



network

The UN Women's Newsletter, Vol. 7 • No. 3 • July, August and September 2003

From the desk of the Acting Focal Point for Women

Dear Colleagues,

I completed my brief assignment as Acting Focal Point for Women in the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues (OSAGI) at the end of September, and have learned much during this period from a different perspective than when I was in the Department of Political Affairs. I have taken away from this assignment a greater appreciation of the difficulties and obstacles faced by women as they try to advance along the career path in our Organization. The statistics in the Secretary-General's report on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system confirm the feelings of many women that their advancement is proceeding at too slow a pace, and that gender balance in the Organization will require policies that are much more effective. While the Secretary-General's report provides the statistics, these cannot portray the individual frustrations behind the figures. New proposals/studies by the Department of Management and OSAGI in the coming year will, we hope, open further possibilities for women at all levels to advance.

We were very pleased to receive feedback from readers of network giving their views on recent issues and hope that you will continue to bring to our attention issues of concern, whether they are about appointments, promotions, career development opportunities or work/life issues, to enable us to deliver a better product to you. Our team appreciates and thanks our readers for taking the time to complete the survey. Your comments are very helpful.

In this issue, we have an interview with the Staff Counsellor, and I want to reiterate her remarks on the importance of planning for retirement. Just as we undertake financial planning, we need to consider how we will occupy our days—or rather years—as most women are expected to live for another 26 years after retirement! For my part, I realize that I did not do so early enough. I am now in the prepara-

tion stage of this period of my life. I urge you all to think about those talents and interests that you have not had the chance to fully explore and enjoy while you were moving along the career ladder, and to see how you might engage them in the future.

My best wishes to you all, and it was a pleasure to work with the OSAGI team.

Joan Seymour

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Synopsis of the Secretary-General's report on the improvement of the status of women in the UN system (A/58/374)

The report provides statistics on the representation of women in the Secretariat and in the United Nations system as of 30 June 2003. Women account for 35.6 per cent of Professional and higher-level staff with appointments of one year or more in the Secretariat. In posts subject to geo-

graphical distribution, 41.8 per cent of Professional and higher-level staff are women. For both categories of posts, this rate indicates a slowing of the progress made during the last 10 years. Of particular concern is the stagnation of progress at the P-4 and P-5 levels. Within the United Nations system, women represented 35 per cent of Professional and higher categories as of 31 December 2002.

The following table illustrates the changes made since June 2002 for both categories of appointments in the United Nations Secretariat:

Comparison of gender distribution of staff in the Professional and higher categories with appointments of one year or more on posts subject to geographical distribution as of 30 June 2002 and 30 June 2003

Level	Appointments of one year or more		Posts subject to geographical distribution	
	30 June 2002 Percentage of women	30 June 2003 Percentage of women	30 June 2002 Percentage of women	30 June 2003 Percentage of women
USG	10.5	13.5	16.6	20.8
ASG	10.2	14.6	23.5	23.5
D-2	22.3	24.8	29.4	31.2
D-1	28.9	28.8	37.7	36.3
Subtotal	24.7	25.6	33.7	33.3
P-5	29.5	30.2	32.5	34.7
P-4	31.4	31.5	38.3	37.2
P-3	38.0	39.8	47.0	49.0
P-2	48.8	50.0	54.1	55.3
P-1	63.1	66.7	—	—
Subtotal	36.0	36.7	42.2	43.1
Total	35.0	35.6	41.0	41.8

Only five departments and/or offices have met or exceeded the target of 50/50 representation: OPPBA (56.4 per cent); OHRM (54.3 per cent); DPI (52.7 per cent); EOSG (52.3 per cent); and DM/OUSG (51.4 per cent). While the overall representation of women with appointments of one year or more in peacekeeping operations decreased to 23.2 per cent, women now constitute 10 per cent of staff at the D-1 level and above, which is a significant increase from 4.2 per cent a year ago.

The report also highlights recent activities towards achieving gender parity and supporting a gender-sensitive work environment:

- In April 2003, the **Secretary-General** wrote to all heads of departments/offices in the Secretariat to express his concern at the low rate of progress and to point to the responsibility of senior managers to achieve gender parity targets.
- The **Human Resources Action Plans** for each department/office set concrete gender targets for the years 2003 and 2004. These include progress towards 50/50 gender distribution in the overall female representation in all categories and levels of posts, including the Professional and higher categories, as well as the General Service, and at least 50 per cent recruitment and selection of women staff at the Professional and higher categories. The plans also identify future retirements that will provide additional opportunities to increase the number of women staff members.
- OSAGI is working on **an analysis of the probable causes of the slow advancement in the improvement of the status of women** in the United Nations with a view to elaborating new strategies for achieving gender parity.
- The **“Directive on Sexual Harassment in the United Nations Peacekeeping and other Field Missions: For Military Members of National Contingents, Military Observers and Civilian Police Officers”** was issued by DPKO in August 2003. It was prepared in close collaboration with OSAGI and OHRM and illustrates what constitutes sexual harassment; explains the various avenues for resolution of differences/grievances; outlines the steps necessary to lodge a complaint; and offers an organizational process to address a grievance of sexual harassment.
- OHRM and OSAGI are exploring ways to better integrate **the departmental focal points** in the new staffing

system, so that the focal points can continue to play an important role in the periodic and systematic monitoring of the recruitment, retention and career advancement of women.

In its conclusion, the report reiterates the need to make more deliberate efforts to appoint women to 50 per cent or more of vacancies and to extend ongoing training and sensitization of managers on gender-balance issues. The impact of the new work/life policies will need to be more closely monitored. To improve the status of women in the General Service category, where women constitute the majority of staff, actions are necessary to review the entry level for General Service staff; provide greater opportunities and incentives for interdepartmental mobility; and enhance career opportunities for women in this category, such as lifting the restrictions on the number of General Service staff eligible for promotion to the Professional category.

A preliminary survey by the Group on Equal Rights for Women at the United Nations seems to indicate that more information and training of staff and programme managers is necessary to dispel misconceptions on the possible effects of work/life policies on productivity and effectiveness. To provide a pool of women staff suitable for higher-level posts, more outreach and networking needs to be done with professional organizations.

The report calls on Member States to submit names of qualified women; make efforts to disseminate available vacancies throughout the United Nations common system; and encourage women nationals to apply for specific posts. In addition, Member States should cooperate more closely with the United Nations to facilitate spouse employment at all the major duty stations of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations system.

The report is available online at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/jpddocumentation.htm>

Resolution on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system (A/C.3/58/L.19)

The resolution was adopted in the Third Committee on 30 October 2003. It expresses concern about the slowing rate of progress in achieving gender balance targets. Among the new elements of the resolution are the call for qualified women to constitute at least 50 per cent of all appointments and promo-

tions, and the need for further training on gender sensitivity and targets for programme managers, as well as the commitment of the Secretary-General to set targets for the appointments of Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and Special Envoys. It also calls for the timely submission of comparable data from organizations of the United Nations system, which should be reflected in the next report. Member States are called upon to cooperate with the United Nations to facilitate spouse employment at all major duty stations.

The survey for network readers says . . .

OSAGI would like to thank all the readers who answered the survey and share with them the findings. **network** is distributed electronically as well as in hard copy to about 1,500 readers, within and outside the UN system. We have received about 100 electronic replies.

Results revealed that our readers are located all over the world, with the majority working within the UN system, with about one third of professionals working in the area of gender. Generally, **network** was found to be a fairly informative publication. Readers who did not classify themselves as “gender specialists” rated **network** as “average” on “improving their understanding of gender issues”.

“Women in the news” was highlighted as a favourite section, with “Interviews” following close behind in the ratings. Readers were quite supportive in offering contributions to future issues of **network**. Suggested contributions included reports, articles, notes on training, policies and best practices, and research and data gathering.

When asked: “What features would you suggest adding?”, we received the following suggestions:

- Personalize the “case studies” by using examples to highlight the best practices from organizations, so that others may learn by example;
- Include contact information of all “focal points” in peace-keeping missions and include lower-level employment opportunities for women;
- Add historical and cultural perspectives on gender issues from the last two centuries;
- Incorporate practical notes about the methodology of gender mainstreaming;
- Incorporate a section with information about research grants to study women’s issues; and
- Provide information about exercise and health as they pertain to women.

OSAGI thanks you again for your input and will work to incorporate your suggestions. We hope to continue to provide a quality newsletter tailored to your needs.

Iranian Nobel Peace Laureate Shirin Ebadi



Women in the news . . .

● Iranian women’s human rights defender wins 2003 Nobel Peace Prize

network wishes to congratulate **Iranian Nobel Peace Laureate Shirin Ebadi**, an Iranian lawyer and activist and the first Muslim woman to win the prize. In extending his congratulations, the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, noted that she had previously served as Iran’s first woman judge and that Ms. Ebadi was recognized for her tireless work to promote the human rights of women, children and refugees. Her interpretation of Islamic law recognized the harmony among human rights, democracy and equality before the law. The Norwegian Nobel Committee also stated that it was pleased “to award the Peace Prize to a woman who is part of the Muslim world, and of whom that world can be proud—along with all who fight for human rights wherever they live”.

- The recent deplorable and tragic attacks on two outstanding women, **Anna Lindh**, Foreign Minister of Sweden, and **Akila Al-Hashimi**, a senior member of the Iraqi

Governing Council and one of three women on the Council, show that the idea of women in leadership positions is still not widely accepted.

Around the UN ...

- **Workshop on gender and post-conflict resolution**, Paris, 10-11 July 2003

A joint workshop on gender and post-conflict reconstruction was organized by the United Nations Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) and the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)/Development Assistance Committee Network on Gender Equality, with special focus on lessons from Afghanistan. The workshop identified challenges and constraints, as well as good practices, for achieving gender equality and meeting women's needs more effectively in humanitarian assistance and recovery; reconstruction of the political, public and security sectors; promotion of economic and social development; and human rights protection and legal reform. It identified key lessons learned and essential elements for an equitable gender-sensitive reconstruction process. It also made proposals for strengthening international support for Afghanistan and ensuring dynamic gender perspectives in future post-conflict reconstruction efforts. (For further information, please visit <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ianwge>)

- The **fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly** commenced at UN Headquarters, New York, on 23 September 2003. On 15 October 2003, Ms. Angela E. V. King, Assistant Secretary-General, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, addressed the Third Committee as it started its deliberations on the advancement of women. She emphasized, "Gender equality is the responsibility of all of us. We are collectively accountable for progress and change. Whether it is the establishment of programmes to support women's sustainable livelihoods and economic independence, the elimination of discriminatory legislation, protection of women from sexual violence, the adoption of measures to increase women's participation in public life and decision-making, or an improved access to health care, we must take responsibility for initiating such change and to see it towards its successful outcome."

(For further information, visit <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/documents/>)

- An **Expert Group Meeting** on the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality was organized by the Division on the Advancement of Women in Brasília, Brazil, from 21 to 24 October 2003 in preparation for the Commission on the Status of Women 2004.

Election of women to the Main Committees of the General Assembly ...

No woman was elected Chairperson or Rapporteur in the Main Committees of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly. Some were elected Vice-Chairpersons, as follows:

- First Committee: no women.
- Second Committee: Ms. Ulrika Cronenberg-Mossberg (Sweden) and Ms. Irene Zubcevic (Croatia); two women out of three Vice-Chairs.
- Third Committee: Ms. Beatriz London (Colombia); one woman out of three Vice-Chairs.
- Fourth Committee: Ms. Jasna Ognjavovac (Croatia); one woman out of three Vice-Chairs.
- Fifth Committee: no women.
- Sixth Committee: Ms. Gaile Ann Ramoutar (Trinidad and Tobago); one woman out of three Vice-Chairs.

Nursing mothers' room in UN Secretariat, NY

To: All staff members
 Date: 30 September 2003
 From: Dr. Sudershan Narula, Director,
 Medical Services Division
 Re: Nursing mothers' room

The Medical Services Division (MSD) announced on 30 September 2003 the reopening of the "Nursing mothers' room" located on the 35th floor, room S-3505.

This room is accessible only to nursing mothers upon registration at the Medical Services Division reception desk from 8.45 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., Monday to Friday. The MSD receptionist will give interested staff members specific instructions as to how to gain access to room S-3505 and guidelines on the proper use and maintenance of this room. For any questions, please call ext. 3-7082.

Ruth Sembajwe, Staff Counsellor



Interview with the Staff Counsellor, Ms. Ruth Sembajwe, UN Secretariat, NY

Tips on retirement

1. Could you please describe for our readers your background, and when you joined the United Nations.

My background is in social work, management and organizational development. I joined the UN in 1992, first as a consultant and then on a regular basis from 1993 onwards. I started in Nairobi working as a Staff Counsellor in the Ombudsman and Staff Counsellor's office, and later joined WFP also as a Staff Counsellor working in the Sudan, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Burundi. Then I joined the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), where I worked as a Human Resources Officer and Staff Counsellor before joining the Secretariat earlier this year.

2. In your view and experience as a Staff Counsellor and Human Resources Officer, what are the particular issues that career women come to discuss with you and would like to see addressed by the Organization?

Staff often complain about mistreatment by their bosses, who refuse to recognize their worth as colleagues. Some have been denied going on missions if the favours sought are not forthcoming. There is also the challenge of parenting long distance, resolving child-related issues over the phone, bearing the extra cost of travelling to be with families as often as possible, and dealing with the constant pressure of frustrated, unemployed professional spouses. In some duty stations, the issues relate to the need to have domestic help and not being able to obtain visas.

3. What issues do you believe constitute the most important ones confronting women upon retirement? Could you put them in order of importance and illustrate with examples.

The following are some of the issues that affect both men and women due to lack of proper planning for retirement. Women have to keep in mind that there is a chance that they will live longer than men, and therefore should plan for their finances accordingly.

- The staff member may have to continue to incur the cost of renting a house, which takes part of the pension income. Thus there is a need to ensure that provisions are made well in advance to purchase a retirement house or make other provisions. This will permit the staff member to live a comfortable life on a pension that is less than a regular salary.
 - Planning ahead on what to do in order to keep busy during retirement is a major consideration.
 - The staff member may be unable to cut the apron strings and let the children take responsibility. Due to the unemployment in some countries, the parent often has to continue supporting grown-up children who are unable to find gainful employment.
4. Do you feel that different geographical regions have different sets of issues to be addressed by women who are facing retirement? Could you please illustrate with examples.
- Different geographical regions have different challenges for women who are facing retirement.
 - In some regions, the medical facilities are not up to standard, and the retirees may be faced with the fact that in cases of serious illness they may have to seek medical facilities in a different country.
 - In some regions it is easier to volunteer your services in the same area that you were engaged in prior to retirement than in others.
 - In some areas the pension is taxed, but not in others.
 - In some areas there is family and community care for the elderly, but not in others.

5. In your opinion, what would be the best way women can inform themselves about retirement issues, in particular when they are in the field?

- The Internet is a good way to inform themselves about retirement issues.
- Women can get in touch with the Staff Counsellor's office by phone or e-mail, and we can forward information upon request.

6. What would you recommend women do after retirement in order to remain active, healthy and connected to their communities?

- Get involved in volunteer development community activities; they should start making inquiries before they retire;
- Eat well; it would help to talk to a nutritionist to find out which foods they should eat more of etc.;
- Exercise;
- Talk to someone they trust about the frustrations and emotions that they are going through.

New strides for gender equity in the European Union¹—a summary

by Asta Schuette, Intern, OSAGI

The *Annual Report on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in the European Union* of 2002 presents an overview of developments, achievements and targets within the European Union. The highlight of the report is the *Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equity*, which provides a structure for gender mainstreaming in all policy areas and an evaluation of the impact gender mainstreaming has had on the *European Employment Strategy*. The report concludes that the “dual approach” is successful in the “promotion of equality between men and women”. (The dual approach refers to gender mainstreaming combined with specific actions for women relating to legislation and financial programmes.) The past two years of implementation of the dual approach confirmed that this is an effective approach which delivers results.

The *Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equity* is commissioned to monitor and implement gender mainstreaming practices from 2001 until 2005 and has a 50-million euro budget to fund transnational projects. The targets of this strategy call for 40 per cent participation of women in all decision-making bodies or an 11 per cent increase from 2001. Because women in the European Union earn only 84 per cent of men's wages, equal pay was the first-year target for the Commission.

Under this strategy, new areas being explored include environmental policy and measures for asylum-seekers.

A major component of the framework is the evaluation of the *European Employment Strategy*. The visibility of gender equality has improved even in Member States that are “lagging behind”, and gender gaps have decreased in particular for employment and unemployment rates. Despite the effectiveness of the dual approach, much needs to be done to reduce the gender gap. Clearly, the unemployment rate is directly linked to participation and, therefore, reducing unemployment would have a reciprocally positive effect on participation. The report notes the increasing awareness that the gender pay gap does not decrease as an automatic by-product of the growing female participation rate, and that structural changes must be sought, not only in the short term, but also on a medium- and long-term basis.

Under the *European Employment Strategy*, the Commission places a priority on policy packages for parents. The hope is to institute widespread, good-quality childcare with parental leave provisions (preferably paid) and more flexible working arrangements for both parents.

The concluding remarks on the *European Employment Strategy* recognizes the successes reached in utilizing the dual approach but also cites areas where improvement is needed. Challenges facing the Commission in the future include: reaching the Lisbon targets (employment rates), increasing the monitoring of policy impact, improving childcare facilities, and extending the involvement of the social partners, especially in the field of gender pay gap and parental leave.

The Commission acknowledges that gender equality is a human right for all, and visible international solidarity and support is essential for women who are denied this right.

In your interest . . . policy matters

- **Secretary-General's Bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13)**

The above Bulletin entered into force on 15 October 2003 with the purpose of preventing and addressing cases of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. It was prepared in consultation with Executive Heads of separately administered organs and programmes of the United Nations, and takes into consideration General Assembly resolution 57/306 of 15 April 2003, “Investigation into sexual exploitation of refugees by aid workers in West Africa”. The Bulletin, which applies to all UN staff, defines the term “sexual exploitation” as any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential

¹Commission of the European Communities. Report from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions: Annual Report on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in the European Union 2002. Brussels, 5 March 2002.

power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Similarly, “sexual abuse” means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

- **New work arrangements in UNICEF**

The Division of Human Resources of UNICEF has published the following policy documents:

—Alternative work arrangements: alternative work schedules; the modality of compressed work schedules; policy and procedure (CF/AI/2003-016 of 30 July 2003);

—Alternative work arrangements: part-time employment; the modality of employment on an established part-time post; policy and procedure (CF/AI/2003-017 of 30 July 2003);

—Alternative work arrangements: part-time employment; the modality of job-sharing; policy and procedure (CF/AI/2003-019 of 30 July 2003).



UNDP Gender Balance in Management Policy 2003-2006

Achieving gender balance at all levels has been a long-standing corporate goal of UNDP. While steady progress could be noted in some areas, there was little or no progress in others. Of particular concern was the proportion of women as Resident Representatives and Deputy Resident Representatives (currently at 26 per cent and 36 per cent, respectively). It was apparent that achieving gender balance was not just a matter of recruiting and promoting more women, but in finding ways to keep the best women through work/family policies that offered balanced lifestyles without sacrificing career growth. As a result, a Gender Task Force was established in 2002, with technical support provided by the Office of Human Resources and with consultations carried out with the Staff Council.

The Strategic Management Team of UNDP has recently approved the Gender Balance in Management Policy 2003-2006, developed by the Gender Task Force. The Policy is effective

immediately as of 12 September 2003. It builds on special measures for gender equality and ST/AI/1999/9, as well as gender policies of the World Food Programme.

Among its key provisions, the Gender Balance in Management Policy establishes:

- The goal of 50/50 gender distribution by 2010 for all levels, in the Professional category and above, overall and at each level, including posts at the D-1 level and above, and also including posts at the Assistant Secretary-General level. This goal applies to every Bureau and Office, and at each grade level or band. Gender targets apply to all categories of staff and positions, including appointments of limited duration and national officers, irrespective of the type or duration of staff appointment, the series of the Staff Rules (100, 200 or 300 series) or the source of funding;
- Among the special measures established to achieve the goal, to be applied at all times, including periods of retrenchment, are the following:
 - All recruitment should be gender-balanced;
 - A target of 50 per cent established for women participants in corporate assessment programmes;
 - All internal vacancies shall have at least one qualified female candidate on the short list, and, in evaluating female candidates, particular emphasis should be given to demonstrated competencies to perform at the higher level;
 - A 50 per cent target set for international Professional women staff who are reassigned to posts at least one grade higher than their personal grade levels, in order to build internal pools of women for more senior-level positions;
 - 200 and 300 series staff, national officers based at Headquarters and country office-based support staff to be eligible to be considered as internal candidates for all international Professional posts, subject to a competitive corporate review; a target of 60 per cent women is set for those successful candidates;
 - Guidelines on cumulative seniority, issued in ST/AI/1999/9, shall apply;
 - Recommendations for accelerated promotion shall be considered more favourably when a woman is recommended, provided her qualifications meet the criteria for higher grade level;
 - All statutory and other bodies within UNDP shall have 50 per cent female membership;
 - Gender targets established at the bureau and office levels, with accountability features for tracking and evaluating progress toward achieving them;
- In order to further work/life balance, management shall ensure staff awareness and implementation of the current work/life quality policy, “Our Work and Life Programme”

(UNDP/ADM/99/71 of 19 November 1999), also including:

- Appointment of focal points in local offices;
- The revitalization of UNDP's spouse employment policy by 2004;
- Ways for women (and men) who take leave for personal reasons to re-enter UNDP in a position that takes account of their further professional development while on leave;
- Management shall ensure that new learning programmes be designed to change the organizational culture and to enhance awareness of and ability to better address issues of gender mainstreaming, discrimination and sexual harassment, in order to create a more gender-sensitive work environment and assist UNDP to mainstream a gender perspective in work programmes with reporting mechanisms.

- The Administrator will report annually to the Executive Board on how well UNDP is doing towards achieving gender balance:
 - Heads of Bureau to be accountable for the implementation of special measures set above;
 - Each Office to prepare a scorecard and report semi-annually, showing the current distribution of women and men by category of position at each level or band regardless of the source of funding or appointment authority;
 - Heads of Bureau shall reflect progress towards achieving targets in a manager's annual report;
 - The Strategic Management Team shall report on the achievements made to the Administrator on a semi-annual basis.

Work/life issues . . .

On 1 February 2003, flexible working arrangements were authorized in all departments and offices of the Secretariat (ST/SGB/2003/4). These new patterns of work offer greater flexibility in when and where work is done, and provide arrangements that may lead to a better balance between professional and personal lives. The four options currently available to staff are: staggered working hours; compressed work schedule (10 working days in nine, with the tenth day off); scheduled break for external learning activities; and working away from the office (telecommuting).

- Flexi-time is a staggered daily start and finish time.
- Compressed work schedule is working 10 days in nine, with the tenth day off.
- Telecommuting is working at home up to a maximum of two days per week.

In the coming year, OHRM will monitor the implementation of these arrangements in departments/offices at Headquarters and in the field to ascertain the effectiveness of the programme.

We are preparing a survey questionnaire for our UN readers to ascertain how many of our colleagues are availing themselves of flexi-time, compressed and/or telecommuting arrangements. Your feedback will assist us in following up the implementation of these policies, as well as in making suggestions to pertinent offices on further adjustments/improvements that could be made.

Annual meeting of ORIGIN

(Organizational and Institutional Gender Information Network²)

Brussels, Belgium, 26-27 June 2003

ORIGIN, an international network of focal points for organizational gender and diversity issues representing about 36 institutions, held its eighth annual meeting in Brussels, hosted by the European Commission. Presentations provided a chance to exchange experiences and discuss issues related to improving gender balance and diversity in the member institutions. Sessions included topics on:

- Lifelong learning: an opportunity or a threat for women?;
- Practical ways for implementing the gender mainstreaming approach;
- Diversity in international organizations: how to improve our records;
- Preventing violence and moral harassment;
- Experiences with diversity workplace surveys and diversity workforce censuses, using the demographic indicators of race and ethnicity.

Many participants found it extremely enriching to be able to discuss divergent opinions, and to engage in constructive debate in a climate supportive of expressing differences. Several members underscored that dealing with controversial issues and resistance was part of the diversity work in the organizations. Presentations provided inspiration to evaluate what organizations were doing and to test the potential impact of diversity training.

(For further information, you can contact Susan Kerr at Sakerr@Adb.Org)

Congratulations to ...

Former Finnish Prime Minister **Harri Holkeri**, a one-time President of the UN General Assembly, was named on 25 July 2003 as the new UN Administrator for the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Mr. Holkeri replaced Michael Steiner of Germany.

H.E. Judith Mbula Bahemuka, the new Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations, who presented her credentials on 2 September 2003, bringing the total number of women Permanent Representatives to eight.

Ms. Wendy Lobwein, who was selected on 9 September 2003 as the Focal Point for Women's Issues at the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia. Ms. Lobwein is at present Support Officer, Victims and Witnesses Section, and she can be contacted at + 33 111-70 512-5217.

Ms. Kathy Bushkin, who was appointed as Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer of the United Nations Foundation and Better World Fund. Ms. Bushkin replaced Ms. Jane Holl Lute, who was recently appointed as Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). Ms. Bushkin will join the UN family on 15 October 2003.

Ms. Joan McDonald, who was appointed Director, Facilities and Commercial Services, OCSS, as of 1 October 2003. Ms. McDonald has worked for the United Nations in different offices and capacities since 1978. **network** welcomes her to the group of senior-level women at the United Nations.

Judge Khalida Rachid Khan (Pakistan), who was sworn in at the International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda as a judge on 22 August 2003. She becomes the fourth woman judge out of 14 permanent judges of the Tribunal.

Ms. Kaci Kullmann, former Norwegian trade minister and a member of the committee that awards the Nobel Peace Prize, for her appointment as board leader of Statoil, a Norwegian oil and gas group. She is the first woman to hold the post since Statoil was founded in 1972.

Farewell to ...

Ms. Gillian Sorensen, Assistant Secretary-General for External Relations, who is leaving her UN job—but not her relationship with the United Nations. Starting on 1 October, she will begin an appointment as a Senior Adviser to the United Nations Foundation, the U.S.-based group created in 1998 to support UN causes.

²Asian Development Bank, African Development Bank, Administrative Committee on Coordination (UN), Bank of Montreal, Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, Canadian International Development Agency, European Commission, European Investment Bank, European Parliament, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Atomic Energy Agency, Inter-American Development Bank, International Fund for Agricultural Development, International Labour Organization, International Monetary Fund, International Trade Centre, International Organization for Migration, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Royal Bank of Canada, Toronto Dominion Bank, UN Secretariat, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Development Fund for Children, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, United Nations Development Fund for Women, United States Agency for International Development, World Health Organization, World Bank, World Food Programme, World Meteorological Organization.

Gender news . . .

African leaders commit to promoting women's rights

The Second Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU), which took place in Maputo, Mozambique, from 10 to 12 July 2003, was a successful milestone in the advancement of women's rights in Africa, with the election of five women Commissioners to the African Union Commission, as well as the adoption of the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa to the African Charter on Human Rights. Through this Protocol, African Governments commit to addressing such issues as violence against women, the gender dimensions of HIV and AIDS, and women's property rights, including land and housing. The Protocol also refers to Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security as a key document in promoting women's protection and rights in conflict and post-conflict zones. In addition, the AU Gender Directorate took a decision for the elaboration of a policy, declaration, strategy and management system on gender mainstreaming of the Commission of the African Union.

The five women elected to the AU Commission were **Mrs. Julia Dolly Joiner** of Gambia, **Mrs. Bience Philomina Gawanas** of Namibia, **Mrs. Saida Agrebi** of Tunisia, **Ms. Elisabeth Tankeu** of Cameroon, and **Ms. Rosebud Kurwijila** of Tanzania. The women appointed to the AU Commission proved to have the utmost expertise in their respective areas, considerable experience working in the field, and to be highly reputable members of the African society. The positive outcome of this Summit in terms of gender mainstreaming and women's effective participation in the African Union was the culmination of three very important consultations among African Women's Networks, from which were issued the Durban Declaration,³ the Dakar Strategy⁴ and the Maputo Declaration.⁵ (Press release from Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS).)

Gender equality tries to reach the boardroom in Norway

by Asta Schuette, Intern, OSAGI

Norway is continuing to set standards on gender equality policies. The Equal Status Act in 1979, requiring that 40 per cent of the members on local and state government boards and committees be women, has been successful in including women in the decision-making process of national and municipal government. Now this standard is being applied to the private sector in the nation's powerful, male-dominated boardrooms by calling for 40 per cent of corporate boards to be comprised of women. By July 2005, some 600 companies must comply with this quota or face penalties in 2007. At the beginning of this year, women represented only 8.4 per cent in the boardrooms. Norway is setting an example for the rest of Europe by demanding higher gender-equality standards of business.

Sweden, which continuously also pursues women's rights and the goal of gender equality, is following suit with Norway. Sweden's then Vice-Prime Minister, Ms. Margareta Winberg, declared that unless the number of women on the boards of publicly listed companies increased from 8 per cent to 25 per cent by 2004, the Government would pursue legal action. The then Vice-Prime Minister said: "At today's speed it would take up to 150 years until half of the Swedish boards' seats are held by women."

Not everybody agrees with the policy of mainstreaming gender in Norway, and although the Norwegian Government has a history of interference in private businesses, some business owners think that the new gender requirements have gone too far. The legislation has prompted a bitter outcry from business groups and a wide-ranging debate about how far the quest for sexual equality should extend. Fin Bergessen, Jr., leader of the Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry, the largest business trade group in the nation, said most businesses support diversifying their boardrooms but believe the legislation is too radical.

Criticism is part of taking concrete action towards a gender-balanced world. The Norwegian Government is fully aware of the fact that the growth of society as a whole is limited when the full capacity of its human capital is not utilized.

³Consultation on Gender Mainstreaming and the Effective Participation of Women within the African Union, Durban, South Africa, 28-30 June, organized by the African Women's Committee on Peace and Development and Femmes Africa Solidarité.

⁴Conference on Mainstreaming Gender and Women's Effective Participation in the AU and NEPAD, 24-26 April 2003, Dakar, Senegal, organized by FAS in coordination with ACCORD, ALF, ACDRHS, WILDAF and FEMNET.

⁵Women's Pre-Summit Meeting, Maputo, Mozambique, 23-24 June 2003, organized by the Foundation of Community Development in coordination with FAS and under the leadership of Madam Graça Machel.

In your interest . . . reports

Report of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace

The Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Carol Bellamy, and the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, Mr. Adolf Ogi, co-chaired the Task Force and presented its report to the Secretary-General on 17 September 2003. The main findings of the report are that well-designed sport-based initiatives are practical and cost-effective tools to achieve objectives in development and peace, because the practice of sport is vital to the holistic development of young people as it fosters their physical and emotional health and builds valuable social connections. It also offers opportunities for play and self-expression, and provides healthy alternatives to harmful actions, such as drug abuse and involvement in crime. Sport can cut across barriers that divide societies, making it a powerful tool to support conflict prevention and peace-building efforts. When applied effectively, sports programmes promote social integration and foster tolerance.

Sport is a powerful vehicle that should be increasingly considered by the United Nations as complementary to existing activities. The Task Force recommendations are:

1. Sport should be better integrated into the development agenda.
2. Sport should be incorporated as a useful tool in programmes for development and peace.
3. Sport-based initiatives should be included in the country programmes of UN agencies, where appropriate, and according to locally assessed needs.
4. Programmes promoting sport for development and peace need greater attention and resources by Governments and the UN system.
5. Communications-based activities using sport should focus on well-targeted advocacy and social mobilization, particularly at the national and local levels.
6. A final recommendation is that the most effective way to implement programmes that use sport for development and peace is through partnerships.

(For further information, contact the Office of Public Partnership—Sport for Development, UNICEF.)

Did you know that . . .

- The **World Food Programme (WFP)** announced that Cesária Évora, one of Africa's greatest singers, is becoming WFP Ambassador against hunger and in favour of school feeding. Cesária Évora, who for years refused to associate her name with any humanitarian agency, has accepted this role with WFP because of the impact of the agency's School Feeding Programme in her home country, Cape Verde.
- A number of **women in Saudi Arabia** have signed a petition calling for radical reform in the country. More than 300 people, including 51 women, signed the document, "In Defence of the Nation". Women are segregated in public places, cannot drive cars and must be covered from head to toe when in public. The women stated that they want change to come from within, and from their own culture, and that both men and women are ready to shoulder the responsibility.
- **AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis** continue to present one of the central moral challenges the world faces today. The Gates Foundation has made tremendous efforts and financial contributions in improving the prospect that vaccines will be developed for malaria and AIDS. Mrs. Melinda Gates is an outspoken advocate of the plight of girls and women, and has influenced the Gates Foundation in pushing hard for microbicides (protective gels), which would enable women to protect themselves from HIV, even if her partner refuses to use a condom.
- The **"honour killings" law** was blocked again by the Parliament in Jordan. An overwhelming majority rejected a proposed law imposing harsher punishments for men who kill female relatives in the name of family "honour". It was the second time since June's election that the Chamber of Deputies quashed the bill on such killings. Jordanian members of parliament argue that more lenient punishments will violate religious traditions and damage the fabric of Jordan's conservative society, where men have the final say. Under the existing law, people found guilty of committing honour killings often receive sentences as light as six months in prison.

News flash . . .

- A survey by the **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)** has revealed that **women in developed countries** have overtaken men at every level of education. According to the report, girls are now more confident of getting better-paid professional jobs than their male counterparts. Statistics show a consistent pic-

ture, across cultures and continents, of women achieving better results than men. The OECD survey is a detailed comparison of education achievement and spending in 43 developed countries. The success of girls is a complete reversal of what would have been expected a generation ago. In literacy skills, 15-year-old girls are ahead of boys in every one of the 43 countries in the OECD survey. The survey states that boys are falling behind because they are more susceptible to put off education by disruptions in their home environment than girls, whether it is peer group pressure or a lack of family support.

(For further information, please visit <http://www.oecd.org/home/>)

- A new report of the **World Health Organization (WHO)** states that projected deaths from tobacco use worldwide, which at present kills about 4.9 million people every year, could rise much more because statistics are showing that young girls are smoking cigarettes almost as much as young boys. WHO has called on national Governments to address the problem through gender-specific programmes. The survey carried out by the Global Youth Tobacco Survey studied tobacco use by more than one million adolescents from over 150 countries and was a collaborative effort of WHO and its regional offices, the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States, the Canadian Public Health Association and other international agencies and individual countries.
- Despite the relatively good news that in the second quarter of 2003 women's hourly median wages totalled 81.3 per cent of men's median wages in the United States, women should notice a less-than-thrilling trend: that the narrowing **wage gap** was caused by a drop in the median male wage rather than a real gain for women during this period. The United States congressional Equal-Pay Act of 1963, declaring that women and men must receive equal pay for equal work, was adopted in response to unfair practices on the part of employers. However, given the slow rate of change, Ms. Karen Nussbaum, assistant to the AFL-CIO president, said that at the current rate it would take generations before the wage gap is eliminated entirely.
- The definition of female menopause is the time at which periods cease. Yet, we are now becoming aware that men can also be affected by a "**mid-life crisis**". For many years, people have talked about it and identified symptoms such as poor sex drive, tiredness and fatigue, acknowledgement of ageing, hair loss, changes in body shape, irritability, sweating, flushing, generalized aches and pains, and low mood—sometimes depression.

It is easy therefore to see why a comparison is made with female menopause. Many doctors acknowledge that a change for men occurs, and that is real, but believe that it has a psychological basis, rather than a hormonal one. However, it needs to be monitored closely.

Web sites

www.devjobsmail.com: This web site provides the largest number of international development job announcements.

www.wicej.org: The Women's International Coalition for Economic Justice is an international coalition, representing 35 organizations from all regions of the globe, that works to link gender with macroeconomic policy in intergovernmental policy-making arenas.

www.womenforwomen.org: Its mission is to provide women survivors of war, civil strife and other conflicts with tools and resources to move from crisis and poverty into a civil society that promotes and protects peace, stability and self-sufficiency.

www.womensenews.org/support.cfm: Women's eNews is a non-profit independent news service covering issues of concern to women.

www.srintl.org: Survivors' Rights International (SRI). SRI is an organization that protects the rights of victims of crimes against humanity and genocide in different areas of the world.

Recommended books

"**Women Don't Ask: Negotiation and the Gender Divide**", by Linda Babcock and Sara Laschever. A survey of 100 men and women found that half of the men had started a negotiation within the previous two weeks, while half of the women had started their most recent negotiations more than four weeks earlier. On average, women negotiated pay raises that were 30 per cent lower than men's. High-flying women are still unusual, argue the book's authors. Most women are too unassertive to take the lead in making decisions or to stand up for themselves, let alone seal the deal on a fat wage packet. But Jenny Watson, deputy Chair of the Equal Opportunities Commission in the United States, disputed the findings by saying that she would not want to suggest that the reason women have unequal pay is because women do not negotiate. She believes it is far more complex than that. Publisher: Princeton University Press (October 2003).

"**Building Your Career Portfolio**", by Carole Poore. Publisher: Career Press (May 2001).

"**Getting promoted: real strategies for advancing your career**", by Harry Chamber. Publisher: Perseus Book Group (May 1999).

"**Dynamics of Diversity**" by Odette Pollar and Rafael Gonzales, 1994. Publisher: Crisp Publications (June 1995).

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(A): Alternate

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network was deeply saddened by the bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad and the loss of close friends and colleagues. Our deepest sympathies go to their families.

Dear Readers . . . If there is any manager—female or male—that you would like to recognize as somebody who shares our commitment to improving the status of women in the Secretariat, please let us know. We will highlight her/his work in our next issue. If you want to send us your comments about **network**, an article that you wrote etc., we would be delighted to receive it. The more interaction with our readers, the better!!!

You can read all of **network** online at
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fpnetworks.htm>

If you want to receive **network** by e-mail, please send a request to dain@un.org

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