



## TRIENNIAL REPORT OF IFUW REPRESENTATIVES TO ECOSOC IN NEW YORK

**Members:** Catherine Moore, Coordinator since 2006; Mary Purcell, Coordinator, resigned 2005;  
Loretta James

This report will highlight several areas to which much time, energy and commitment is made; it by no means reflects a total picture of participation and visibility of IFUW.

As the IFUW Representatives at the United Nations Headquarters, New York the focus of our involvement is always guided by the IFUW Mission Statement and Resolutions, together with some of the United Nations' identified, areas of importance. Examples would include the Decade of Water, UN Conferences and emerging opportunities, as well as invitations extended to select NGOs by the President of the General Assembly.

In December 2005 Mary Purcell resigned after many years as Convener and as an IFUW representative in New York. She played an important role in putting the Girl Child on the international agenda and was one of the founders of the Working Group on Girls (WGG). The NGO Committee on UNICEF honoured Mary by offering the Mary Purcell Grant for Girls, to assist young women to take part in the 2007 Commission on the Status of Women meeting on "*The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child*". Catherine Moore, another experienced member of the team, took over as Convener of the New York team and played a key role in promoting these grants.

### **Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)**

Over 1000 government and NGO representatives from around the world come together in New York for the annual CSW Meeting. The New York team, together with IFUW international leaders and other members from different countries, are present with strong delegations at each of the CSW meeting, lobbying the delegates and organizing workshops. Recent themes included:

- 2005 "Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly" and "Current challenges and forward-looking strategies for the advancement and empowerment of women and girls"
- 2006 "Enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, *inter alia*, the fields of education, health and work" and "Equal participation of women and men in decision-making process at all level."
- 2007 "The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child"

From 2007, CSW will focus on a single theme at each annual session. The new format is designed to provide a much stronger outcome document and more opportunities for informal discussion leading up to the Conference.

### **NGO/CSW/NY Committee**

The NGO/CSW/NY Committee works tirelessly throughout the year between meetings of the CSW. Much planning is involved. This has joint organization with the Division for the Advancement for Women on a Roundtable. The team also arranges special briefings: March 2006, briefings were held at the Nigerian Mission, with Mrs Adekunbi Sonaiki, Vice President Commission on the Status of Women Bureau, and a second Briefing was held at UNIFEM Headquarters. March 2007, a briefing was held at the Office of Population and Gender Study, with Dr. Judith Bruce, a member of the Expert

Group Meeting. NGO/CSW/NY also hosts a luncheon to honor Women Ambassadors to the United Nations. Catherine Moore represents IFUW on the Committee and is currently Secretary-elect.

## **CEDAW**

Loretta James followed the sessions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and highlighted special issues raised in the country reports so that NFAs might take action. She also alerted NFAs to the countries whose reports would be considered in upcoming sessions. She remains optimistic about the significance of CEDAW in the lives of many women, although there is shared disappointment that the goal of ratification by 192 Member States has not been met. The number signing remains at approximately 184. Loretta has been especially impressed with not only the apparent impact of the Shadow Reports, but the process that involves ongoing, grassroots participation at the regional level. NFAs can monitor their governments' follow up on recommendations of the final reports and circulate information to the public on the objectives of the CEDAW Convention, the Beijing Platform for Action and the concluding comments on the outcome of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Special Session of the General Assembly "Women 2000; Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-first Century". It continues to be essential that NFAs encourage their governments to comply with the CEDAW objectives towards making gender equity a reality.

## **Commission of Social Development (UNCSD)**

2005 marked the tenth anniversary of the first World Summit for Social Development. The UNCSD meeting focus was on poverty eradication, employment and social integration, with special attention given to people with disabilities, aged and youth. The accompanying NGO Forum, "Reclaiming Copenhagen", was jointly organized by the Division of Social Policy and Development, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the NGO Committee on Social Development and the Friedrich Bert Foundation. The NGO Forum served as a model of collaborative efforts and highlighted themes essential to social progress; among them: linkage between people and human rights linkage between economic development and human dignity, linkage between the design of policies and projects by those who will be the benefactors and the political will of sustainability.

## **UNICEF**

IFUW continues to be active in the NGO Committee for UNICEF. Catherine Moore represented IFUW at UNICEF's "Expert Group Meeting on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child" in Florence, Italy in 2006.

## **Project 5-O**

Catherine Moore will soon end her two-year term as chairperson of the 5-O New York. The representatives of the Project Five-O partners have a congenial and collaborative relationship, working together to organize joint advocacy activities. Both NY representatives participated in Project 5-O's twenty-fifth anniversary celebration in Copenhagen, which was well planned with appropriate celebration, recognition and a forward glance to the future.

## **DPI/NGO Executive Committee**

The Convener represents IFUW on the Executive Board of the United Nations Department of Information NGO Executive Committee as treasurer. IFUW and Soroptimist New York UN Representatives are jointly preparing a special workshop for the September 2007 DPI/NGO Conference "*Climate Change: How it Impacts Us All*", featuring high school students.

Catherine Moore, Coordinator  
April 2007