

Bits and Pieces

Building Women's Resources - can you help?

Tamil Eelam Women's Research Centre

Our research centre is newly established and we are making every effort to build up a vast library of information on women. We would be grateful for any book lists and information on organizing research centres.

Ms Elavathani, Co-ordinator
Women's Research Centre



Annette Hug

Raja Veethi, Kalviankadu,
Jaffna, Sri Lanka

The Palau Community College Library

The Palau Community College Library seeks to expand and strengthen its collection of materials about women and women's development issues.

Jane Barnwell, Librarian, Palau Community College Library,
P.O. Box 9, Koror, Republic of Palau, PW 96940, Western Caroline Islands.

Coming conferences

The Asian Migrant Center is co-sponsoring a conference on 'Asian Women in Migration' on January 20-25, 1995 in Bangkok. Details from Asian Migrant Center, 4 Jordan Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong. Tel 3120031.

A conference on the theme 'Towards Beijing - Women, Environment and Development in the Asian and Pacific Regions' will be held from February 9 to 11, 1995 at the Victoria University of Technology, St Albans Campus, Melbourne, Australia.

For details contact Helen Hill/Jeannie Rea, Centre for Asia-Pacific Studies, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428, Melbourne Mail Centre, 3000, Victoria, Australia.

The Australian National Consultative Committee on Refugee Women (ANCCORW) is holding seminar and training workshops focussing on refugee issues for NGOs wanting to



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participate in the process leading to Beijing and beyond. If you are interested in this work, contact ANCCORW, 69-71 Parramatta Rd., Camperdown, Locked Bag 15, Camperdown P.O. NSW, Australia 2050 Tel (612) 5659111 fax (612) 25504509.

The Coalition of Activist Lesbians (Australia) is developing a position paper on issues affecting lesbians to take to the CSW preparatory meeting in New York in 1995 and to Beijing. COAL seeks to link with lesbian groups in the region and internationally in preparation for Beijing. Mailing address: PO Box 600, Crow's Nest, NSW, Australia 2065. Tel (612) 4515030 fax (612) 9755824.

B i t s a n d P i e c e s

A Women's Peace Platform for the 21st Century

Dear Sisters, Would you like to help write a Women's Peace Platform for the 21st Century?

The Platform for Action of the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women (WCW) is based on the themes of equality, development and peace. But developed and developing countries alike continue excessive military expenditures depriving too many people of basic education, clean water, essential health care and human security.

We propose to strengthen the peace base of the Platform for

Action and to create a small pamphlet in different languages, to be called a **Women's Peace Platform for the 21st Century** for distribution at the WCW that will reflect our vision of a peaceful people on a peaceful planet.

Won't you please send in your ideas for the following subjects?

Peace and Women * Peace and Development * Peace and Equality * Decision Making * Peace and Violence * Peace and Nationalism * Peace and Health * Peace and



National Mitweek

Education * Peace and the Economy * Peace and the Media * Peace and Militarism *

Peace and Repression * Peace and Democracy.

Contributions should be brief, statistics and facts documented, and all ideas linked to actions to be carried out by governments, multi-lateral organizations, the United Nations, or NGOs. Send to: **Peace Action International**, 866 UN Plaza, Room 4053, New York, NY 10017. Please include your name, address, telephone, fax/e-mail.

Source: New York NGO Committee on the Status of Women Working Group on Peace. Convenor: Pamella Saffer, c/o Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, UN Liaison Office, 777 UN Plaza, 6th floor, New York, NY 10017. Tel (212) 682-1265.

Happy birthday - 20 years well spent

The Leichhardt Women's Community Health Center in Sydney recently celebrated 20 years of providing innovative health services to women. With clinical services, counselling, health education and bilingual services, the Center was the

B i t s a n d P i e c e s

Child Brides in Canada

Our ISIS warning bells clanged when we read the following report in the June 1994 issue of **KINESIS**. Migration to first world countries has long been used as a mechanism for exploitation of women from the South by men from the North, this mechanism is now targeting particularly young and poor girls from the South, in this case for migration as child brides to Canada.

Women's groups in other northern countries, including Australia in the Asia-Pacific region, should be especially vigilant against such abuse. We wonder how it is possible for a 13 year old immigrant girl to become a bride in Canada where, legally, she is still a minor? What standards and whose standards are operating here?

KINESIS reports, 'A recent ruling in Montreal has left women's and immigrant's groups angry over the racist and sexist treatment by the courts of child brides in Canada. A judge in Montreal acquitted a 50-year-old-man, accused of assaulting his 13-year-old wife whom he sponsored for immigration from the Dominican Republic in early 1994. The girl, who fled the abusive relationship soon after arriving in Canada, was sheltered at the Secours aux Femmes, a shelter for immigrant women who are victims of abuse, she was the

first of its kind in Australia and has conducted campaigns on cervical cancer, migrant issues, sexual assault, HIV/AIDS, ageing and drug and alcohol abuse.

Leichhardt Women's Community Health Center, Inc., 55 Thornley Street, Leichhardt, Sydney, NSW Australia.

youngest resident at the shelter.

The court acquittal came in part because the judge questioned the girl's motives for marrying the man in the first place. Judge Joel Guberman agreed with lawyers for the accused who argued that the marriage was a ticket out of the Dominican Republic for the girl, which puts her 'credibility' into serious question.

A spokesperson for the Secours aux Femmes shelter, Marcia Aiquel, says shelter workers and residents are horrified at the judge's decision which means that "as a woman, the onus remains on you as the abused". Shelterworker Omaira Falcon adds, "...it is true that she married him in order to come to this country, [but] does that give him the right to rape...and sodomize her?"

Women's groups are concerned that this ruling will encourage more men to seek child brides from the developing world in return for immigration to Canada. In most cases, the girls are poor, are financially at the mercy of their husbands, know nothing of their rights in Canada and speak little or no English or French. Of the 78 women who stayed at Secours Aux Femmes in 1993, more than half were immigrants sponsored by their husbands.

Source: **KINESIS**, June 1994.
KINESIS #301-1720 Grant St.
Vancouver, BC V5L 2Y6, Canada.

Woman in Action

Dr Sima Samar, thirty-seven years old, is the 1994 recipient of the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership, the Award honours Asians who exemplify greatness of spirit, integrity and devotion to liberty. She works with her war devastated people in Afghanistan and the Afghan refugee community in Pakistan and was one of the first Hazari women to become a medical doctor. In 1984 she fled Afghanistan with her son when her husband was arrested, he has become one of Afghanistan's disappeared. Amongst other works, she actively supports literacy and livelihood education for women and girls and has established schools and hospitals. While she does not wear a veil and so arouses the ire of fundamentalists, she is a model of courage and independence for many women and girls, including Tamanna her three year old adopted daughter (Depthnews Women's Features, August 1994).

Woman in Action

Pakistan's prime minister Benazir Bhutto, the only Muslim woman leader to attend the ICPD in Cairo, who said 'Leaders are not elected to allow a narrow-minded minority to dictate an agenda of backwardness.'

Woman in Action



ISIS International is delighted that Noleen Heyzer has taken up the position of Director of UNIFEM (the United Nations Development Fund for Women), Noleen is a Board member of ISIS International-Manila

We wholeheartedly agree with the comments of the Administrator of the UNDP, James Speth, when announcing Noleen's appointment, 'Ms. Heyzer is a highly regarded leader in the international women's community who will bring great strength to UNIFEM and to its mission of helping women around the world.'

Since 1984, Noleen has headed the Gender and Development Programme of the Asian and Pacific Development Centre in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where her work has helped to build networks