

Bulletin Board

New Internet Page on Women's Rights

Essex University Human Rights Centre holds one of the largest, by far the best organized, human rights archives on the Internet. To mark International Women's Day, a new page containing information relating to the abuse of the human rights of women and the role of women in refugee and war situations was launched. Submissions may be submitted to:

The Human Rights Centre
University of Essex
Colchester CO4 3SQ, U.K.
phone: (44-206) 872558
fax: (44-206) 873428
e-mail: human-rights@essex.ac.uk

Appeal for Documentation Help

The Delhi-based women's group Sakshi will appreciate any help in gathering information on legal cases, precedents, existing laws, etc. on the issue of sexual harassment in Third World or Commonwealth countries.

The request stems from a sexual harassment case pending before the Supreme Court of India. Sakshi filed the case following the gang-rape of a rural woman working for the Rajasthan State Women's Development Programme. While actively campaigning against child marriage (on the state's insistence), she was repeatedly harassed and then gang-raped. State officials were aware of her situation but ignored this. Such negligence on the part of the authorities makes her situation even more appalling.

Sakshi has prepared guidelines on the prevention and prosecution of sexual harassment cases and is asking the Supreme Court to implement these. The case is up for the final hearing soon.

Sakshi needs input from Commonwealth and Third World countries on legal decisions and other documentation that will support its stand on sexual harass-

ment. Any assistance rendered will be crucial as there are no legal precedents in India. Information on organizations involved in agitating for sexual harassment laws or in raising public awareness of the issue of sexual harassment will also be helpful.

Contact Naina Kapur,
e-mail: sakshi@unv.ernet.in.

Nauru Group Needs Support

WINA-Women, Information & News Agency, a newly formed women's organization in Nauru, has a monthly publication that covers issues affecting women in the Pacific. The group will

welcome donations of office equipment and furnishings: desktop and notebook computers, printers, photocopier (heavy-duty), word processor, camera, filing cabinets, facsimile machine, telephone and stationery.

Support may also be in the form of story contributions— anecdotes, and reports on programs and activities, overseas trips, and national and international events; recipes; book reviews; advertisements; poems—or subscriptions to WINA.

Contact WINA-Women, Information & News Agency
P.O. Box 439, Republic of Nauru
Central Pacific

Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women

The United Nations is now in a position to name those countries that are abusing women's rights, focus the world's attention on them and implement protective measure. In response to a Canadian-led initiative, the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) has named the first Special Rapporteur on violence against women.

At its 50th session, the UN Commission on Human Rights adopted a Canadian-sponsored resolution appointing Radhika Coomaraswamy as special rapporteur on violence against women, including its causes and consequences. Ms. Coomaraswamy will report to the commission annually over a three-year period. As Special Rapporteur, she is tasked with:

- gathering information on violence against women, its causes and its consequences;
- naming countries where women's rights abuses are a part of life; and
- recommending ways to eliminate violence against women and attempt to make the UN take action.

The UNCHR also invites the special rapporteur "to work closely with other special rapporteurs, special representatives, working groups and independent experts... and the Commission on the Status of Women." (E/CN.4/1944/L.8/Rev.1)

To contact Ms. Coomaraswamy, write or call:

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International Centre for Ethnic Studies
8 Kynsey Terrace, Colombo, Sri Lanka
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