



5th International Helvi Sipilä Seminar

UN CSW-54 | Thursday March 4, 2010
10.00 - 11.30 a.m. Conference Room C
Temporary North Lawn Building (TNLB)

The International Helvi Sipilä Seminar Series was started in 2006 to honour Minister Sipilä's work and the work of women with the UN and the CSW and its bodies as well as in other international and national women's organisations.

She Says YES to Power Helvi Sipilä Commemoration Seminar

OPENING OF THE 5th SEMINAR

Chair of the Seminar Leena-Maija Laurén (Finland)
Finnish Federation of University Women

OPENING ADDRESS

Acting Director Rachel N. Mayanja (Uganda)
UN Division of Advancement of Women (DAW)

ADDRESS

Minister Stefan Wallin (Finland)
Minister of Culture and Sport, responsible for Gender
Equality

KEY NOTE DIALOGUE

Vice President Shirley Randell (Australia)
International Federation of University Women

Vice President Jessica Notwell (Canada)
World YWCA

CLOSING ADDRESS

Gro Lindstad (Norway)
UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

**Minister Helvi Sipilä's recorded speech at the World
Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995**



Welcome to the Seminar

THE INTERNATIONAL HELVI SIPILÄ SEMINAR series addresses challenging issues that affect women and their lives globally and locally in the 21st century. At the fifth seminar in 2010, we offer several themes on the lines of the CSW-54.

The idea of a seminar, which would honour the long and remarkable career of Minister Helvi Sipilä, came to me during the UN CSW-49 Session on Beijing +10 in 2005. Helvi Sipilä's recorded speech was shown at a high level panel to an exceptionally attentive audience. At home in Finland, my enthusiasm was shared by the five women's organisations listed in this programme leaflet and a planning team for the seminar was set up.

The first ever International Helvi Sipilä Seminar coincided with the centennial celebrations of full political rights to all citizens in Finland in 1906, and it was therefore entitled *Power in her Hands*. Topics of the other International Helvi Sipilä seminars have been *Girls Shaping our Futures* at CSW-51, *Fatal*

Financing at CSW-52 and *She says NO to Violence* at CSW-53.

This year's seminar is a special tribute to Helvi Sipilä, commemorating her life and work. Minister Sipilä was and still is a role model for many of us today.

Accordingly, the 2010 seminar has been entitled *She says YES to Power*. Women's political participation is a prerequisite for gender equality and genuine democracy. Empowerment of women in politics begins with increasing the number of women in decision-making positions, but it cannot stop there. What is required, are gender-sensitive governance reforms and a boost to women's participation in economic policy-making.

It gives me great pleasure to wish you all warmly welcome to the seminar.

Leena-Maija Laurén
Chairman of the Seminar

Minister Helvi Sipilä 1915-2009

HELVI SIPILÄ was a Finnish lawyer, diplomat and the first female Assistant Secretary-General of the UN. Sipilä received numerous national and international awards including twelve honorary doctorates, and she was granted the honorary title of Minister in 2001.

Helvi Sipilä also held leadership position in several associations, including the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, International Federation of Women Lawyers and the International Council of Women.

Helvi Sipilä's profession in law was exceptional at the time. When she announced the opening of her own law firm in November 1943, she became the second woman in Finnish history to practise as a lawyer. She ran her own law firm for 30 years. Private entrepreneurship enabled her to engage in extensive social activities, including service as a member of governmental missions.

They included such duties as membership of the UN Commission on the Status of Women from 1960 to 1968 and from 1971 to 1972, serving as Vice President between 1962 and 1966 and President in 1967, and membership of the UN delegation of Finland from 1966 to 1971, including Presidency of the Third Commission in 1971 and Vice Presidency in 1969. She was also appointed UN Special Rapporteur

on the Status of Women and Family Planning (1968-1972).

Her profession and leadership positions in international organizations, together with the governmental duties, were merits on the basis of which Helvi Sipilä – as the first woman in the world – was appointed in 1972 Assistant Secretary-General of the UN. She held this post until her retirement in 1980.

While Assistant Secretary-General, she was appointed Secretary-General of the UN World Conference on Women in Mexico in 1975. She continued to work as a consultant for the UN until 1981, in order to promote the UN Voluntary Fund for the Advancement of Women (now UNIFEM), set up during the UN Decade for Women 1976-1985.

Helvi Sipilä was a well-known and respected advocate for equality and women's rights. Her important legacy will live on.



Seminar Speakers

Leena-Maija Laurén, Chairman of the Seminar

Ms Leena-Maija Laurén, MSc (Econ), is a graduate of Turku School of Economics, Finland, and a teacher and researcher at the Finland Futures Research Centre at Turku University. She has also completed the Management of Lifelong Education Programme MLE at the Harvard Institute of Higher Education, Cambridge, Mass., U.S.A. She is particularly interested in Gender and Development Studies. In 2009, she was Visiting Lecturer at Makerere and Zanzibar Universities in Africa under the auspices of the North-South-South Higher Education Institution Network Programme of University Exchange, sponsored by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.



Rachel N. Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, UN Division of Advancement of Women

Ms Rachel Mayanja, the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women since November 2004, is a long-serving career international civil servant with vast experience in normative, policy and operational work of the United Nations including peace-building, peace-keeping and inter-agency collaboration. Ms Mayanja, a national of Uganda, obtained law degree from Makerere University, as well as Master's Degree in Law from the Harvard University Law School.



Stefan Wallin, Minister of Culture and Sport, responsible for Gender Equality

Mr Wallin is a Party Leader of the Swedish People's Party and a Member of Parliament in Finland. Minister Wallin is interested in gender equality policy at large but especially concerned and interested about reconciliation of work and family life, equal pay, men and gender equality, gender mainstreaming and violence against women.



Shirley Kaye Randell, Vice President of the International Federation of University Women

Professor Shirley Randell is Director of the Centre for Gender, Culture and Development at the Kigali Institute of Education in the Republic of Rwanda. Following a distinguished career in education and in commonwealth, state and local governments in Australia, she has provided advisory services in education, governance for empowerment, gender mainstreaming and public sector reform for governments in the Pacific, Asia and Africa since 1997. Professor Randell is Vice President of the International Federation of University Women.



Jessica Notwell, Vice President of the World YWCA

Ms Jessica Notwell is a Vice President of the World YWCA and chairs the Programme and Advocacy Committee. As well, Jessica is Executive Director of the Women's Economic Council in Canada. Jessica is committed to community development that promotes diversity and inclusion as well as women's equity, equality and empowerment. Jessica has given time and energy to many community organizations including Marjorie House women's shelter, Literacy Link Niagara, and Micro Entrepreneurial Initiative Niagara.



Gro Lindstad, Chief of Intergovernmental Relations at UNIFEM

Ms Gro Lindstad is responsible for relationship strategies towards parliamentarians and governments/ministries. She is in charge of developing strategic and political advice to Directorate at UNIFEMs HQ in New York and assisting sections in work related to parliamentarians. Ms Lindstad's past positions include Political Adviser at Norwegian Parliament, responsible for foreign policy and development issues, including special focus on women and development issues in the Committee on Foreign Affairs.



Organizers of the Seminar



AKATEEMISET NAISET
KVINNLIKA AKADEMIKER
UNIVERSITY WOMEN

Finnish Federation of University Women

FFUW, the union of women graduates was founded in 1922 and has at present 21 local associations. FFUW is a member of the International Federation of University Women (IFUW). Today, in accordance with the objectives of the IFUW, the FFUW advocates for the improvement of the status of women and girls, promotes gender equality, lifelong education, international understanding. It encourages graduate women to employ their expertise for the good of society. FFUW is a national forum where women from universities, business and administration can share experiences and collaborate.

www.akateemisetnaiset.fi, www.ifuw.org



NAISJÄRJESTÖJEN KESKUSLIITTO
KVINNOORGANISATIONERNAS CENTRALFÖRBUND ry
THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF FINLAND

National Council of Women of Finland

The National Council of Women of Finland, established 1911, has over sixty member organisations which altogether have nearly half a million individual members. The Council acts as a national link and a forum for discussion for its member organisations. The Council's objective is to promote equality, human rights and the status of women in the Finnish society. The Council coordinates writing of the Peking +15 shadow report to be presented in 2010. www.naisjarjestot.fi



Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations NYTKIS

The Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations NYTKIS is a co-operation forum that brings together women's associations from several key sectors of society, e.g. from the political and research sectors. The objectives of NYTKIS are to achieve equality between women and men and to end discrimination against women. www.nytkis.org



YWCA of Finland

World YWCA - a global movement of 25 million women and girls working for justice, peace, health, human dignity, freedom and the environment in 120 countries. The World YWCA's current priority advocacy areas are eliminating violence against women, HIV and AIDS and girls and promoting women's participation in peace building. In Finland, the national association comprises 25 associations in 22 locations. The YWCA strives to empower women and girls through education and training, development programs and actions against violence and trafficking in women. An essential part of the YWCA's work is to empower young women for leadership and social justice. www.ywca.fi



National Committee for UNIFEM in Finland

The objective of the National Committee for UNIFEM in Finland is to support the United Nations Development Fund for Women UNIFEM in promoting women's status and human rights. The National Committee supports these goals by raising funds for UNIFEM programs, by offering expert opinions and organizing discussions, seminars and visits at schools and educational institutes, as well as by advocating women's rights and development issues among the politicians, decision-makers and other stakeholders. The National Committee for UNIFEM in Finland was established in 1981, as the first National Committee, by Minister Helvi Sipilä. www.unifem.fi