

lished the Provisional Government under Kerensky. This lasted only a few months, trying to continue fighting the war against the Germans against all odds, until the Bolshevik coup d'etat in October.

In Britain it was only in 1926 - the year of the General Strike - that International Women's Day was taken up. This was done by an interesting alliance of the (then) very important Co-operative Women's Guild and the Communist Party. From then on until the end of the Second World War, 8th March was a regular event for expressing opposition to fascism in Britain and Europe.

Perhaps because of this anti-fascist (and left-wing) association, the event was dropped at the end of the war in Britain and many other countries. It was revived in the late 1960s by the new women's liberation movement. In 1971 a demonstration of 5,000 women in London demanded equal pay, equal opportunity, free 24-hour childcare, free contraception and abortion on demand. The event has grown since then in a completely unstructured kind of way - there is no coordinating body, for instance - because it provides a convenient date around which women can organise if we want to. This is why some parts of the country have well-organised and very lively events, while others may not have anything. Most trade unions organise something, and the Women's Trade Union Congress takes place around this time. Local authorities are the other source of events.

International Women's Day has taken its place, along with Feminist Book Fortnight in June, as one of the two key dates for women's events. It is Women's Day which offers perhaps the widest range of activities, and the possibility of reflecting on the original - and not yet achieved - goals of the women who started it all: women's rights, and peace and freedom for all.

*Source: Everywoman*

*March 1991. 34 Islington Green, London, N1 8DU United Kingdom.*

## Women in Development

### Europe Working Group prepares for 1995 UN Conference on Women

**P**reparations are now beginning for a UN conference on women to be held in 1995. Women in Development Europe (WIDE) has decided to begin preparing for this event by assessing the achievements/failures of the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies. WIDE is also planning to be involved in the early discussions about the agenda of the Conference by applying for official UN observer status.

Pauline Eccles, Mieke van der Veken and Anna Foca will make up the core working group which will prepare a discussion paper assessing the Forward Looking Strategies (FLS) for broader discussion among WIDE network.

At present the group is collecting information and responding to a paper sent to the group by Erika Maerke on the FLS.

#### Possible themes

The UN division for the Advancement of Women in Vienna reports that the priority themes for the meeting are: equality, increased awareness by women of their rights including legal literacy, equal pay for equal value, equality in economic decision-making, elimination of stereotyping of women, development, women in extreme poverty, integration of women's concerns in national development

planning, women in urban areas, population, and nutrition, health factors, migration, drug consumption and AIDS, peace, women and the peace process, measures to eradicate violence against women, women in international decision-making, and education for peace.

#### Contact addresses

Focal points for United Nations agencies who are preparing the meeting are:

- Division for the Advancement of Women, Vienna International Centre  
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*Source: WIDE Bulletin, August 1991:2. c/o SID, Palazzo Civiltà del Lavaro 00144 EUR Rome, Italy. Fax: 39/6/5919836.*