



Report for CONGO on Current Activities

November 13, 2008

Monthly Membership Meetings

The Committee holds regular monthly membership meetings consisting of a 30 minute business portion followed by an hour and a half-long program with speakers on a particular theme. The NGO CSW/NY partners with other groups to sponsor programs together when the program themes overlap with their work. Themes for the current fiscal year (July 1, 2008-June 30-2009) meetings are:

- September 18- Gender Architecture
- October 16- Gender and Climate Change
- November 20- Summary of Expert Group Meetings on Priority Theme for CSW 53 (Geneva Oct. 6-9)
- December 11- Human Rights (Co-sponsor with UNA-USA and NGO Committee on Human Rights)
- January 15- Social Integration, Women and Finances: Doha conclusions (Co-sponsor with NGO Committee for Social Development)
- April 16- Migration and Family (Co-sponsor with NGO Committee)
- May 21- Women and Health/Women and Mental Health (extended conference)
- June 18- Women and Communication

Sub-committees and Task Force

The NGO CSW/NY currently has three active Sub-committees: the Sub-committee on Violence Against Women, the Sub-Committee on Older Women, and the Sub-committee on the Priority Theme for CSW 53. Highlights of their activities are briefly summarized below.

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Sub-committee on Violence Against Women

The current activities of the SCVAW include a presentation on Violence Against Women for the November 20 DPI/NGO briefing. In addition, they are investigating possible collaboration with the Working Group on Girls of the NGO Committee on UNICEF around the issue of the “girl child” and Violence against Children. SCVAW meets on the third Thursday of each month, following the NGO CSW/NY meetings.

Sub-committee on Older Women

The SCOW has collaborated with other groups in the preparation of a background paper entitled “Recommendation on the adoption of a General Recommendation on the rights of older women” for a new CEDAW recommendation on older women. As of 6 November 2008, 26 organizations had endorsed the background paper. In addition, SCOW is working on a project to create biographical sketches of older women who have made significant contributions to the advancement of women entitled “Women Who Count.” The project is in preparation for a parallel event during CSW 53.

Sub-committee on the Priority Theme for CSW 53

The SCOPT has been meeting twice each month since early October to focus the NGO CSW/NY’s work on the upcoming Commission around the Priority Theme. The sub-committee has formed four groups to focus on advocacy around different aspects of the theme. These groups are: Women and Poverty, Women in Health, Education and Training, and Women in Power and Decision-Making.

Task Force on Women and Climate Change

The Task Force on Women and Climate Change meets monthly. The group organized the panel for the October 16 membership meeting of the NGO CSW/NY. The Task Force has prepared a proposal for a page on the NGO CSW/NY website to introduce viewers to the group’s work and provide information regarding gender and climate change. In addition, the group is submitting a proposal for an interactive grassroots session as a parallel event for CSW 53.

53rd Commission on the Status of Women

Round Tables

In preparation for CSW 53, the NGO CSW/NY is planning two Round Tables that will address the themes of the Commission and initiate discussion in preparation for CSW 53. The first is set to take place on February 3 and will focus on “The equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women, including care-

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giving in the context of HIV/AIDS.” The second is set for February 17 with the topic “Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels.”

Consultation Day

The NGO CSW/NY is planning a consultation day for NGO participants in CSW 53. The date for the Consultation Day is March 1, 2009. A Planning Committee has been meeting twice a month since early October to work on preparations for the day.

Blog for CSW 53

This year, the NGO CSW/NY is working to maximize participation in the preparation for CSW 53 by using the internet. The Committee has created a blog where anyone interested can access information regarding the planning process, important deadlines, key dates and events related to the Commission. The Committee’s blog for CSW 53 can be accessed at: <http://ngocswnycsw53.wordpress.com/>

Handbook for CSW 53

As has been done in past years, the NGO CSW/NY is preparing a Handbook for CSW 53. The Handbook serves as a guide for NGOs participating in the Commission. It will contain background information on the Priority Theme and Commission composition, advocacy recommendations, and a listing of all parallel events during the Commission.

Women Ambassadors’ Luncheon

On November 3, 2008, the NGO CSW/NY held its 8th Women Ambassadors’ Luncheon in the Delegates Dining Room at United Nations Headquarters. This year, eight new woman ambassadors were honored at the luncheon: H.E. Mrs. María Fernanda Espinosa of Ecuador, H.E. Mrs. Susan Waffa-Ogoo of Gambia, H.E. Ms. Gabriela Shalev of Israel, H.E. Ms. Sylvie Lucas of Luxembourg, H.E. Ms. Enkhtsetseg Ochir of Mongolia, H.E. Mrs. U. Joy Ogwu of Nigeria, H.E. Mrs. Simona Mirela Miculescu of Romania, and H.E. Ms. Marina Annette Valere of Trinidad and Tobago. All eight honorees attended along with UN officials and representatives of NGOs. Stephen Lewis, Co-Director of AIDS Free World and Former UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS gave the keynote address.

Preparation for Beijing + 15

The NGO CSW/NY will invite the NGO CSW of Vienna and the NGO CSW of Geneva to collaborate in reviewing the history of the Beijing Conference and the +5 and +10 Reviews, drawing on the previous conference, following recommendations and complementing achievements with the ultimate goal of

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promoting gender parity at all levels for women of all ages. In preparation for Beijing +15, Vivian Pender, the Chair of the NGO CSW/NY has appointed an ad hoc committee chaired by Afaf Mahfouz, Vivian Pender, and Jackie Shapiro. The ad hoc committee is proposing that several brainstorming meetings be held (in early December 2008, mid-January 2009, and mid-February 2009) for the entire NGO community to plan for Beijing +15. These meeting will result in the establishment of a task force to facilitate an alliance of NGOs, regional organizations, member states and UN agencies, to be announced at CSW 53 in March 2009. The goal for the task force will be to develop an outcome document that is concise and user-friendly and can be translated and distributed for use throughout the world. In addition, a fundraising campaign will be launched to raise \$1 for every woman on earth, and an Honorary Board of Directors will be formed.

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