



TRIENNIAL REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

Members: Mary Hall (*Canada*) Convener; Margaret Tait (Great Britain) Rae Duff (*New Zealand*); Sushil Bhardwaj (*India*), IFUW Vice-President, *ex-officio*

The role of the Resolutions Committee is to oversee the submission of resolutions to IFUW Conference and Council and to oversee the call for resolutions and to encourage and assist implementation of adopted resolutions by IFUW and the national federations and associations (NFAs).

Review of IFUW's Resolutions Process

The Committee spent considerable time reviewing IFUW's resolutions' process. We found that practice had evolved over time and had deviated from the process set out in the Rules of Procedure.

In the past, proposed resolutions were debated at the session at which they were introduced. Further debate occurred at a subsequent session followed by a vote. For the Manchester Conference in 2007, NFAs were invited to submit amendments to proposed resolutions via e-mail prior to the Conference. No debate was allowed in the session when the resolutions were introduced. Instead an evening meeting between proposers of the resolutions and those wishing to amend them produced a consensus resolution. The consensus resolutions were subsequently debated and voted upon in a later business session.

When looking at how resolutions should be handled in the future, the Committee solicited input from past committee chairs. We reviewed carefully the submission process and timetable, the process for pre-conference submission of amendments, and the process for discussing, amending and debating resolutions at Conference. We tried to balance the need for an open and accessible process with clarity and efficiency as well as balancing the rights and concerns of NFAs with the need for achievable timelines.

Based on our discussions, the Committee drafted a new set of IFUW Resolutions Regulations, which will be separate from but complement the Rules of Procedure. These are being presented to the 90th Council and the 30th Conference for approval. The Committee hopes that the proposed changes will provide more clarity to the process and encourage more NFAs to become engaged in the resolutions process.

The proposed regulations would no longer require that the resolutions be read in a session. The Committee feels that the delegates of all NFAs, English speaking or otherwise, should have read and discussed the resolutions with their members before coming to Conference. A reference to the location of the resolutions in the documentation should be sufficient. The time saved could be better used for debating the content and discussing plans of action.

The timetable in the proposed regulations is based on the submission of resolutions six months prior Conference, as currently required in the IFUW Constitution. The Committee does not think that this provides enough time for the consultation process. The preparation of the submitted resolutions for the initial posting on the web site requires consultation between the Resolutions Committee and the proposers. In turn NFAs have to discuss the suggestions of the Committee within their organization. This may take considerable time. The e-mail amendment process requires the same level of communication between the Committee and the NFAs and within the NFAs. A longer time frame would facilitate this consultation. For this reason, the Committee is proposing a constitutional

amendment changing the deadline for submission from six to nine months before the Conference. If this passes, the regulations would be updated automatically.

Resolutions Submitted to the 30th Conference

The Committee completed the work on the regulations early in 2009. Our next task was to prepare the Call for Resolutions for Mexico 2010. The timeline followed was:

5 February 2010	Deadline for resolutions' submission
18 March 2010	Proposed resolutions circulated to NFAs and posted on IFUW website
18 May 18 2010	Deadline for proposed amendments
16 June 2010	Amended resolutions sent to IFUW Headquarters
23 June 2010	Amended resolutions circulated to NFAs and posted on IFUW website

There have been 12 resolutions submitted. Three of these are internal resolutions. One of the internal resolutions is from the Argentine Federation and the remaining two are from the Rwandan Association. The remaining nine resolutions are as follows: one from the Swiss Association, one from WG-USA, three from the Canadian Federation, one from the British Federation, two from the French Association and one from the Mexican Federation.

If a resolution was originally written in a language other than French or English, the original text was also required. The Committee believes that this will overcome some of the translation difficulties experienced in Manchester.

The Committee has worked with the proposing NFAs, and where applicable UN representatives, to ensure that the resolutions are in the proper format and correctly reference relevant international conventions. Despite the short timeline, the Committee has worked efficiently and was helped by the prompt response of the UN representatives and the effective support from IFUW staff.

The correspondence by e-mail with the proposing NFAs requires more time. If the constitutional amendment changing the deadline for submission from six to nine months before the Conference is passed, there will be sufficient time for consultation with the proposing NFAs.

Follow-up to Resolutions Passed by the 29th Conference

IFUW and several NFAs reported actions taken in follow-up to resolutions adopted in Manchester:

Resolution No. 1: Women In Leadership and Decision-Making Positions

The Samoa Association of Women Graduates (SAWG) participated in a CEDAW Partnership multi media campaign on local radio and television promoting "Women in Decision Making: Meeting Challenges, Creating Change".

Resolution No. 1 and No. 10: Global Warming

IFUW and individual NFAs supported an international call for the inclusion of women on the High Level Advisory Board on Climate Change Financing.

Resolution No. 2: Creating a High-Level Women's Agency for the United Nations

IFUW joined other women's organizations in a successful advocacy campaign resulting in the adoption of a UN General Assembly Resolution laying the foundation for the creation of a women's agency. IFUW and NFAs continue to advocate for adequate funding for the new entity.

Resolution No. 3:- Religious Beliefs and Women's Health

The New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women (NZFGW) sent a submission to its national Law Reform Committee supporting the petition of Pacific Women's Watch New Zealand, which called on the Government to take action against under-age cultural marriages in New Zealand.

Resolution No. 5: Women's Role in Disease Prevention

The Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) held a regional conference on "Human Rights and HIV/AIDS". A new resolution proposed by the French Association (AFFDU) to the 30th Conference uses **Resolution No. 5** as its foundation. This new resolution proposes that the policy be broadened to recognize the impact of bioethics on human rights issues, particularly women's human rights.

Resolution No. 6: Prevention of Armaments containing Depleted Uranium: A Human Rights Issue

The Australian Federation of Graduate Women (AFGW) supported protests by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) against the holding of an international armaments fair in Adelaide promoting weapons containing depleted uranium.

Other Activities

As Resolutions Committee Convener, I have attended the meetings of the SWC and taken part in that Committee's email correspondence. The online discussions held by the Status of Women Committee have been successful. Perhaps in future one session could be a discussion dealing with action on resolutions.

The Committee is planning to present a resolutions workshop at the Conference in 2010. Our goal is to familiarize NFAs with the process of developing a resolution and encourage more NFAs to submit resolutions especially in relation to IFUWs priority areas of action and help them with taking action on resolutions with their government and representatives.

*Mary Hall, Convener
May 2010*