



MESSAGE FROM THE IFUW PRESIDENT

I am in India for the celebration of the 40th birthday of the Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund (VGIF), planned together with the Indian Federation of University Women's Associations (IFUWA). Over the 40 years, VGIF has provided funding for many IFUW national projects helping women and children. VGIF has also generously assisted IFUW with funding for training projects at our triennial conferences. We are appreciative of VGIF's support. It is a time to celebrate their accomplishments and look ahead to continuing our close partnership in the future. In this time of financial crisis, I would also like to encourage all NFAs to think of ways to link with new women graduates. They face difficult challenges of unemployment, reduced job openings and fewer work place training options. IFUW can reach out to these young women with initiatives like one in Turkey offering opportunities to share issues, receive mentoring and encouragement, and find a place to express their concerns as the new generation of graduate women.

Louise Croot, IFUW President

To view the full message:

<http://www.ifuw.org/memcorner/president/2009messagepresident2611.shtml>

IFUW BLOG: UNITE TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

According to some estimates, up to 70 per cent of women experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. The United Nations General Assembly, which designated 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, has invited governments, international organizations and NGOs to organize activities to raise public awareness of the problem. UNIFEM has taken a leading role. The first phase of their Say No to Violence campaign, of which IFUW was a launch partner, generated over 5 million signatures in a global call to make this issue a top priority worldwide. The new phase, Say NO – UNiTE to End Violence against Women, aims to trigger and highlight actions by individuals, governments and civil society. The initial goal is to reach 100,000 actions by March 2010. IFUW fully supports this initiative and encourages IFUW national affiliates and members to get involved.

Actions can range from adding your name to the Say NO petition, volunteering at local shelters or women's organizations, advocating for legislation to reaching out to students at schools, spreading the message through blogs and tweets or donating funds that support local organizations on the ground. IFUW members are encouraged to add any actions taken on the Say NO website.

To view the full blog or comment: <http://www.ifuw-forums.org/blog/2009/11/25/unite-to-end-violence-against-women/>

To view the Say NO-UNiTE website: <http://saynotoviolence.org/>

IFUW BRPID PROJECTS 2009-2010

The IFUW Project Committee has awarded Bina Roy Partners in Development (BRPID) grants to IFUW national federations and associations in ten countries: Cameroon, Egypt, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Rwanda, Samoa, Thailand, Turkey and Uganda. A decision on three other projects is still pending. This year the grants were awarded on a competitive basis. Grants of between 500 and 2000 Swiss francs will support projects ranging from scholarships for girls in Samoa, to one working to promote sexual/reproductive rights for nomadic women and girls in Cameroon, one working to improve communication and education on feminine hygiene issues as a means of keeping girls in school in Rwanda, and another offering literacy classes for women and girls in Egypt. Descriptions of the ten projects can be viewed on the IFUW website. Member support of the BRPID programme is needed

more than ever! The number of grants IFUW can offer in 2010 will be determined by the donations we receive now. To find out how you can contribute, click on the link below.

For information on how to support the BRPID programme: <http://www.ifuw.org/brpid/support.shtml>

For descriptions of the 2009-2010 winners: <http://www.ifuw.org/brpid/2009-2010projects/index.shtml>

IFUW REPRESENTATIVE CONCHITA PONCINI WINS PRESTIGIOUS INTERNATIONAL MINERVA PRIZE

The international MINERVA Prize is awarded annually to remarkable women working to instill new knowledge, new values and new passions to their communities. Conchita Poncini, Coordinator of IFUW's Representatives to the United Nations in Geneva and head of IFUW's delegation to the Human Rights Council, has been chosen to receive the prestigious 2009 MINERVA Prize in recognition of her lifelong work promoting women's human rights. The award ceremony, under the patronage of the President of the Italian Republic, will take place today in Rome, where she will receive a gold jewel-encrusted pin in the shape of the head of Minerva, Roman goddess of wisdom. According to Conchita "to me it is a shared award with all women who are working to make an equal place for women with men in society". IFUW extends its warmest congratulations to Conchita for this well deserved recognition. Members who wish to add their congratulations should write to her directly at conchita.poncini@bluewin.ch.

54TH COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN & GLOBAL FORUM FOR WOMEN

2010 marks the 15th anniversary of the Beijing World Conference on Women. From 1 to 14 March in New York, the 54th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will review progress in implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action over the last 15 years. It will be preceded by a two-day NGO Global Forum for Women on 27 & 28 February. Members wishing to be considered for IFUW's delegation to the CSW meeting should complete and return the [application form](#) to rfo@ifuw.org no later than 15 December 2009. No funding is available. Members must fund their own travel, visa and accommodation costs. Those requiring a visa to enter the United States are urged to start the process at least two months in advance.

For the application form: http://www.ifuw.org/docs/temp/csw_application.doc

WORLD BANK PRESENTATION ON THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS AND THE POWER OF WOMEN

In preparation for CSW's Beijing+15 Review, the Geneva NGO Committee on the Status of Women (NGOCSW) invited Ms. Mayra Buvinic of the World Bank to present the Bank's strategy and policy in approaching the financial and economic crisis from a women's empowerment and gender equal perspective and to address how gender equality is mainstreamed in the Bank. For a summary of the presentation, see the report by Conchita Poncini, IFUW Representative and President of the Geneva NGO Committee on the Status of Women.

For the report: http://www.ifuw.org/advocacy/reports/2009_World_Bank_presentation_Buvinic.pdf

IFUW PRE-CONFERENCE CONSULTATION: SUMMARY OF PHASE II DISCUSSION

In Phase II of the consultation on the next Programme for Action, members shared information and suggested action that could be taken in the areas of education, financial independence and women's empowerment. Dorothy Meyer, Convener of the Status of Women Committee, has prepared a summary of the three-week discussion.

For the summary: <http://www.ifuw.org/docs/2009-pre-conf-consultation-discussion-summary.pdf>

CALL FOR ARTICLES

IFUW members are invited to submit articles about actions taking place at the national or local level. This includes conferences, workshops, seminars, community projects, advocacy initiatives, coalition work with other NGOs and membership strategies. Selected articles, up to 500 words, will be used on the IFUW website. Good quality photographs are encouraged. Articles and photographs should be sent to ifuw@ifuw.org with a message stating the submittor's full name, national federation or association, local group and contact information.