



## IFUW OPENS PROGRAMME CONSULTATION

As a result of the 2008/2009 Programme Survey, the IFUW Board of Officers and Status of Women Committee (SWC) have adopted a new process to give national Federations and associations (NFAs) and members a greater voice in identifying the priority issues to be included in the next Programme for Action (PfA). In Phase I, NFAs and members will be asked to give preliminary feedback on the issues of most importance to their national and local work. This will be followed by two e-mail discussions in October 2009 and March/April 2010. The SWC will next prepare a background document based on this input. Final discussions will take place at the 30th Conference in Mexico City in August 2010. All NFAs and members are invited to take part in Phase 1 of the consultation by using the [online form](#) or filling out the short [questionnaire](#) attached to this message and submitting their replies by email or fax. Replies to these questions are due by 27 May 2009. Regular updates on the consultation process will be posted at: <http://www.ifuw.org/consultation/>.

## 30th IFUW CONFERENCE UPDATE

The IFUW Board of Officers and the Mexican Federation of University Women (FEMU) are planning an exciting conference for 2010. The 30th IFUW Conference will be held in the Gran Melia Reforma Hotel in the heart of Mexico City, from 5-9 August 2010. The hotel offers superb meeting rooms, accommodation and other facilities, including an indoor pool and spa. IFUW's block booking will offer members excellent prices. FEMU is planning a series of one-day tours to give participants an opportunity to visit the city's amazing archeology museum, to explore charming colonial quarters, to tour the National Autonomous University of Mexico (a World Heritage site) and to trace the steps of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera (two of Mexico's most famous artists). Three pre- and post-Conference tours will introduce members to the history, archeology and culture of other Mexican regions. Participants will have a wide choice of seminars, workshops and training sessions throughout the week. More details will be available soon at <http://www.ifuw.org/ifuw2010/>.

Members interested in attending the Conference can sign up now to receive regular planning updates by sending their name, city, country, national association or independent member number, and email to [mexico2010-sub@ifuw.org](mailto:mexico2010-sub@ifuw.org). IFUW leaders have prepared a special introduction explaining what the conference is, the roles members can play, and suggestions for how members can plan to attend.

## IFUW WITHDRAWS FROM PROJECT FIVE-O

IFUW gave formal notice in February 2008 that it is withdrawing from Project Five-O, the partnership of five-women's international organizations it helped found in 1980 to provide vocational training for women and girls in developing countries. Zonta International and Soroptimist International have also withdrawn. While the programme supported many worthwhile projects over the years, recently funding had been very uneven; Soroptimists International was providing a significantly disproportionate share. Concerned about the long-term viability of the project component, IFUW had tried unsuccessfully for several years to encourage the partnership to move toward a more coordinated international advocacy approach. After much deliberation, the IFUW Board decided to end IFUW's participation in the programme.

The International Council of Women and Business and Professional Women International have decided to continue their participation and are looking for new partners. The remaining funds will be used for the current projects. IFUW will continue to work closely on common advocacy priorities with its former Five-O partners at the international level. IFUW NFAs and local groups are encouraged to continue collaboration with our former Five-O partners at the national and local levels.

### **FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN OF AFRICA (FUWA) TO MEET IN ABUJA, 16-19 JULY 2009**

IFUW's African affiliates will come together in Abuja, Nigeria will address questions related to "Girl Child Education in Africa": enrolment and retention, the role of governments, the role of UN agencies, civil society and NGOs, globalization and environmental factors. Members wishing to present a paper should submit their abstract by 30 May 2009 to Dr Roseline I. Okorji [aijayokorji@yahoo.com](mailto:aijayokorji@yahoo.com). Abstracts should not be more than 300 words. For more information, see <http://www.ifuw.org/fuwa/>.

### **A RECORD HIGH FOR WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT**

According to the latest analysis undertaken by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), a record number of women now hold seats in parliament following elections and renewals that took place in 54 countries in 2008. On average, women hold 18.3% of the seats across all chambers of parliament. This represents a 60% increase in the number of women parliamentarians since 1995. Also, for the first time, 15% of parliamentary chambers in 32 countries have reached 30% or more women members. At the other end of the spectrum, however, one quarter of all parliamentary chambers have less than 10% women members. According to IPU's publication *Equality in Politics*, the greatest obstacles to women's entry into politics are prejudice and cultural perceptions about the role of women, together with a lack of financial resources. Yet, once they do become involved, women bring different views, talents and perspectives to politics.

For more information, see: Women in Parliament in 2008 - The Year in Perspective:

<http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmn08-e.pdf>

Equality in Politics – A Survey of Women and Men in Parliaments:

<http://www.ipu.org/PDF/publications/equality08-e.pdf>