



PeaceWomen Across the Globe
FRIEDENSFRAUEN WELTWEIT
نساء من أجل السلام عبر العالم
Femmes de Paix Autour du Monde
Женщины мира за мир на земле
MUJERES DE PAZ EN EL MUNDO
Mulheres pela Paz ao redor do Mundo

DONNE DI PACE NEL MONDO

ピースウーマン—国境を越え平和をつくる女たち
全球和平妇女

01 | 2011

Newsletter



Women played important role in North African upheavals

► *Ruth-Gaby Vermot-Mangold and Mirjam Sager*

In the recent upheavals in Tunisia and Egypt, women played an important, conspicuous part. Now they demand active participation in building the new states.

In her newspaper article «The Middle East – Women and the Revolution» in the «Gulf Times», the journalist Naomi Wolf highlights the pioneering role of women in the demonstrations in Egypt and Tunisia. Unlike in earlier protest movements, women organized the demonstrations and reported on them.

Some women from the network of PeaceWomen Across the Globe comment on the reasons for change, the role of women and their demands for the future:

► Nada Thabet, PeaceWomen from Egypt:

«In this revolution we saw the return of love for our country, a spirit of courage and the hunger for freedom once the fear was gone. But what after the revolution? Egypt is living in a state of political and economical and depression. We do need reforms and progress. The general development of our society cannot do without the real contribution of women, because they constitute more than half of the population and they educate the future generation. I hope that what happened is not just a reaction like the ones Egypt is accustomed to. Our hope lies in a new constitution, in the adjustment of laws, the acknowledgment of peoples' rights and responsibilities, values and principles. We want a life with dignity and justice for everyone.»

► Maha El-Zein, PWAG coordinator Horn of Africa:

«Egypt and Tunisia were governed by dictators and corrupt leaders. I hope that the uprising is going to pave the way for radical changes. The form of government has to change and the separation of powers must be established. And a strong civil society has to develop. The women in the region of North Africa and the Middle East are part of the process of change. The women's organizations are working towards female empowerment. Women must use critical analysis to address the gender inequalities, insuring women's effective participation at all levels.»

► Aida Abura, PWAG coordinator Near and Middle East:

«Women were a leading force in the upheavals in Egypt. It is symptomatic that no woman was nominated for the constitutional committee. This is a serious problem and an inexcusable exclusion of women from the development of a new Egypt.»

► Egyptian Center for Women's Rights:

«We believe that Egyptian women had an important and equal part in the revolution together with Egyptian men. They have the right to participate in building the new Egyptian state on the simple basis of citizenship.»

EDITORIAL

Dear Friends

Conflict transformation, a focus of PWAG's 2010-2012 program, is an approach that aims at changing the relationship between the conflict parties. The process allows the possibilities for a new perspective, mutual understanding, and empathy for the needs of the other side. It attempts to transformation not only thinking but, equally important, the assumptions and beliefs about the nature of the conflict and its resolution.

Instead of fighting over power, resources, identity, security in the widest sense, participation and justice—all assumed to be finite and not commonly held—the parties are encouraged to accept responsibility for their respective attitudes, actions and requests. The aim of the process is to meet the basic desires of all parties involved in the conflict by improving their relationship and encouraging cooperation. Through this process, all parties come to recognize their shared interests and common destiny. Herein lies its transformative power: the other is no longer seen as the despised enemy, the opponent and adversary, whom one is afraid of therefore who has to be eliminated. Now the parties realize: «We share a common destiny therefore we are all responsible and must jointly contribute to a solution.»

PeaceWomen in various regions have implemented projects that manifest this approach in practical ways. Training programs spread this insight, strengthen the connections among the PeaceWomen, foster cooperation, and contribute to preventing violent conflict. We want to spread this transformation worldwide. Your ongoing support is of great significance.

Noa Zanolli
PWAG Board

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The path towards peace in Afghanistan remains long and difficult

► Interview Mirjam Sager, intern PeaceWomen Across the Globe

Sima Samar is the Chairperson of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission. She is highly respected as a consistent and fearless expert on human rights.

Afghanistan has started a reconstruction and reconciliation process. The government negotiates primarily with the Taliban, allowing them important political functions. Women rightly fear that they may have to pay a heavy price for peace. Are women's rights in danger?

Afghan women want to negotiate an end of the conflict, of which they are the main victims. But they are worried that their rights are being traded for a short term political gain. The recent history of our country shows that every time men negotiated with each other, women's rights, human rights and justice were not part of their agenda. This clearly shows that there is no regard for these values when they interfere with power interests. Women's rights are already shrinking, while unpunished sexual abuse, domestic violence and honor killings are increasing.

What does reconciliation mean for you as an Afghan women and a human rights expert?

In my view, national reconciliation is possible if there is a strong, honest political will and a clear mechanism for it. In order to be just, it must be a transparent process with public support and active female participation.

How does the reconciliation process function in reality? What is the role of women?

The process is not transparent, the population is not involved and women are marginalized, even those chosen for the high peace council. The reconciliation strategy of the government is not going to work. In fact, it looks like a bad joke, as deals are made with criminals who violate human rights. I fear that my country is not yet ready for reconciliation, because our institutions (government, parliament and judicial system) do not have enough strength and public trust.

You always underline that impunity is a major problem: war criminals are not prosecuted and enjoy amnesty.

Unfortunately very few abusers of women's rights have been prosecuted. This problematic fact reduces the hope of the people for a just reconciliation process. Amnesty was not the right way, it has not brought sustainable peace in Afghanistan. The fight against impunity requires a strong political will and belief in human rights. Secondly it needs the support of the international community for accountability and justice. Only strong institutions and a strong civil society can end the impunity.

Could the UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security be an effective tool to protect Afghan women in conflicts and to support their participation in the peace process?

I cannot say that 1325 is a 100% perfect idea, but it is a tool that we could use, especially at the moment when there is much talk in Afghanistan about reintegration and reconciliation programs. The main problem is that the majority of women and men do not know the resolution. That's why it is crucial to improve public awareness. The key lies in the education of women: If many of them know the tool and are able to use it, then the government as a member of UN is obliged to listen.



Sima Samar

Women in Kenya and Uganda train to work for peace

In areas of violent conflicts in Uganda and Kenya, women became victims of sexual abuse and physical injuries. Moreover, they lost loved ones and often their livelihood. Many have psychological traumas and are stigmatized by their community. These women lack education and support to build confidence and self esteem and their communities need strategies for survival and perspectives for justice and peace.

In 2010, Coalition for Peace in Africa and PeaceWomen Across the Globe started a cooperative project. A group of 50 women peace builders of Kenya and Uganda began working together. Their training programs focus on early conflict warning, conflict analysis, mediation, negotiation, advocacy, women's rights, international law and instruments, leadership and communication skills and trauma healing.

The network of women peace builders in the two regions will positively contribute to conflict transformation. It will amplify the voices of women on peace issues across the two countries, and public statements will raise respect for women's concerns. Success stories from PeaceWomen and best practices from the network will make their efforts for conflict transformation visible. The best practices from the network will be used as motivational tools for women and organizations facing similar challenges.

Rose Wawuda Ouko
Project manager



The main objective is to empower local women and young activists

► *Carolina Monteiro, National Coordinator PWAG Indonesia*

Indonesia has gone through positive political changes since 1998 and is now officially recognized as a democratic state. Yet the government is not sufficiently concerned with human rights, peace building or women's rights. Therefore PWAG Indonesia is working diligently to promote decisive participation of women in policy and peace processes.

Indonesia is populated by over 250 million people living on 11.000 islands. Its enormous cultural diversity with 280 ethnic groups and more than 300 languages means a great political challenge. The country is facing different kinds of conflicts, stemming mainly from increased religious fundamentalism and from insufficient protection of pluralism and human rights.

In the last three years, PeaceWomen in Indonesia have created a strong network. They are active in the areas of Aceh, Sulawesi Island, Timor Island, Moluccas islands (Ambon) and Papua, where conflicts result from military occupation, struggle over land ownership, problems between communities and local authority and competition for natural resources.

The aim is to strengthen local women as leaders

For the past ten years there have been a lot of initiatives from local NGOs and the social movement to solve those conflicts. Most promising is the increase in community-based peace-building. In order to strengthen the role of women in these processes, PWAG has implemented several projects since 2008, also trying to reach the youth of Indonesia.

The main objective is to strengthen local women as female leaders. They are instructed in gender equality, public participation, leadership basics and national laws as well as international human rights conventions supporting women. This empowers them to effectively participate in establishing peace and in other civic developments, which need women's perspective, experience, insight and knowledge.

PeaceWomen in Indonesia are pioneers in teaching peace for women and young people. The first year showed that there is a huge need for training. In 2009 more than 200 women – some of them very young grassroots women – from villages in Sulawesi and Ambon participated in workshops, and the original network has been expanded.

Young activists learn from the pioneers

The generational dialogue is central to the PWAG project. During the last three years, the network has recruited young women and girls activists. In exchange with older women, young activists are learning how to negotiate with government officials and politicians and how to work with other peace networks. They are beginning to understand the importance of many issues in which PeaceWomen have raised their voice for many years and they are joining their fight for these objectives.

This motivates them to acquire more skills and to ensure that this knowledge is also used over the long haul. PWAG Indonesia is convinced that the inter-generational approach of the project is necessary, knowing that the young people will continue the work of PeaceWomen in the future.

Women need to be included in peace negotiations

Sustainable peace in Indonesia demands a consensus on what measures can guarantee it. So far, peace negotiations were exclusively men's business. Today, women are involved in the community-based peace processes: as mediators, facilitators and providers. They support local communities with a better knowledge on how women and children are the main victims of conflicts and on how peace can be established.

The exhibition

The exhibition «1000 PeaceWomen Across the Globe» is a success story for our organization. It has traveled around the world several times, and combined with workshops and talks it is a wonderful public platform for addressing peace, justice, and reconciliation.

In the past year, we added a wonderful new angle to the original exhibit. The occasion is the 10-year anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 that demands women be included centrally and meaningfully in peace negotiations, and reconciliation efforts.

With attractive, eye-catching posters in German, French, and English we show the origins and development of this historic resolution, its content and demands, as well as the reasons for the difficulties in its implementation. As one positive example, we highlight the history of Liberia, where ordinary women—Muslim and Christian—played essential roles in ensuring the peace process continues and compelling the warring factions finally to reach peace agreement in 2003 after years of civil war. The exhibition also includes a DVD with statements by 31 PeaceWomen from 17 countries. They express their views on the importance of Resolution 1325 for their peace work and address their demands to the UN Security Council and UN member states.

Our exhibition continues to be an important instrument for peace work and public awareness. It still features the 1000 postcards portraying our PeaceWomen with a photograph and biography. The new elements include the posters and the DVD on Resolution 1325. The exhibition titled «No Women – No Peace» can be ordered from the International Secretariat. The print templates for the posters are available for free to all interested parties. Inquiries regarding the exhibition should be sent to info@1000peacewomen.org.

We thank our donors for their very generous support, which enabled us to create our updated exhibition. With its mix of pictures, texts, examples, and demands, we are convinced that this new version moves viewers and gives plenty of food for thought.

Ruth-Gaby Vermot-Mangold
Co-President PWAG

«A world without women's participation in decision-making processes at all levels has no future.» *Natalya Berezhnaya (Russian Federation)*

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NEWS FROM PEACEWOMEN ACROSS THE GLOBE

- ▶ PeaceWomen Across the Globe thanks **Barbara Lutz** (office manager), **Katrin Rieder** (project manager 10 years UNSCR 1325), **Robin Bartlett Rissi** (intern) and **Mirjam Sager** (intern) for their valuable work.
- ▶ PeaceWomen Across the Globe is looking forward to work with **Tanja Mirabile**, starting March 2011 as manager of strategies and organization in the office. Maaret Jokela begins as the new intern on first of April 2011.
- ▶ PeaceWomen Across the Globe welcomes **Dr. Cordula Reimann** as project manager Sudan. Cordula Reimann is internationally known as an expert on conflict transformation and peace-building and as a trainer and lecturer.

PEACEWOMEN ACROSS THE GLOBE CONGRATULATES

- ▶ **Ruchama Marton**: The PeaceWoman and her organization were awarded the Alternative Nobel Prize 2010. Physicians for Human Rights-Israel campaigns for the right to health for all people in Israel and Palestine.
- ▶ **Teresa Ulloa Zúurriz**: The Mexican PeaceWoman was named «Dame Nita Barrow Distinguished Visitor» by the Centre for Women's Studies in Education at the University of Toronto.

EVENTS

- ▶ **2011/02/28 – 2011/03/25**, Exhibition «No Women – No Peace», Palais des Nations, UN Geneva, on the occasion of 16th Session of the UN Human Rights Council. The Swiss Mission to the UN invites to the opening on 8th March.
Registration: info@1000peacewomen.org
- ▶ **2011/03/23**, Workshop «No Women – No Peace. 1325 for Human Rights», 01:00 – 02:30 pm, Palais des Nations, UN Geneva, UNOG Library. Organized by PeaceWomen Across the Globe, in cooperation with Geneva Call, Bangwe and Dialogue, Rwanda Women's Network, WILPF, UNFPA and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.
Registration: info@1000peacewomen.org
- ▶ **2011/07/03 – 2011/03/31**, Exhibition «No Women – No Peace», Hérouville Saint-Clair (France), Maison du Citoyen.
- ▶ **2011/03/08 – 2011/04/08**, Exhibition «1000 PeaceWomen Across the Globe», film «1000 Women and a Dream», Tübingen (Germany), City Hall.
- ▶ **2011/03/08 – 2011/03/18**, Exhibition «No Women – No Peace», Dhaka (Bangladesh), Swiss Embassy. Workshop on 18th of March. With the participation of Kamla Bhasin, Co-president PeaceWomen Across the Globe.
- ▶ **2011/03/12 – 2011/04/07**, Exhibition «1000 PeaceWomen Across the Globe», Schwäbisch Gmünd (Germany), City Hall. Finissage with Ute Scheub, PWAG coordinator Western Europe.
- ▶ **2011/04/05**, Discussion «Women in conflict regions – experience with UN Resolution 1325», Freiburg (Germany), BZ-Haus, 07:30 pm, organized by AMICA e.V.
- ▶ **2011/05/12– 2011/05/15**, International Conference «The time is ripe. We are going into a Society where Life is Worth Living», St. Gallen (Switzerland), Tonhalle (concert Hall). The International Academy HAGIA organizes the conference and presents insights from Matriarchal Studies and Perspectives on Matriarchal Politics. PWAG presents the exhibition «No Women – No Peace».
- ▶ **2011/07/10 – 2011/07/16**, World YWCA Council «Women Creating a Safe World», Zurich (Switzerland), <http://www.worldywcaouncil.org/>

Donations

PeaceWomen Across the Globe needs your support!

Please help the organization and the projects of PeaceWomen Across the Globe with a donation or by buying a «Peaceshare».

Thank You!

Bank Account Information

Berner Kantonalbank
1000 FriedensFrauen
Account-No: 16 248.434.2.85
Swift: KBBE CH 22
IBAN: CH79 0079 0016 2484 3428 5

Contact

PeaceWomen Across the Globe

International Secretariat
Maulbeerstrasse 14
3011 Bern
Switzerland

Tel +41 (0)31 312 02 40
Fax +41 (0)31 312 02 39

info@1000peacewomen.org
www.1000peacewomen.org

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Mirjam Sager, Margo Okazawa-Rey,
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