

29th IFUW CONFERENCE
Manchester, England, 15 August 2007

The Advocacy Role of CIRs

Presentation by Sun Young Kim, IFUW Membership Committee and President of the Korean Association of University Women

A Centre for Women's Human Rights in Seoul, Korea

Violence against women persists in all regions of the world as a pervasive violation of human rights and a major impediment to achieving gender equality.

In December 2003, the General Assembly requested the Secretary General to prepare an in-depth study on all forms and manifestations against women (A/RES/58/185).

The Secretary-General's in-depth study on all forms of violence against women was launched in the General Assembly on 9 October 2006.

Violence against women is an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace. Violence against women both violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In considering the problems in Korea, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family initiated and entrusted "The Center for Women's Human Rights (CWHR) in November 2005.

The Center for Women's Human Rights works with six other Women's Organizations at National level and provides central support to more than 80 local consultation centers.

The Center provides domestic as well as international networking, advocacy, guidance in legal consultation, emotional and psychological consultation, and medical services, providing guidance on the spot for the victims of violence for their recovery and reintegration into society.

Since this is one of the priority programmes with the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, they have supported the various programmes which have been

established on the elimination of discrimination against women, specially the sexual exploitation of women.

In 2005, KAUW carried out training of local government employees of Seoul City, who were engaged in setting up programmes that deal with sexual exploitation. At present, KAUW has five Women's Resource Development Centers in different parts of Seoul where many courses are offered to women.

Today, since women are more interested in job training, there are now many courses for them. After they complete training and have passed the government examinations, KAUW members work with them to help them find a job. Approximately 9,000 women have been assisted in a three months period.

The sexual exploitation victims are one of the target populations. We work together with social workers to encourage them to participate in the courses and give them the opportunity of self-support and reintegration into society.

Busan branch of KAUW has two Consultation Centers within Busan city. They also provide a number of other programmes, such as visiting schools for to provide sex education. Recently, they have carried out consultation through internet that they find very useful.

Role of CIR :

When KAUW receives any information in English, the CIR is responsible for translating it into Korean, reporting to the Board and sending it to Branches in both languages.

We also send the information regarding women's issues to the website of the Korean Women's Development Institute which has access to all women's organizations in Korea. For example, we send the resolutions from the IFUW Conference for wider circulation.