



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

IFUW REPRESENTATIVES: Catherine Moore, Coordinator  
Loretta James  
Polly Woodard

Our focus this triennium has been guided by the four priorities established by IFUW, the key concerns of the standing committees of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) at the United Nations Headquarters and the significant themes identified by the United Nations and its agencies. The lead team member for each IFUW priority is currently:

- Priority 1: Education for the Girl Child – Catherine Moore
- Priority 2: Adult Literacy for Women – Polly Woodard
- Priority 3: Access to and the Advancement of Women in Higher Education –  
Polly Woodard (as it pertains to the health and well being of women and girls)
- Priority 4: Women as Leaders and Decision-Makers -- Loretta James

### **The Girl Child**

IFUW enjoys a significant relationship with the United Nation's Children' Fund (UNICEF), the lead agency working to build a world where the rights of every child are realized. The team has close contacts with the Gender & Rights Division. Annual briefings with UNICEF, initiated by Catherine Moore in 2006, offer an opportunity for IFUW international leaders and the team to share IFUW's concerns, to learn more about UNICEF's priorities and to explore how IFUW and UNICEF can work together in partnership. There will soon be an opportunity to meet the recently appointed Executive Director of UNICEF, Mr. Anthony Lake.

The team is also active in the NGO Committee on UNICEF and its working groups. Catherine Moore is co-chair of the Working Group on Girls (WGG). WGG works to ensure that national governments implement commitments to girls' rights made through international agreements, advocates for the ongoing inclusion of girls' rights in the work of the United Nations system, and promotes the active participation of girls as agents of change in their own lives, families, communities and societies. For example, WGG has developed a toolkit to facilitate discussion groups with children on the issue of eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against girls. Feedback from the project will serve as input to the United Nations' 2011 review of progress in this area. Catherine Moore represented WGG at the 2009 Conference on the Girl Child in The Hague, which looked specifically at Violence against Girls in the Home and Family Setting. Among the high-level speakers at this conference were Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, an Independent Expert who prepared the Report, Study on Violence against Children, and Marta Santos Pais who was appointed (2009) to the position of Assistant Secretary-General on Violence against Children.

Polly Woodard is on WWG's Task Force to Prevent Violence against Girls, which promotes good practices to protect girls from commercial sexual exploitation and assists girls who have been trafficked. She participated in the development of the group's mission statement and goals and drafted the group's letter in response to a New York Times article, "*The Invisible War*", which exposed horrific sexual violence against children in war.

Polly Woodard also convened and participated in a group to advocate for an event on violence against girls and the impact on HIV/AIDS at the 2010 Women's Global Forum.

## **CoNGO**

CoNGO, the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations, works to ensure that NGOs are present and heard when governments discuss issues of global concern at the United Nations. In 2010, Catherine Moore was appointed to the CoNGO Human Resources Committee. The immediate task, in collaboration with appointees from Geneva and Vienna, will be to develop a Handbook establishing policy/practices related to personnel. The team recently engaged in discussions with the CoNGO president on how IFUW might be more active in CoNGO in the New York centre.

The team continued its active participation in several CoNGO committees. Catherine Moore is in her second term as secretary of the Committee on the Status of Women (2007-2009 and 2009-2011). Polly Woodard was elected to the executive of the HIV/AIDS Committee. This committee advocates for global action related to the epidemic; especially the provision of care and support, and reducing the vulnerability of individuals and communities to HIV/AIDS, including societal stigma associated with the disease. She wrote the mission statement for the Affordable Medication sub-committee, and organized formal meetings on HIV/AIDS with Swaziland's UN Ambassador.

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

The NGO Committee on the Status of Women works throughout the year planning for the annual CSW session. Loretta James is currently the chair (2007-2010) of the sub-committee on fundraising and reception for the NGO events. Polly Woodard served on the Planning Committee for CSW 53<sup>rd</sup> and 54<sup>th</sup> Sessions in 2009 and 2010. All three team members were involved in the planning and organization of the special Beijing +15 Global Forum for the 3,440 NGO representatives from 138 countries who attended the 54<sup>th</sup> Session of CSW. The team puts considerable effort into facilitating the participation of IFUW delegates from around the world who come to New York for the annual CSW meeting. This includes the organization of special briefing meetings and the preparation of a special handbook for IFUW delegates.

The upcoming themes for CSW include:

- 2011 Women and girls in science and technologies: increasing opportunities in education, research and employment; review theme: Elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against the girl child
- 2012 The employment of rural women, in relation to climate change and food security; review theme: Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women
- 2013 Addressing stereotypes which constrain the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women, including in decision-making; review theme: The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care-giving in the context of HIV/AIDS

### **Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**

While CEDAW Committee operations moved to Geneva in 2008, at least one session per year continues to take place in New York. Loretta James has the lead role in attending and providing feedback on CEDAW national reports from countries where IFUW has affiliates. The other team members also attend selected CEDAW sessions.

## **GEAR and UNIFEM**

Loretta James has been the team's lead person following the Global Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) Campaign, a network of over 300 women's, human rights and social justice groups around the world advocating for the creation of a new UN gender equality entity. She provided regular progress updates through IFUW's Advocacy Network. After three years of intensive lobbying by the coalition, the UN General Assembly finally passed a resolution in September 2009 calling for the creation of a new women's entity. GEAR suggested recruitment criteria and is now monitoring the search for the person who will head the agency. GEAR is also continuing efforts to lobby for adequate funding for the new entity.

IFUW maintains close links with UNIFEM. Catherine Moore is a member of the NGO Committee for UNIFEM and attends regular monthly meetings. Following her elected two two-year terms as Vice President for Program for the New York Metropolitan Chapter she has taken a hiatus from that level of involvement. In June, she will represent IFUW at the UNIFEM Conference on *Strategic Imperatives for Ending Violence against Women: Linkages to Education, Economic Security and Health*.

## **Other Activities**

Catherine Moore served as treasurer of the Executive Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations Associated with the United Nations Department of Public Information (NGO/DPI). The NGO/DPI committee helps UN-associated NGOs to make effective use of available information and material to increase knowledge about, and public understanding of, the UN purpose, structure, policies, actions and programmes. She organized and participated in a panel on "Child Brides: Stolen Lives" at the UN DPI/NGO Conference Reaffirming Human Rights for All, held in Paris in 2008.

Looking ahead, the main focus for the rest of the year will be on the ECOSOC High Level Segment in on *Implementing the Internationally Agreed Goals and Commitments in regard to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women* and the 65<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly in September, 2010 that will focus on *the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)*. Catherine Moore, Polly Woodard and IFUW Vice-President Marianne Haslegrave will represent IFUW at a special session in June that will give NGOs an opportunity to share their assessment of progress on the MDGs.

## **Changes in the Team**

The team was enriched by the addition of Polly Woodard at the start of the triennium. Through Catherine Moore's "informal" liaison with Women Graduates-USA, three potential new representatives for the New York team have been identified. We look forward to the opportunity to increase the number of New York team members, and anticipate a new vitality that can enhance IFUW representation at UN Headquarters here in New York.

*Catherine Moore, Coordinator  
May 2010*