

*Welcome to the Advocacy Update for April, our first issue for 2008. We have decided this year to send this update out separately from the e-bulletin and in email format to make it easier for you to open and read. Other changes this year are a broader advocacy focus and more opportunities for you to be involved. We hope you will like our new format - do share with us your thoughts! Please send them to Amy Bain at [amy@gaatw.org](mailto:amy@gaatw.org).*

*In this issue we provide a report from the Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking (13 - 15 February 2008) and the 7<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council (Geneva, 3 - 28 March 2008). We also give information about **Upcoming Events** and a **Special Announcement**. We would also like to draw your attention to the **Request for Information from Bonded Labour in the Netherlands (BLinN)**, which is seeking examples about procedures for identification of trafficked persons. We look forward to hearing from you about this!*

## REPORT FROM VIENNA, FEBRUARY 2008

### ***GAATW launches Recognise Rights campaign at the Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking...***

GAATW launched the Recognise Rights campaign on 12 February 2008 in Vienna, the day before the opening of the UN.GIFT Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking. Recognise Rights is based on the recommendations and findings from GAATW's global study, *Collateral Damage*, an in-depth look into the human rights impact of anti-trafficking measures in eight countries. The goal of the campaign is to ensure that the protection of human rights will be central to the formulation of all anti-trafficking and migration policies and that they are devised and implemented with the full involvement of the affected communities.

**LEFÖ**, an Austrian women's organisation and GAATW member, kindly hosted the launch at her Vienna offices. **Evelyn Probst**, LEFÖ-IBF Coordinator, opened, after which **Dr. Helga Konrad**, International Consultant on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, addressed the press and took questions about the challenges she saw in the implementation of the anti-trafficking framework. **Eleanor Taylor-Nicholson**, Program Coordinator for GAATW IS, gave more information about the Recognise Rights campaign, followed by **Dr. Renu Rajbhandari**, Chairperson of the Women's Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC) a GAATW member in Nepal. Attendees included journalists and representatives from member organisations in Europe, LAC and Asia that were able to provide specific examples of collateral damage from their countries. The launch was successful in stimulating a global dialogue on how anti-trafficking initiatives and policies are leading to human rights violations and how States need to be held accountable for ensuring that human rights are at the centre all of anti-trafficking efforts.



International Press Conference on Human Trafficking by GAATW in co-operation with LEFÖ. 12.02.2008. On the podium: Eleanor Taylor-Nicholson, Dr Renu Rajbahandari, Evelyn Probst, Dr Helga Konrad (from left to right).

***Report from the UN.GIFT Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking (13 - 15 February 2008) - Eleanor Taylor-Nicholson attended ...***

Arrivals to Vienna in February saw the city festooned with billboards and signs to announce the Vienna Forum gleaming through the snow, and the opening session at the Austria Centre Vienna sparkled with addresses from celebrities Emma Thompson and Ricky Martin, urging the 1400 participants of the Forum to take human trafficking seriously.

This rhetoric continued over the next three days, as the representatives of UN.GIFT (UN Global Initiative to Fight Trafficking), the joint UN coordinating body that organised the Forum, pushed all stakeholders to share their heartfelt commitment to combating trafficking, the new 'global slave trade'. Religious leaders, the private sector, youth, women leaders and more, all had special panel sessions on how they could join in.

In other sessions law enforcement and tackling organised crime, was the focus, likely because the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) leadership in the UN.GIFT Steering Committee. Police forces and international agencies spoke of improved data collection methods and how to beat corruption. The warfare rhetoric was notable throughout: "Arming the private sector" and "the fight against trafficking" for example.

All of this seemed very far away from the realities of human trafficking. Representation of trafficked people themselves, or migrants, or sex workers, or any other group with direct experience of the risks of migration or informal sector work, was not included in the agenda. Nor was there any discussion of the broader human rights impacts of the anti-trafficking framework on these groups, including the tightening of border controls (it was not mentioned for example that most African participants had been denied visas to Vienna and couldn't attend).

GAATW members were able to contribute on panels including: *Betty Pedraza* from Espacios de Mujer, Colombia, who spoke about NGO and law enforcement cooperation, *Maria Tchomorova*, Animus Foundation/La Strada Bulgaria on the panel "Health and Human Trafficking", *Ana Revenco* from La Strada Moldova on "Repatriation and Reintegration", and *Katerina Levchenko* of La Strada Ukraine about "National and Regional Responses". *Mike Dottridge*, the editor of GAATW's recent report *Collateral Damage*, also spoke on a very interesting panel on innovative prevention strategies. Other members were able to attend and participate.

Some things about the Forum were disappointing: the disregard of human rights or the human rights approach to anti-trafficking work, and the sidelining of NGOs (for example no NGOs were included on the steering committee or in planning process) to name just two. It might also be a concern to some that the enormous budget for the event came from the United Arab Emirates and Belarus, neither of whom are well known for their human rights efforts.

But, on the positive side, human trafficking into all sectors was given equal attention by the organizers, and the broad definition of human trafficking was accepted by most. Also, members tell us that they had an opportunity for constructive conversations and meetings during the Forum and some have reported direct action emerging from this meeting at the national level.

The follow up from the Forum is not yet clear. Antonio Maria Costa, the UNODC's Executive Director, in closing said there are no "official conclusions for this Forum" but also called for concrete actions, including ratifying the Palermo Protocol, establishing a formal mechanism to review Member States' implementation of the Protocol, improving technical assistance, and increasing public awareness. According to Mr. Costa, the "road ahead is already mapped in the UN anti-trafficking Protocol". Then to end, Ruslana, the Ukrainian pop star, gave a 30 minute show complete with back-up dancers and smoke machines - not much changed in three days...

More information about the UN.GIFT and the Vienna Forum, including transcripts of speeches and presentations, can be found at the <http://ungift.org>.

#### 7th SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

*The Human Rights Council (HRC) convened for its 7th regular session in Geneva from 3 to 28 March 2008...*

The Council approved the mandate for the new **Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery**, including its causes and consequences, **Ms. Gulnara Shahinian** of Armenia. Ms. Shahinian has worked on trafficking and smuggling at a national and international level, including as an expert in trafficking for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and as a member of a UN expert group on trafficking. Additionally, the HRC extended for three years the mandates of other Special Rapporteurs including on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, **Ms. Najat M'jid Maala** of Morocco, and on violence against women, **Dr. Yakin Ertürk** of Turkey.

For more information about the Special Procedures mandate holders, including a full list of the members and mandate holders, please visit <http://www.unhcr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/view01/6B7007A33E763D6DC1257418006BFCAE?opendocument>

Also in this meeting, Louise Arbour, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, announced she would be leaving office at the end of her term in June 2008. Ms. Arbour has come under sustained criticism in her role, largely due to her criticism of the United States human rights record during the War on Terror.

#### The HRC 1<sup>st</sup> Universal Periodic Review (3 - 18 April 2008)

Immediately following the 7<sup>th</sup> session was the first ever session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism. The UPR is a result of the efforts to make the HRC more effective, and governments and NGOs have been planning for this session for more than 12 months. NGOs from the countries under review were able to submit joint shadow reports, and also attend the session at which the reporting State was questioned by other States on their human rights record. Initial reactions from NGOs in Geneva are that the first session is highly disappointing and States are using this process for self-promotion and shielding their colleagues from criticism of their human rights record. NGOs were

also frustrated at being unable to engage in constructive dialogue with member states.

The schedule for States to be considered during the first two UPR sessions is as follows:

**1st UPR session (03 - 18 April 2008)**

1. Bahrain	5. Indonesia	9. Brazil	13. Netherlands
2. Ecuador	6. Finland	10. Philippines	14. South Africa
3. Tunisia	7. United Kingdom	11. Algeria	15. Czech Republic
4. Morocco	8. India	12. Poland	16. Argentina

**2nd UPR session (5 - 16 May 2008)**

1. Gabon	5. Benin	9. Zambia	13. France
2. Ghana	6. Republic of Korea	10. Japan	14. Tonga
3. Peru	7. Switzerland	11. Ukraine	15. Romania
4. Guatemala	8. Pakistan	12. Sri Lanka	16. Mali

More information about the UPR mechanism, copies of the government and shadow reports, and information about how civil society organizations can play a role can be found at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRmain.aspx>.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

***CEDAW Committee Elections (Nominations due on 30 April 2008)***

Of the 23 experts that make up the Committee, 11 of the terms are expiring at the end of this year. The 11 new members will be elected during the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of States parties to the Convention in New York on 30 July 2008. Nominations for new members are due on 30 April 2008. Only States can nominate candidates and the final decision is made by a vote of the State Parties to the CEDAW Convention. NGOs play an important role in lobbying their governments to nominate their choice of candidate. **Are you planning to lobby for a particular candidate? Please let us know!**

More information about the elections, as well as a list of the current members of the committee, can be found at the OHCHR's website at:

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/elections.htm>.

***Human Rights Council 8<sup>th</sup> Session (02 - 13 June 2008)***

The next session of the HRC will be from 2 to 13 June 2008 in Geneva. During this session the HRC will appoint a new **Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially in women and children**, to replace Ms. Sigma HUDA (Bangladesh). GAATW IS will be holding a side event during the HRC 8<sup>th</sup> session. **Is any one expecting to attend or planning an event? If so, we would like to know! Please send details about your participation in the upcoming HRC 8<sup>th</sup> session to [amy@gaatw.org](mailto:amy@gaatw.org)**

To learn more about the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in person's mandate, please visit <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/trafficking/index.htm>.

***General Assembly Thematic Debate on Human Trafficking (03 June 2008)***

The General Assembly is holding a Thematic Debate on Human Trafficking on 03 June 2008 in New York. The thematic debate will focus on the "3 P's" of the Palermo Protocol and will include two panels: *Enhancing multilateral cooperation to prevent trafficking in persons* and *Protecting victims of trafficking and cross-border cooperation in prosecuting traffickers in persons*. GAATW is planning to attend this Debate and we will keep you informed about ways to be involved. **If you have any more information about this Debate or are planning to go, please write to [amy@gaatw.org](mailto:amy@gaatw.org)**

To learn more about the thematic debate please visit

<http://www.un.org/ga/president/62/ThematicDebates/thematicdebates.shtml>

***CEDAW Committee 41st session (30 June - 18 July 2008)***

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women will hold its 41st session from 30 June to 18 July 2008. It will consider country reports from Finland, Iceland, Lithuania, Nigeria, Slovakia, United Kingdom, Tanzania and Yemen. To learn more about the 41<sup>st</sup> session and to read the country reports, please visit <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/cedaws41.htm>

***Global Forum on Migration and Development (27 - 30 October 2008)***

The second Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) is planned for 27 - 30 October 2008 in Manila. This year's theme is *Protecting and Empowering Migrants for Development*. The Ayala Foundation is organising a related Civil Society Meeting from 27 - 28 October.

Before the GFMD, UNIFEM, ILO and UNICEF are planning a Conference on Gender, Migration and Development with the theme: *Seizing Opportunities, Upholding Women Workers' Rights* which will be convened in Manila on 25 - 26 September 2008. To learn more about the GFMD and the Civil Society Meeting, please visit <http://gfmd2008.org>.

### SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

On 08 April, **Inés Alberdi** of Spain was appointed Executive Director of the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). According to the UNIFEM news release announcing her appointment, Inés Alberdi has extensive experience working on "gender issues and in politics". Her academic positions include that of Professor of Sociology at Madrid University and Director for Research at the Centre for Sociological Research. Additionally, she served in the Madrid Assembly as Deputy and has been a member and an advisor of multiple boards and commissions. GAATW welcomes the appointment of Ms. Alberdi and looks forward to working with her.

To view the full news release please visit [http://www.unifem.org/news\\_events/story\\_detail.php?StoryID=668](http://www.unifem.org/news_events/story_detail.php?StoryID=668)

### REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The Netherlands's Ministry of Justice recently announced that it will provide support to trafficking victims who are unwilling or unable to cooperate with law enforcement. While this is a positive step forward, it still does not protect trafficked persons who wish to avoid police contact, because only police have the authority to identify 'a victim of trafficking'. **Bonded Labour in the Netherlands (BLinN) is seeking examples from other countries of identification processes that are undertaken by departments, agencies or organisations other than the police.** Also, BLinN is interested in learning of best practices for establishing and organizing such identification procedures.

Please send responses to Sanne Kroon at [s.kroon@blinn.nl](mailto:s.kroon@blinn.nl) with a copy to GAATW at [gaatw@gaatw.org](mailto:gaatw@gaatw.org).