



DAWN INFORMS

Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era

From Gigi Francisco at Porto Alegre WOMEN MAKE THEIR MARK AT THE WORLD SOCIAL FORUM

Showing strength in numbers, Southern women joined hands with men in launching what was yet another collective manifestation of united force by social movements in their struggle against market-led globalisation.

Clearly, half of those who made it to the southern tip of Brazil for the World Social Forum at Porto Alegre were women of all ages and walks of life. A majority came as activist members of social movements, political parties, trade unions, and women's organisations in the South although there was also a significant contingent from the North. A small group of women came as parliamentarians and former gov-

ernment officials. Some came as members of the one-thousand-strong corps of foreign journalists. Still others came as individual women who wanted to learn from and to be counted among the esti-

mated seven thousand people that flocked to Porto Alegre for this historic event. Local residents of this city widely admired for its participatory budget process and impressive social welfare system also showed up en masse. From among them, the women and youth constituted a remarkable contingent.

Under the banner of "Another World is Possible", women-organised workshops dealt with the increasing poverty, hardships

and new vulnerabilities of women that result from free trade policies, recurrent financial crises and market-driven economic reforms. Social welfare for all, particularly for poor households



One of the highlights of the meeting was a surprise demonstration staged by 100 women against the conservative Bush administration that is expected to overturn legislation on abortion and overseas programs on reproductive health. Shouting "there is no justice without gender justice" and "abortion is possible!", the women paraded around the conference venue with placards flagging political calls for sexual difference, diversity, women's rights, autonomy, and reproductive choice.

February 2001

What's Inside

DAWN at Porto Alegre
World Social Forum

Gigi Francisco,
Sonia Correa.....P1-4

Financing for Development
Mariama Williams.....P5-10

FFD Calendar.....P9

World Conference on
Racism.....P11

Trade and Sustainable
Human Development Report
Mariama Williams.....P12

WTO Updates.....P13

Resources.....P13

New DAWN Books.....P14-15

Campaigns.....P16-17

Steering
Committee Notes.....P18

Film award.....P19

Subscription Update..P19

WORLD SOCIAL FORUM

jeopardized under monetarist, trade and debt management economic policies in the South, was demanded.

The unequal share of women in leadership and political power at all levels of state management, and social movement mobilisations linked to continuing psychological and cultural resistance to gender justice, were also prominent topics of discussion. In dealing with alternatives, women raised the need to integrate concepts and actions related to addressing issues arising from the range of work across the production-reproduction continuum — sexual and domestic violence, reproductive health including the right to abortion and sexual difference; and for interrogating the interlink between gender justice and quality of life of poor households and people.

DAWN joined other women's networks and groups in these initiatives, led by the strong presence of the Latin American women's networks on MERCUSOR, reproductive and sexual rights, and on women's literacy and adult education. Other groups included the women's organisations associated with the following international movements: International South Group Network, Jubilee South, Via Campesina, ATTAC, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and the World March of Women Against Poverty and Patriarchy.

While the exclusive group that met in Davos for the annual World Economic Forum concentrated their ener-



"The best feminist moment at Porto Alegre was the demonstration against the international abortion policy of the new United States President, George W. Bush. The diverse and colourful protest reflected the feminist mode of doing politics."



In dealing with alternatives, women raised the need to integrate concepts and actions related to addressing issues arising from the range of work across the production-reproduction continuum — sexual and domestic violence, reproductive health including the right to abortion and sexual difference; and for interrogating the interlink between gender justice and quality of life of poor households and people.

gies on tightening the global grip of corporate finance and commerce, the multitude that gathered at the World Social Forum tilted the balance by raising the banner of people, communities and neighbourhoods above all. The participants not only envisioned another world in which security in health, shelter, education, food and other non-material aspects of life such as autonomy, freedom and spiritual development are guaranteed but, more importantly, exchanged ideas and strategies for a people-propelled transformation.

Social mobilisations aimed at arresting the expansion of capital and goods, such as those around the Tobin Tax, debt cancellation, and defence of community rights over natural resources were linked with positive community alternatives that included participatory budgets, self-help care, and community currency systems.

An important message that resounded throughout the meeting was the need to converge the political force of social movements, trade unions and progressive political parties. 🌸

DAWN'S gender-focussed perspective on development was firmly present in the planning and implementation of the first World Social Forum held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, 25-30 January 2001. The WSForum was a major grassroots social movement and NGO event with a focus on globalisation, economic justice and gender justice.

DAWN joined with Latin American feminist organisations to change the agenda to include feminist panelists in the main Forum. At the event, DAWN fielded a number of speakers and was involved in two discussion panels amongst more than 400 workshop events that drew about 7000 delegates.

With REPEM and UNIFEM, DAWN organised a panel on 28 January on "Transparency and Accountability: Gender Budgets", to discuss women's economic rights, the invisibility of non-paid women's work, and an analysis and study of national and local budgets. Panelists were Gina Vargas of Peru for UNIFEM; Fatima Pandey of South Africa for ICAE-GEO; Margarita Percovich of Uruguay and Carmen Zabalaga of Bolivia for REPEM.

A DAWN panel on Marketisation of Governance was held on 29 January, at which panelists shared the regional and global debates and analysis that emerged from DAWN's research on Political Restructuring and Social Transformation, and ongoing work on alternative development frameworks, the global political economy and the multiple impacts of the changing economic order on the state and its capacity to govern.

The panelists were Gigi Franciso, Regional Coordinator for DAWN-South East Asia, who spoke on feminists addressing the relationships between policy and power; Dot Keet of South Africa who spoke on relationships between the state and globalisation and impacts on women from the South; and Gina Vargas of Peru, who spoke on critical analysis on the relationship between the feminist movement and the state.

DAWN Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Research Coordinator, Sonia Correa, highlighted the main themes discussed in the DAWN platform

document published as *Marketisation of Governance*, and introduced the Spanish version of the book, which had a commentary by Atila Roque, Coordinator of the Globalisation and Public Policy Unit of IBASE.

Sonia Correa said the great plurality of voices at the Forum expressed strong critiques of the unequal and oligarchic character of globalisation, and feminist perspectives were heard in the major morning panels of the event. The best feminist moment, however, was the demonstration against the international abortion policy of the new United States President, George W. Bush. The diverse and colourful protest reflected the

feminist mode of doing politics. Women made Porto Alegre and the world aware of how the presence of Bush significantly alters the globalisation scenario — not only through his fundamentalist defence of the market, but immediately in respect to the sexual and reproductive self-determination of individuals.

It was now important to sustain the Porto Alegre energy and expand it into other spaces, Sonia Correa said.

Even while the event was running, the debate moved through cyberspace to link on internet with The Public Eye on Davos, an independent NGO conference held parallel to the annual World

Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. An interactive television programme linking the social and economic fora, *The Globalisation Divide: Davos-Port Alegre*, featured very few women despite late efforts to bridge the "gender divide." The predominately male debate became heated.

The WSF and Eye on Davos both challenged the legitimacy and policies of the World Economic Forum and NGO participants considered the activities highly successful, even though peaceful protest was prevented in Davos.

One of the speakers at the World Social Forum, charismatic Brazilian leader Luiz Igacio Da Silva, said men had not actually changed much, but women had grown and made the world less chauvinist. He referred to Latin America history with a long list of illustrious men, and only one woman's name. 🌸



WORLD SOCIAL FORUM

Plenary Address at the World Social Forum

by DAWN South East Asia Regional Coordinator, Gigi Francisco

According to UN statistics, the total monetary value of women's unpaid work around the world now stands at US 11 trillion dollars a year. But because it is assumed that "economic man" will take care of the needs of his wife and children, women's work in the care of families and communities is rarely counted and valued. This attitude can also deprive women citizens of the liberty and mobility to work outside the home.

The male labour bias in economics also leads to the widespread practice of unequal pay for equal work. We need to interrogate how practices of flexibilisation and casualisation of paid work legitimates the idea that women prefer more flexible hours and how the 'good mother' discourse is deployed in the discourse of economics. Why does the World Bank think that flexibilisation of the labour market will lead to increased wages? Why is it that, according to statistics, unemployed men do not use their freed time for domestic work?

The concept of social wage or living wage, however, does not substitute for social policy. Research on women's employment in export processing zones reveals that the improvement of labour-related social policy in these feminised industries took place when there was, in fact, already a decrease in the share of women's employment compared with men's.

- We must resist the World Bank's practice of targeted safety nets and insist on universal social policy for all citizens.
- Tax incentives given to trans-national corporations must be stopped and the same amount diverted to social welfare.
- We must resist the opposition of finance capital to social welfare spending and explore ways by which social welfare is guaranteed within a framework of fiscal sustainability.

Brazil's innovative HIV/AIDS policy was a topic of interest at the recent World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, prompting wide discussion and media attention.

Brazil's HIV/AIDS Drug Policy — putting people before patents

By Jane Galvão

Civil society mobilisation and political will to challenge pharmaceutical giants are hallmarks of Brazil's innovative AIDS programme.

The Brazilian programme is now widely known for its free distribution of anti-retroviral medication for HIV/AIDS treatment through the public health system to almost all those who need it. The drug distribution is totally funded by the government, despite some national opposition and international adversaries of the calibre of the World Bank and the World Health Organisation.

The Brazilian policy has been spotlighted internationally because of its disregard of certain patents and domestic production of anti-HIV drugs. Government expenditure on HIV/AIDS drugs has risen from US\$34 million in 1996 to US\$332 million in 2000. By 1999, a total of 47% of the drugs,

equivalent to 19% of the expenditure, were purchased from Brazilian companies. The other 53% of the drugs, 81% of expenditure, were acquired from multinational pharmaceutical companies.

A major element in favour of maintaining the free drug treatment is the impact of the therapy in reducing the number of deaths of people with HIV/AIDS, and decreasing costs of hospitalisation, savings amounting to an estimated US\$472 million.

One of the main arguments used by opponents of free drugs distribution in developing countries is the possible failure to maintain the complicated drug regime and the consequent appearance of more resistant virus strains. Brazil has shown that a developing country can attain the same rates of adherence as developed countries if the drugs and services are made available.

- GETTING INVOLVED

DAWN is amongst the few women's organisations so far engaging in the Financing For Development process. The process, leading to a high level global event to be organised by the United Nations in early in 2002, provides an opportunity for NGOs to push for major changes to institutions and frameworks for international finance that could have far-reaching implications for trade, development, gender justice and economic justice.

Women's organisations and NGOs concerned with reform and restructuring of global economic institutions must work to ensure the FFD process is not dominated by big business and state negotiators (see Latin America meeting P6). The pressure is now on the women's movement and civil society to become involved in FFD because the outcomes will be central to addressing their concerns of poverty, gender justice and economic justice.

It was as an outcome of the WSSD+5 process and mounting NGO pressure from Seattle and beyond that an agreement was made in December 1999 for unprecedented collaboration between the UN, the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organisation to find ways to improve the financing of development. The FFD event will address development from the perspective of finance, seeking to mobilise financial resources for the full implementation of the action plans agreed to at the major UN conferences over the past decade. It represents an opportunity to propose new ideas for global development paradigms to replace the "Washington Consensus".

Under particular scrutiny is Foreign Direct Investment, especially FDI for development in the context of the trend towards privatising social goods. The mainstream view is still for the entry of private and foreign capital on some social sectors such as water, housing, power and utilities. Another area of focus is Currency Transaction Taxes, with a particular concern about how the various taxes being considered for directing to development will actually be regulated and used. Emerging from the women's caucus at WSSD+5 is consideration of some international mechanisms to address human rights infractions, such as unfair labour practices, by trans-national corporations.

DAWN is specifically concerned about the inter-connections between public goods, privatisation and good governance issues. It questions the link between the neo-liberal policy framework and this new UN initiative: how can people talk of Financing For Development when the policy framework has and continues to erode (under trade liberalisation) public sources of finance for development?

DAWN was represented at the NGO Hearings held by the FFD PrepCom in November 2000 by Mariama Williams of the International Gender and

Trade Network, who also represented the Centre of Concern (see Page 7). Mariama Williams and Marina Durano represented DAWN at the second FFD PreCom in New York that began on 12 February 2001, for which WEDO assembled a women's team. The Latin American women's movement is working on accumulating expertise to extend their involvement in the process. A number of leading NGOs concerned with the reform of global institutions are involved, including the Centre of Concern, Third World Network,

SAPRIN, The Ring, ATTAC, Social Watch, International South Group Network, Jubilee South Coalition, OXFAM, and International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. An Ad Hoc NGO Working Group for FFD that emerged from the NGO Hearings can be contacted on ffdnogocaucus@egroups.com.

PrepCom and Advisory Panel

The FFD Preparatory Committee and a 15-member Bureau are chaired by Asda Jayanama of Thailand and Jorgen Bojer of Denmark. The intention of the preparatory process is to seek a new view of financing development using funding from both private and public sources.

In December 2000 UN Secretary-General Kofi Anand also named a high-level advisory panel of international financial experts led by the former President of Mexico, Ernesto Zedillo, an economist. Other members include the former United States treasury secretary, Robert E. Rubin, who is now chairman of



From Page 5

Citigroup's executive committee, the former president of the European Commission and Finance Minister of France, Jacques Delors, Oxfam Director David Bryer, former Minister of Finance in India, Manmohan Singh, former Deputy Director of the International Labour Organisation, Mary Chinery-Hesse of Ghana, and the former Vice-President of Costa Rica, Rebecca Grynspan. The panel has been given five months to come up with concrete ideas to



FFD MEETING IN LATIN AMERICA

Big business and ministers of finance and economics dominated the Latin America regional consultation on Financing for Development despite earlier information that civil society organisations could participate.

Only two NGOs attended and expressed concern about the organisation of the meeting, lack of information and the lack of NGO representation.

Earlier in the year, civil society organisations were informed they could participate in the five regional meetings held from August to December to lead up to the high level global meeting on Financing for Development scheduled for early 2002. The regional meetings were organised by the UN Economic Commissions in cooperation with UNCTAD. The contacts were the UN Regional Commissions and UNCTAD offices.

The Latin America consultation was held in Bogota in November 2000. NGOs reported that no information was made available, no media release made, and inquiries about where it was to be held were directed to the Colombia Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The representation at the consultation was at a much higher level than Latin America women's movement representatives usually see at regional meetings. This experience made them determined to become more involved in the FFD process and to build women's expertise so they can make more impact.

help poor countries that are falling further and further behind a global economic boom.

The PrepCom has already held hearings with the private sector and civil society organisations. There has also been a series of regional consultations held between August and December 2000 in Jakarta, Colombia, Addis Ababa, Beirut and Geneva.

The PrepCom held its first substantive session in November 2000 and the civil society and private sector hearings in November and December. The summaries of these hearings provided the background papers for the second session in New York 12-23 February 2001.

There will be a third substantive session 30 April to 11 May 2001, and a final substantive session 14-25 January 2002, before the high level global event takes place.

The UN Secretary-General has prepared a 64-page policy report with 87 action-oriented proposals for governments' consideration that is expected to be crucial to the February session of the FFD PrepCom. The report can be found through the FFD web site, www.un.org/esa/ffd



RELATED EVENTS

There are a number of meetings and events related to the Financing for Development process scheduled during the preparation period (see FFD Calendar). Amongst them are a Civil Society Forum on the FFD PrepCom and the 30th Session of the Commission for Social Development, scheduled for 11 February 2001 in New York and overlapping with the FFD PrepCom in New York.

DAWN Research Coordinator for Political Restructuring and Social Transformation, Vivienne Taylor, who is Advisor to the South Africa Minister for Social Development, was invited to speak on how the United Nations events in 2001 interrelate.

The panel included the Minister of the Mission of Mexico to the United Nations, Mauricio Escanero, who is facilitator for the FFD PrepCom, and Muhammed Ali Sorcar, Counselor with the Bangladesh mission to the UN and Least Developed Countries Focal Point.

Other sessions at the one-day forum covered an introduction to the issues and logistics of the 2001 UN events and priorities for the upcoming events from the perspective of civil society organisations. 🌟

No Magic in Liberalising Capital

Mariama Williams, of the International Gender and Trade Network, represented DAWN, DAWN-Caribbean and the Centre of Concern at the Financing For Development NGO Hearing, 5-9 November 2000, in New York and spoke on the theme Mobilising International Resources for Development — Foreign Direct Investment and other private flows, and trade. This is an excerpt from her submission and the full text can be downloaded from the DAWN website, www.dawn.org.fj



The existing institutional framework for trade and foreign direct investment has not led to development or a significant reduction in poverty. Rather, development is stagnant and many developing countries' economies are in retrogression, with the number of people in poverty growing. Much of this retrogression has occurred during the past 20 years, particularly in the era of economic liberalism.

It has been generally argued that the expansion of world trade since the 1940s has been primarily due to the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) system of free trade. What is often left unsaid is that during the period 1940-1970s, there was a great deal of attention paid to poverty eradication and the creation of full employment through careful regulation, domestically and internationally, of the movement of capital in all its forms. Capital controls, fixed exchange rate system and relatively easy access to intellectual property underpinned the growth and development of the OECD nations, which in part helped to pull along some nations in the South, particularly in the Caribbean.

However, starting in the 1980s with the reign of economic liberalism, initially implemented in Southern economies under structural adjustment programmes and now under the World Trade Organisation, liberalisation of trade, exchange rates and capital markets have engendered the dominance of the financial market over production and the loss of the economic policy autonomy of developing countries without the expected benefits of growth and development.

The reasons for needing to hold a conference on Financing For Development raise two broad ques-

tions. The first is on the efficacy of economic liberalism that now dominates the international political economy. According to the World Bank, economic liberalism prescribed a balanced budget, sound currency and free trade as the key to growth and poverty reduction. A crucial element of this is the liberalisation of capital, still being pushed as the magic ingredient for growth. The IMF is pressing for a stronger role over capital account liberalisation and other attempts are being made to create a multilateral framework for investment that would privilege the rights of private capital over the rights of states to make decisions about their economies — all being done in the name of growth and poverty eradication.

The second question is about the nature and characteristics of trade and investment, in particular capital flows and their role and contribution to development.

Certainly, there has been great wealth produced by countries with economic systems evolved enough to deal with the new framework; also a

handful of countries in the South, most notably the Newly Industrialised Countries. But growth and development have eluded most of the countries of the developing world, which continued to suffer systematic loss in trade and market share during the 20-year reign of economic liberalisation, becoming more indebted and dependant on aid.

We therefore cannot assume that the present wave of global integration is good or benign in its impacts.

Trade liberalisation and foreign investment have not done the job. The strategies did not work because

Foreign Capital Flows

- 500 largest TNCs control about 70% of world trade and 80% of foreign investment
- There are 800 Free Trade Zones in 102 countries
- Skewed distribution of FDI with only 12 developing countries receiving over 70% of FDI 1997/98, China topping the list with about 30%;
- FDI has replaced Overseas Development Aid as the largest provider of financing for some countries;
- FDI flows to the 48 LDCs is very small and the level of concentration is higher than with ODA; top 10 FDI recipients account for 79% of total FDI flows while 10 ten ODA recipients account for 32%
- Most FDI originates from developed countries; only about 10% (1990-94) from developing countries, mainly Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, South Korea, Malaysia and Singapore

From Page 7

it was assumed trade liberalisation was automatically linked to growth; that foreign direct investment is relatively costless, less volatile and inherently beneficial to host economies; that gender did not matter in overall policy design or implementation of projects. Where gender was included it was added to improve the instrumentality of policy effectiveness. Empirical evidence runs counter to these assumptions.

Trade liberalisation does not automatically lead to growth. Foreign investment is not less costly and FDI is not inherently less volatile than other capital flows, nor does it bring only positive outcomes. Other private capital flows are speculative, move rapidly and may lead to destabilisation; but foreign capital inflows lead to debt and repayment constraints.

While private and commercial capital inflows increased from \$25 billion in 1988 to \$227 billion in 1998, distribution, especially of Foreign Direct Investment, is highly skewed in favour of a dozen countries including Argentina, Brazil, China, Hungary, Nigeria and Thailand, while very little flows to low-income countries, especially sub-Saharan Africa. Capital flow is held to be unambiguously good for the receiving economy, but recent events in SE Asia, Mexico, Brazil and Russia have given cause to consider destabilisation from capital flows that occur in stops and starts and that may not lead to growth, but lag behind it.

Overall, the empirical evidence suggests "insignificant causal relationship between FDI and growth; the experience in East and SE Asia indicates causation

may run from growth to FDI and not always as conventional wisdom dictates, that "countries with high domestic savings rates attract more FDI". Resolution of this paradox requires analysis.

Today, according to the World Bank, 24% of the world's population still live on incomes of less than \$1 a day. Most of these people are women who constitute the backbone of the unpaid, and a growing pool of the paid workforce underpinning trade liberalisation and foreign direct investment in Export Processing Zones. Women are over-represented in the informal economy, sex tourism/trafficking, poverty and destitution and they are the major cushion for domestic adjustment.

Women's labour underpins export expansion; women shoulder the burden of SAPs, and women are the cheap labour underpinning the comparative advantage of the South. It matters for the effectiveness of trade and investment liberalisation policy whether gender inequality and gender bias constrain women's ability to make effective use of the opportunities provided, or are able to respond to policy initiatives or to engage in productive improvement in terms of land rights, credit and technology; it matters whether there is gender bias that impacts the availability of women's labour between social reproduction and the formal economy, giving rise to a pool of labour for low wage growth strategy being employed by many economies.

Increasingly, countries are told the problem is that they need to integrate into the world economy. All countries have been integrated and there continues to be trade, debt and multi-national corporations. It is

Recommendations

- International financial resources and trade should promote sustainable human development that is pro-poverty eradication and pro-gender equity.
- The legitimate political institutions of the country should determine the nation's economic structure and the nature of its institutions, not foreign investors of the IFIs.
- The principle of special and differential treatment in trade, investment and financing agreements and programmes should be respected and operated effectively.
- There should be more democratic participation of southern states in the enforcement and implementation of international reform, rules and standard setting; and active and effective participation of civil society in global economic decision-making.
- The rights and power of developing country governments should be retained to protect the balance of payments.
- International financial resources should be mobilised in the form of private capital flow and trade must be undertaken in a context that does not exacerbate the current trend towards privatising social/public goods.
- There should be more balance in the direction of international financial resources to broader groups of countries and for the capital enhancement of particularly marginalised groups, especially women, in those countries.
- Countries and peoples should not be forced to make trades of desperation, such as relying on the low wages and the exploitation of children and women workers, for competitive advantage.

not just integration but the nature of integration.

Open trade is being applied to all sectors of the economy, especially those in which developing countries have special interests, such as agriculture and clothing, and trade rules now cover future growth areas such as services as well as investment. The relevant comparative advantage of developing countries seems to lie in cheap labour that is increasingly female labour.

Therefore the operations and governance of the multilateral and regional trade system have significant gender dimensions. One dimension is the issue of the role that gender plays in setting trade and investment rules, the assumptions they are based on and false premises and mis-diagnoses of development and social issues that follow. A second gender dimension focuses on the two-way interplay between existing gender inequalities and trade policies designed to facilitate export promotion and trade liberalisation. The relative lack of attention to the role of unpaid labour in the economy, trade and investment policies have serious implications for women's welfare, particularly where policies focus on employment-creation without supporting social reproduction. Decreased tax revenue from liberalising imports and custom valuation agreements of the WTO will lead to increasing fiscal deficit, and the likely targets of spending adjustments are social programmes that chiefly benefit women.

It is assumed that trade liberalisation creates employment that is unambiguously good for women. But

there are health implications, and employment is based on shunting women into low-paying, zero-benefit jobs, as well as casualisation of labour that is reinforcing low pay in agriculture and manufacturing.

Trade rules that focus on export promotion by altering domestic regulations may also affect women's access and control over resources such as land, credit and technical assistance.

NATURE OF THE PROCESS

Attention needs to be paid to the nature of the systemic process governing the intervention of the multilateral financial institutions and the flow of capital, and the institutions be held accountable, their mandates revised and replaced.

If in fact we are to believe in the pronouncements of the World Summit for Social Development, the Beijing Platform of Action and host of international agreements, as well as the implicit and explicit acknowledgement of the IMF, WB and WTO that they were wrong and the system has problems — then there is an economic, political and moral imperative to move forward differently.

This requires a comprehensive assessment of the trade and financial system and reconnection with certain base values already laid down in the international system, primary of which is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and assorted rights conventions. 🌟

Calendar of some events related to Financing For Development

February 2001

12-23 Second Substantive Session of the FfD PrepCom

12-23 Commission on Social Development, 39th session, New York

12-16 UNCTAD Commission on Investment, Technology and Related Financial Issues, fifth session, Geneva

15-17 Global Change and Sustainable Development in Southeast Asia, Chiang Mai, Thailand

26-9 Mar Commission on Sustainable Development, inter-sessional ad hoc working group, New York

March 2001

7-8 WTO Working Group on Trade and Investment

17 World Economic Forum, China Business Summit 2001

19-21 UNCTAD Trade and Development Board, executive session, Geneva

April 2001

2-6 Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the LDC Conference, New York

16-27 Commission on Sustainable Development, 9th session, New York (possible start on the 9th)

30 April- 11 May Third Substantive Session of the FfD PrepCom.

30 April- 2 May Commission on Sustainable Development, 10th session, (First Preparatory Committee of the World Summit on Sustainable Development), New York

May 2001

2-3 ECOSOC resumed organizational session, New York

7-8 WTO General Council

22 WTO Committee on Trade and Development, Geneva

26 May - 3 June APEC Senior Official Meeting, Shenzhen, China

June 2001

6-7 APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade meeting, Shanghai, China

13-14 WTO Working Group on Trade and Investment, Geneva

The feminist movement and progressive organisations need to push to the centre of debate the issue that there are certain non-negotiables -- and these non-negotiables are the fundamental basic needs of people to survive, Vivienne Taylor states in DAWN's recent publication, Marketisation of Governance, foreshadowing debate at the recent Financing for Development NGO and private sector hearings in New York in November-December 2000. DAWN argues in Marketisation of Governance that the needs to be met within countries and those integral to the responsibility of governments include food security, health care and education. The international debate on governance, DAWN says, has been reduced to what kind of government is needed for the global market, and government attention has been diverted from providing for its citizens and directed towards securing foreign investment and markets.

Various speakers at the Financing For Development NGO and Private Sector hearings in New York in November 2000 made multiple references to the re-engagement of the state in the development process, though in different roles, in the context of understanding appropriate roles for government, civil society and the private sector.

Mariama Williams of DAWN-Caribbean/Centre of Concern attended the FFD hearings for DAWN, with Peter O'Driscoll of COC, who gave a brief summary of the hearings. An FFD NGO Caucus formed at the hearings networks electronically to share information and debate issues on ffdnngocaucus@egroups.com.

There was a strong NGO concern to integrate the cross-cutting issues addressed in platforms and programmes of action of the various UN conferences — Rio, Beijing, WSSD, ICPD, Habitat — into the FFD process, and to strengthen gender analysis. There was also a need to build on the specific concerns raised at WSSD+5, including reduction of wasteful and military expenditure, corruption, tax reforms and tax haven problems and debt standstill measures. It was pressure generated by the NGO community that made the study of new and innovative sources of financing for development one of the most significant outcomes of the WSSD+5 process.

NGOs expressed serious concern about the mainstream view that private and foreign capital can enter some social sectors such as water, housing, power and utilities. Many speakers emphasised the urgent need for education and health care policies as prerequisites for poverty alleviation and economic development. It became clear that FFD has to make more definite plans for the way in which these indispensable prerequisites are to be financed.

An NGO caucus working group on systemic issues called for "a bold, transformative vision" that would serve people-centred development, make financial, economic and trade institutions socially and envi-

ronmentally responsible, and empower citizens groups and workers' organisations to counterbalance corporations and institutions.

There were suggestions that in view of the fact that the Bretton Woods Institutions were inappropriate for Financing for Development in poor countries, the UN should take control and develop mechanisms to manage financing for development, for instance through UNDP. There was also a need for an international mechanism to look into infractions of human rights by transnational corporations, such as unfair labour practices

Thomas Niles of the International Chamber of Commerce acknowledged that there was an urgent need for coordinating all multilateral development actors, including the World Trade Organisation and International Labour Organisation, under the United Nations. He stated also that the ICC expected governments to make laws based on international conventions and apply them fairly, and for corporations to follow them.

Transparency, accountability, disclosure laws and "level playing field" were listed by almost all private sector speakers as prerequisites for an enabling investment environment. NGOs have consistently argued for the application of these values across sectors.

Almost all private sector speakers indicated that they recognised the damaging effects of volatile short-term capital flows and some specifically referred to the overreach of liberalisation policies.

NGOs strongly supported measures to tax currency transactions as a means to control destabilising speculation and to generate finance for development. In a subsequent letter to the FFD Coordinating Secretariat, NGO representatives expressed deep concern about pressures from the United States to prevent references to transaction taxes being included in working documents. They called for a fair reflection of views expressed by NGOs and others in the documents. 🌟

Where Gender and Race Intersect

As women's NGOs gear up for the UN World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, WCAR, to be held in South Africa 31 August - 7 September 2001, UNIFEM has released a background paper highlighting how gender and race intersect to especially disadvantage women.

The Women's International Coalition for Economic Justice, WICEJ, with which DAWN is linked, is planning to develop an analysis on the intersection of gender and race in the context of globalisation. WICEJ will meet in New York 3-5 March, just prior to the Commission on the Status of Women, CSW, meeting. The CSW will focus on gender and race and gender and AIDS.

DAWN is concerned about the intersections between race, gender and the multiple and varied impacts of globalisation. DAWN research over the years has shown the extent to which race and racism is used to exclude the poorest people and countries.

A UNIFEM background paper available at www.unifem.undp.org/hr_racism.html says the Beijing Platform of Action acknowledges that gender subordination may be informed and heightened by racism, xenophobia and other experiences. A summary of the paper's analysis follows:

Globalisation, privatisation, structural adjustment policies and the weakening or removal of social safety nets undermine the right to an adequate standard of living and the state's obligation to provide the means to achieve it. Women in recently decolonised countries or who experience forms of neocolonialism are particularly affected.

Women are disproportionately affected when, due to labour market segregation and relative economic disadvantage, they are more likely to bear the brunt of discriminatory and exploitative labour practices. This intersection of race and gender is amplified by economic rights violations, which disproportionately affect women who face dual or multiple forms of discrimination based on race, gender, immigration and other status.

The cuts in social spending and public sector jobs that have accompanied structural adjustment and welfare reform policies, for example, disproportionately affect women at the intersection of race and gender.

Employment opportunities remain particularly limited for minority, immigrant and indigenous women in industrialised countries, as well as for women in less developed countries. Export processing zones have high concentrations of immigrant women and extend a lower level of labour protection than in the mainstream economy. Even in the formal economy, women from racially disadvantaged groups find sticky floors, broken ladders, locked doors and glass ceilings preventing their access to equal opportunity. Wage disparities between white and black workers often intersect with disparities between men and women. Black women in Brazil receive salaries four times lower than those of a white man.



Where gender and race converge to make women of disadvantaged racial groups among the most powerless in society, rates of violence are particularly high. An example is in South Africa, where there are lingering effects of apartheid and colonialism and a high incidence of sexual oppression and violence

by white male farmers who prey on African women workers on their land, many of whom are migrants.

Violence against women is rampant in times of armed ethnic conflict, for example in Rwanda, Tutsi women were portrayed as evil temptresses and spies and targeted for genocide. Female victims of ethnic-based genocide face problems associated with sexual violence, such as pregnancy, guilt and community stigma.

In some societies, forms of violence towards women are justified as customary and religious practices. Such justifications tend to misappropriate arguments about white cultural imperialism, for example opposition to honour killings in Jordan and circumcision in parts of Africa are portrayed as led by "western" feminists. Some Islamic men appeal to the shari'a to authorise beating their wives and justify non-interference by the state. Health issues can be linked to racial discrimination. High rates of alcoholism among Native American communities in the United States can in part be traced to longstanding patterns of neglect and

To Page 12

From Page 11

of racial discrimination. As a result, women and girls in such communities suffer from disproportionately high rates of foetal alcohol syndrome. In some cases, women's ethnic or religious communities may deny them the basic right to legal equality. Certain ethnic groups in Africa treat women as minors, so they cannot contract, acquire property or marry without permission.

In other countries the state may deny indigenous women's rights to protect their sacred sites. In Australia Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal women's rights to protect a sacred site for religious purposes were denied when the highest court rejected their racial discrimination challenge to a bridge construction project. The government required the group to verify the religious basis of their claims, but the women refused to reveal their beliefs, based on the sacredness of these beliefs.

The UNIFEM paper makes recommendations for changes in reporting methodologies, information gathering, and working methods of the UN and other institutions to promote greater integration of gender into the effort to combat all forms of racial discrimination. WCAR presents an important opportunity to take up the recommendations. Another paper on gender and racism in Fiji can be found at www.isiswomen.org/wia/wia100/soc00013.html, featuring an interview with Raijeli Nicole, formerly of the Fiji Women's Rights Movement. 🌸

PEOPLE POWER PRESIDENT

A woman president for the Philippines, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, was the exciting outcome of the people's power victory which ousted President Estrada from office last month.

Estrada was forced to resign over charges of corruption after most of his cabinet, the police and military withdrew their support following his apparent victory in Congress to keep details of his bank accounts concealed.

People took to the streets for three nights to protest Filipino style against Estrada's tactics and SEA-DAWN Regional Coordinator Gigi Francisco reported a tense situation as the developments unfolded.

President Arroyo's appointment is considered a victory for people power, a bloodless revolution. In 1984, another Filipino people power movement known as the Parliament of the Streets was instrumental in bringing down the Marcos dictatorship.

President Arroyo, who previously served as Vice-President, has promised a competitive economy, good governance, and a new political system based on strong party programmes and institutional dialogue, not patronage and personality politics. Gigi considers this promise the "most promising", as the new president has declared 2001 national elections an open field that will allow new political parties to spring up. 🌸

UNDP Trade and Sustainable Human Development Report

UPCOMING

From Mariama Williams

The United Nations Development Programme, UNDP, is in the process of preparing a Trade and Sustainable Human Development Report, TSHDR, which will bring gender into the forefront of the global emphasis on trade as a means of development. The TSHD Report is envisioned as a 'value based report with the explicitly political agenda' of shifting the current trade mind-set from one preoccupied with market access to one focused on development.

The Report will explore three broad areas: 1) a critical review of the evolution and workings (governance) of the multilateral trading system; 2) the link between trade and sustainable development; and 3) the relationship between gender inequalities, gender relations and international trade and trade policies.

Production of the report over a two-year period will be participatory and based on the input of broad cross-sections of stakeholders in the South, including governments and civil society organisations.

Timing, Process and Content of the TSHDR

Both the content and the process of the report are intended to lead to alternative thinking on multilateral trading systems. It is hoped that this will serve as a catalyst for moving the debate beyond the current narrow emphasis on technical and legal details, as well as shift the perspective from market access to development. It will be an extension and a complement to the Human Development Reports 1999, 2000.

Producing the TSHD report as a consultative process presents possible openings for NGOs to have their voices heard in the debate. NGOs should keep watch for information on this process, especially through their regional UNDP offices.

WTO UPDATES

The WTO Special Session of the Committee on Agriculture resumed discussions in February 2001 on the hotly contested political issue of agricultural reform. There are two distinct positions at the core of the debate: the United States and agriculture exporting countries advocate open, market-driven trade in agricultural commodities, while the European Union and many developing countries assert that agricultural production must remain insulated from unstable global markets.

Among submissions likely to get strong support from developing countries is a proposal from India for a Food Security Box, a policy space for developing countries that lack sufficient resources and infrastructural capacity to manage geographic and economic vulnerabilities that put them at disadvantage compared with developed country competitors. The Indian proposal will combine benefits of subsidised agriculture and unimpeded market access to developed countries, that will guarantee food security sufficiently in developing countries and minimise their vulnerabilities.

The Committee on Agriculture meets again in March and then begins the task of assessing negotia-

tions and setting rules for the actual process of trade-offs and concessions. The pace of their negotiations is expected to be conditioned by the lead-up to the Fourth WTO Ministerial meeting scheduled for October/November 2001 in Qatar. Widespread disagreements over the scope and content of a new trade round that is expected to be launched at Qatar may impede progress on agricultural negotiations. 🌻

The WTO Secretariat has circulated draft guidelines and procedures for the continuation of the trade in services negotiations. They are believed to closely follow a proposal from 24 developing countries, but in several areas they restate the current GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services) text. A key issue is the emphasis on different modes of negotiation. Developing countries support the Request and Offer system in which countries seeking liberalisation make a request and other countries counter with an offer. The United States favours alternative methods.

The new draft places greater emphasis on needs of developing countries, reflecting their concerns at the Third Ministerial meeting in Seattle in 1999 that poorer members had been sidelined in the WTO. 🌻

RESOURCES

Financing for Development:

www.socialwatch.org

www.coc.org

www.un.org/esa/ffd

WCAR

www.unifem.undp.org/hr_racism.html

www.isiswomen.org/wia/wia100/soc00013.html

Rio+10 (new):

www.un.org/rio+10

Trade, Globalisation (new):

www.transnationale.org/

ECOSOC NGOs (new):

www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo

IWTC (new):

www.iwtc.org

Formalising After 55 Years

NGOs are seeking to extend the limited consultative arrangements for NGOs to the United Nations General Assembly — in essence formalising 55 years of existing practice.

A UN GA NGO resolution seeks to ensure that NGOs will be invited to participate in General Assembly conferences, prepcoms and special sessions. It also proposes to secure the rights for accredited NGOs to attend UN General Assembly open meetings, receive documentation and make available their reports and documents.

The NGO Task Group on Legal and Institutional Matters prepared the resolution and is seeking NGO support.

NGOs are asked to lobby their government and parliamentary leaders to co-sponsor the resolution; to write letters to Heads of State, ministers and UN missions; organise meetings between NGOs and governments about the resolution; and assist in getting information out to other NGOs. 🌻

IN THE SHADOW OF THE PATRIARCHS: FEMINIST CRITICAL ESSAYS FROM SOUTH EAST ASIA



The paradox: a greater political/ideological intimacy between citizens' formations and governments, but also a potentially uncritical relationship lacking the necessary dynamism of difference and contestation to give rise to the kinds of innovations and plurality of endeavours a successful transformation project requires.

A new DAWN book on the theme *Political Restructuring and Social Transformation: Feminist Critical Essays in Southeast Asia*, is a bold attempt to confront these issues, Research Coordinator Vivienne Taylor says in the Foreword. "The book asserts the need to catalyse action on multiple fronts to ensure social justice and women's emancipation."

There is a new urgency to understand and interrogate the changes underway in national, regional and global contexts from a critical feminist perspective of democracy and development. The views of South East Asian women are reflected in five essays in which they endeavour to present an invigorated, if not completely alternative way, of interrogating state, power and governance.

SEA-DAWN Regional Coordinator Josefa (Gigi) Francisco edited the volume with Stella Eloisa R. Marquez-Fong and wrote the first essay, *Disciplining Women in the Shadow of the Southeast Asian Patriarchs*, which examines the way the state has been influential in shaping women's needs and desires, and how in this viewing, women themselves perform a part in the legitimisation of the patriarchal state.

"The fashioning of women's identities as biological reproducers and symbols of the nationalist ideological and communal-cultural spirit....is at once a liberation from a previous identity of colonial construction and a bondage to another powerful and all-consuming political symbolism." The simultaneous interlocking concern for the family and the nation/tribe/community is deeply etched in the imagination of women and men in the region as citizens of the

state....the web of family, community and nation is an effective means for exacting from Asian women certain duties and loyalty in return for social security and cultural belonging.

Carol Medel-Anonuevo writes on *Re-Fashioning the Southeast Asian States in the Era of Globalisation*, reflecting on the shifting roles of the states in a growing process of transnationalisation that has brought both centering and fragmentation.

Maria Luz Quesada-Tiongson raises the essentially patriarchal nature of the state and its institutions which urged the women's movement to sustain its efforts at integrating women in government in an essay on *States and the Institutionalisation of Gender in Governance: Recasting or Re-Packing Power?*

A detailed discussion of the multiple strategies employed by the women's movement as it engaged the state from outside is provided by Cecilia Ng and Carol Yong Ooi Lin in *Challenging and Engaging with State Power: Which Way Forward for the Women's Movement?*

The collection ends with Lorna Israel and Maureen Pagaduan writing on *Subverting Culture, Power and State: Making it Personal*. The essay insists on the primacy of subjective encounters as sites of power and the political, and exposes the over-determination of political discourse by the state, which is but one stream in a diverse spectrum of experience of power and politics.

The essays were drawn from papers presented at the DAWN South Asia, Southeast Asia and Pacific Regional Workshop on PR&ST held in Chiangmai, Thailand, 8-11 October 1999. They present a range of feminist analytical approaches and theoretical musings that interrogate the cultural meanings underpinning the Southeast Asian states as these redefine roles and strategies of governance in the context of globalisation. Insights from these essays contributed to the finalisation of a DAWN global document, *Marketisation of Governance* (Taylor, V. 2000), which is available on DAWN website, www.dawn.org.fj 🌺

DAWN WEIGHS UP CAIRO

NEW DAWN BOOK

High levels of poverty continue to bedevil the effective implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action in the South, according to contributions to DAWN's latest book, *Weighing up Cairo: Evidence from women of the South*. The book of country case studies was compiled by the Research Coordinator for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Sonia Correa. The first round of these analyses was synthesised in a booklet, *ICPD+5: Moving Forward in the Eye of the Storm*, which was widely distributed at events leading to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session for ICPD+5 in June 1999. Between 1999 and 2000, information was collected to update the initial studies and further develop a Southern-based understanding of the linkages between population, development and reproductive health and rights.

In the introduction, Sonia Correa says that a critical constraint to implementing of the ICPD Programme of Action is that the overall economic and social situation of countries studied, which had not improved since 1994. "Besides openly contradicting the equity premises of the ICPD Programme, the persistence of extreme poverty and inequality is detrimental to women's health and tends to increase gender imbalance more generally. Social and economic conditions are particularly bad in Bolivia, India, Nicaragua, Peru and West Africa.

"Poverty also creates fertile ground for regressive religious and cultural ideologies to proliferate. Poor people — especially poor men — are easily prone to fundamentalist messages. Cultural and religious resistance is clearly an important obstacle to the full implementation of the programme of action. In some countries, advocates for the ICPD are continually confronted by regressive forces.

"Sexist culture and traditions and detrimental practices persist everywhere. Religious groups, particularly the Catholic Church, actively influence the reproductive rights agenda in West Africa, Latin America and the Philippines. In South America, pro-life civil society organisations are being strengthened and even minor advances on abortion are provoking acrimonious debate. In Nicaragua, the actions of these pro-life groups are becoming increasingly hostile and women's NGOs are openly being threatened."

"In most countries the research has revealed that quite meagre progress has been made in respect of sexual health, abortion, adolescent health, and especially sexual and reproductive rights. Governments have moved

more on the 'well behaving components of the ICPD agenda' and tended to leave aside those issues that require deeper institutional and cultural transformation. Action on abortion clearly illustrates this. "Another difficulty is that some key ICPD concepts still lack clarity. The concept of sexual health, for example, is usually simply translated as the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) or HIV. Everywhere, institutional inertia is a major hindrance.

"Privatisation schemes that are now being promoted have instead become major obstacles to improving the quality of health services. There are exceptions, amongst them the Brazilian Health Reform, which is quite unlike the usual model of structural adjustment programmes.

"Both the Cairo+5 and Beijing+5 negotiations were painfully slow and often stalemated because of the wide differences between the South and North on economic issues and failure to reach consensus on gender issues with the Group of 77. Despite the acrimonious debates and the insidious strategies of the conservatives, good final agreements were adopted. These did not retreat from the consensual language agreed upon in 1994 and 1995, and in some aspects even go beyond."

Despite their diversity, the case studies in *Weighing Up Cairo* demonstrate that since 1994, some real progress has been made in improving reproductive health policies and services. As DAWN concluded in its earlier publication, *ICPD+5: Moving Forward in the Eye of the Storm*, a semantic revolution has clearly been underway. In all the regions studied, various gender equality and equity initiatives are being implemented, reflecting the synergy that has developed between the Cairo and Beijing agendas. The new publication includes two additional papers by Sonia Correa and Gita Sen: *Cairo+5: Moving Forward in the Eye of the Storm*, written for Social Watch; and a UNIFEM article analysing United Nations review conferences, *Gender Justice and Economic Justice - Reflections on the 5 Year Reviews of the UN Conferences of the 1990s*. 🌸



Right to Know

A coalition of environmental, labour, social justice and human rights organisations is pushing for legislation that will hold United States multinational corporations accountable for their impacts on the environment, human rights and workers around the world.

DAWN has endorsed the coalition's efforts to ensure that at a minimum, basic US right-to-know laws are applied to the overseas operations of US-owned companies.

The international right to know campaign follows growing concern about globalisation and the actions of corporations that has been expressed at recent meetings of the World Trade Organisation, World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

There is an increasing awareness that trade and investment agreements enable big business to move from country to country around the globe, but place no requirements on corporations to operate responsibly.

The proposed legislation that the coalition hopes the US Congress will sponsor includes requirements for companies to report on the release of toxic pollutants; report the amounts of natural resources such as timber and minerals a companies extract from a country; inform workers about hazardous chemicals in the workplace and their labour rights; report their security arrangements with state police and military forces abroad; and disclose all company names, locations, facilities, subsidiaries and contractors abroad.

Until a year ago, the triple therapy that has made AIDS a manageable disease in wealthy nations was considered realistic only for those who could afford to pay US\$10-15,000 a year or lived in societies that could. That was the conventional wisdom. Brazil has shredded all the excuses about why poor countries cannot treat AIDS. Tina Rosenberg, New York Times

WTO Ministerial

Qatar has been selected by the World Trade Organisation as the host for the next WTO ministerial meeting in November 2001.

This is despite a strong civil society lobby opposing holding the meeting in Qatar. The campaign against Qatar as the venue highlighted its poor human rights record and said the WTO should not try to avoid public scrutiny simply by holding a meeting in a country that forbids public protest.

Eye on Davos

The Public Eye on Davos, the international NGO campaign, launched a strong statement at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, 25-30 January 2001, to protest the influence the private sector exerts on international policies and the negative impact on the safeguarding of human rights, social equity, democracy and the environment.

DAWN is amongst NGOs that endorsed the statement calling for democracy and transparency in international economic decision-making.

HIV/AIDS Drugs



DAWN added its voice to those of organisations protesting against the United States' efforts to use patent laws to prevent the production of drugs for HIV/AIDS treatment in Brazil and Argentina.

In a letter to the WTO Secretariat, the Brazilian delegation, US Mission and others, DAWN expressed its support for demands to ensure that patent legislation serves the right to life, health and human

dignity and does not constitute an obstacle for the access to treatment.

The letter drew attention to a New York Times article by Tina Rosenberg titled "Look at Brazil: Patent laws are malleable. Patients are educable." It outlined the successful production and delivery of affordable HIV/AIDS drugs, including teaching patients how to accurately manage the medication routine.

DAWN also joined HIV/AIDS treatment activist organisations to protest against the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association going to court in South Africa in an effort to maintain high prices for life-extending drugs. The protracted legal battle is an attempt to derail implementation of South Africa's Medicines Act, which is intended to increase affordable medication for people. Less than 0.2 per cent of South Africa's 4.3 million HIV infected people have access to appropriate drug treatment.

Biopiracy

The patent granted to Rice Tec for Basmati rice lines and grains is a blatant case of biopiracy, the pirating of genetic material, biological resources and indigenous innovation of Third World countries.

DAWN is amongst those who have signed on to a campaign to protest this patent and shares the concerns of the Africa group and others 'that plants and animals, as well as microorganisms and all other living organisms and their parts, cannot be patented, and that natural processes that produce plants, animals and other living organisms should also not be patentable.'

The evidence provided by India in the re-examination of the patent on Basmati rice shows that not only the grain, but the seeds and plants which produce the grain have been bred and cultivated over centuries in India and Pakistan. Women peasants in these countries have been the seed breeders and the selectors. They freely shared the seeds resulting from their innovation with gene banks and breeders across the world, including the Americas. It was through this free sharing that Rice Tec got access to Basmati rice, and now claims to have invented the Basmati rice plant, grains, seeds, method of selecting for planting and the cooking of the rice grains.

The United States patents authority has been asked to cancel the RiceTec claims in the interests of the rights of millions of farmers in Asia and the Americas, the biological and intellectual heritage of the people of the Indian sub-continent, and its own credibility.

Patents on Life



The Spanish Government is trying to pass legislation to allow granting patents on life. If it goes through, the legislation will provide for patents on biological material and genes from plants, animals and human beings as long as it is isolated or produced by a technical process. There has been no time for public debate.

DAWN signed on to a protest letter on internet calling for a stop to the draft legislation, in the belief that many Spanish people would reject it if they had the opportunity.

Quinacrine Trials

A Quinacrine alert has been issued to try and prevent human trials at the Children's Hospital of Buffalo, New York.

More than 30,000 women in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh were sterilised with Quancrine in unapproved, unethical trials, now banned because of Quinacrine's high failure rate and hazardous nature. This method of sterilisation carries serious potential risks such as birth defects, cancer and toxicity.

DAWN has signed on to a petition seeking a halt to the human Quinacrine trials in the United States, out of concern for the health of women participating in the trials and the fact that they may legitimise trials in countries with poor or no regulatory processes.

Technologies Task Force

DAWN supports a move to establish a United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force and Trust Fund. As an ECOSOC NGO, DAWN was asked to give views on formulating a strategy for such a task force.

DAWN sees priority areas of action and activities for a task force in ensuring that cyberspace becomes a neutral, unbiased, non-gendered space rather than the patriarchal domain it is currently.

In mobilising new resources for ICT-for-development activities and projects, particular consideration should be given to the needs of women in the South for the fullest possible participation in ICT including funding of Virtual Resource Centres/websites and list serves to facilitate electronic publishing, dissemination, advocacy, networking and such activities.

Space with appropriate safeguards should be established for the exchange of ideas about innovative projects for/from developing countries and resources seeking such projects to support.

Regarding new resources that can be mobilised for development in the South, urgent consideration should be given to the taxing of financial and commercial ventures/shopping and similar activities taking place through e-commerce, in order to set up a social development fund for poverty eradication through regional institutions.

Steering Committee Notes

DAWN, REPEM and IBASE took the first steps towards a virtual resource centre in December 2000 with a workshop/web training in Montevideo.

DAWN Communications Officer, Seona Smiles, from Fiji and IBASE's Magaly Pazzello from Brazil joined REPEM in Uruguay to work on ways to develop web sites and make information more accessible to women. Part of the planning involved discussion on ways to enlarge the portal so people seeking the web sites could find them more effectively. There was discussion also on ways to link the sites so that information and documents could be made more accessible in different languages.

The week-long workshop also produced a web site design for REPEM. The Home Page colours are a variation of the DAWN blue and gold theme, and IBASE's new site is possibly using a similar colour scheme. The web-weavers are working on ways to strengthen the links between the sites.

DAWN's new web site is now on internet and accessible at www.dawn.org.fj. It includes

information about the research themes, work at global and regional levels, and a full publications listing. All documents available in electronic form either have been or are being linked.

The Steering Committee will meet in Trivandrum, India, 2-6 April following a Political Economy of Globalisation Research Meeting in Bangalore at the end of March. The 2000 SC meeting was held in Bangkok, Thailand.

PR&ST Research Coordinator Vivienne Taylor is attending the 30th Session of the Commission on Social Development, which is chaired by the South African Minister for Social Development, Dr Zola Skweyiya, to whom she is advisor.

The sessions were scheduled for 13-23 February, with discussion centred on the theme of enhancing social protection and reducing vulnerability in a globalising world. Other discussion points were the role of volunteerism in the promotion of social development and the programme of work for the Commission 2002-2006. 🌸

CAMPAIGN

PREVENTING CORRUPTION

DAWN is amongst 81 NGOs from 33 countries that have raised a concern about preventing corruption in Export Credit Agencies projects.

A joint letter to the Secretary General of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development said that official export credit agencies had so far not implemented the OECD convention making bribing foreign government officials a criminal offence, although it had come into force in February 1999. Many export credit agencies had insufficient or no regulations in place to prevent corruption in the contracts they fund, while others had policies but did not adhere to them.

The letter puts forward seven recommendations. Most importantly, it proposes that official export credits or guarantees should be declared void if

corruption is discovered in the contracts covered by them. Companies involved in illegal payments related to such contracts should be debarred from receiving further credits or guarantees for five years.

The NGOs ask that export credit agencies should not cover commissions as parts of the contracts that they fund, should work together with borrowing governments in investigating evidence regarding corruption, and should suspend credits or guarantees while such investigations are carried out.

A new report published by the Berne Declaration documents that in Indonesia, export credit agencies guaranteed several power plant contracts that were rife with corruption during the Suharto years, resulting in over-priced power plants and unneeded electricity. When the new government began investigating, export credit agencies from Germany, Japan, Switzerland and the United States pressurised Indonesia to recognise the contracts even if they involved corruption. 🌸

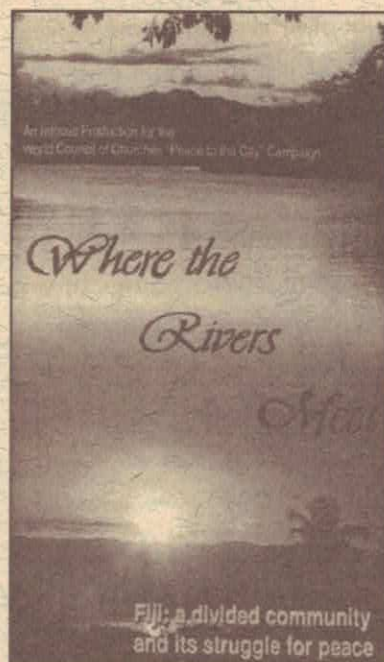
A UNESCO gold medal has been awarded for a moving documentary film on Fiji made by a member of the DAWN network, 'Atu Emberson-Bain.

'Atu was a Senator in the Fiji Government that was held hostage by rebels in May last year.

She made the film, titled *Where the Rivers Meet*, in 1999 for a World Council of Churches Peace to the Cities project which Amelia Rokotuivuna of the Pacific YWCA coordinated in Fiji. Michael Rokotuiviwa Preston composed and performed the film's original music. The film focuses on the efforts of three NGOs/civil society organisations in Fiji — People for Inter-cultural Awareness, Inter-Faith Search and Citizens Constitutional Forum — to re-build inter-ethnic and inter-religious understanding and agreement on a democratic constitution after the coups of 1987. Much of what the film celebrates has been undermined since 19 May 2000, but it is a moving record of the continuing challenges for civil society in Fiji to end racism.

'Atu is an independent consultant, researcher and documentary film-maker whose earlier films have included *Caught in the Crossfire*, a collaborative production about sex workers in Fiji that won best camera and best women's issue at UNESCO's forum for Pacific Women Television Producers. Her first film was about the struggles about indigenous mineworkers in Fiji, *Na Ma'e Na Ma'e (We Stand Until We Die)*, which was banned by Fiji TV following interventions by the Australian mining group that dominates Fiji's gold industry. 'Atu is also the editor of a 1994 book of women's writings on development in the Pacific inspired by DAWN and titled *Sustainable Development or Malignant Growth*.

The gold medal for *Where the Rivers Meet* was awarded at the first annual New York Festival awards competition for television documentaries by producers from developing countries.



Film Award

NOW ON
EMAIL

SUBSCRIPTION UPDATE

For current subscribers and new subscribers
who have not yet responded

The triannual newsletter of the DAWN network, DAWN Informs, is available at the DAWN website, www.dawn.org.fj, and can be downloaded for free. Including 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 and tell us which format -- PDF or Word -- you would like to receive it in.

If you wish to receive the printed version of the newsletter, you need to fill in the form below and send it to us by post, or email us with the required information:

NAME: _____

POSTAL ADDRESS: _____

Thankyou to
subscribers
who have
responded.

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.

Subscriptions

DAWN *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 or fax (679) 314 770.

Now available also on email, pdf or Word document, by sending your email address to dawn@is.com.fj

STEERING COMMITTEE

General Coordinator: *Claire Slatter, Fiji*

Tel: (679) 313900 Ext 2183/2184

Fax (679) 314770

Email: Dawn@is.com.fj

Former General Coordinator: *Peggy Antrobus, Barbados*

Tel/Fax: (246) 4374235

Email: Pan@caribsurf.com

RESEARCH COORDINATORS

Political Economy of Globalisation:

Gita Sen, India

Tel: (91) 80 663 2450;

Fax: (91) 80 664 4050

Email: Gita@iimb.ernet.in

Sexual and Reproductive Rights:

Sonia Correa, Brazil

Tel: (55) 21 553 0676;

Fax: (55) 21 552 8796

Email: Scorrea@ax.apc.org

Pol. Restructuring & Soc. Transformation

Vivienne Taylor, South Africa

Tel: (27) 21 6504221;

Fax: (27) 21 6854304 (h)

Email: Taylor94@iafrica.com

REGIONAL COORDINATORS

Africa: Anglophone: *Bene Madunagu, Nigeria*

Tel: (234) 8722-2340; Fax: (234) 8722-0929

Email: Gpl@fordwa.linkserve.org

Africa: Francophone: *Fatou Sow, Senegal*

Tel: (221) 825-0090; Fax: (221) 825-6533

Email: Fatousow@telecomplus.sn

Caribbean: *Keturah Cecelia Babb, Barbados*

Tel: (246) 437 6055; Fax: (246) 437 3381

Email: doccentre@sunbeach.net

Latin America: *Celita Eccher, Uruguay*

Tel/Fax: (598-2) 403-0599

Email: Repem@repem.org.uy

(Virtual) Pacific: *Yvonne Underhill-Sem, Samoa*

email: yju_sem@yahoo.com

South Asia: *Vanita Nayak Mukherjee, India*

Tel: (91) 471 441534

Email: Vanita@md2.vsnl.net.in

South East Asia: *Gigi Francisco, Philippines*

Tel: (63) 2 9272421; Fax: (63) 2 4260169

Email: gigifran@skyinet.net & dawn-sea@mc.edu.ph

You are welcome to use or reproduce any material from DAWN *Informis*, but please cite the source as DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era). This issue of DAWN *Informis* is available on DAWN website: www.dawn.org.fj

DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era)

School of Social and Economic Development

University of the South Pacific, Suva, FIJI

Tel: (679) 313900; Fax: (679) 314770

Email: dawn@is.com.fj

Website: www.dawn.org.fj

SECOND CLASS AIRMAIL