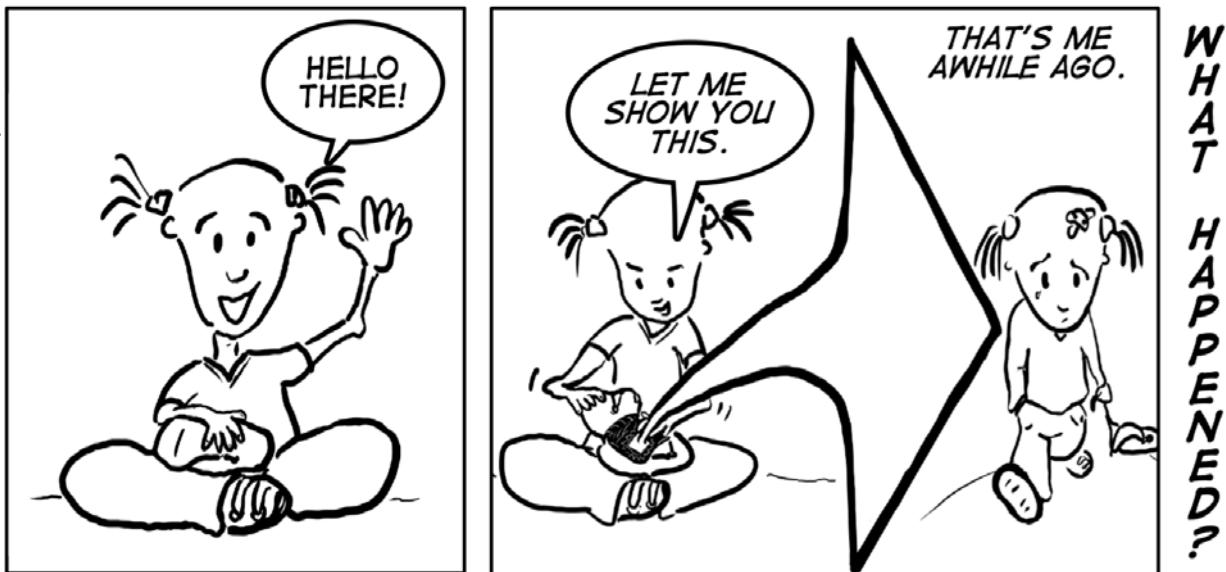


# International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament

May 24 — 2007

Comix by Beldan Sezen



see pages 18-19

## Girls Change the World!

Girl Soldiers and Their Children	3	Pacific Youth Charter	20
Girls Making Change in Africa	5	Kurdish and Turkish Mothers	
Young Women Have the Courage		Building Peace Together	22
to Resist	7	Fun, Food, and Activism	24
Peacebuilding for Youth	8	Stop Rape in Burma	25
Challenges for Iranian Girls	10	Resources	27
Training Girls as Leaders	12	Action and Solidarity	29
Girls Build Peace in Cambodia	15	International Directory	
Bully Me Not	18	of Women's Peace Groups	31



# May 24: International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament

## Child's Play

There is a tendency in discussions about women and peace to see women solely as victims. This is dangerous and very one-sided. All of us know the horror stories: rape as a weapon of war, trafficking, and forced pregnancy. It is critical to make this reality known, to do more to support survivors, punish offenders—and to prevent the whole vicious descent into hell that is war in the first place.

It is equally important to look at how women are agents of change for peace. Women are not passive victims of forces outside themselves—women help to create social forces. The idea of women's agency—of women having power and making decisions—is disturbing to many. Activist women are a challenge to traditional roles in many cultures.

There is another important aspect to this discussion, which is also often left out. Where are the girls in all of this? Girls are not solely victims. They are activists and creators, too. Losing sight of this also victimizes girls and young women, forcing them into a role, denying them role models, lowering our own and their expectations of what they can accomplish. Today's girl child is tomorrow's woman. You can read a few stories about how some young women are challenging violence in the following pages.

This year's May 24<sup>th</sup> action pack looks at how young women and girls are actively engaged in building a better world. It also looks at girls increasing role in combat. There are sobering statistics: of the 300,000 child soldiers today, up to 40 percent (120,000) are girls. Some are abducted. Some are raped and join because they understand they have no future in their communities. Parents in countries as far apart as Uganda and Bosnia, in attempts to protect their daughters, withdraw them from school, and some times marry them off to older men.

Some girls join armed groups voluntarily. Armed opposition groups like the New Peoples Army in the Philippines, Maoist guerillas in Nepal and LTTE in Sri Lanka specifically emphasize gender equality in their recruiting efforts. Girls may join because they want to confront social injustice and build a better world. Yvonne E. Keairns identified in her research for the Quaker United Nations Office and the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (see *The Voices of Girl Child Soldiers*, 2002) that living in poverty played a key role in girls joining an armed movement. With little food at home, girls joined guerrillas in the hopes of empowering themselves and their communities, or because they did not want to accept an arranged marriage by their family or be hired out as a domestic servant. Another important factor was girls' unwillingness to put up with violence in the home. Many girls Keairns interviewed were escaping sexual abuse or other violence at home.

What alternatives are peace movements proposing for girls? How are peace movements empowering girls? What are girls' dreams about a violence-free world and how can they be supported in realizing those dreams? We hope this issue of the May 24 pack helps to highlight the need to listen to girls and young women and to work together to create a better world for everyone.

Shelley Anderson

Editor: Shelley Anderson  
Proof-reading: Matt Whitten and Joyce Mumford  
Layout: Françoise Pottier

Copies of the information pack from previous years are available from IPB and WPP (see addresses on p. 35)

# Girl Soldiers and Their Children

by Susan McKay

Although global in occurrence, the situation of girl soldiers who become pregnant and have children when they are members of armed groups, particularly those in armed opposition groups, still remains largely unacknowledged. Sometimes considered particularly vulnerable and at risk, girl mothers, as well as most girl soldiers, typically do not benefit from formal disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs.

To understand DDR within the context of the experiences of girls and girl mothers, it is useful to think of DDR as **D**enial, **D**iscrimination, and **R**ejection. International *denial* exists of girls' significant numbers within combat forces. The many ways girls are involved in fighting are minimized, for example, by describing girl soldiers as "wives" of soldiers. Girls experience

This girl mother from Sierra Leone returned to her village with her child. Though she would like skills training and health care, she has not been able to access it.



Photo: Susan McKay

*discrimination* in their access to demobilization programs with their benefits, such as vocational training, education or loans. Girls are *rejected* because they are judged, stigmatized and subjected to social distancing by community members, even though the majority of these girls have been abducted and held against their will. (McKay & Mazurana, 2004).

DDR as presently structured is not a viable model for most girls and girl mothers because these processes are designed to target boys and men, to get guns out of circulation, and to return soldiers to a useful civilian life. Although women and girls do enter DDR, they do so in very small numbers because they are thought of as "wives" of soldiers who do not merit gender-specific processes, they do not know about DDR, and/or they avoid public acknowledgement that they have been soldiers. Instead, the majority of women and girls eschew DDR and return directly to live with family and friends. Consequently, working with former girl soldiers at community levels, whether in villages, urban areas, or internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, is now thought to be a better approach although we have yet to learn how to do so effectively. One of the barriers is that communities are often unable to respond in helpful ways. Therefore, girl mothers attribute a large portion of their difficulties in reintegrating to the families and communities to which they return. Thus mobilizing and preparing communities is a key component of reintegration support for girl mothers.

## Challenges of Reintegration

When girls return with children, the complexities of reintegration are increased because these children are born outside of sanctioned marriage and, often, of unknown fathers (because of multiple rapes). For example, most returning girl soldiers from armed opposition groups in Sierra Leone, Angola, and Northern Uganda—among other countries—have experienced repeated sexual violence. Besides the shame and the stigma that surrounds them because they are no longer virgins, girls suffer from physical injury to their genitals and reproductive organs and sexually-transmitted diseases and other health effects. Their children often have serious health problems such as malnutrition, diarrhea, malaria, and injuries.

Many issues are therefore raised when working with returning girls and girl mothers and their children. These include, but are not limited to, reproductive

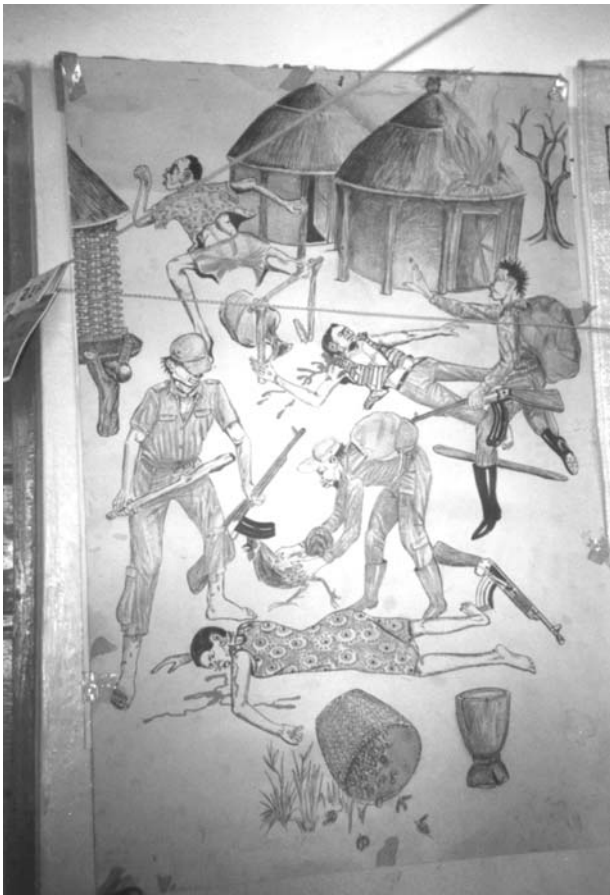


Photo: Susan McKay

This drawing, posted on the wall of a school in Northern Uganda, shows an image of the type of massacre that the Acholi people there have experienced.

health problems, poor infant and child health and delayed development, the involvement (or lack thereof) of “bush husbands” who are fathers of their children, and changes in relationships within their larger kinship group because of their experiences and the circumstances of the children’s conception. Ultimately, girl mothers may find it too uncomfortable to stay in their communities and migrate to towns and urban centers to head their own households.

## Women peacebuilders as resources

In countries where girls return from fighting forces, women peacebuilders potentially have an important role in supporting their positive reintegration. For example, women may be able to provide assistance in various ways, including with mothering and vocational skills. In war-affected countries where fighting forces engage girl soldiers, elder women—in tandem with broader community initiatives—can be supported in working with girls and their children when they return. But it is unrealistic to ask them to provide assistance without giving them training and material support for this work.

During an exploratory study in a village in western Sierra Leone, women elders said that they were willing to help girl mothers (McKay, Burman, Gonsalves, & Worthen, 2004). Women elders also identified their role

in assisting girls in emotional healing. Some of these women had participated in Safe Motherhood training and agreed that approaches to supporting girl mothers could be integrated into already-existing training programs. However, the women were also war-affected, and their “tools of trade” (such as herbs and midwifery supplies) had been destroyed or stolen. Therefore, they needed supplies so that they could regain their means of livelihood and could, in turn, help girls in the community.

## Key priorities

There are some possible ways forward. Some key priorities to better support returning girl soldiers who are mothers include:

- 1) Because formal DDR processes are by nature high profile processes which receive public attention, they are not meeting the needs of girls and girl mothers who usually choose to keep a low profile. DDR processes should change to be more inclusive of girls—which may mean developing alternative models as distinct from a male-centered soldier model. Emerging international consensus is that community-based approaches that emphasize involving community members are more appropriate.
- 2) The material needs of returning girl mothers and their children, including primary health care, schooling and/or learning economic skills, and basic community infrastructure requirements (housing, food supply, water) must be provided if they are to survive and thrive.
- 3) Girls should be facilitated to organize on their own behalf and to participate in developing programming that supports their reintegration.

*Susan McKay is a researcher based at the University of Wyoming, USA. For more information about girl mothers, go to [www.uwyo.edu/mckay](http://www.uwyo.edu/mckay) and follow the link to Bellagio Report.*

## References

- McKay, Susan, Burman, Mary, Gonsalves, Maria, and Worthen, Miranda. (2004, May). Known but invisible: Girl mothers returning from fighting forces. *Child Soldiers Newsletter*, 11, 10 – 11.
- McKay, Susan & Mazurana, Dyan. (2004). *Where are the Girls? Girls in fighting forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone and Mozambique: Their lives during and after war.* Montreal: Rights and Democracy. The pdf format of this book is available to download or the book can be read online at [www.ichrdd.ca](http://www.ichrdd.ca) (follow the link to publications).

## **“A long journey begins with one step”: Girls Making Change in Africa**

An estimated 135 million of the world’s girls and women have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM). Two million girls a year are at risk of such mutilation—approximately 6,000 girls per day. It is practised extensively in Africa and is common in some countries in the Middle East. It also occurs, mainly among immigrant communities, in parts of Asia and the Pacific, North and Latin America and Europe.

Sometimes a trained midwife will be available to give a local anaesthetic. In some cultures, girls will be told to sit beforehand in cold water, to numb the area and reduce the likelihood of bleeding. More commonly, however, no steps are taken to reduce the pain. The girl is immobilized, held, usually by older women, with her legs open. Mutilation may be carried out using broken glass, a tin lid, scissors, a razor blade or some other cutting instrument. When infibulation takes place, thorns or stitches may be used to hold the two sides of the labia majora together, and the legs may be bound together for up to 40 days. Antiseptic powder may be applied, or, more usually, pastes—containing herbs, milk, eggs, ashes or dung—which are believed to facilitate healing. The girl may be taken to a specially designated place to recover where, if the mutilation has been carried out as part of an initiation ceremony, traditional teaching is imparted. For the very rich, the mutilation procedure may be performed by a qualified doctor in hospital under local or general anaesthetic. FGM is reportedly practised in more than 28 African countries.

In industrialized countries, genital mutilation occurs predominantly among immigrants from countries where mutilation is practised. It has been reported in Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, the UK and USA. Girls or girl infants living in industrialized countries are sometimes operated on illegally by doctors from their own community who are resident there. More frequently, traditional practitioners are brought into the country or girls are sent abroad to be mutilated. No figures are available on how common the practice is among the populations of industrialized countries.

African women’s groups have led the struggle to transform such harmful traditional practices. Girls themselves have resisted FGM in many ways. Below are two stories from the Nairobi-based women’s group Family Mediation and Conciliation (FAMEC), in Kenya, about how young women are changing their lives.

### **You will never marry or be a mother**

“I am the first born in a family of five and from a polygamous family,” said Leah Sopiato. Leah, 25, years is happily married to Isaac Ntari and blessed with two beautiful daughters and a son.

“My father was a senior chief during the colonial times. From such a family, it was very important that we upheld Maasai culture to the letter including naming and rites of passage. My father passed away while I was still young and we were left under the care of my mother and half brothers. Later my mother converted to Christianity and had no relevance for Maasai rites of passage and in particular female genital mutilation (FGM) which she did not allow any of her daughters to go through.”

“This marked the beginning of my tribulations. In primary school, I became the most talked and mocked about girl because I had defied customs. No one would play with me, no one would allow me to join in their conversations. I was the laughing stock in the school. At this point I did not understand why my mother would not allow me to become like all the other girls. I was under so much pressure from my peers that I began to believe that my mother hated me. Everyone in my class made fun of me and taunted me that I would never get married nor become a mother. Whenever there would be ceremonies in the area, I would not attend as women would openly talk about me, which made me uncomfortable.”

### **Things Begin to Change**

“My relief began when I joined a boarding high school where I met girls from diverse communities. I wouldn’t dare attend a Maasai gathering. After completing high school, my community members began recognizing me and the fact that I had successfully completed secondary education unlike my peers who had dropped out of school due to early pregnancies and marriages. However, one fear still lay inside me, I will never be married by a Maasai man.”

“As fate would have it, I met and got married to a Maasai man who has been very supportive of my work. Initially his parents would hear nothing of their son marrying an uncircumcised woman and openly rejected me. After long negotiations, his parents agreed to our marriage on condition that I would be circumcised while

giving birth. We agreed to their condition but we knew all too well that I would deliver in the hospital!”

“I gained boldness to speak about myself after attending women empowerment trainings from organizations such as FAMEC on women’s human rights and Medical Assistance Program (MAP) courses. I have learnt to accept myself as an individual and still as part of the Maasai community even without the cut. I know the dangers of FGM and I am glad that I did not go through the rite.”

## **A Living Role Model**

“I started working with grassroots organizations, which have given me an opportunity to challenge Maasai culture. I have spoken and offered workshops and seminars on several occasions where I openly tell the women and girls that I am a Maasai woman who is not circumcised but married and with children and that it is a practice that can be done away with. I have been a living example and role model against this culture and have shown that without going through FGM women can still get married and have children normally.

“Whenever I give myself as an example it has had so much impact that sometimes the participants break down into tears. I like sharing my experience with women and girls and I have seen changes among the Maasai community. With my passion and dedication I have started a community based organization that advocates for girl child education and elimination of harmful cultural practices with our target being both men and women. We have also established peer clubs in school where we educate girls on the effects of FGM as we strategize on providing an alternative right of passage for the girls.”

“So far we have rescued 11 girls from early marriages and a few others from FGM. It is not easy for me as the practice is deeply rooted in society. There is also peer pressure from age mates of the girls who protest FGM with some of them performing poorly in school due to the isolation and trauma they get from their age mates. Further, rescuing a girl is hard because she is literally disowned by the community and you have to provide for all her needs if the rescue centers cannot accommodate them. This bears heavily on our family resources (there is only one rescue center in Kajiado District and it cannot take in more girls).”

Although change does not happen in a day, at least there are indicators for social transformation and a long journey begins with one step.

## **Could I Own Cattle?**

Ann Koissaba, 30, attended a three-month FAMEC training called “Bringing women’s rights home”.

“This course has changed my life completely,” she said. “Before the training, I knew nothing about women’s right to property. Being a Maasai housewife with four children, my work entailed taking care of the house, children, sheep, goats and cows (which are very important to our community). We Maasai women are trained to never have a say in the marriage. In fact I did not know that I could also own cattle. I had been socialized to know that cattle belonged to the man and a woman could only tend them. I believed that the cattle belonged to my husband, who could come to the *mwarata* cowshed, pick some goats and sell them without my knowledge or consultation.”

“But through the training I realized that I have a right to own property, including cattle, and by virtue of taking care of the animals my husband should consult me before selling them. I was taught how to use negotiation and nonviolence to claim my rights. I began by bringing to my husbands’ attention my contribution in acquiring the property we had and thus the need to involve me when he makes a decision regarding our property. This entailed communication, negotiation and conflict resolution skills that I had acquired through FAMEC training. At first I was fearful and I did not know if it was going to work but after sometime it worked! Now my husband consults me and I have a say also in our home.”

“Female genital mutilation (FGM) is still a big issue among Maasai people. It has been challenging for us to convince women to abandon the practice as it has outlived its usefulness. When I meet other women in the local gatherings (*mwethia*), I share the impact and dangers of the practice and also offer my support to those who have protested the practice. I also teach other women in such forums how to claim their rights through communication and dialogue. It has not been easy but it has been worth every effort especially when I see the change in my family and how I communicate with my husband.”

“I can say that FAMEC has brought a big difference in my life, family and community at large.”

*Family Mediation and Conciliation (FAMEC) works to empower women throughout Kenya. FAMEC, PO Box 3659, Nairobi 00100 GPO, Kenya.*

## “Young Women Have the Courage to Resist”

*The Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) is an international initiative that works to improve working conditions and support the empowerment of workers in the global garment and sports shoe industries. CCC believes that all workers—regardless of sex, age, country of origin, legal status, employment status or location, or any other basis—have a right to good and safe working conditions, where they can exercise their fundamental rights to associate freely and bargain collectively, and earn a living wage which allows them to live in dignity. The following is an interview with the young CCC activist Johanna Ritscher of Sweden.*

“When I was ten years old, my teachers called my parents to a meeting to discuss my behavior. Their problem was that I behaved like a *boy*, taking too much space, being too lively. For the first time I understood that I was not just a human being or a child but also a *girl*, which had implications about what I was allowed to do or say. Gradually, I started to understand that it was not me but the world around me that had a problem. Norms and expectations are used to order people into different hierarchies where gender, color, class, etc. determine what we are allowed to do and how we do it. Worst of all, people seemed to accept this.

“A few years later I got involved with the Red Cross Youth, with the intention of learning and spreading knowledge about the world order and how to change it. I started to work as a volunteer on fair trade issues. The Red Cross Youth being a member of the Swedish

Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) coalition, it was a natural step to also become involved with the CCC. Together with another Red Cross Youth activist I am, since the ‘Play Fair at the Olympics’ campaign, in charge of coordinating and mobilizing CCC support groups in Sweden.

“We have given a lot of talks, organized training events and put a lot of effort into street actions. I think we have succeeded in spreading awareness of the CCC and extended its support network. We have used alternative fashion shows and theatre to expose working conditions, role plays to show how the money is divided along the supply chain, ball games where the rules obviously favor one of the teams, and of course music festivals. Thousands of young people have become involved as a result and have helped expose irresponsible companies and put pressure on them.

“Although the global situation and exploitation of people and nature are getting worse, a movement is developing that is increasingly focused and effective. From a gender point of view, young women no longer put up with being treated according to obsolete standards—they have the courage to resist. Women are made stronger by their involvement in a forum like the Clean Clothes Campaign. The CCC is a gender struggle as well as a struggle for human rights.

“When I’m not a CCC activist I am still involved in the Red Cross Youth work on sustainable development and I study Political Science. I am also vice president of Sweden’s Fair Trade Committee. And I’m learning about the United Nations, since I’m going to New York as the youth representative of the Swedish delegation to this year’s Commission for Sustainable Development meeting—I’m so excited! On top of this, I have my love, my friends, music and movies to keep me busy. And I paint. I can’t keep all the madness I see in the world within myself, I have to let it out, and I do this through painting.”

*Reprinted with the kind permission of the Clean Clothes Campaign from Made by Women: Gender, the Global Garment Industry and the Movement for Women Workers’ Rights, edited by Nina Ascoly and Chantal Finney (128 pages, 2005). More information, and copies of Made by Women, are available from Clean Clothes Campaign International Secretariat, PO Box 11584, 1001 GN Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Tel. +31 20 412 27 85 (fax: 412 27 86). Email: info@cleanclothes.org. Web: www.cleanclothes.org*



photo courtesy of CCC

Activist Johanna Ritscher of the Clean Clothes Campaign, Sweden.

# Peacebuilding for Youth

by Naomi Bolderheij

Nine days. Thirty strangers. Fifteen nationalities. United on one mountain top, sharing one common ambition—peace. Though this may sound like an advertisement for a new reality television show, this description actually forms the backdrop for a peace training that was organized by the United Network of Young (UNOY) Peacebuilders in the southern Ukraine, in August 2006.

UNOY Peacebuilders is a global network of young people and youth organizations active in peacebuilding. UNOY's aim is to increase the impact young people have in their peace work by providing them with a network of other young peacebuilders, and by enhancing their knowledge and skills of working for peace, active nonviolence and reconciliation.

Youth are often under-valued as positive agents of change and as key actors in the peace movement. Though they often have great ideas on how to work for peace, young people often lack the support and exposure they need to develop, improve and coordinate their actions. UNOY Peacebuilders offers young people the time and space they need to grow. UNOY's trainings are designed to raise awareness and build personal and organizational capacities in order to motivate and empower young people to develop partnerships and projects in the context of peace and nonviolence.

Training seminars are a highly effective way to build up the skills of young peacebuilders while at the same time providing a space for exchange of experiences, networking, dialogue, and ultimately building bonds of friendship and solidarity among young people from different backgrounds. The 'Building Peace Skills' Training in Crimea is a perfect example of how UNOY fulfills its mission.

The "Building Peace Skills" training was open to thirty youth workers active in local and national associations, community organizations, youth clubs, youth councils and youth initiatives. Participants were aged between 18 and 29 and came from 15 different European countries, including the Caucasus and Russia. The venue for the training was a remote site in Bakhchisaray, Crimea.

## Camping for Peace

Normally the word 'venue' is used in combination with words like convention centre or hotel. This training was

held at an archaeological expedition campsite. Though we (the participants) had been informed that accommodation would be 'rustic', no one expected the hardship we experienced. Half way through the week we had to change venues. With half of the participants and trainers suffering from food poisoning, all thirty of us broke camp and hiked down the mountain in search of comfort and better hygiene. Nonetheless, the venue was perfect in terms of 'building bonds of friendship and solidarity'. This type of hardship is good practice for the accommodation one is likely to find in war torn countries.

The training sessions were held in tents, and included sessions on 'introduction to the field of peace building and nonviolence', 'intervention strategies and examples of different types of peace work', 'the role of youth in peace and conflict', 'intercultural communication', 'diplomatic negotiation', and 'advocacy, lobbying and campaigning'.

## Gender and peacebuilding

Though approximately two-thirds of participants were female, gender was not the focus during any of the sessions. So I decided to ask the other participants, both male and female, what their views were on women and peacebuilding. I was particularly interested in finding out how young peacebuilders felt women could contribute to building peace.

Most of the participants, especially the female ones, didn't feel comfortable generalizing and found it hard to say something specifically about women that didn't apply to men too. However, when prodded they generally felt that "women play a crucial role in the upbringing of children" and believed that women "should nurture the feelings of nonviolence and teach how to resolve conflicts peacefully", said Ismayil, a 21-year-old man from the Ukraine. Another participant, Rose, 18 and from the UK, agreed saying: "There's a lot to be done bringing children into a peaceful home and teaching/practicing nonviolence from a young age". She continued, "This is a bit controversial as we should really be re-thinking why it is that women are often in the home and expected to bring that support rather than their partners". A trainer, Celina (30, Argentina), said "Women listen more because they are less powerful in many societies. Men sometimes feel that they are always right as social constructions make them in charge or in power."



“Women have a natural way of seeking consensus, keeping the group (family) together makes it easier for them than for men to build a peaceful society” and so “women should keep this strength and not try to copy men’s behavior, in their professional and private life,” said Anne-Claire, 31, of France. One of the younger participants, Rose, felt that “women are more emotive than men and therefore can bring a stronger humane aspect to conflict” though she was quick to add “but I’m a bit skeptical about that myself”.

To sum this up, it seems young people don’t really feel comfortable stereotyping men and women, though they do recognize that women poses certain qualities (arguably that men don’t have), namely a strong human aspect and a natural sense of nurturing that could be very beneficial to building and maintaining peaceful societies.

### **Empowering women for peacebuilding**

After finding out from the participants how they thought women could contribute to building peaceful societies, I was interested in finding out, whether the participants thought women needed to become more involved in working for peace.

Two interesting points were raised, first, “as a first step to get the role of women as peacebuilders recognized in societies, they need to be trusted to do that work, given the space and financial support”. “For women to be more active they need to feel empowered”, Anne-Rose explains: “I mean, if the social structure is such that they feel that they can’t make any difference then that needs to change before we think about how they can do that.”

So it all comes down to recognizing the role of women as peacebuilders first. Celina believes this can be achieved “if young women are trained in dialogue and mediation skills at family, peer and local level” then inevitably “their listening skills and courage will get good results, so they will be recognized by their communities as peacebuilders.”

The second point has to do with the women themselves, and needs to come from within. “Women need support and training to become aware of the important skills they have so they can *dare* to play their role in society.” Women need the confidence to believe in themselves, and the conviction that they can make things happen. Women need to embrace their strengths rather than trying to be more like men and society needs to be open for them to do so. A change in social structures needs to be preceded by a change in gender norms.

### **A lifetime of difference**

Though gender was not necessarily a top priority on the training agenda, it was refreshing to hear that a new generation of peacebuilders sees a very clear-cut role for women in peacemaking. Not only that: this new generation is being driven by men and women, and more and more women are in the driver’s seat.

Clearly for now, UNOY Peacebuilders’ mandate lies with youth, without a particular focus on gender. Improving gender mainstreaming of UNOY’s activities and approach is on the agenda, however, and concrete steps are being taken to ensure that everyone at UNOY becomes gender sensitive. Celina, who is UNOY’s International Coordinator, takes this challenge very seriously and asserts, “I think we have to start by changing the way we do things every day, ourselves, here and now.” She also reaffirms her trust in youth, female or male, and reminds us that “young people are future-oriented and more open to discuss alternatives to violence”. She points out that “young people are more creative and still hopeful when adults sometimes have given up or are stuck on positions.” How can you not be hopeful when you still have a lifetime to make a difference?

Alongside various trainings and seminars, UNOY Peacebuilders has been actively campaigning for the UN’s International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence (2001-2010) though its global youth campaign called Peace It Together.

Peace It Together is carried out by a network of enthusiastic young people who believe that a Culture of Peace is not only necessary but possible, if we work together. The campaign is action-based and encourages the sharing of knowledge, skills and experiences to promote active nonviolence as an effective approach to building a Culture of Peace (defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization—UNESCO—as a set of values, attitudes, modes of behavior and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations).

UNOY Peacebuilders regularly holds peacebuilding training sessions in the Netherlands to empower youth. Contact: UNOY Peacebuilders, Javastraat 58, 2558 AR the Hague, the Netherlands. Tel. + 31 70 364 7799. Fax: + 31 70 362 2633. Email: [info@unoy.org](mailto:info@unoy.org) Web: [www.unoy.org](http://www.unoy.org)

*Naomi Bolderheij is Communications Officer at the International Fellowship of Reconciliation’s international secretariat in the Netherlands.*

# Challenges for Iranian Girls

*[Editor's note: the following article was written by a member of the Center for the Defense of Human Rights, in Teheran, Iran. The Center was founded over four years ago by the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Shirin Ebadi. In August 2006 the Iranian government declared the Center illegal and threatened to arrest staff if they continued their work against the state's arbitrary detentions and murders. Many believe the trigger behind the attempt to shut the Center down was the publication of Ebadi's moving autobiography Iran Awakening: A Memoir of Revolution and Hope (Random House, 2006).]*

This article is a protest against all the miseries, past and present, Iranian girls experience. It also bears witness to the girls whose new ideas about breaking old ideas and eliminating restrictions have been heavily suppressed and never honored.

Iran is a contradiction: from a political and social point of view we are an advanced country, yet many realities are also the same as those in Third World countries.

Ostensibly women and girls are partners in society. They go to university and have educational and occupational opportunities. But the truth is a girl's talents and capabilities are limited to becoming a good housewife.

## Paradoxes and complications

We talk about justice and equality between men and women's rights in Iran. All the media talk about women's holy rank and how highly women are regarded. In reality women and girls are seen as sources

for enjoyment, entertainment, and survival. The fact is we live in a complicated and paradoxical country which suppresses girls more and more by its paradoxes.

We live in a community which is neither traditional nor modern. A community with outdated cultural and mental structures that affect its concept of girls today. These structures are nothing but the results of habitual thinking which are unfortunately embodied in our belief as religion. That's why most people think the challenges facing girls involve the obligatory rulings about clothes and religious instructions. Yet in addition to discussing the correct or incorrect interpretations regarding religious obligations, there are problems facing Iranian girls today which aren't related to religion. These problems include paternalism, identity crisis, and a lack of security, especially economic security. When thinking of the challenges facing girls, we must remember that each girl is a member of a bigger society whose prosperity is not separated from her own prosperity. This article will look not at individual girls, but at the broader picture.



Illustration: Beldan Sezen

There are many examples from around the world of young women making a difference. Malalai Joya was 25 when she became a national heroine of Afghanistan. In 2003 she stood up in the Loya Jirga (the conference that was making a constitution for her country) and bravely spoke out against the war lords who were at the conference. She is now a member of Parliament.

## **To cook and to raise children**

Most girls have a lack of confidence and do not believe in their own capabilities. This is a big problem. Unfortunately there is still inequality between girls and boys despite all the advances that have taken place in girls' education. The root of the problem is paternalism, or the masculine norm in society. Despite all attempts in communities to challenge this, girls still suffer from the bias for masculine norms and values, both in their families and in the larger society. This cultural influence affects how girls are raised. Girls learn to act according to others' expectations and needs, not their own.

So girls think their purpose is to give birth to and raise children, to please others rather than themselves. This has been the reality for generations, despite many advances. Boys are raised, too, to think girls exist to care for them. A 15-year old girl is not honored with the same freedom and authority by her family that her male counterpart of the same age is. While boys learn to be independent and are taught they "are able to do what ever they want", girls are overlooked and ignored.

While we can't deny the biological or emotional differences between girls and boys, these differences should not be the cause of restrictions for girls. Yet these restrictions are raised and even rationalized as advancing women's status.

## **Sunflowers need the sun**

Like a sunflower which naturally needs to turn to the sun, human nature also needs to be cherished and cared for. Unfortunately it is the girl child who faces restrictions and prohibitions in the name of being cherished and respected. These 'do's and 'don'ts' raise girls to be dependent and unable to stand up for their own rights. We regret to say that Iran's governing rules don't stipulate equal social rights for men and women, so even in work situations there is no way for women to show their potential. Although there are many female engineers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, and other professionals, who do work beside men, most people prefer men for their professional services. Women have not yet been recognized and accepted as talented as males. It's clear that such sex distinctions are not only unfair, but also counter to human dignity.

Disregarding girls' abilities is a barrier to development and world peace. Paternalism must be removed or development and peace will not take place. There are other reasons for girls' problems. Iran is a society with an identity and a security crisis, and this too affects girls. There is much physical insecurity (including physical punishments both inside and outside the family, domestic violence, and rape). This is especially true in countries like ours where there is little legal redress for such abuse. There have been many cases in which girls

who have complained of sexual harassment in the streets, or oppressive parental restrictions at home, have either been ignored by the legal authorities, or been themselves accused of criminal behavior.

One cause of such physical insecurity is the identity crisis, or mental insecurity, of Iranian society today. There is a very high level of social stress and tension: unmet expectations which lead to depression, unemployment, a lack of opportunity, drug addiction, all of which lead to the break up of families and communities.

The main victims of such tension and insecurity are women and girls. They cannot raise a healthy future generation if they themselves lack opportunities. While recent years have seen many qualitative changes in girls' lives, society has not caught up with these changes. These changes demand new status and treatment especially from politicians. This has not happened.

## **Believe in yourself**

Girls need to be educated to believe in themselves. They need to understand themselves. They need support and education about their rights, not restrictions. They need to be included in social issues. This is the first step towards finding solutions to social problems like the Iranian identity crisis.

Raising girls to understand themselves doesn't mean being against men. It means raising girls to be independent and free members of society. If girls learn to respect their own needs, and spend more time on gaining an education and discovering their inner powers, they will be taking the first and most effective steps towards world peace. This peace means challenging all the present restrictions. Educating girls this way will have a great influence on a girl's personal life and subsequently on all of society because nobody can deny how effective women can be in developing the country.

Girls need to break their silence about what is happening to them. They need to reclaim their lost confidence. Society needs to support girls in this. Girls need equal rights with boys, including equal legal rights. Teaching girls their rights is one way to build a better society. It is a way to achieve social equality for all members of society, whether male or female. "All humans were born free and have equal rights and dignities. They all possess intelligence and conscience and all should treat each other like brothers," states the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Girls aren't excluded from this fact.

As the members of the Center for the Defense of Human Rights we try to highlight women's role in social development, because this role has been ignored. We need all girls' help to do this. People should not be oppressed because they are different.

# “Be who you are”: Training Girls as Leaders

by Shelley Anderson

Young girls are only concerned about the latest fashions and boys—right? Wrong, says Nisan, a group founded in 1993 by a 23-year old activist named Calanit Doveve.

The full name of the organization is Nisan Young Women Leaders. The name says it all. Nisan is a feminist, Arab-Jewish organization that works to empower girls, ages 15 to 17, in Israel to become involved in the decisions that affect their lives—and to work for peace. “We aim to develop a new leadership generation, which includes equal numbers of women, who are committed to achieving gender and ethnic equality and a sustainable culture for peace,” say Nisan’s two Program Coordinators, Dalia Halabi and Tali Raz.

## Different Needs, Different Problems

Dalia coordinates the program for Arab/Palestinian-Israeli girls, while Tali coordinates the program for Jewish-Israeli girls. Tali explains more. “Nisan began with a vision of a Jewish-American woman who wanted to work with young girls, both Jewish and Arab, in Haifa. She helped to organize a delegation of young women to go to the United Nations Women’s conference in Beijing in 1995. For several years the girls met in mixed groups (Arab and Jewish), but it was very difficult—there was a big cultural and political gap. The mixed groups were disempowering the Arab girls. They looked up to the Jewish group and felt they were backward, behind, and that they could never catch up. So we felt it was better to work in separate groups because the girls’ needs and problems are very different.”

“The Leadership Development Program (LDP) is a year-long program. The different groups meet once a week after school, though in some schools we meet as part of the curriculum. The facilitators are Arab or Jewish women, depending on the group. They are graduates of a training course where, with supervision, they learn facilitation skills, feminist issues, and about the Arab-Israeli conflict. Many of the LDP graduates are now facilitators! The purpose of the groups is to raise awareness about gender and to learn about leadership skills and theory, which also means talking about the conflict. Every group has to design and implement a project for their community. For me, it’s important to talk about ‘the other’, about stereotypes

and militarism. There’s lots of racism in the Jewish sector, so we try to discuss this and deal with it,” she said.

Each single-identity group, after preparation, is brought together for three days intensive dialogue about the conflict. Both women agree the dialogue is important and more problematic for the Jewish participants. “For them, the other is the enemy,” Dalia said. “Some Jewish girls have never seen an Arab.”

## Believe in yourself

Dalia, 35, is an Arab-Israeli. She experiences daily what it is like to be ‘the other’. “It can be schizophrenic,” she said. “There is a dangerous identity crisis. You do not belong to Palestinian society in Palestine, but you are not Israeli as well. You can’t speak your own language (Arabic) without a thousand eyes looking at you. You are an in-between sort of creature.”

“What is important for me is to learn and foster what girls can do for peace. If girls are at peace with their own identity then they can accept others more. My message to girls is—be who you are. If others have a problem with this, then it is their problem, not yours. We have to give girls a belief in themselves and in their national identity.”

Dalia is also well-aware of the problems within Arab-Israeli communities. “Arab society is very poor. There is a lot of domestic violence. Villages are underdeveloped and have very bad schools,” she said. “There is nothing to do after school ends at 1:30 in the afternoon—no community centers. Girls don’t go out. We see a wave of early marriages—last year three of our 15-year-olds became engaged to marry, and two dropped out of school. This is not legal—the legal age of marriage is 17—but if it is reported no one interferes. ‘Why should I care?’ seems to be the reaction.”

“These girls face many difficulties. There is no sexual awareness. Our program includes modules on love and healthy couplehood; the status of women in the family, the workplace, and society; domestic and other violence against women; and body image. When I asked the girls what happened when they got their first period, they said things like ‘I was so ashamed I wanted to bury myself,’ or ‘I couldn’t even tell my mother.’ It is very depressing. We have to be very careful when we talk about such things, because if the parents knew, they



might not let the girls come to the meetings. Yet it is all worth it. The girls become empowered and aware. It is very easy to recruit members!” Dalia said.

Working with Nisan has changed her. “I’m not the same person I was. I studied at university for five years and had no Jewish friends. Living as a minority, I built walls. I was angry and shut myself from the other. Now I’m stronger and more aware,” she said.

### **“I’ve learned to ask questions”**

During the school year 2004 to 2005, 194 girls participated in LDP groups, in after school groups in Haifa, Nazareth, Acco and elsewhere. Eleven groups of girls meet for two hours once a week for the whole school year. In addition to modules on personal identity; body image; and sexual harassment, a leadership module included lessons in team building; assertiveness; public speaking; stereotyping and racism; equality as a social value; conflict resolution; and Arab-Jewish dialogue.

The culmination of the leadership training is the independent community project each group is expected to develop. The girls use the feminist awareness they have acquired to identify a problem in their local community, and apply the leadership and management skills they learned to address the problem. For example, at a high school in Kiryat Bialik, the girls organized two projects. The first took place on March 8, International Women’s Day, when the girls conducted an awareness raising campaign throughout the school on stopping violence against women, which included making presentations in all their 9<sup>th</sup> grade classes on the topic. The same group organized a Tolerance Day, when they invited live bands to play in the school auditorium in order to celebrate cultural diversity. In

Nazareth, the young leaders decided to address the issue of improving communication between adolescent girls and their mothers. The leaders hosted meetings with older women in seven private homes throughout the city, inviting mothers, relatives and neighbors to come and talk together. Another group organized an activity day for the children of women in a battered women’s shelter.

For both Dalia and Tali, what counts most is the increase in self-esteem they see in the participants. “This group has given me a lot of self-confidence!” said Amal, 16. “I began to love myself!” “I have learned to respect other’s opinions, to listen and to find ways for cooperation with others,” agrees Sojud, 15. “I’ve learned to ask questions all the time, and never to accept the answer, ‘this is the way it is,’” explained a young woman from a Haifa high school.

Nisan wants to conduct more follow-up and expand to working with female university students. In 2005 it conducted a pilot program with 16 university students, nine Arab and seven Jews. Participants met 14 times for four hours each and learned about women’s leadership for peace. “This class has really opened my eyes to what living in Israel is about. I have learned more than I could have imagined,” said one participant. Another agreed: “This class has introduced me to many issues that I never knew about, maybe because I have always been taught one side of the story or maybe because I never spoke about politics with Palestinian Israelis before, but either way I am very happy that I have now been enlightened.”

### **Women belong in the kitchen**

Nisan is also very interested in gender awareness for boys as well as girls. In 2005 Dalia introduced a version

of the Leadership Development Program designed for both boys and girls. The group of nine girls and seven teenage boys examined different social issues, such as gender stereotyping, domestic violence and healthy couplehood, and were challenged to look at power relations between men and women.

“All my attempts to awaken the teenagers’ awareness regarding gender stereotypes met with confrontation,” said Dalia. “It was difficult for the teenagers to open themselves to interpretations that contradict their society’s preconceived notions.”

“A couple of the boys did express revolutionary ideas. One declared that a woman has the right to do whatever a man does, but when asked if this is true regarding his sister, he automatically said ‘No!’ He explained that his sister’s achieving equal social rights isn’t only dependent upon him; if society doesn’t permit it, it won’t happen.”

“None of the girls permitted herself to experiment with expressing unconventional ideas and all appeared afraid to express opinions contrary to their society’s codes. They seemed busy trying to please the boys with acceptable opinions. For example, one of the girls stated that the place of the woman is in the kitchen, and that a man who does the dishes isn’t a man.”

Based on this experience, Nisan remains convinced of the need for a program that fosters feminist, egalitarian and pluralistic values in both boys and girls, but that such a program would need to be carried out in two stages. In the first stage, girls and boys should meet in separate groups in order to sensitize each group to issues such as gender stereotyping and power relations, and in order to empower the girls. Afterwards, the groups should be brought together for dialogue.

As Program Coordinators, Dalia and Tali are also responsible for organizing staff workshops for the LDP group facilitators. These meetings may involve advance training in methods for facilitating feminist and Arab-Jewish dialogue among teen age girls.

### **Military service means women’s equality?**

Nisan’s feminist approach is critical to Tali. “There is this illusion in Jewish society that we don’t need feminism. Women can date, can go to university, so why feminism? Feminism is okay for Arab society because they’re primitive. So this is the first challenge—to show how feminism is as important in Jewish society as in Arab society. If you look at the high rates of domestic violence, job discrimination and sexual harassment, if you look at girls’ low self-esteem and low self-confidence, you see Jewish society needs feminism.”



NISAN girls discuss militarization. A poster selling condoms blatantly shows the militarization of Israeli society.

“There is also a big myth in Jewish society that military service for women is a sign of liberalism. Many of the facilitators are unaware at first of feminism as anti-militarism. They think women should do everything like men. Lots of young Jewish girls say they want to be fighters, they want to do their military service. I ask them why and they are shocked—no one has ever asked them this before. The Arab girls are sometimes jealous of this—they think military service, too, is one more example of Jewish girls’ freedom. But then the girls come back from military service with horrible experiences of sexual harassment and discrimination.”

Both Tali and Dalia see women’s equality as a necessary building block for a culture of peace. “It is difficult for me,” said Tali, “to work to challenge the system from inside.” For her, feminism is about making injustice visible and fighting it. She wants Jewish girls to be aware of discrimination –both discrimination against themselves and against others. “I want Jewish girls to be aware and sensitive. Israeli society is 20 percent Arab. We have many Ethiopians and other minorities. But they aren’t seen—they are invisible. There is a big need to be critical in Israeli society.”

*Nisan Young Women Leaders, PO Box 3185 Nazareth 16130, Israel. Tel: +972 4 6561604; fax +972 4 6081131. Email: info@nisan.org.il Web: www.nisan.org.il*

# Girls Build Peace in Cambodia

by Stephanie Guyer-Stevens

**Son Sum:** I was brought to a house with many other women and told to stay. A man told us ‘We brought you here to work.’ I asked other women, ‘What kind of work will I do? They said, ‘The pimp took money for you; you have been sold to a brothel.’”

Cambodia is on the front line of international efforts to stop human trafficking. This small country is still rebuilding after a brutal genocide and years of war.

Looking at Cambodia’s history through a gender lens provides an opportunity to understand trafficking and its expansion around the world. Sadly, the model Cambodia provides is transferable to any point in the globe. To understand girls in modern Cambodia one must understand recent Cambodian history.

**Son Sum:** “When I was being taken to another brothel, the driver tried to rape me in the car. He threatened me with a knife. So I tried to attack him. He threw me against the door. The car window was open, and I fell through and ran away. I didn’t know where I was. I walked all night long. In the morning I came to a market on the Thai side of the border. I saw one of my neighbors there. She asked me why I was so dirty. She took me back to Cambodia.”

Between 1975-79, the Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, controlled Cambodia and was responsible for the deaths, by execution, starvation and torture, of an estimated two million people. They systematically searched out and killed everyone who worked for the government, all Buddhist monks, any teachers or intellectuals, anyone who had glasses or owned a wristwatch.

The genocide was largely overlooked by the rest of the world. It was near the end of the US war in Vietnam and most American politicians wanted to avoid any more action in Southeast Asia. The Khmer Rouge also quickly closed Cambodia’s borders, so news reports had to rely on firsthand accounts by the few people able to escape into neighboring countries. International news services refused to give credence to their reports. News of Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge went unheard.

In 1979 Vietnamese forces moved in and took control of the country. Thousands of Cambodians moved to

refugee camps along the Thai and Vietnamese borders. The country was shattered—the Khmer Rouge had bombed roads and mined rice fields throughout Cambodia, disabled all the internal infrastructures, and made it almost impossible for people to go back to earning money by farming rice, the foundation of Cambodian economy. By eliminating anyone who understood how to create a functioning government, they made Cambodia entirely dependent on the international community to begin reconstruction.

By killing people who simply owned a musical instrument, and by killing Buddhist monks and nuns, they also destroyed the country’s rich cultural heritage. A whole generation of young people were alienated from the traditional Buddhist religion and its stabilizing role in the community.

The Khmer Rouge legacy left a country populated mostly by women and children, a cynicism among its youth, and a cultural void.

**Sin Li:** “Before Pol Pot men had power over women; they also respected women, but not now. Violence has increased since then. Sometimes being poor makes men feel powerless, and the men look for power—so they control the women.

“Before the Pol Pot regime, woman depended on the men. But now women need a job to support the family. Before, the daughter would never think of finding an outside job. But now children need to look for work on their own. The children work away from the eye of the family. The family doesn’t know what happens to them. The children have to stand by themselves – wrong or right, they decide by themselves.”

Thousands of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have been established to help rebuild the country. Cambodia has seen huge progress. But perhaps the most devastating “assistance” came from the United Nations (UN) mission in Cambodia, or UNTAC, who arrived as an international peacekeeping force in 1992. UNTAC succeeded in beginning rebuilding, but the UNTAC troops also introduced a huge market for prostitution.

**Thyda:** “The year I was born my father died. My mother gave me to my aunt in the country. Every month, my mother visited me. But she never gave my aunt any money to help support me. Last year, I was 12 years old. My mother said ‘Live with me. I can find an English school for you in Phnom Penh.’”



Photo: Stephanie Guyer-Stevens

Cambodian girl in market place

“I had wanted to study English. But my aunt warned me, ‘Don’t go with your mother. I am worried she will sell you.’ But I don’t believe her. So I go with my mother. My mother takes me to a lady’s house. The lady asks, ‘Is this your daughter? Oh she’s very beautiful. Yeah, can do, can do.’ I don’t know what she means. They take me to a room, and make me to take off my clothes so they can check my vagina to see if I’m a virgin. They cut my hair and make-up my face.”

Journalist Elizabeth Becker (author of *When the War was Over, a Modern History of Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge*) told *Outer Voices* (a multi-media documentary project dedicated to listening to and sharing the voices of grassroots women activists from the Pacific Islands and the Asian Pacific Rim):

“When I first came [to Cambodia] as a war correspondent in 1972, you first started to see prostitution when families and villages were being bombed in the countryside. And along the routes into the capital city of Phnom Penh, you’d see pimps, soldiers, stopping refugee carts, stopping cars, and buying young women. The beginning of that kind of prostitution that was so common in Vietnam but was not common in Cambodia. You found a population where there were vastly more women than men. The men had been decimated.

“The true professional prostitution came into being when the peace accords were signed and foreigners arrived with a lot of money, and it was what you’ve read about in all peacekeeping operations that now the

UN is finally starting to address, where foreign soldiers, foreign bureaucrats, come to a country, with them the contractors, the business people and a country that was exceedingly poor is suddenly open to the wider world, and prostitution flourishes.”

Cambodians fled to camps along the Thai and Vietnamese borders. Among the camp residents on the Thai border was Chanthol Oung, who used her time in the camp to complete her law degree. Moved by the people’s suffering, she vowed to stop violence in Cambodia. She founded the Cambodian Women’s Crisis Center (CWCC) in 1997. The Center began with four staff people. It now has 80 full-time workers and 300 volunteers.

“In the first year we provided shelter to more than 600 women,” she said. “Last year we provided shelter and services to around 1700 cases. We have three regional shelters and are able to accommodate around 150 women and girls per day.

“Before I founded CWCC I was working with the UN Center for Human Rights. I also worked for the Human Rights Task Force on Cambodia, I coordinated sixteen NGOs, working on women’s rights, and conducted research on women’s issues. We found domestic violence, trafficking, and rape to be a severe problem, and victims were getting no assistance from the government. There were no shelters, and no legal assistance.

“We train the police on how to combat violence against women. Most policemen came from the army. They do not know about the law, and what constitutes crime. So we train them on criminal law, criminal procedure, and what the police role should be in fighting violence against women,” Chanthol concluded.

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Cambodia are creating the social infrastructure for the country. Services that would usually be provided by a government are handled by the NGOs because of the government’s inability to strategize and fund these services. Yet factionalizing among NGOs occurs where the networks aren’t developed and sustained, and NGOs have no role in the political process. Ministers of parliament often shun them when NGOs criticize politicians.

Nevertheless, Cambodian culture is reviving, and monasteries and convents are active once again. Whether they will ever fully return to their central stabilizing role in the culture is hard to predict.

**Keap Noun:** “During the years of Pol Pot no one could practice Buddhism. No one could go to the pagoda and worship Buddha. All the pagodas became a place to keep pigs. Now we are able to practice Buddhism again. Buddhists believe people cannot be sold; people are



not animals. Anybody that sells people is a monster. The society does not need him. On the government level, there's no real way for the Buddhists to act. But on the local level, in the community, when people come together at the pagoda, then it's possible to speak as Buddhists about stopping sex trafficking."

This is the situation faced by young Cambodians today. All the girls we interviewed for the "Girls From Cambodia" documentary had been trafficked into prostitution. All had escaped. We met some of them in CWCC's shelters, and some in their homes, where they had returned to their villages, or where they were making new homes.

None of them consider themselves peacemakers, or leaders of any kind. They are simply girls, many of them very young, who have been forced into prostitution. None of the girls we met expected any pity. Although they were often sad and many were unable to return to their homes because of the stigma of being HIV positive, or because everyone knew what had happened to them, they were looking forward to the future. What could they become? What could they begin to do for themselves?

The life of an activist is something far beyond what any of them might imagine. But these young girls are living examples of peacemaking that the rest of us are lucky to learn from. Their stories of unbelievable suffering are hard to match with these seemingly frail teenagers who tell them as calmly as if talking about their daily chores.

As I gather my courage to get through my daily tasks I always have in mind Chen Souk Ha, who escaped from a brothel in Malaysia, only to be put in jail, pregnant with a customer's child, but who, over a year later, escaped, because of her drive to be home with her children: "The police raided the brothel, and I was in jail for eight months. My husband found out and

contacted a Malaysian human rights organization. They had me released, and put on a plane back to Cambodia. CWCC picked me up at the airport, and took me to the shelter. I received sewing skills and literacy training. I stayed for more than two months. Then, a few months later, I got \$120 from CWCC to open a small grocery store. Meanwhile, CWCC talked with my husband. He agreed to stop being abusive. So I decided to go back with him," she said.

I have in mind Chanthol Oung, who faces danger every day simply by going to her office, a potential target for traffickers who profit from human suffering.

"For instance, one case the police rescued 23 Vietnamese girls and sent them to us," she said. "Immediately a gangster came to us with guns. He said the girls must come back. He said they bought these girls so the girls owe them that money. The girls said they didn't want to go back. So we called the police. The police came, and warned the gangster to leave. I thought the police should arrest them right then! No need to warn them! But we were careful and tried to be very sweet—because the gangster is dangerous.

"When we see what has been done to these women—they are injured, they are beaten—than we feel angry. We don't care so much about our security. We have to confront these perpetrators. If all of us were scared, then the perpetrator would feel free to do what he wanted. You know, when you work with the victim and you see the suffering, fear leaves you. You become brave enough to protect the victim."

*Stephanie Guyer-Stevens is founder of Outer Voices. Quotations in this article are from the documentary 'Girls from Cambodia'. Outer Voices, 1020 Gravenstein Hwy. S., #150, Sebastopol, CA 95472, USA. Tel. +1 415 497 0563; fax +1 707 829 9289. email: info@outervoices.org; web: www.outervoices.org.*

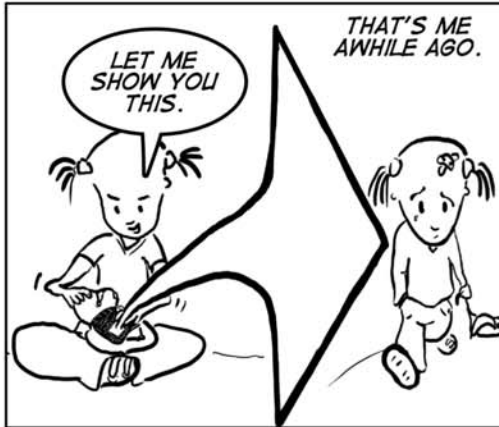
Illustration: Beldan Sezen



Another example of girls' activism: Maya is one of many girls in Nepal who participate in the Bal Shanti Children's Peace Program. There are girl child peace camps and trainings where girls can learn how to handle conflict nonviolently. Girls organize peace marches and collected signatures from other children for peace, and paint murals that show their dreams of peace.

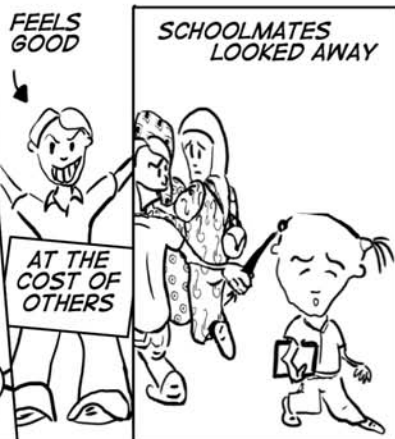
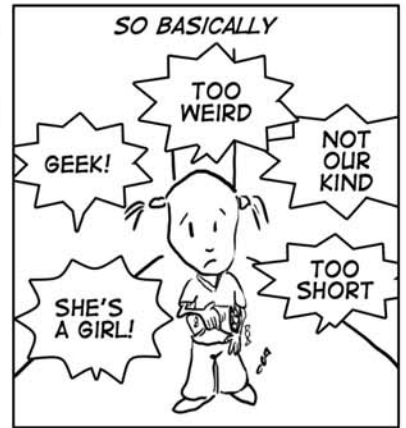
# BULLY ME NOT!

BY BELDAN SEZEN



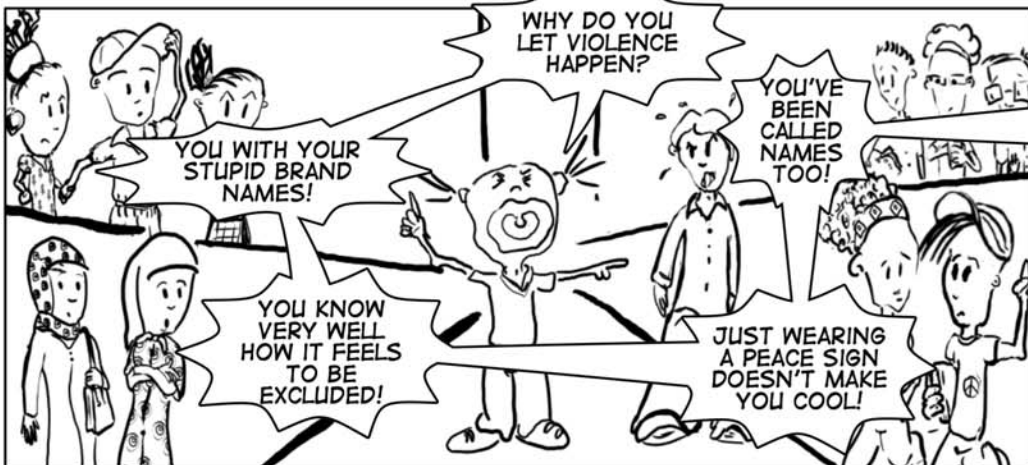
THAT'S ME AWHILE AGO.

WHAT HAPPENED?

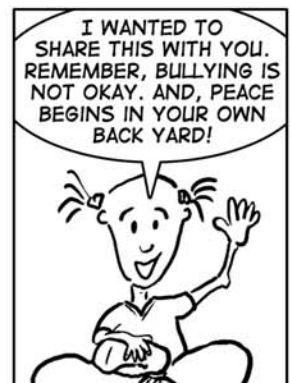




I KNEW I HAD TO SPEAK OUT AT ONE POINT. YET WITH ALL THE FEAR AND SHAME IT WAS SCARY.



IT'S UP TO THE BULLY



**THE END**

# Pacific Youth Charter

Some 1,000 young people from 25 Pacific countries and territories came together in Tahiti from 17 to 22 July 2006 for the 1st Pacific Youth Festival. It was an exciting week of workshops, seminars and most of all talking and sharing experiences. The young activists identified nine crucial issues for the development of the Pacific region. Their insights form the 58 resolutions of the Pacific Youth Charter, excerpts of which are below.

## **I. Good Governance**

The principles of good governance are not always reflected in practice throughout the Pacific. We believe that governments must be free of corruption and inequality. We think that our populations would be best served by governments which recognize respect, integrity, justice, and dignity as the main qualities in the exercise of power. An integrity commission should be formed to ensure that the principles of good governance are respected and that appropriate measures are applied if these principles are not upheld. Programs should be created to enable young people to understand politics and good governance, and youth assemblies/parliaments established in every Pacific country as a forum for young people to express themselves.

## **II. Active Citizenship**

There is a lack of engagement of young people in civic life throughout the region. We believe that this is primarily due to inadequate information for young people and misconceptions about the realities of political processes. Yet young people have the potential to play an important role in civic activities. Leaders must include young people in reflection and decision making processes at the local, national, and regional levels through youth councils, youth parliaments and similar structures. We encourage all youth to better inform themselves and to make well-informed voting decisions.

## **III. Education and Training for All**

We believe that integrating the teaching and preservation of traditional knowledge in the education system is important in order to reflect our cultural identity. We believe that there is a gap in access to education for all. Many training opportunities are not recognized and we need to emphasize both practical and theoretical learning. Technical and vocational training should be accessible and affordable for all. There must be recognition of the tremendous contribution of government ministries, non-governmental organizations, community-based

organizations and faith-based organizations to young people's development. To achieve a sustainable way of living, education about sustainable development and self-sustaining practice must become a core curriculum in our education system.

## **IV. Social and Professional Integration**

Pacific young people face challenges when seeking employment and the recognition of their traditional roles. Young people are capable and have both traditional and formal skills, and are enthusiastic to assume increased responsibility in society. More resources need to be dedicated to developing entrepreneurial skills among young people, particularly in remote areas, including incorporating relevant curriculum in education. The roles that maintain our cultures need to be recognized as occupations. More volunteer or internship programs need to be created for students to gain skills to facilitate entry into the workforce. Fair selection process, equal opportunities, and occupational health and safety measures must be legislated by government and implemented for all.

## **V. Sustainable Development**

Climate change, poverty and inequality are among the many consequences of unsustainable development. We must improve our environmental, economic, social and political management if we are to achieve sustainable development for current and future generations. The Pacific way of life is in danger. Young people are affected by the environment's exploitation. We, young people and our communities, must assume responsibility as stewards of the earth. We need advocacy of good environmental principles and practices.

## **VI. Cultural Diversity**

The youth of the Pacific have a large role to play in the promotion and propagation of cultural diversity. Youth need encouragement to preserve their cultures, and support in making their concerns and ideas heard. Regional cultural exchanges can also contribute to youth development and building a proud and respectful Pacific. Globalization has a real impact on the preservation and maintenance of tradition and culture, and legislation for the protection and preservation of traditional knowledge and customs is needed. Subjects on culture and tradition in the formal school curricula at all levels are needed. Youth's participation in traditional decision-making processes should be increased, and exchange programs initiated.

## VII. Health

We believe that the health and well-being of young people is an important area in their holistic development. Pacific young people face increased health-related issues, such as unplanned pregnancies, STDs, HIV/AIDS, suicide and substance abuse. Health service providers are urged to provide quality health care that is accessible and affordable for all.

## VIII. Equality for All

Equality for all is necessary for young people to have access to opportunities that will help them to achieve their goals in life. It is vital to young people that we have an inclusive and caring society free of all forms of discrimination. We urge the formation of a regional Human Rights Commission to promote the adoption and implementation of international and national human rights conventions, and that governments and civil society need to ensure that universal human rights are upheld regardless of culture. All forms of discrimination must be removed to ensure an inclusive society and equal opportunity for all regardless of age, gender, sexuality, ability, race, or religion.

## IX. Peace Promotion

Many young people in the Pacific are affected by violence and conflict. This impacts upon our culture, lifestyle, economic and social opportunities. We need to resolve corruption, conflict and competing interests through compromise, negotiation and nonviolent measures. To achieve this, peace needs to be promoted through education and networking.

## X. Education on Peace

We believe that our youth require knowledge about peace, its promotion and its advocacy. Existing youth efforts and initiatives demonstrate that we have the capability and confidence to be leaders in the promotion of peace. Peace promotion curricula and outreach programs must be developed for young people and the broader community. Resources and active support needs to be provided so that youth can be empowered to consider and apply principles of peace. Everyone has a responsibility in the establishment of a network that addresses and promotes open communication through websites, cultural exchanges, and other initiatives. Pacific youth call all upon leaders to prioritize the promotion of peace and tolerance, and for youth leaders to be proactive in promoting peace. All peoples should be able to pursue self-determination by peaceful means.



Illustration: Beldan Sezen

Melba Pattillo was 15 when she and eight other African-American students decided to stop racial apartheid at Little Rock Central High School (USA) in 1957. She faced white mobs, soldiers and death threats, but insisted on her right to an education. "It was like being a soldier on a battlefield," she said—a soldier who used nonviolence.

# Kurdish and Turkish Mothers: Let's Build Peace Together!

by Ann-Kristin Kowarsch

Twenty years of armed conflict have marked the region in Turkey that is densely populated by Kurdish people. Over 30,000 people have been killed during this war; a state of emergency had been declared in the area; villages have been burned; and torture is systematically committed. Labelled a “low intensity war”, in the first week of April 2006 some 15 civilians were killed by security forces—including children aged three to nine years old—in the Kurdish towns of Diyarbakir and Kiziltepe.

These events are mostly ignored by the European media. Also ignored is the courageous engagement for peace and justice that has been initiated by the Peace Mothers in different Turkish and Kurdish towns. Introducing themselves they declared: “As Peace Mothers, we established our initiative in 1999. At that time the war came to its climax and we received sad news of deaths every day. During that period thousands of mothers could not even get the dead bodies of their children. Against this background we came together with Kurdish, Turkish and Georgian mothers to begin our march for peace. We started this movement aiming at the establishment of strong relations between the Kurdish and the Turkish communities in order to achieve an end of the war and a life in friendship within a free and common country... We feel the same pain, so let's build peace together!”

I met two Peace Mothers, *Türkiye Bozkurt* and *Nazime Avras*, at the European Social Forum in Athens (May 2006) and asked them about their work, dreams and personal motives for joining the Initiative of Peace Mothers in Istanbul.

## **When and why did you join the Initiative of Peace Mothers?**

*Türkiye Bozkurt*: “I am married and have two daughters and a son. In 1999 we came together as mothers, whose children were either in the mountains, in prisons or had lost their lives in the war. There is a dirty war in Turkey. The Kurdish question is not a new issue for this country. 80 years ago the Republic of Turkey was founded by both Kurds and Turks together. The struggle for freedom had been fought together. Yet in the republic Kurds are ignored. There were 28 Kurdish uprisings—after the crushing of the last uprising, they said: “We have covered the Kurds with concrete, they won't raise their

voices again!” This concrete was cracked by the 30-year old struggle of the Kurds. The soldiers destroyed our villages in front of our eyes. They took people into custody and tortured them, assassinated them without trial. We had to flee our village. Although mothers were crying during the war, many of our youngsters lost their lives and many women had been raped, when a ceasefire and a peace process was asked for, we said: “We have to forget about our anger and hate. Instead we should struggle for peace, too.” And so we came together with mothers in Istanbul, who had lost their children in the war and we founded the Initiative of Peace Mothers.”

*Nazime Avras*: “I was also present at the founding assembly in 1999. We had come together to say that the dirty war should come to an end and that there should be peace among Turks and Kurds. But a few months later I left the initiative. My husband had lost his life due to the war. I had to find an income in order to look after my two daughters. Later I thought: ‘Both my husband and my sister lost their lives in this struggle. In my close family six persons were killed. Before the PKK movement started, Kurdish society was very feudal: women did not have any rights. The movement has changed society's approach towards women a lot. These were reasons for me to participate in the Initiative of Peace Mothers once again.’”

“As Peace Mothers we will do anything necessary to defend peace in our country and in the world. We do not want any soldier, any guerrilla fighter, to be killed. We do not want to raise our children as orphans. My two daughters still long to see their village again.”

There have been new outbreaks of war in the Kurdish region. What impact did these events have on you? As Peace Mothers did you do anything against this?

*Nazime Avras*: “As Peace Mothers the only thing we want is peace. We want support from mothers from all over the world. The Turkish army has gathered soldiers on the Turkish borders with Iran and Iraq. Kurdish villages are under blockade. Every day we receive news about new military operations. On the Kurdish satellite television channel a mother spoke, who lost her child during the last operations. The dead child had been a guerrilla fighter for 17 years. Another child of hers is a government soldier. The mother cried, “Maybe my child who was a guerrilla was killed by his own brother who is a soldier. This bloodshed has to stop immediately.”

## **“We do not want any mother to cry anymore.”**

*Türkiye Bozkurt:* “The source of the problems in Turkey is the Kurdish question. First they kill guerrilla fighters with chemical weapons, then they attack the civil population with arms when they bury their dead children. The prime minister said: “We do not care about women and children, we do not watch anybody’s tears, our security forces will show no sorrow.” A judge of the appellate court was shot down. Behind all these incidents there are illegal paramilitary organizations like the Turkish Revenge Brigades. And behind these there is the army. We want our cultural rights and peace. But the state calls us terrorists and tries to mobilize the Turkish population against us. They force Kurds to migrate from their villages, then don’t want them in the Turkish towns where they fled to.”

“People should not close their eyes to these events. They have to say ‘stop, that’s enough’!” Accepting a country as a candidate for European Union (EU) membership they cannot ignore what this country does against the Kurds. If Turkey joins the EU, the EU must put the Kurdish question on their agenda, just as they did with ETA [armed opposition group that fought for a separate Basque state, independent of the state of Spain], the Irish Republican Army or the Palestinians. There are some countries that only have about 700,000 citizens. Kurds have a population of over 40 million. We only want to live in a democratic country and have our cultural rights. We do not want any mother to cry anymore. It does not matter where you come from, what your religion or race is. The color of every mother’s tears remains the same.”

## **What does peace look like? How do you imagine peace?**

*Türkiye Bozkurt:* “When there is peace the first thing that we will do is embrace our children. The bloodshed will come to an end and we will realize the world’s beauties. I wish a peace in which everyone enjoys all human rights. And of course we need a general amnesty. With an amnesty our children will return to their homes. Then, maybe our only problem will be to feed our hungry stomachs, to find solutions to our economic problems.”

*Nazime Avras:* “The word peace by itself is a very nice term. You can imagine thousands of beautiful things. What I imagine from peace is to give birth, to marry and to raise my children in a free world. I am now 36 years old, but I did not have the chance to realize what the beauty of life is. I lost my husband, my village and everything in front of my eyes. I always lived in pain. My daughters want to see the grave of their father, but there is not even a grave that I could show to them. Unfortunately still there is no peace”

*Ann-Kristin Kowarsch works with the International Free Women’s Foundation (IFWF). IFWF is working to develop a women’s solidarity network for peace in the Middle East. IFWF, Willebrordusplein 10a, 3037 TC Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Tel.: + 31 (0)10 465 1800. Fax: + 31 (0)10 265 1460. Email: info@freewomensfoundation.org*



Nazime Avras (right) and Türkiye Bozkurt (left). Nazime’s vest reads in Kurdish “Mothers do not want war”, while Türkiye’s reads in Turkish “Peace Mothers Initiative.”

# Fun, Food, and Activism

by Nina Perkowski

The International Student Days (ISD) held 9 to 15 October 2006 in Karlsruhe, Germany, were organized by World Youth Citizens. World Youth Citizens (WYC) began at a youth congress in 2003 in Morocco, when 12 participants, bored during a panel discussion, started chatting. They decided they wanted to DO something and not just talk about things.

After the congress, the youth returned home, promising each other to stay in contact. Pascal Renaud from Germany decided to work on the United Nation Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) while reuniting the other participants. He organized the first International Student Days in Karlsruhe in 2004, which brought international students to Germany. Each morning they gave workshops to local students from Karlsruhe. During the rest of the day, they got to know each other, exchanged ideas, and developed projects together. All participants were youth leaders or had worked on one of the MDGs. All of them wanted to connect young people all over the world. Some 1,200 students from Karlsruhe had the opportunity to attend 140 workshop sessions.

In 2005, World Youth Citizens met their project partner Sok Heng, which works for rural education in Cambodia, and a project was developed. In the summer of 2006, the WYC Berlin section exhibited the results of a German-Cambodian photo project in the local town hall, showing pictures taken by children aged seven to twelve.

This year I was one of the organizers. We met every morning with the international students, explaining the day's program and the ISD motto "We are what we do" (see website [www.wearewhatwedo.org](http://www.wearewhatwedo.org)). Students then chose their workshop for the day.

I conducted a workshop with my friend Sophie. We welcomed the students with a warm up game and then asked about the different options they would have after finishing school: from doing military service, or refusing military service, to studying, travel, or a job.

We then focused on the voluntary social year, a year German students can take to devote to volunteer work. We gave examples of different places to volunteer, and explained the regulations. We talked about *Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste* (ASF) as an organization which enabled youth to do volunteer peace work. ASF

was founded after World War II to send German youth to rebuild countries occupied by Nazis.

Afterwards, we did a simulation with them: the group was divided in two different 'tribes'. Together, in silence, they had to build a roof over the only water source. One tribe had the building material, the other the water source. They did succeed in cooperating, but there were conflicts that neither side knew how to handle.

We did that simulation in order to show them how difficult it can be to get to know a new culture, and that you really have to know about the others' backgrounds in order to be able to understand their actions. After this simulation, we presented our projects, where we are ASF volunteers. I talked about the history of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR), and Sophie about the Jeanette Noel House, a center for illegal refugees.

After the workshops there were other activities: making music, painting a tram, and cooking food from our countries. We visited the Special Olympics, played pool and supported a German girl who had organized a sale of jewelry made by a Peruvian World Youth Citizen. Her plan is to sell his products in Germany in order to enable him to study.

One of many highlights was a meeting with the Mayor of Karlsruhe who gave a speech congratulating us for the success of the ISD. All of us appreciated this sign of support. There was an international evening with lots of food and cultural presentations: capoeira demonstration, Latin American music, a yoga dance, traditional Scottish dancing and music from Sierra Leone. We Germans presented a theatre play of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. The atmosphere was cheerful and the room filled with excitement and care. It was an unforgettable evening.

There was a lot of energy created during the meeting. In the end, everyone gave some feedback. The bottom-line was the same: everyone felt highly inspired and motivated by the others, everyone was impressed with the youth they met and everyone believed that we needed to continue to 'be the change'. It was a very emotional goodbye, lots of tears were shed and promises were made to keep in touch. A Brazilian participant wants to organize the next International Student Days in Brazil.

continues at the bottom of page 26



# Stop the Licence to Rape in Burma

by the Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN)

Since 1992, the United Nations (UN) Commission on Human Rights has passed resolutions each year on the situation of human rights in Burma. The reports by the UN Special Rapporteurs on Burma submitted to the UN General Assembly have contained an abundance of summaries of testimonies of extreme human rights violations committed by the Burmese military regime, including military rape.

The UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, jointly with the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and the Special Rapporteur on torture, has sent letters of allegation to the regime on sexual violence committed by military personnel in Burma.

However, until today there has been no concrete redress provided to victims of rapes and no positive development in the lives of women in Burma.

It is evident that the military regime in Burma has taken no serious measures to improve the situation. Nearly all military rapists go unpunished. This culture of impunity has meant that women and girls in Burma continue to be raped by the regime's soldiers.

In June 2002, the Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN) jointly released the report *Licence to Rape*, which documents 173 incidents of rape and other forms of sexual violence, involving 625 girls and women, committed by Burmese troops in Shan State, mostly from 1996-2001. The youngest case was a six-year-old girl. 83% of the rapes were committed by officers, in most cases in front of their troops. The rapes involved extreme brutality and often torture, such as beating, mutilation and suffocation. 25% of the rapes resulted in death. 61% were gang-rapes, and in some cases, women were detained and raped repeatedly for periods of up to four months. Out of the total 173 documented incidents, in only one case was a perpetrator punished. More commonly, the complainants were fined, detained, tortured or even killed by the military. The majority of rape incidents were committed in the areas of Central Shan State where over 300,000 villagers have been forcibly relocated from their homes since 1996 as part of an anti-insurgency campaign.

These acts are a form of violence against women which has been recognized as "a serious form of discrimination that seriously inhibits women's ability

to enjoy rights and freedoms on a basis of equality with men" (CEDAW General Recommendation No.19). Such violence is a violation of the following rights and freedoms: the right to life; right not to be subject to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; right to equal protection according to humanitarian norms in time of international or internal armed conflict; right to liberty and security of person; and right to the highest standard attainable of physical and mental health.

*Licence to Rape* gives clear evidence that:

- Rape is officially condoned as a 'weapon of war' against the women in Shan State.
- The Burmese military regime has committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in the form of sexual violence, against Shan women.

Although *Licence to Rape* only documents incidents of sexual violence committed by the regime's military in Shan State, other reports indicate that such sexual violence has been happening in all of Burma's ethnic areas, and is continuing until today. The systematic use of sexual violence by the regime is clearly an integral part of its strategy to subjugate Burma's peoples, and to control and exploit the resource-rich ethnic states.

Over the past decade, the regime has increased the size of its army from 180,000 to over 400,000 troops. In Shan State alone there are over 100,000 troops in some 150 battalions, including artillery and tank battalions. The military exercises absolute power, and all abuses, including sexual violence, are licenced in the interests of controlling local populations. *Licence to Rape* thus *affirms* that the system of military dictatorship in Burma is the root cause of the widespread sexual violence against ethnic Shan women.

## No relief or redress for women survivors

There is nowhere for the rape survivors to turn to inside Shan state for any medical or social support, let alone for legal recourse. A large number of survivors and witnesses have fled to the Thai-Burma border. These survivors are still suffering the mental and physical effects of sexual violence. However, Shan refugees, unlike ethnic Karen and Karenni refugees from Burma, are not recognized in Thailand and there are no refugee camps provided for Shan people even though they are

outside the country owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted in Burma. Survivors therefore have very limited access to basic healthcare, let alone mental healthcare or counseling services. They are usually forced to exist as undocumented persons, constantly in fear of being arrested and deported to Burma. They end up working illegally for their survival, doing jobs that are dirty, difficult and dangerous.

## Women survivors call for peace

The overwhelming desire of women survivors interviewed has been to be able to return to their homes inside Shan State, where their families have lived for generations, and to live in peace. They want the Burmese military to withdraw from Shan State and let them live without fear.

Czech leader Vaclav Havel and Bishop Desmond Tutu have called for the UN Security Council to move a resolution on Burma. The resolution will call for the Burmese military to honour their commitments to democratization. This is an initiative that is supported

by the movement for human rights and democracy in Burma.

The international community should not tolerate the ongoing human rights crisis in Burma. We call on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members, Burma's other neighbors and countries around the world to impose comprehensive economic and aid sanctions against the regime. This will weaken the regime, and empower the people's movement for democracy.

*The Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN), founded in 1999, works to promote women's rights inside Burma and along the Thai-Burma border. SWAN is a founding member of the Women's League of Burma (WLB), an umbrella women's organization comprising 11 women's groups from Burma. SWAN, through its affiliation with other women's organizations, establishes common platforms to promote the role of women from Burma in the struggle for democracy and human rights in their country. SWAN, PO Box 120 Phrasing Post Office, 50250 Chiang Mai, Thailand. Web: [www.shanwomen.org](http://www.shanwomen.org)*

---

continued from page 24

The days that we spent together did not only create strong personal bonds and helped to network youth activists from all over the world; there were also new plans made, new ideas created and new projects launched.

This week, organized and conducted mainly by young students is strong proof of the power that youth have and what can happen if they use this power to follow one common dream: the improvement of our modern world.

*Nina Perkowski, 19, is an ASF volunteer with the International Fellowship of Reconciliation in the Netherlands.*

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are targets, to be reached by 2015, agreed upon by 189 countries in the United Nations in 2000.

The MDGs are:

- Reduction of extreme poverty and hunger by half.
- Primary education for all boys and girls.
- Promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- Reduction of child mortality by two-thirds.
- Reduction of maternal mortality by three-quarters.
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.
- Clean drinking water and 100 million slum dwellers above the poverty line.
- Develop a global partnership for development.

# Resources

## International Network for Girls

Governments committed themselves to improving girls' situation in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. The hundreds of nongovernmental organizations working to support the development of girls had few opportunities to network and monitor governments' promises. The Working Group on Girls created an International Network for Girls (INfG) to support such grassroots efforts. INfG now includes over 740 members in 102 countries. Members work on improving education for girls and on stopping child labor and sexual exploitation, and fostering the rights of girls in all stages of their lives.

The Working Group on Girls publishes the electronic newsletter *ACTION for GIRLS* and fact sheets on issues such as girls' human rights. *Contact: UNICEF House, 3 UN Plaza, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, New York, NY 10017, USA. Tel. +1 212 824 6394; fax +1 212 824 6482. Email: wggs@girlsrights.org Web: www.girlsrights.org*

## Girl Child Network

Girl Child Network (GCN) was founded in Zimbabwe in 1999 to organize school clubs where girls could meet and talk about issues important to them. Now encompassing some 10,000 girls in 100 clubs, GCN provides educational scholarships, organizes Girls' Empowerment Villages and links women role models to girls. Every 15 October (International Day for Rural Women) GCN has a Women as Role Models Day where women role models come in close contact with the girls whose education they are sponsoring, in order to encourage and inspire the girls. *GCN, 131 Duri Road, Harara, Zimbabwe. Tel. +263 070 21 509 / 31132. Fax +263 070 31132. Email: gcn@zol.co.zw*

## Girls for Gender Equality

Girls for Gender Equity, a grassroots organization in New York, works to create opportunities for girls and women to live self-determined lives. Volunteers willing to serve as role models to girls 6 to 14 years old, to coach sports, and teach on health issues (nutrition, HIV prevention) are sought. *GGES, 1360 Fulton Street, Suite 314, Brooklyn, NY, USA. Tel. +1 917 647 3157. email: mandy@gges.info. Web: www.gges.info*

## Children's Resource Centre

The Children's Resource Centre was started in 1983 to help South African children organize themselves into a children's movement. Today there are more than 50 Children's Groups throughout South Africa with a membership of over 5,000 children between the ages of 7 to 14 years. Children's health clinics and an environmental program have been established, as has media training for children.

Half of South Africa's 18 million children (out of a total population of some 40 million people) are girls. The Children's Resource Centre launched a National Girl Child Campaign in December 2006 to unite South Africa's 10 million girls to "create a better world for girls and to stop racism and sexism." *CRC, 3 Milner Road, Rondebosch, Cape Town, South Africa. Tel. +27 21 686 6898 (fax 686 6901). Email: crcchild@telkomsa.net; web: www.childrensmovement.org.za*

## Peace Education

The Peace Education Action Committee is a professional association which conducts research on and develops peace education resources. It publishes resources on conflict resolution trainings, violence prevention and social and emotional learning, such as *Blueprints for Violence Prevention* (web: [www.colorado.edu](http://www.colorado.edu)) or the brochure *School Conflict Resolution Training: What You Need to Know to Select a trainer* ([www.disputeresolution.ohio.gov/brochures](http://www.disputeresolution.ohio.gov/brochures)). *Psychologists for Social Responsibility, 208 "I" Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002, USA. Email: psysr@psysr.org Web: www.psysr.org*

## Publications

*Peace Lessons from Around the World* (USD25, includes shipping; 144 pages, 2006) by the Hague Appeal for Peace is a collection of 16 lessons, from Albania, Cambodia, Philippines, Kenya, India, Nepal, the USA, Spain and South Africa. These case studies and models of ways to teach peace in the classroom follows previous Hague Appeal for Peace publications, such as *Learning to Abolish War: Teaching Toward a Culture of Peace* (by B. Reardon and A. Cabezudo) and *Peace and Disarmament Education, changing mindsets to sustain the removal of small arms* (ed.

Gloria Levitas). *Most publications are available online at [www.haguepeace.org](http://www.haguepeace.org). Hague Appeal for Peace, 777 United Nations Plaza, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, New York City, NY 10017, US. Fax +1 212 661 2704.*

***Empowering Young Women to Lead Change: A Training Manual*** (124 pages, 2006) is an easy to follow resource manual (available in English, Spanish and French) with sections on young women's leadership, economic justice, HIV/AIDS, human rights, peace, self-esteem and body image, sexual and reproductive health, and violence against women. Tested in six countries, the manual was designed to support young women to lead themselves in learning more and taking action. *Developed by the World YWCA and the UNFPA.*

***Girls Formerly Associated with Fighting Forces and their Children: Returned and Neglected.*** Researchers Susan McKay, Robinson and colleagues outline the challenges facing girl mothers leaving fighting forces who seek to reintegrate into their communities in southern and western Africa. Often stigmatized and rejected by their communities, these girls struggle to find ways to earn a living to support themselves and their children in the face of economic and sexual exploitation. Based on a conference held on girl mothers, there is a participatory approach which presents conference papers and the ensuing workshop discussions. The girl mothers speak for themselves and call for improved support from their communities so that they can better care for their children and earn their own living.

The article can be found (in PDF format) on the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers' website: [www.child-soldiers.org/resources/psychosocial](http://www.child-soldiers.org/resources/psychosocial)  
*Contact: Dr. Linda Dowdney, Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers 2-12 Pentonville Road London N1 9HF, UK. Tel: + 44 207 713 2761 [www.child-soldiers.org/resources/psychosocial](http://www.child-soldiers.org/resources/psychosocial)*

***Where are the Girls?*** by Susan McKay and Dyan Mazurana (146 pages, 2004) is a ground breaking publication based on extensive research with girls in fighting forces northern Uganda, Sierra Leone and Mozambique, both on their lives during combat and after war. The research looks at comparative findings of psycho-spiritual, physical and psychological health and sociocultural issues. Most valuable are the insights into their contributions and needs from the former girl combatants themselves. *International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, Suite 1100, 1001 de Maisonneuve, Blvd. East, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2L 4P9. Email: [ichrdd@ichrdd.ca](mailto:ichrdd@ichrdd.ca) Web: [www.ichrdd.ca](http://www.ichrdd.ca)*

***DMZ: A Guide to Taking Your School Back from the Military***, (48 pages, USD5, bulk rates available), is a comprehensive counter military recruitment organizing

manual for youth activists and their allies. This magazine style handbook includes ideas on keeping military recruiters away from your school, detailed legal information (for the USA), concrete campaign suggestions and up-to-date statistics. *Youth and Counter-Recruitment Program, War Resisters League, 339 Lafayette St., New York, New York 10012, USA. Tel. +1 212 228 0450 X 102. Email: [youth@warresisters.org](mailto:youth@warresisters.org)*

***Girls and Warzones: Troubling Questions***, by Carolyn Nordstrom (52 pages, 1997), examines the problematic issue of what is peace and what is war given the daily violence girls experience. The author questions why it is so difficult to gather information on the specific experiences of girls in war and peace. *Life and Peace Institute (LPI), PO 1520, SE-751 45 Uppsala, Sweden. Tel. +46 (0)18 169500. Email: [info@life-peace.org](mailto:info@life-peace.org). Web: [www.life-peace.org](http://www.life-peace.org)*

***Adolescent Girls Affected by Violent Conflict*** by the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, and the Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group of the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee. This fact sheet looks at the specific situations of adolescent girls affected by violent conflict and at how adolescent girls' participation in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and community development can be supported. See [www.peacebuild.ca](http://www.peacebuild.ca) or [www.womenscommission.org](http://www.womenscommission.org). The fact sheet is also available on the WPP website at [www.ifor.org/WPP](http://www.ifor.org/WPP)

***A World Turned Upside Down*** (Kumarian Press, 2006, USD 26.95), edited by Neil Boothby, Alison Strang and Michael Wessells, is a collection of essays by experts (including Susan McKay) on ways to support war-affected children, including former girl combatants. *Web: [www.kpbooks.com](http://www.kpbooks.com). Tel. +1 800 289 2664; fax +1 860 243 2867.*

## **Imaging Ourselves**

The International Museum of Women (IMOW), a WPP partner, has published a book on young women around the world. The book, ***Imaging Ourselves***, has expanded into an innovative inter-active project. The project includes online discussion on dialogue and conflict. Every two months audio, films, images and texts from young women will be accepted for publication and discussion on topics such as War and Peace; Image and Identity; and Work and Office. A special discussion for young men will also be organized, asking what defines their generation: fatherhood, relationships, culture? *IMOW, PO Box 190038, San Francisco, CA, USA 94119-0038. Email: [info@imow.org](mailto:info@imow.org). Web: [www.imow.org](http://www.imow.org)*

## Suggestions for Action and Solidarity in 2007

- Order more copies of this action pack and give them to girls in your school, youth group or worship community. Talk with youth leaders about encouraging a discussion on the violence girls face in their daily lives and how to support girls in overcoming this violence.
- Listen to girls about their experiences at school. Is there bullying at school? Do girls feel safe to move and speak out about what is important to them at school? Talk with teachers and youth leaders about ways to create a safe and empowering environment for girls.
- Make a special effort to reach girls: talk with Girl Scouts/Guides or other girls' groups about how war and peace affect girls. Share an action with them like writing a letter to a government official. Check out already existing training programs for young women peacemakers, such as the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts' Create Peace Worldwide Initiative.
- Help start a girls peace club after school. Show a film or invite a young woman activist to speak in order to start a discussion on how girls can create peace.
- Help a local peace group to organize a meeting to introduce their work to girls.
- Encourage your school and community libraries to display on May 24 books by and about girls' lives, and especially about risks girls have taken to build peace.
- Organize a peace camp for girls. Invite girls from different communities in your town, or from different countries. Teach peace—good communication skills, mediation, assertiveness training for girls.
- Educate others about the work of young women peacemakers. Speak out at school and clubs about the need for young women peacemakers to connect and exchange ideas and experiences.
- Issue a statement, press release or letter to the media, and to the editor of your favorite newspaper or magazine, to mark May 24, International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament. Call for more attention to what girls and young women are doing for peace, and how conflict affects girls and young women.
- Hold a song, poster or essay competition with prizes for the best song, poster or essay that highlights the work of young women peacemakers.
- Promote peace education within schools. Invite speakers from different sides of issues into schools to talk to each other in front of students. Make sure issues such as peace and dialogue are in the curriculum, from kindergarten to university.
- Sponsor an essay contest for girls to express their ideas about creating peace.
- Organize a peace club after school, where young women can come together and talk.
- Organize a special worship service for young women peacemakers; take a collection and send it to a young women's peace group.
- Hold a gathering at your home to write legislators on topics like ratifying the nuclear test ban treaty; or the transfer of military funds to meet human needs; or providing more funding to stop violence against women; or whatever is necessary for your community.
- Invite local women's organizations together to speak on how young women can contribute to building a culture of peace, and how women's organizations can support young women's peace initiatives.
- Organize a youth celebration for peace on May 24; invite young women speakers from peace organizations like the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, or a local solidarity group.
- Educate young women peacemakers on UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Distribute copies of the Resolution (which can be downloaded from [www.peacewomen.org](http://www.peacewomen.org)) during meetings and public events.
- Twin with a women's peace group or a youth peace group in another country. Exchange emails and letters; learn about what is important to young women about peace in your respective countries. Fundraise to invite a speaker or speakers from the group to come to your country in order to raise public awareness.
- Invite women veterans with a peace perspective to speak about their experiences at local schools. Insist that school officials always include a speaker on peace whenever military recruiters visit, so students can get an objective and fair perspective on the reality of military life. Hand out leaflets such as *Do You Know Enough to Enlist?* or *Make Our Schools Military-Free Zones* from American Friends Service Committee's Youth and Militarism Program, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102, USA. Web: [www.afsc.org](http://www.afsc.org)
- Contact organizations working to reintegrate girl ex-combatants into society and see how you can help.

- Photocopy newspaper articles about the situation of young women in conflict situations and pass them around your classroom; or post articles on websites about women in conflict situations.
- Translate and reprint articles from this pack (please credit the pack and don't forget to send us a copy!) to educate others about the issues.
- Encourage groups to include ending violence in their agendas and events, and to increase their support for young women working for peace.
- Inform your networks (your school, youth organization, place of worship, or work place) about May 24 and possible solidarity actions for young women peace activists.
- Organize a public panel, demonstration, or film showing on May 24, to highlight young women's work for peace. Invite young women leaders from different ethnic and religious groups in your community to speak.
- Organize a discussion group on ways to support women working for peace in conflict situations.
- Invite women from all sides of a conflict in your community to come together in order to explore ways to reduce tensions within the community or neighborhood.
- Write letters of support to the groups profiled in the annual pack to express your solidarity for their work.
- Create a website about what young women are doing for peace and justice in your community.
- Support the United Nations 'Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World' (2001-2010). Contact IFOR for more information.
- Invite members of your community to write and submit poems which reflect how violence against young women during conflict has affected their lives as well as the lives of close friends and relatives. Ask your local newspaper to publish some of these poems and/or ask a local bookstore to hold

a poetry reading which features these poems and their authors. Hold a silent candle light vigil at the end of the readings in memory of all women and girls who have lost their lives to war.

- Hold a festival with other groups or women business owners in your town to celebrate young women and a culture of peace. Include music, dance and theater performances as well as information booths to create awareness of women's role in creating peace.
- Ask stores, libraries, city government buildings, local radio stations, etc., to declare themselves violence-free spaces on March 8 (International Women's Day), May 24 or November 25-December 10 (International Days of Action against Violence Against Women). Activities might include giving young women an opportunity to talk about solutions to tensions within the community, or about international security, which they might not normally have the opportunity to do.
- Ride public transportation on May 24 and distribute information to young women about local peace groups. Include telephone numbers for peace organizations and organizations that work to empower women and girls.
- Plan a photo exhibit or music festival with local artists that highlight the work of grassroots young women peace activists.
- Sexual exploitation of women and girls always accompanies armed conflict. Help women who have been trafficked by contacting anti-trafficking groups within your own country, or by making contact with migrant or foreign women's groups within your country.
- Support legislation for emergency housing and services for women fleeing violent situations. Make sure there are foreign language-speakers among service providers, and information on emergency shelters for women in different languages.



Illustration: Beldan Sezen

In 1996 the Movimiento de los Niños por La Paz (Children's Movement for Peace) in Colombia organized a national peace referendum for children. 2.7 million children voted for peace. The nation was moved. A year later 10 million adults vote 'yes' for a Citizen's Mandate for Peace, Life and Freedom.

# International Directory of Women's Peace Groups 2007

## **International**

### **IFOR Women Peacemakers Program**

Spoorstraat 38, 1815 BK Alkmaar  
the Netherlands  
Tel +31 72 5123-014 (fax 515-1102)  
Email: s.anderson@ifor.org  
Web: www.ifor.org/WPP

### **International Peace Bureau - Women in Peacemaking Program**

41, rue de Zurich  
1201 Geneva, Switzerland  
Tel. +41 22 731 6429 (fax 738 9419)  
Email: silvi@ipb.org  
Web: www.ipb.org

### **NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security**

777 UN Plaza, 8<sup>th</sup> floor  
New York, NY 10017, USA  
Tel. +1 212 682 3633, ex. 3121  
Fax +1 212 682 5354  
Web: www.peacewomen.org  
Email: NGOWGCoordinator@  
peacewomen.org

### **War Resisters' International Women's Working Group**

5 Caledonian Rd.  
London N1 9DX, UK  
Tel. +44 171 278-4040 (fax 278-0444)  
Email: warresisters@gn.apc.org  
Web: www.gn.apc.org/warresisters/  
news/wriwomen.htm

### **Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)**

1, rue de Varembe, CP 28  
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland  
Tel. +41 22 919 70 80  
Email: info@wilpf.ch  
Web: www.wilpf.int.ch  
(Contact WILPF for a complete list of  
national sections)

## **Angola**

### **Angola Women's Network**

Avenida Hoji ya Henda no. 21 1 Dt.  
Luanda  
Tel. +244 2 34 95 13  
Email: rede.mulher@netangola.com

## **Afghanistan**

### **Afghan Women's Network**

PO Box 426  
Islamabad, Pakistan

### **Revolutionary Association of Women of Afghanistan**

PO Box 374  
Quetta, Pakistan  
Web: www.rawa.org

## **Argentina**

### **Madres de Plaza de Mayo**

Hipoloto Yrigoyen 1442  
1089 Buenos Aires  
Tel. +541 383-0377 (fax 954-0381)

## **Armenia**

### **Center for Gender Studies**

17 Nalbandian Street, apt. 4  
375010 Yerevan  
Tel/fax +374 2 5656 80  
Email: root@shahin.arminco.com

## **Australia**

### **Women for Peace**

PO Box 2111  
Lygon Street North  
Brunswick East, Melbourne 3057  
Tel: +61 (03) 93876490,  
Email: info@womenforpeace.org.au  
www.womenforpeace.org.au

## **Austria**

### **Frauen für den Frieden**

Luis-Zuegg-Str. 14  
6020 Innsbruck

## **Azerbaijan**

### **Azerbaijan Women and Development Centre**

3/6 S Rustanov St - kv 65  
370001 Baku  
Tel. +99412 927-920 (fax 983-235)  
Email: ramiz@unfpa.baku.az

## **Barbados**

### **Women and Development Unit**

Elaine Hewitt  
c/o University of West Indies  
Cave Hill Campus, St. Michael  
Tel. +1 809 436 6312 (fax 436 3006)

## **Belgium**

### **Rassemblement des Femmes pour la Paix (RFP)**

Coordination Femmes OSCE  
Rue Antoine Dansaert 101  
BP 15, 1000 Brussels  
Tel. +32 2 512 6498 (fax 502 3290)  
Email: Femmes.Paix@amazon.be

## **Bougainville**

### **Bougainville Inter Church Women's Forum**

PO Box 209, Buka  
Tel. +675 973 9983 (fax: 973 9157)

## **Burma**

### **Burmese Women's Union**

PO Box 52  
Mae Hong Son 58000 Thailand  
Tel/fax +66 53 612 948  
Email: bwumain@cscsoms.com  
Web: www.freeburma.org/lokanat/  
bwu.htm

## **SWAN**

PO Box 120 Phrasing Post Office  
50250 Chiang Mai, Thailand  
Web: www.shanwomen.org

### **Women's League of Burma**

Email: wlb@womenofburma.org  
Web: www.womenofburma.org

## **Burundi**

### **Association des Femmes Burundaises pour la Paix**

Deputé à l'Assemblée Nationale  
PO 5721, Bujumbura  
Tel. +257 223 619 (fax 223 775)

## **Cambodia**

### **Alliance for Conflict Transformation**

34, St 480, Phsar Doeum Thkov  
Chamkarmon, Phnom Penh  
Tel/fax +855 23 217 830  
Web: www.act-cambodia.org  
Email: act@online.com.kh

## **Canada**

### **Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group**

c/o Canadian Peacebuilding  
Coordinating Committee  
1 Nicholas St., no. 1216  
Ottawa, ON K1N 7B7  
Tel. +1 613 241 3446 (fax 241 4846)

### **Voice of Women for Peace**

761 Queen St. W, Suite 203  
Toronto ON, M6J 1G1  
Tel. +1 416 603 7915 (fax 603 7916)  
Email: vow@ca.inter.net  
Web: www.vowpeace.org

**Chad**

**Union des Femmes  
pour la Paix**  
BP 1298, N'Djamena  
Tel. +235 514925

**Colombia**

**Organizacion Femenina Popular**  
Cra. 22 No. 52B B 36  
Barrancabermeja, Santander

**Congo**

**Comité National  
des Femmes pour la Paix**  
BP 2041, Brazzaville  
Tel. +242 831 201 (fax 833 421)

**Croatia**

**Be active Be emancipated (B.a.B.e.)**  
Medvescak 62  
10 000 Zagreb  
Tel/fax +385 1 46 62 606  
Email: babe@zamir.net  
Web: www.babe.hr

**Center for Women War Victims**

Kralja Drislava 2/1  
10000 Zagreb  
Tel. +385 1 45 50 313 / 45 51 128  
Web: www.czzzr.hr  
Email: cenzena@zamir.net

**Cyprus**

**Women's Research Centre**  
19, Necmi Avkiran Street  
Lefkosa, Nicosia  
Fax +90 392 22 83823

**Centre for Women  
and Peace Studies**

4A Kissamou Street  
Pallioraotissa, Nicosia 1040

**Democratic Republic of Congo**

**Mouvement des Femmes  
pour la Justice et la Paix**  
BP 724 Limete, Kinshasa

**Denmark**

**Fonden Kvinder for Fred**  
c/o Vibeke Aagaard  
Slippen 3 st, 2791 Dragor  
Tel. +45 3253 4002

**Kvindemes Internationale**

**Liga for Fred og Frihed (WILPF)**  
Vesterbrogade 10, Mezz.  
1620 Copenhagen V  
Tel. +45 31 231-097

**East Timor**

**Forum Komunikasi  
Perempuan Loro Sae**  
(Communication Forum for East  
Timorese Women)  
Rua Governador Celestino da Silva,  
Farol, Dili, East Timor  
(via Darwin, Australia)  
Tel. +670 390 32 15 34  
Email:  
fokupers@fokupers.minihub.org

**Egypt**

**The Suzanne Mubarak Women's  
International Peace Movement**  
Email:  
info@womenforpeaceinternational.org  
Web:  
www.womenforpeaceinternational.org

**El Salvador**

**Conamus (National Coordinating  
Committee of Women in El Salvador)**  
Apartado 271, Centro de Gobierno  
San Salvador  
Tel/fax +503 262-080

**Fiji**

**Media Initiatives for Women**  
PO Box 2439  
Government Buildings, Suva  
Tel. +679 331 6290 (fax 3301 925)  
Mobile: 9244 871  
Email: femlinkpac@is.com.fj

**Finland**

**Women for Peace**  
c/o Unioni, boulevard 11A 1  
00120 Helsinki  
Tel. +358 9 694-382

**France**

**Women Living Under Muslim Law**  
Boite Postale 20023  
34791 Grabels Cedex

**Georgia**

**Women's Centre**  
15 Chavchavadze av.  
Tbilisi 380079  
Email: grc@access.sanet.ge

**Women of Georgia for Peace**

20 Ateni St. Apt. 29  
Tbilisi 380079

**Ghana**

**Women in Peacebuilding**  
West Africa Network for Peacebuilding  
PO CT 4434  
Cantonment-Accra  
Tel. +233 21 221318 / 221388  
Fax +233 21 221735  
Web: www.wanep.org  
Email: ealaga@wanep.org

**Germany**

**Frauenetzwerk für Frieden**  
Werner-Schuster-Haus  
Kaiserstr. 201, 53123 Bonn  
Tel. +49 228 626 730 (fax 626 780)  
Email: fn.frieden@t-online.de  
www.frauenetzwerk-fuer-frieden.de

**International Women's  
Peace Archive**

Lothringer Str. 64  
46045 Oberhausen

**Arbeitsgemeinschaft  
Friedenspädagogik**

Waltherstr. 22, 80337 München  
Web: www.un1325.de

**Frauen für Frieden**

Tel/fax +49 30 323 9543  
Email: EQuistorp@aol.com

**Greece**

**Women for Mutual Security**  
1, Romilias Str., 14671 Kastri, Athens  
Tel. +30 2310 884 3202  
Fax +30 2310 80 128 50

**Guatemala**

**Conavigua**  
7a Avenida 4-35/Zona 1  
Guatemala Ciudad  
Tel. +502 2 537-914 (fax 325-642)

**Iceland**

**Women for Peace**  
c/o Porunn Magnúsdóttir  
Hofsvallagata 17, 101 Reykjavík

**India**

**Women in Security,  
Conflict Management and Peace**  
Core 4 A, UGF  
India Habitat Centre  
Lodhi Road, New Delhi 110 003  
Tel. +91 11 464 8450 (fax 464 8451)  
Email: wiscomp@vsnl.com  
Web: www.furhhdl.org

**Israel**

**Bat Shalom**  
PO Box -Bat Shalom 2426  
Jerusalem 91023  
Tel. 972-(0)2-6245201/699/462  
Fax: 972-(0)2-6245463  
Email: info@batshalom.org  
Web: www.batshalom.org

**Italy**

**Donne per la Pace e il Disarmo**  
Casella postale 713  
36100 Vicenza  
Tel. +39 444 500-457 (fax 327-527)



**Japan****Okinawa Women Act  
Against Military Violence**

Kumoji Mansion 402  
3-29-41 Kumoji, Naha City  
Okinawa 900-0015  
Tel/fax: +81 98 864 1539  
Email: suzuyo@mxi.meshnet.ne.jp

**Violence Against Women  
in War-Network, Japan**

2-10-10 Shiomi, Koto-ku  
Tokyo 135-8585  
Tel/fax +81 3 5337 4088  
Email: vaww-net-japan@jca.apc.org  
Web: www.jca.apc.org/vaww-net-japan

**Korea (South)****Korean Council for Women Drafted  
for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan**

3/F CISJD Bldg.,  
35 Chungieongro 2 Ga  
Seodaemun Gu, Seoul  
Tel: +82 2 365 4016 (fax 365 4017)  
Email: jdh@peacenet.or.kr  
Web: www.witness.peacenet.or.kr

**Women Making Peace**

4th floor, 38-84 Jangchoon Dong 1Ga,  
Joong-Gu, Seoul  
Tel. +82 2 264-8649 (fax 275-4861)

**Kyrgyzstan****Women's Association  
for Environmental Safety  
and Nuclear Peace**

720001, Kyrgyzstan, Bishkek, ul.  
Turusbekova, d. 89, Bishkek  
Tel. +3312 218-335 (fax 219-615)  
Email: chopon@dyikan.Bishkek.su

**Liberia****Liberian Women's Initiative**

11 Broad Street, PO Box 1063  
Monrovia  
Tel +231 227 095

**Malaysia****Sisters in Islam**

SIS Forum Berhad, JKR No 851  
Jalan Lapangan Terbang Lama  
Kuala Lumpur 50460  
Tel. +60 3 242 6121 / +60 3 7629 8050  
Fax +60 3 7629 8051.  
Email: sis@sisfora.po.my  
Web: www.sistersinislam.org.my

**Mali****Mouvement National des Femmes  
pour la Sauvegarde de la Paix  
et de l'Unité Nationale**

BP 1771, Bamako  
Tel. +223 224-231 (fax 231-999)

**Mozambique****Muherez Mocambicanas pela Paz**

CP 257, Maputo  
Tel/fax +258 1 428-140

**Namibia****Sister Namibia**

PO Box 40092, Windhoek  
Tel. +264 (0)61 230618 / 230757  
Fax +264 (0)61 236371  
Email: sister@iafrica.com.na

**Nepal****Mahila Bikash Samaj**

PO Box 5840, Kathmandu  
Tel. +977 1 271-794 (fax 270-396)  
Email: wodes@shova.mos.com.np

**Netherlands****Multicultural Women  
Peacemakers Network**

Admiraal van Gentstraat 26  
3572 XL Utrecht  
Tel. +31 (0)30 271 9226  
Email: info@mwpn.nl  
Web: www.mwpn.nl

**Vrouwen voor Vrede**

Postbus 93  
3800 AZ Amersfoort  
Email: vrouwenvoorvrede@antenna.nl

**New Zealand/Aotearoa****Women's Peace Network**

c/o Peace Movement Aotearoa  
PO Box 9314, Wellington  
Tel. +64 4 382-8129 (fax 382-8173)  
Email: pma@xtra.co.nz

**Northern Ireland****Women Together for Peace**

62 Lisburn Rd, Belfast BT9  
Tel. +44 1232 315-100 (fax 314-864)

**Norway****Kvinner for Fred**

Rimolslia 12c, 7029 Trondheim  
Tel/fax +47 3347 3875

**Palestine****Jerusalem Center for Women**

PO Box 51630, Jerusalem  
Tel. +970 2 234 7068 / +972 2 234 7653  
Fax +970 2 234 7069  
Email: jcw@palnet.com  
Web: www.j-c-w.org

**Russia****Committee of Soldiers' Mothers**

4 Luchnikov per., entr. 3, rm. 6  
Moscow 101000  
Tel. +7 095 928 2506 (fax 206 8958)

**Mothers of Chechnya for Peace**

Moscow - 125252  
Novopeschanaya st. 16/78  
Tel/fax +7 (095) 943 7534  
Email: materi-chechni@mail.ru

**Soldiers' Mothers of St. Petersburg**

Ul. Razjezaya 9  
191002 Saint Petersburg  
Tel/fax +7 812 112 4199 or 112 5058  
Email: kazis@mail.axon.ru  
Email: elmaria@mail.axon.ru

**Rwanda****Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe**

PO 2362, Kigali  
Tel. +250 77543 / 71948 (fax 78432)  
Email: profemme@rwanda1.com

**Serbia****Women in Black**

Jug Bogdanova 18/5  
11000 Belgrade, Serbia  
Tel/fax +381 11 2623 225  
Email: stasazen@eunet.yu  
Web:  
www.wib-zeneucrnombelgrade.org

**Sierra Leone****Women's Movement for Peace**

PO Box 220, 18 Gloucester St.  
Freetown  
Tel +232 222283

**Solomon Islands****Federation of Women**

PO Box 334, Honiara  
Tel. +677 23130 (fax 26150)  
Email: vepsica@solomon.com.sb

**Somalia****Save Somali Women and Children**

PO Box 38887-00623 Parklands  
Nairobi, Kenya  
Tel. +254 20 3744083.  
Tel/fax +254 20 3752199  
Email: shirdon@iconnect.co.ke

**South Africa****African Women's****Anti-War Coalition**

PO Box 30653 Braamfontein  
Johannesburg 2107  
Tel. +27 11 403 3910  
Email: anu@sn.apc.org

**All Africa Women for Peace**

PO Box 11002  
Maroelana 0161, Pretoria  
Tel. +27 12 346 4659 (fax 460 3962)  
Email: aawp@sn.apc.org

**Spain****Dones X Dones**

Ca la Dona  
Casp, 38, pral., 08010 Barcelona  
(Cada dijous de 20 a 22 h)  
Tel. +93 412 77 01  
Email: caladona@pangea.org

**Red Mujeres de Negro**

(Women in Black)  
Email: roal@nodo50.org

**Sudan****Sudanese Women's Voice for Peace**

PO Box 21186, Nairobi, Kenya  
Tel. +254 2 561 158 (fax 570-614)  
Email: lpihap@africaonline.co.ke

**Sweden****Kvinna till Kvinna**

Kristinebergs Slottsväg 8  
S-112 52 Stockholm  
Tel +46 8 441 30 80 (fax 643 23 60)  
Web: www.iktk.se  
Email: info@iktk.se

**Switzerland****Femmes Africa Solidarité**

8 rue du Vieux-Billard  
PO Box 5037, 1211 Geneva 11  
Tel. +41 22 328 8050 (fax 328 8052)  
Email: info@fasngo.org

**Frauen für den Frieden**

Huzlenstrasse 34, 8604 Volketswil  
Tel. +41 (0)44 945 07 25  
Fax +41 (0)44 945 07 26  
Email:  
secretariat@frauenfuerdenfrieden.ch  
Web: www.frauenfuerdenfrieden.ch

**Frauenstelle für Friedensarbeit**

Gartenhofstr. 7, Postfach 9621  
8036 Zurich  
Tel. +41 1 242-9307 (fax 241 2926)  
Email: frieda@swix.ch

**Tibet****Tibetan Women's Association**

Bhagsunag Road  
PO Mcleod Ganj 176219  
Dharamsala, India

**United Kingdom****Widows for Peace and Democracy**

36 Faroe Road, London W14 OEP  
Fax/tel: +44 (0)207 603 9733

**Women in Black-UK**

Email: Wib-uk@gn.apc.org  
Web: www.wib.matriz.net

**Women in Black Research  
on Feminist Antimilitarism**

Web: www.cynthiacockburn.org

**United States of America****Code Pink**

2010 Linden Ave. Venice, CA 90291  
Tel: +1 310 827 4320  
Email: info@codepinkalert.org  
Web: www.codepink4peace.org

**Initiative for Inclusive Security**

625 Mount Auburn  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
Tel. +1 617 868 3910 (fax 995 1982)  
Email:  
information@womenwagingpeace.net  
Web: www.womenwagingpeace.net

**MADRE**

121 West 27<sup>th</sup> St., no. 301  
New York, NY 10001  
Tel/ +1 212 627 0444 (fax 675 3704)  
Web: www.madre.org  
Email: madre@madre.org

**Uruguay****SERPAJ Uruguay**

Joaquin Requina 1642  
11200 Montevideo  
Tel. +598 2 408-4770 (fax 408-5701)  
Email: serpaj@chasque.apc.org

**Zimbabwe****Women of Zimbabwe Arise**

Tel. +263 91 300 456  
Email: wozazimbabwe@yahoo.com

**International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR)**

Spoorstraat 38, 1815 BK Alkmaar  
The Netherlands  
Tel: +31 72 512-3014 (fax 515-1102)  
Email: [office@ifor.org](mailto:office@ifor.org)  
Web: [www.ifor.org](http://www.ifor.org)

IFOR, founded in 1919, is a network of people who believe in the power of active nonviolence to change the world. Fundamental to IFOR's work is its spiritual basis. IFOR's members include Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Muslims, Bahá'ís and Hindus, and members whose philosophical understanding leads them to a commitment to active nonviolence. IFOR has branches or contacts in over 40 countries.

**International Peace Bureau (IPB)**

41 rue de Zürich, 1201 Geneva  
Switzerland  
Tel: +41 22 731-6429 (fax 738-9419)  
Email: [mailbox@ipb.org](mailto:mailbox@ipb.org)  
Web: [www.ipb.org](http://www.ipb.org)

The International Peace Bureau is dedicated to the vision of a World Without War. We are a Nobel Peace Laureate (1910) and over the years 13 of our officers have been recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize. Our 280 member organizations in 70 countries, and individual members, form a global network bringing together expertise and campaigning experience in a common cause. Our current main program centers on Sustainable Disarmament for Sustainable Development. We welcome your participation.