bank for International Settlements and the OECD. It also involves three international supervisory and regulatory groupings including the Basle Committee on Banking Supervision and the Association of Insurance Supervisors.

The FSI, on the other hand, brings together representatives of regulatory bodies and heads of national regulation with top risk managers from the private sector. Both were established soon after the Asian financial crisis.

The Chair of the FSF and also General Manager of the BIS, Andrew Crockett, briefed the United Nations on the work of the Forum in May this year as

part of preparations for next year's conference on Financing for Development. He completely absolved the private sector from any wrongdoing in the Asian financial crisis: "The private sector will only invest in countries with sound economic footing. If we were to strengthen market conditions, they (countries) will be less burdened with the 'feast and famine syndrome'."

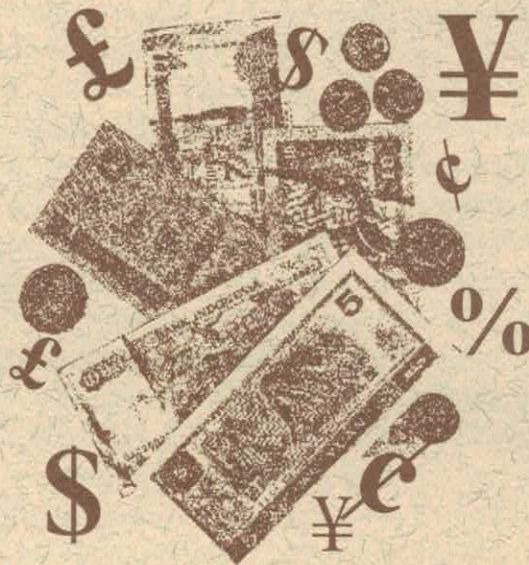
Crockett observed that "minor problems in rapid growth can lead to major ones." Rather than question the assumptions behind rapid growth itself, he accepted as givens the highly vulnerable nature of financial markets and the fact that "competition makes them do things that do not reflect prudential behavior." He urged the international community to instead monitor and better understand the financial

market, anticipate and lessen the impact of financial crises.

Enter the global regulators. Within the IMF, regulators are mainly tasked with guiding countries in developing what is called the 'balance sheet approach' in order to ensure that countries do not encounter liquidity problems in their portfolio. There is also a strong distinction made between liquidity and solvency problems of indebted countries, that necessitate different solutions.

Within the FSF, regulators are mainly concerned with identifying vulnerabilities in the global financial market and locating gaps in standards and codes that are its source of weaknesses and failures. Their task is to propose regulatory standards that they hope to "sell" to the private sector and governments by convincing them that regulation aimed at more stable markets is to their mutual advantage.

These global regulators in the service of global economic integration and financial stability are the new techno-fixers of our times. ☀





## WORLD SOCIAL FORUM *Changes to the Agenda*

**D**AWN joined with the Feminist Articulation of the Mercosur (Southern Community) to change the agenda of the first World Social Forum and include feminist panelists in the main Forum panels. The Brazilian organising committee has wholly accepted the changes.

DAWN will take part in the Forum, a new annual event for the promotion of human rights, social justice and sustainable development that will be held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, January 25-30, 2001. It is timed to take place as the World Economic Forum, held annually in Davos, Switzerland, meets.

Past General Coordinator, Peggy Antrobus, Sonia Correa, Celita Eccher and Gigi Francisco are to represent DAWN at the Forum and other members of the DAWN network may also attend. DAWN Latin America has joined the initiative with the Southern Community to disseminate information about the political importance of participating in this space for construction of a planetary citizenship, as well as supporting the changed agenda.

The World Social Forum is intended to provide a space for building economic alternatives, exchanging experiences and strengthening South-North alliances, as well as providing an opportunity to mobilise civil society internationally. It has developed as a consequence of a growing international movement that advocates greater participation of civil societies in international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organisation. For decades these institutions have been making decisions that affect the lives of people all over the world without a clear system for accountability and democratic participation.

The Brazilian Organising Committee is building alliances with organisations in the Americas, Africa, Asia and Europe to develop the Forum. Topics for discussion include building economic policies that promote human development, the influence of multinational corporations in local communities, and organising against gender and racial discrimination. The four main themes are the production of wealth, access to wealth and sustainability, civil society and the public arena, and democracy and citizen power. The Forum will not be a decision-making body, but participants will be able to disseminate proposals from organised meetings. At the end of the Forum there will be a large public event.

*The World Social Forum Organising Committee can be contacted at Rua General Jardim, 660 8º andar, Sao Paulo, Brazil, DEP 01223-010, email: forum@forumsocialmundial.org.br www.forumsocialmundial.org.br* 🌞

### DAWN IN UNDP DIALOGUE

*DAWN was one of four civil society organisations represented on a panel in a dialogue with the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Fund for Population Activities at the time of their annual meeting in Geneva in June. Discussion centred on the strategic positioning of UNDP on a range of substantive issues including globalisation, poverty reduction, its relationship with the Bretton Woods institutions, and governance. DAWN-South East Asia Coordinator Gigi Francisco asked the UNDP to re-cast the debates on development by building on its work around the Human Development Report, and by working in partnership with civil society organisations.*

"The current state of the United Nations is far from what we could imagine as an enabling environment for clear, cohesive and sharp policies and programmes for poverty reduction," she said. "The Beijing Platform of Action and Copenhagen Commitment on Social Development embody principles by which a new world could be imagined and constructed. However, our global analysis shows that gains achieved through engagement and strategic advocacy are being lost, for one, because these are not being translated into real change at the local level.

"More critically perhaps, judging from the outcome of the Beijing+5 UNGASS and difficult negotiations on the WSSD+5 document, some states are turning back from broad-based consensus on global development goals that included women's rights and gender equality - a disturbing, if not dangerous, trend. Both northern and southern governments are guilty of turning back on certain commitments, which flags the need for a comprehensive global audit of the various global commitments from the standpoint of poverty reduction." She said also that the UNDP should articulate in clear terms its commitments to gender mainstreaming, as well as define itself distinctly from World Bank policies and programmes. The panelists were critical of the United Nations as a whole and deeply concerned about its loss of legitimate power, which had been transferred to other institutions in which developing countries and CSOs had no influence.

UNDP Administrator, Malloch Brown, concluded by reiterating a commitment to "the right to development" principle, and said he was doing everything possible "to make sure the amount of gender work at the country level grows." 🌞

# GENDER JUSTICE: *Weaving in Gender*

*DAWN's participation in Global Dialogue 2 at Expo 2000 in Hanover in July is outlined by Pacific Regional Coordinator, Yvonne Underhill-Sem. GD2 was on the theme Responsible Governance in a Global Society and DAWN worked with UNIFEM to organise a session on Responsible Governance for Gender Justice.*

When gender justice is left off the agenda, so too are many other critical democratic principles such as democracy, participation and equity. This is the importance of having a critical feminist lens. But there is also a danger of gender justice issues becoming entrenched and dismissed as merely concerned with "apple-pie and motherhood."

The Research Coordinator for Political Economy of Globalisation, Gita Sen, began the session with an outline of DAWN's thematic concerns beginning in the 1980's with an urgency to bring into macroeconomic debates perspectives of gender from the lived experience of women in the South. By the late 1990's DAWN was addressing the challenge of making connections between the personal body politics of the globe through issues of reproductive and sexual rights, and the politics of macroeconomics particularly globalisation. Another aspect of DAWN's work described by Gita Sen was the question of how DAWN decides who to work with and how this has changed over time. By 1995 it was becoming clear that DAWN was speaking to the converted on gender justice and was making little headway on its systematic attempt to mainstream arguments, despite a serious gender justice gap in these larger analytical frameworks.

The Special Advisor to the Director of UNIFEM, Diane Elson, speaking in the context of accountability and economic governance, focused on the importance of working with national budgets as concrete and practical sites from which to address gender justice. She talked about some innovative examples of budgeting as well as the importance of acknowledging the large size and particular characteristics of the 'care economy'. She noted the particular challenges of working with the constraints of macroeconomic structures from the perspective of activism.

By the end of the first session the group charged itself with key questions about how to work for a genuinely transformative agenda; how new constituencies could be built and maintained amongst progressive movements; how conceptual clarity in integrating gender could be used in the practical applications of programmes, projects and policies; and how can we

pay due attention to gender justice in the face of the urgency of poverty as well as the tight time frames we are working within?

In the course of discussion, participants interrogated many taken-for-granted concepts and contested issues. For instance, the extent to which gender debates had moved the focus away from gains initiated by women's movements; the difficulties of finding the appropriate words to articulate the concerns of gender justice; the contradictory ways in which women are represented in new democratic spaces; the difficulties of addressing those inter-personal power relations between women and men in which women continue to be oppressed; and the contradictory characteristics of the dichotomy of North-South politics.

Participants showed full support for the critical importance of participatory and transformative democracy. As a fundamental principle, it was not necessary to always ask, for example, about 'gender and trade' or 'gender and poverty'. Rather it was more useful to be vigilant about processes of democracy and governance through a critical feminist lens.

In the final session there was a return to the specific question of how to do gender justice within our work. This was addressed by beginning with how the dialogue might inform a grassroots participatory process, and discussing the 'hooks and barbs' inherent in community organising. While good care was needed to ensure good democratic processes, the substance of any resulting policies and programmes also had to be interrogated closely.

In conclusion, the importance of the complex constellations of power that constitute all interactions was recognised. It was no longer a matter of two- or three-way power dynamics. Instead it was important to track and understand multidimensional constellations of power as coalitions are built, even contingent ones. The gender justice question can then be asked strategically rather than as a routine intervention. The discussion ended with a reflection on the gendered nature of time that invited extra pressure on ensuring that gender justice was addressed. 🌞

# GENDER AND TRADE NETWORK

## RESEARCH, ADVOCACY AND ECONOMIC LITERACY

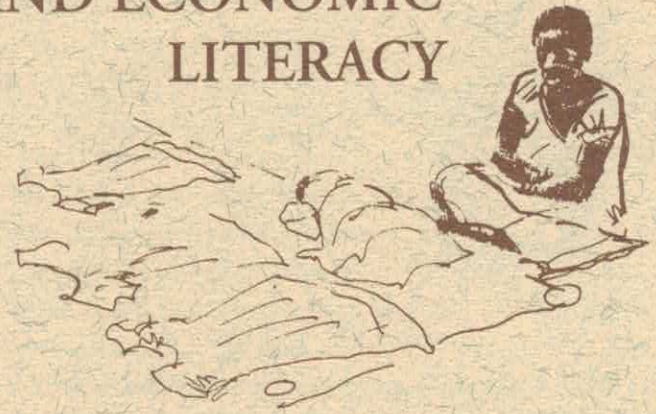
The International Gender and Trade Network, established through a collaborative project of DAWN Caribbean and the Centre of Concern, has begun work on regional and global research with appropriate methodologies, a web site, and materials for advocacy and literacy.

Despite the belief of trade economists that trade is gender neutral, the work of feminist economists, advocates and economic literacy experts on structural adjustment over the past 20 years has clearly established that all macroeconomic issues have a gender impact.

To address the challenge of developing the work and directing it towards trade and investment, DAWN Caribbean and the COC sponsored a Women's Strategic Planning Seminar on Trade in Grenada, following the third Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organisation in Seattle in November 1999. The seminar gathered 48 feminist economists, activists and economic literacy specialists.

To facilitate the directions the meeting set, a steering committee was established with regional representation and focal points: Africa - Mohau Pheko; America - Lynda Yanz; Asia - Marina Durano; Caribbean - Nelcia Robinson; Europe - Janice Goodson Foerde; Latin America - Coral Pey; and the Pacific - 'Atu Emberson-Bain and Amelia Rokotuivuna.

Each region will develop its own research projects, advocacy strategies and economic literacy based on regional needs and priorities. Overall coordination of literacy and research that focuses on ensuring



an integrative framework, which emphasises comparative perspectives and strengthens strategic global organising and international trade and economic policy advocacy, will be undertaken by Mariama Williams and Yassine Fall. A Secretariat was established, currently based at the COC in Washington DC, with Maria Riley and Alexandra Spieldoch of the COC, Peggy Antrobus of DAWN Caribbean as Consultant, and Charmaine Samaraweera of the COC as Administrative Assistant. Mariama Williams is at the Secretariat for six months also. The Secretariat handles the overall communications for the network.

A research meeting is planned for early 2001 and another on literacy and popular education is to be held in Lusaka, Zambia. The network will focus on the WTO, Free Trade Area of the Americas, the Lome Convention and Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, as well as on other important international events/agreements/institutions that impact the regions. The Secretariat will be the focal point for advocacy. ☀

## RECONSTRUCTING GLOBAL FINANCIAL ARCHITECTURE

*DAWN South East Asia Regional Coordinator, Gigi Francisco, follows developments and policies in UNCTAD. She was at the NGO Plenary Caucus for UNCTAD X in Bangkok in February 2000 (DAWN Informs 1/2000), and in June followed the debates in Global Dialogue 2 at EXPO 2000 in Hanover.*

The message from UNCTAD's Director of the Macroeconomic and Development Policies Department at GD2 was that the power of the IMF needs to be

'clipped'. Director Yilmaz Akyuz suggested the IMF's involvement in resolution of the debt crisis ought to be limited, or perhaps it should not be involved at all.

He said to make major reforms of the international financial system, ways would have to be found to govern the governance bodies. Unless there was a global initiative to construct a new financial architec-





ture, South economies would be left on their own to defend themselves from pressures of the market, multilateral institutions and developed countries. He recognised that developing countries would oppose a rapid change in the IMF's role, so it needed to be diminished slowly, with wide-ranging consultation.

The different financial regimes in the South varied considerably, so there was room to manoeuvre.

Mr Akyuz proposed a set of components for a global framework on which to set a new global financial architecture that included an agreement of the right of developing countries to receive concessional income transfers from developed countries; a clear mechanism to recognise the rights of debtor countries; recognition that globalisation has proceeded in a highly selective way; a code of conduct or international standards for foreign investors; and the instituting of clear accountability for Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organisation.

The call for increased transparency in financial markets was supported in the debate by the presentation of the President of the Inter-American Development Bank, Enrique Iglesias. He said also that good central banks were needed at national level to ensure liquidity, coupled with a set of strengthened international regulations, a task now being undertaken by the Financial Stability Forum.

Queried about the exclusivity of FSF membership, Mr Iglesias said developing countries should participate and he was conferring with some Latin American countries on how they could have a representative become a member.

Concerning the mobilisation of resources for social development, he spoke of the desirability of developing micro finance projects in a context of decentralised governance.

He admitted private investors were not easily attracted to putting money into the social sector, but said this could be improved if local administrative units were given increased mandate to acquire and manage resources. He said public funds would still constitute the dominant investment in social services such as health and education, but in others such as water utilities and housing it may not be the case. 🌞

## WORLD BANK:

### *A Stop to Pushing Poor to Pay for Basic Services*

The World Bank is to stop encouraging borrowing governments to charge the poor for health and education services. The Bank now acknowledges that these fees deprive many people of basic needs.

The change follows pressure by the United States, anti-poverty groups of the South and others. The United States Congress adopted a Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill on 25 October that contained a provision requiring the USA to oppose any International Monetary Fund, World Bank or regional development bank loan that includes user fees or service charges on poor people for primary education or primary health care. Primary health care includes prevention and treatment efforts for AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and infant and maternal well-being in connection with lending programmes.

The WB has since announced it is moving in the direction of eliminating the imposition of fees for

all basic services from all lending programmes. The Bank is to help countries find other sources of health funding after they dismantle the fees.

Critics have long complained that WB advice often ends up hurting the poor. The change on user fees is the latest in WB policy reversal. It no longer pushes all countries to open their capital markets and has steadily cut back lending for mining and oil production projects, under pressure from environmentalists.

On the recommendation of the World Bank, developing countries have been imposing user fees since 1987 in order to raise more revenue for health services and meet the fiscal deficit targets set by the WB and IMF.

The United Nations Development Programme's Director of poverty programmes, Stephen Browne, said that experience had shown user fees were a deterrent to universal education and universal health. In Uganda, where

To P13

## MANY SERPENTS STILL IN PARADISE

*No Paradise Yet* is the poignant title of a new book published by the Panos Institute and Zed Books. It hits home to the first generation of contemporary feminists who are now becoming, let's face it, down-right elderly. For despite the hopes and hard work of those who went to the first UN conferences for women, who have lobbied so long for gender justice along with economic justice, participatory democracy and an end to violence and the inequalities visited on the South, we have not yet attained this Paradisical state.

Ironically, it is the countries of the South which provide many of the visions of Paradise: warmth, abundance and in some cases, women to serve the needs of men. There are many serpents in this paradise, including patriarchy, sex discrimination, hostile laws and violence that squeeze women in their coils.

*"I knew this woman with three kids who used to support herself. Her children did not want to be admitted to school in their father's name. They never saw their father, who had since married someone else. When their mother tried to register them in her own name, the school flatly told her: 'We cannot allow that. We don't have that kind of society here.'"* Legal Aid Advisor, Bangladesh.

Judith Mirsky and Marty Radlett edited the book that examines some of the areas, many of which coincide with Beijing's critical areas of action, where legal and social reform is urgently needed. Women journalists in the South researched and wrote the stories about the lives of women and their struggles to change the unequal basis of marriage, divorce and child custody; to legislate against domestic violence; to give women access to land in their own right; to combat sex discrimination in the workplace; to end sexual harassment in educational institutions; to raise awareness of the needs of adolescents, and to raise men's awareness of responsibilities involved in marriage and parenthood.

The editors say that many of the reports make clear how women are all too often penalised for transgressions against society's norms of sexual and reproductive behaviour in a way that men are not. Caribbean women are expected to be 'strong' at all costs and can be censored for not having a child; in Bangladesh divorced women frequently lose custody of their children; in Pakistan, false accusations of adultery against individuals who choose their own marriage partner can result in severe punishment; in Kenya women students have virtually retreated into their hostels, attending class only when it is an absolute necessity; in Mexico pregnancy testing is a routine condition of employment and forced resignation if the worker becomes pregnant is commonplace.

Clearly, women have not yet attained Paradise on Earth. But there is hope in the stories of societies that have been bold and committed enough to take action for change. So perhaps it is not yet too late. In a healthy environment, women are able to stretch active mature middle age to new limits, and some of the first generation contemporary feminists may yet see gender mainstreamed within human rights and economic justice movements, and increasing equity for all.

For sales information contact [sales@zedbooks.demon.co.uk](mailto:sales@zedbooks.demon.co.uk) or Zed Books Ltd, 7 Cynthia Street, London N1 9JF, UK.

-- Seona Smiles 🌞

### *From P12... World Bank fees*

the average person earns less than US\$1 a day, the number of children attending school doubled immediately after \$8 annual school fees were dropped in 1997. In Malawi, which is even poorer, there were similar results. Fees keep children out of school, especially girls, and deny care to the sick, resulting in preventable suffering.

Critics of the user fees say the overwhelming evidence reveals these charges result in denials of care, and that supposed exemptions from the charges for the poor routinely fail. The exemptions are supposed to make sure the poor get free services, while those who can pay, do so. Poor and uneducated people, however, do not know how to manoeuvre through complicated systems.

While removing the fees will not solve the entrenched problems of poor health and low educational attainment in the world's poorest countries, elimination of fees will topple a high hurdle. 🌞

## Steering Committee Notes

**A** tribute to Past General Coordinator, Peggy Antrobus, has been organised by the United Nations system in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean in collaboration with the Centre for Gender and Development Studies of the University of the West Indies, and the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action, CAFRA.

They arranged a Symposium in Barbados 9-10 November on Peggy's work in recognition of her contribution to the development and growth of the women's movement in the Caribbean from 1975 to 1995 and beyond.

Peggy was a founder member of DAWN in 1984 and General Coordinator 1990-1996. (see DAWN's web page on Peggy, [www.dawn.org.fj](http://www.dawn.org.fj))

UNDP and UNIFEM organisers said the impact of Peggy's work on the gender debate in the region was the focus of the Symposium, which looked at how her work influenced and shaped the discourse from the beginning of the Decade for Women in 1975. Speakers addressed the social/economic and political contexts in the region and presenters critiqued the issues, speaking to selected papers by Peggy.

The Symposium was a follow-up to Beijing+5 activities and other Caribbean women were honoured also during the event for their contributions to advancing the Beijing process.



**A**n important figure now gone from the Pacific and from the Steering Committee is Yvonne Underhill-Sem, who very ably served as Pacific Coordinator for the past 2½ years. In that time she established a network of researchers and activists in the Pacific and directed the region's contribution to DAWN's PR&ST work. Yvonne was also DAWN representative on the GD2 organising committee and was on the WSSD+5 team. Yvonne has accompanied her family to Bonn. Until a replacement Regional Coordinator is found, Yvonne will function as Virtual Pacific Coordinator, from Bonn and will provide occasional support for the network in Europe-based meetings.



**D**AWN will also greatly miss the Assistant Coordinator/Administrator, Kushma Ram, who has left the Secretariat after two years. Kushma has been a key figure in the Secretariat and her efforts were crucial to establishing the Secretariat office in Fiji and systems to improve administrative efficiency. She interpreted the spirit and perspective of DAWN in all aspects of the Secretariat's daily work and ensured they were reflected in the decisions made and directions followed. Kushma has an MA in Development Studies from the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, Netherlands, and she is taking up a new appointment with the Institute's newly-established Centre for Labour Research in Dubai. In her new job she will co-direct the new Centre and coordinate its gender programme.



*DAWN Steering Committee held its annual meeting in Bangkok 28-31 July 2000. Pictured from left, back row: Vanita Mukherjee, South Asia Regional Coordinator; Sonia Correa, Sexual and Reproductive Rights Research Coordinator; Peggy Antrobus, Past General Coordinator; Gigi Francisco, South East Asia Regional Coordinator; middle row: Celita Eccher, Latin America Regional Coordinator; Claire Slatter, General Coordinator; Keturah Babb, Caribbean Regional Coordinator; Fatou Sow, Francophone Africa Regional Coordinator; front row: Gita Sen, Political Economy of Globalisation Research Coordinator; Kushma Ram, Assistant Coordinator/Administrator; Sharan Lateef, Accountant.*

## CAMPAIGNS

Civil society organisations, especially those working on the WTO, are gearing up a campaign led by the Third World Network to prevent acceptance of the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

The Act was signed in to United States law in May 2000 as part of the US Trade and Development Act, since when the US Government has been urging African governments to express their interest in signing on. African Ministers of Trade at a recent conference in Cairo, however, opposed hasty action by African governments to join the AGOA until they assess all the implications. A number of African diplomats have suggested civil society may need to bring the dangers of AGOA to the attention of governments, particularly in relation to various WTO issues.

Grounds for refusing to sign on to the AGOA are being circulated by TWN, with a list of the dubious benefits that would supposedly accrue and reasons why they are unacceptable, especially at the cost of accepting unfair measures in WTO rules.

A sign-on letter will be electronically circulated soon by TWN, informing other NGOs of its threat. TWN can be contacted for more information on [twnafrica@ghana.com](mailto:twnafrica@ghana.com)

DAWN has signed on also to a campaign to prevent the Australian government from taking oil and gas resources and royalties that rightfully belong to the people of East Timor. Through a Zone of Cooperation treaty that Australia made with Indonesia, they jointly managed resources exploration and shared taxation imposed on companies working in the region. But none of the area falls within Australian waters.

Under the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea, the seabed boundary should be equidistant between Australia and East Timor. If this is applied, the whole of the Zone of Cooperation will fall into East Timorese territory. Most of the current oil exploration is inside this Zone, which Australia is now re-negotiating with the East Timorese to persuade them to accept it as it stands, with Australia getting 50% of the royalties from the area. The protest campaign calls for a seabed boundary equidistant between East Timor and Australia and for all royalties from exploration and resources to go to the East Timorese, partly as compensation for the damage done by Australia's complicity in Indonesia's 25 year war against the East Timorese people.

To sign on, send a protest letter to Alexander Downer, the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, [minister.downer@dfat.gov.au](mailto:minister.downer@dfat.gov.au), or contact Action in Solidarity with Indonesia and East Timor, [asiet@asiet.org.au](mailto:asiet@asiet.org.au)

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## SUBSCRIPTION UPDATE

### For current subscribers and new subscribers

The triannual newsletter of the DAWN network, DAWN Informs, is available at the DAWN website, [www.dawn.org.fj](http://www.dawn.org.fj), and can be downloaded for free.

Beginning this issue, you can receive the newsletter electronically, as a PDF or Word document at your email address. If you wish to be on this mailing list, send us an email at [dawn@is.com.fj](mailto:dawn@is.com.fj) and tell us which format -- PDF or Word -- you would like to receive it in.

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**If we do not receive this update, we will assume you no longer wish to receive the print version.** Printed copies of DAWN Informs are available free of charge to women based in the South. Friends based in the North are asked to make an annual minimum contribution of US\$20.00, payable by bank cheque only to DAWN, School of Social and Economic Development, University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji.

**D**AWN *Informis* is published three times a year by Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) as a networking tool for its members. DAWN is an autonomous inter-regional organisation of the South which acts as a network and catalyst advocating alternative development processes that emphasise the basic survival needs of the world's people, particularly Third World women and their children.

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 [dawn@is.com.fj](mailto:dawn@is.com.fj) or fax (679) 314 770. Now available also on email, pdf or Word document, by sending your email address to [dawn@is.com.fj](mailto:dawn@is.com.fj)

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