ASIAN WOMEN FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE

**Report of
the Regional Conference:
Asian Women for
a Culture of Peace**

6-9 December 2000

Hanoi

UNITED NATIONS
**Economic and
Social Commission
for Asia and
the Pacific**

UNESCO

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Cover: An adaptation from an entry by Mr Anand Singh Naorem of India in the international contest "Visualise your concept of a Culture of Peace", organized by UNESCO Women and a Culture of Peace Programme and the International Association of Art.

PREFACE

We, the organizers of the Asian Women for a Culture of Peace Conference, which was held at Hanoi from 6 to 9 December 2000, take pleasure in hereby presenting the final report of the Conference to all interested parties in the region and beyond.

The Conference was timely, coming at the closing of the International Year for a Culture of Peace and in preparation of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010). We hope that the Hanoi Declaration and the Asian Women's Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace and Sustainable Development will be useful as tools for action at the local, national and regional levels.

It is also our hope that this report will help to amplify women's voices for peace and inspire broad partnerships. Persisting gender discrimination and violations of the human rights of women are a major challenge at the beginning of this new century. It is of particular urgency that more balanced participation of women and men be ensured at all levels of decision-making.

We would like to express our gratitude to all those who generously contributed to the Conference with their time, creativity, competence and financial resources. Moreover, we invite all institutions, organizations and individuals, at both the governmental and non-governmental levels, to assist in the implementation of the many pertinent recommendations of the resulting document.

We are convinced that it is through quality education, coordinated action in favour of full gender equality and the empowerment of women that we can develop just and prosperous societies based on the values defined in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and the United Nations Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

Mr Hak-Su KIM
Executive Secretary
United Nations
Economic and Social
Commission for
Asia and the Pacific

Mr Chu Tuan CAP
President
Viet Nam National
Commission for UNESCO

Mr Koïchiro MATSUURA
Director-General
United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

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CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The regional conference, Asian Women for a Culture of Peace, was organized by the Government of Viet Nam in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in Hanoi from 6 to 9 December 2000. Its main purposes were to provide a forum for Asian women to share their visions, experiences and strategies on the themes of peace-building and non-violence in Asia, and to coordinate their actions for the promotion of a culture of peace and sustainable and environmentally sound development.

Significantly organized during the International Year for the Culture of Peace, and as part of the preparations for the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010), its main themes were:

(a) Education, training, socialization and research: learning the tools for living together peacefully and with respect for differences;
(b) Engaging women in the mass media and communication in Asia against violence and for peace-building;
(c) Identifying strategies, initiatives and partners that promote access to greater economic opportunities for women as well as reduce poverty, focusing in particular on the family and community; and
(d) A gender perspective on peace-building and political decision-making.

Approximately 150 participants from 35 countries in Asia attended the Conference. They included women leaders, politicians, gender and peace researchers, educators, writers and philosophers, national and community-based peace promoters, and media and communication professionals as well as representatives of the United Nations system, national governments, and non-governmental organizations and regional institutions.

The Hanoi Declaration, the Asian Women's Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace and Sustainable Development, and the Report of the Conference presented in this publication were developed and adopted by the participants. The participants shared exemplary practices, presented their experiences, visions and analyses based on relevant data, and engaged in in-depth discussions on the four themes. The Plan of Action points out the constraints faced by Asian women in promoting a culture of peace and the opportunities available for overcoming those constraints and moving forward. It also presents recommendations that call for actions on the part of governments, parliamentarians, research institutions, educational systems, media professionals, grassroots organizations as well as individuals in promoting gender equality, and peace and development, which we hope will be adapted to, and actively used in, different socio-cultural contexts.

The organizers are extremely grateful to all those who contributed to the success of the Asian Women for a Culture of Peace Conference, including the Japan Foundation, the Republic of Korea, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, the Southeast Asia Gender Equity Program of the Canadian International Development Agency, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO. We invite all interested parties to use the occasion of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010) to implement the Hanoi Declaration and the Asian Women's Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace and Sustainable Development.

HANOI DECLARATION

We, Asian women,

Gathered at the Asian Women for a Culture of Peace Conference, significantly organized in Hanoi, Viet Nam, 6-9 December 2000, as an Asian celebration of the International Year for the Culture of Peace,

Consider that this Conference is part of the preparations for the United Nations Decade on a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010), and is in support of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Outcome Document of the Global Review Meeting of the Fourth World Conference on Women,

Join women of the world in acknowledging the many achievements brought about in the past century, and in their continued endeavours to achieve gender equality, development and peace,

Regret that wars and armed and other conflicts continue to exist, families and communities fall apart, countless lives are lost, crime and violence are on the rise, and poverty and social prejudice remain a burden for Asian women,

Voice alarm at the continued proliferation of war and military build-up at the expense of social and human welfare and development everywhere as well as at the pollution of children's minds,

Express concern that women continue to be victims and targets of atrocities and aggression in wars and conflict situations, thereby experiencing systematic violations of their human rights and dignity, and that they remain largely excluded from decision-making in political, economic and social development,

Reiterate that human security and a culture of peace require that we confront the root causes of violence, economic deprivation, social injustice, intolerance, exclusion and discrimination,

Strongly advocate that:

(a) Education be the key to human development and peace, along with respect for human rights, dignity and cultural diversity, equal participation in decision-making by women and men, and reorientation of social and economic policies and structures;

(b) The media play a responsible role in shaping public perceptions, eliminating stereotyped images of women and men, de-glamourizing wars and armed violent conflicts and reflecting increased engagement of women in a culture of peace;

(c) The role and potential of women and men in the eradication of poverty, the enhancement of the economic development of the family and the community, as well as the empowerment of women through training for employment and livelihood programmes, and through equitable participation in science and technology for sustainable development, be further promoted;

(d) Women's distinctive experiences, perspectives, skills and competence in conflict resolution and management, in opposing the use of force, in preventing violence, in healing and reconciliation, as well as women's potential for leadership, be recognized and enhanced.

Commit ourselves to building the culture of peace movement in solidarity with women in other parts of the world, and working with civil society organizations, governments, regional and international non-governmental organizations, and international organizations, particularly the United Nations system, in promoting demilitarization, disarmament including nuclear and chemical weapons, and the cessation of the manufacture of, and trade in, arms,

Unanimously adopt the Asian Women's Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace and Sustainable Development.

Adopted in Hanoi
9 December 2000

3

ASIAN WOMEN'S PLAN OF ACTION FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

We, Asian women, gathered in Hanoi, Viet Nam, demonstrate and reaffirm our commitment to a culture of peace and non-violence and adopt the following Plan of Action as a regional framework for the promotion of women's role and potential in peace-building, non-violence and sustainable development in Asia.

1. Education, training, socialization and research: learning the tools for living together peacefully and with respect for differences

Constraints:

- A scarcity of women at all levels of decision-making.
- An imbalance in resource allocation to military expenditure rather than to peace-building and education.
- Globalization, bringing about changes in economic conditions, increased competition and a widening gap between the rich and the poor.
- Education that promotes exclusion and superiority rather than inclusion and equality.

Opportunities:

- The values of a culture of peace as outlined in the United Nations Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Culture of Peace networks and websites.

Actions:

- Involve educational policy makers, administrators, and professionals in developing curricula, teaching methods, materials, textbooks and teacher education programmes that foster gender sensitivity and support the learning of non-violent conflict resolution at all levels.
- Actively involve children and young people to prevent bullying, in learning the skills of non-violent conflict resolution and acting as mediators in resolving disputes.
- Encourage consumer boycotts of violent toys, comics and games, and encourage the design of toys that promote creativity and the values of a culture of peace.
- Encourage the enactment of legislation to outlaw violence in schools and homes.
- Introduce training in gender sensitivity and peaceful conflict resolution for men and women across society, especially parents, educators, health workers, police, military personnel and employers.
- Provide women with opportunities and training for leadership.
- Support women's networks in helping to prevent violence, show solidarity with the victims of abuse and communicate across borders in conflict situations.
- Research violence prevention, gender relations, and peace promotion in order to promote awareness of problems and new solutions.
- Request UNESCO and other United Nations agencies to promote and widely distribute proactive peace research.

2. Women in mass media and communication in Asia: against violence and for peace-building

Constraints:

- Women lack access to, and control over, mass media and information technologies despite communication advancements.

- Gender insensitive and biased media that capitalize on sensationalistic and violent images and reportage.

- A gender imbalance in mainstream media institutions and information technology corporations. The presence of women in those institutions is still limited.

- The increased commercialization of media technologies and systems, which preserves the interests of certain sectors and reinforces socially constructed gender roles, inequality, intolerance of diversity and social injustice.

- The control of media by some vested interests, which results in biased reporting of violence and armed conflicts as well as gender stereotyping, nurturing a culture of violence and conflict.

Opportunities:

- Availability of various forms of audio-visual media that are effective in educational and consciousness-raising efforts amongst illiterate people.

- Various forms of media that can be successfully utilized for advocacy and in raising silenced and/or taboo issues in relation to gender discrimination, violence against women, the human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), and health and sexuality issues.

- Closer alliances between women media practitioners and women activists, leading to the strengthening of the lobby for gender equality within media institutions.

- New information technologies that provide new opportunities for women in networking and knowledge sharing.

Actions:

- Governments, United Nations agencies such as UNESCO, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other actors: further encourage and support the entry of women into the fields of media, journalism and new information technologies through the provision of scholarships and training opportunities.

- National Commissions for UNESCO and non-governmental actors: work towards strengthening networks of women in the media in all parts of the region.

- National governments and UNESCO: promote the introduction of gender analyses and human rights training as part of the core curriculum of media studies in universities and other educational institutions.

- National governments and UNESCO: cooperate in developing curricula and programmes for primary and secondary schools, and in providing training for educators that focuses on the culture of peace as well as critical analyses of the media (i.e. media literacy).

- UNESCO: develop a forum for media owners in the Asian region to engage them in active dialogue on promoting respect for cultural diversity in the media.

- Media institutions, national and regional associations of journalists and editors: promote gender-sensitive, non-violent codes of ethics within their media institutions through the setting up of self-regulatory, national-level councils.
- Women's NGO networks: promote the active participation of women and all civil-society actors in the development of policies for new information and communication systems such as the Internet.
- Women media practitioners and peace promoters: utilize the media in monitoring commitments to the implementation of all recommendations made in the Beijing Platform for Action and the Global Review Meeting of the Fourth World Conference on Women (New York, 2000).
- UNESCO: support programmes and initiatives in radio and television to raise consciousness of gender inequality and oppose violence.
- UNESCO: organize international photography competitions for women photographers on different topics every year, focusing on the changing roles of women and men.
- UNESCO: develop or enhance currently available websites in order to promote the documentation, archiving and greater accessibility of written material, strategies, graphics and photographs that promote a culture of peace.

3. Strategies, initiatives and partners: economic opportunities for women

Constraints:
- Unequal division of labour in the home.
- Gender stereotyping that limits women's educational opportunities and continues segregation in the labour market.
- The limited access by women to resources of production; increased women's marginalization and vulnerability.
- Long-term implications of national debt, impact of international financial integration, trade liberalization, rapid capital flows, and the negative impact of some donor-and-lender projects on women.
- Prolonged economic sanctions and embargoes imposed on particular States.

Opportunities:
- Women's traditions of conflict resolution through dialogue and communication.
- Micro-credit schemes that encourage the formation of women's enterprises and social capital.
- Strong women's organizations and women's peace movement.
- Policy instruments promoting gender equality, international Conventions (e.g., the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol) and national plans of action.

Actions:
- Educate policy makers on the gender impact of globalization, initiate gender sensitive data collections, institute gender sensitive budgeting and policy-making, and include women in international negotiations with regard to economic and trade issues.

- Eliminate constraints to women's economic rights, strengthen and protect women's rights to land and mobility, and provide government support for women's unpaid work such as care giving.
- Strengthen women's capacity by increasing their literacy in various areas, including legal and economic issues, and communication and information technologies.
- Affirm and promote women's indigenous, diversified, ecologically sound and sustainable local economies.
- Promote women's banks, micro-credit and equal access to capital.
- Ensure that women continue to retain control over their financial activities and initiatives when they succeed and expand.
- Launch Asian women's regional and subregional alternative markets.
- Work to eliminate violation of rights, including trafficking in women and children, drug trafficking and arms trading.
- Advocate the transformation and reprioritizing of international aid, introduce transparent language (e.g., "donor" versus "lender"), and ensure that grant and loan funds are spent in the recipient countries.
- Introduce safety nets and laws that protect women in the informal sector.

4. A gender perspective: peace-building and political decision-making

Constraints:
- Wars and conflicts continue throughout Asia; more civilians are affected and lose their lives.
- Women's multiple roles in conflicts remain unacknowledged.
- Militarism, the arms race and traditional methods of security continue to encourage the use of force for maintaining security and dealing with conflicts.
- Issues of human concerns such as social justice, economic concerns, gender and human security are not adequately considered in conflict resolution.
- The presence of foreign military bases and the testing of weapons in the Asian region.

Opportunities:
- Highlighting of issues of human security and gender empowerment on the agenda of governments and international bodies.
- Involvement of, and contributions by, women throughout the world to peace initiatives at the local, national and international levels.

Actions:
- Develop Gendered Human Security Indicators (GHSI) for the Asian region to promote the concept of human security and demonstrate the gender differential impact on human security. These indicators will describe the inter-dependence of human security and national/state security, and propose ways of resisting ideas of war. They will also indicate the number of women involved in politics and decision-making, and examine their influence on peace.
- Recommend that UNESCO, as the lead agency identified by the United Nations for the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the

World, engage institutions to study different approaches to conflict resolution as a step in the preparation of GHSI.

- Promote a culture of peace and gender justice through publications, community radio projects and websites as well as in science and technology.
- UNESCO, ESCAP and other organizations: support networks and institutions in the Asian region, to train women and men leaders and decision-makers in gender sensitivity, good governance and decision-making.
- Establish partnerships and dialogue with business leaders, industry, trade unions and consumer rights advocates in promoting peace.
- Promote a culture of peace by preparing programmes to encourage States to decrease the defence budgets and transfer this peace dividend to the social, cultural and educational sectors.
- Establish an organization or network of Asian women for promoting a culture of peace.

In adopting the Plan of Action broadly outlined above, we, the Asian women gathered in Hanoi, strongly pledge to cooperate with one another and with all agencies concerned in the implementation of that Plan of Action. To that end, a follow-up mechanism will be established, with the support of UNESCO, ESCAP and other international organizations, and donor agencies, to coordinate the culture of peace movement in Asia for sustainable development.

Hanoi
9 December 2000

REPORT OF THE MEETING

THE ASIAN WOMEN FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE CONFERENCE
HANOI, 6-9 DECEMBER 2000

A. Organization of the meeting

The Asian Women for a Culture of Peace conference was organized by the Government of Viet Nam in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in Hanoi from 6 to 9 December 2000. It was convened as an Asian celebration of the International Year for the Culture of Peace, 2000 and as part of the UNESCO initiated culture of peace process, as well as in preparation for the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010.

The primary aims of the Conference were: (a) to provide a forum for Asian women to share their visions, experiences and strategies on the themes of peace-building and non-violence in Asia; and (b) to coordinate their actions in the promotion of a culture of peace as a prerequisite for sustainable and environmentally sound development.

The Conference was attended by 150 participants from 35 countries in Asia and the Pacific, as well as non-Asian countries, organizations of the United Nations system, national government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and regional institutions. It was also attended by a number of guests of honor from the Parliament and Government of Viet Nam, and the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, as well as ambassadors and representatives of funding countries and agencies.

At the opening session, following the introduction by Mr Chu Tuan Cap, President of the Viet Nam National Commission for UNESCO and Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Viet Nam, the conference was addressed by: Ms Nguyen Thi Binh, Vice-President of Viet Nam; Ms Sonia Mendieta de Bardaroux, President of the Executive Board of UNESCO; Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO; and Dr Hoang Van Nghien, Chairman of the Hanoi People's Committee.

All speakers unanimously highlighted the pressing need to integrate a gender perspective into peace-building and increase women's participation in decision-making at all levels. The necessity to mobilize women and men for the transformation of societies away from war and violence towards a culture of peace, respect for human rights and sustainable development was also emphasized.

Following the inauguration, the Conference participants joined Ms Nguyen Thi Binh, and Mr Koïchiro Matsuura in opening the "Exhibition on the Visual Introduction of Viet Nam Culture".

The Conference adopted the programme and agenda, and the organization of work and rules of procedure. The following persons were then elected to constitute the core of the Conference Bureau: President, Ms Ha Thi Khiet, President of the Viet Nam Women's Union; Vice-Presidents, Her Excellency, Ms Mu Sochua, Minister for Women and Veteran's Affairs, Cambodia, and Ms Margaret Alva, Member of Parliament, India; and Rapporteur-General,

Ms Savitri Suwansathit, Inspector-General, Ministry of Education, Thailand.

The Conference also accepted that the moderators of the Working Groups be part of the Conference Bureau together with the four rapporteurs who would be elected by the Working Groups and who would also be serving as assistant rapporteurs to the Rapporteur-General.

On the evening of the inauguration day, the Conference participants were invited to an official dinner with traditional cultural performances, hosted by His Excellency Mr Nguyen Dy Nien, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam, who also delivered a welcoming address.

B. Keynote address

Ms Ha Thi Khiet, President of the Viet Nam Women's Union, delivered the keynote address in which she joined women from around the world in expressing pride in the countless achievements made in the past century by women for "equality, development and peace".   She called on Asian women to prepare themselves even further for the new opportunities and challenges of the twenty-first century.

She also stressed the importance of the women's networks and organizations at the local, national, regional and international levels, which had been cooperating with governments, NGOs, the United Nations agencies, and social and civil organizations for women's empowerment and gender equality that were seen as a prerequisite for peace and development. She cited, in particular, the example of the Viet Nam Women's Union, a "think tank" on women-related issues which enjoyed the support of 11 million women members from all strata. The Union had been very effective in mobilizing the support of society for the development of women's education and quality of life, as well as the development of children and entire communities in Viet Nam.

She then introduced four priority objectives of the Union for the implementation of the Viet Nam National Action Plan for the advancement of women:
   (a) Enhancing women's economic status through job creation and income generation;
   (b) Promoting equal access to education at all levels for women's empowerment;
   (c) Supporting women's health care;
   (d) Promoting women's participation in political and social affairs.

Ms Khiet also stated that the Union now had links with more than 300 organizations in 60 countries, and she again called on Asian women to join hands and cooperate with all women and men for a culture of peace.

C. Introduction to the conference themes

The Director of the Women and a Culture of Peace Programme, UNESCO, presented a short version of the UNESCO paper entitled "The Culture of Peace from a Gender Perspective", which was the main theme of the Conference.

She stressed that the culture of peace initiative was a revitalization of the basic moral and intellectual mission of UNESCO as enshrined in its Constitution, and should be seen in

relation to present geopolitical situations. In the vision of a culture of peace which was to be widely shared, dialogue and respect for human rights would replace violence, intercultural understanding and solidarity would replace enemy images, sharing and the free flow of knowledge and information would replace secrecy, and egalitarian partnership and full empowerment of women would replace male dominance. However, building a culture of peace would first entail unlearning the codes of war and violence.

She referred to the United Nations Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, and stressed that contrary to the previously held belief, those who wanted peace would have to prepare for peace instead of preparing for war. She called for peace education at all levels of the school system, as well as peace and conflict resolution skills and research to be made obligatory in the new millennium. Education, she emphasized, must include girls and women, and must be gender-sensitive to enable interpersonal, intercultural and international dialogue, and, hence, learning to live together as proposed by the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century (UNESCO, 1996).

Referring to the five-year assessment of the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action, she stated that despite some achievements, many obstacles to gender equality remained, while violations of women's human rights as well as denial of equal opportunities for women and men were still common occurrences.

The Director said that women's peace initiatives in many countries often stemmed from the frustration and anger that they felt from being denied the opportunity to influence decisions, leading to their suffering from the consequences of wars and conflicts. Their activism often drew on their traditional roles and skills in conflict management and sometimes the revival of traditional rituals.

She raised male roles and masculinity as an important issue in relation to a culture of peace, particularly in the light of statistics that revealed men were responsible for 90 per cent of physical violence, including domestic and street violence, and violence in schools and society in general. "Masculinity trends" in some societies had resulted in young girls adopting violent behaviour in their search for equality and recognition, while in other societies, those trends had led to the creation of anti-violence networks of young men.

She concluded by making a strong appeal for partnerships, networking and commitments for a culture of peace in which people could live free from fear and want.

The Chief of the Women in Development Section, ESCAP, presented a paper on the "Role and Status of Women in Asia and the Pacific in Building Peace". She outlined the various issues identified by ESCAP meetings as being the fundamental and structural causes of civil and armed conflict in the region, i.e., deprivation, human rights violations, competition for scarce resources and most seriously, the inequality resulting from unequal distribution of power and resources. Faulty development strategies could sow the seeds for future conflict, discord and tension.

She emphasized that long-term conflict prevention therefore needed to focus on balanced development and alleviation of poverty while ensuring equal sharing of benefits among all members of society. Gender inequality and the lack of empowerment of women had a direct and negative impact on the development of societies as a whole. With the intensification of globalization, women had increasingly become victims of problems such as

trafficking, sexual exploitation, irregular migration, violence and insecurity.

With regard to peace, she reported that significant efforts had been made by women in the ESCAP region, characterized by (a) women's perspectives in rebuilding society and calling for an end to gender-based brutality and abuse, (b) women's peace activism, and creative and effective strategies for peace and development, and (c) the participation of women's civil society organizations in promoting human security.

However, she said, ESCAP statistics had revealed a larger gap in gender equality at decision-making levels. Therefore, she invited the Conference to pool collective wisdom and experiences in: (a) addressing the issues of women's role and potential in shaping the direction of local, national and international development processes; (b) promoting women's voices in decision-making; (c) ensuring accountability in the use of resources; and (d) drawing up an action plan that focused on development as a critical means of conflict prevention and peace-building.

D. Presentation by countries and organizations

Twenty-four speakers from regional and national organizations and countries took the floor to share the experiences and challenges of their countries and organizations with regard to the themes of the Conference. In particular, they took stock of the achievements, as well as the obstacles encountered, since the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995.

The following common concerns and challenges were explicitly expressed in most of the presentations:

(a) Violence against women both outside and within the family;
(b) Trafficking in women and children;
(c) Economic vulnerability caused by poverty, lack of education and training, transition to a market economy, the threat of the human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and environmental degradation;
(d) Social vulnerability caused by the break-up of family support systems, the impact of wars and conflicts on refugees and displaced women, and increased intolerance of differences.

E. Women's role and potential in peace-building and non-violence in Asia

Prior to the Working Group discussions on women's role and potential in peace-building and non-violence in Asia, the moderators introduced the themes and goals of the Working Groups to the Plenary.

Working Groups

(a)   Working Group I: Education, training, socialization and research: learning the tools for living together peacefully and with respect for differences. Moderator: Ms Diane Bretherton

The moderator highlighted that the almost invisible struggle of ordinary women for peace had been heroic. Their approaches and visions of a culture of peace differed from those of male decision makers. For many women, peace began in the family, and extended from the home to the neighbourhood, community and the nation. In the peaceful family, equality existed between men and women, between young and old and through harmonious relationships with neighbours. Children living in such a setting could learn peace by example. The father respected the mother, and both parents respected those who differed from themselves, whether the difference was in language, religion or culture. She reminded the Conference that a family did not live in isolation, however. To be at peace the family would need security, economic well being, respect, freedom from conscription into violence, laws that would prevent abuse, and media and toys that would promote peace and knowledge about other cultures.

The moderator maintained that women needed to be active outside as well as within the home. Due to their lack of equal representation in government, women needed to work together through other channels to achieve change. Through the fields of education, training, socialization and research, women needed to learn the tools for living together in the family and in wider society. Women's strengths needed to be taken to the wider arena to make them the "ordinary heroines" for peace.

(b) Working Group II: Engaging women in the mass media and communication in Asia against violence and for peace building.
Moderator: Ms Susanna George

In her introduction, the moderator pointed out that even though the media tended to reflect commonly held values of a given society, the potent role of media institutions in shaping and giving rise to new norms and standards was a fact that social justice activists and those interested in maintaining the status quo of the elite had recognized. In any given situation of armed conflict, mainstream media implicitly distinguished the "victim" from the "aggressor," and ultimately shaped public opinion of whom to support and whom to oppose. Rarely did mainstream media reporting provide a total picture of the historical, geopolitical and sociocultural reasons behind a conflict situation. What viewers had to contend with were sensationalized moments of violent events that would lose their news worthiness within days and drop out of public sight.

The moderator stated that violent images were so rampant in the television and film industry that people living in conditions of peace could also become familiar and desensitized to the violence, horror and gore that they witnessed in their entertainment including games and toys. Stereotyped messages about the "other", i.e., anyone outside of a personal framework of sociocultural understanding, was a common "sin" of mainstream media. It was easy to slip into ready stereotypes simply because stereotyped, biased, intolerant attitudes already existed to varying degrees in society. Women, who were no strangers to the experience of being stereotyped, misrepresented or made invisible by mainstream media, were in some senses in the best position to help change that trend in mainstream media and all forms of communication towards creating a culture of peace. Women had also experienced being a most significant "other" in societies that were patriarchal and male-dominated.

The moderator underlined that women media practitioners and communicators as well as activists for women's causes had sought out strategies, both within and outside of mainstream media, to transform the media from a presenter of stereotypes, and violent and denigrating images, to a reliable source of information that would promote and defend values of equality, justice, tolerance and peace. Women had also sought to promote alternative streams of information and communication, utilizing all forms of communication including street theatre, songs, poetry, posters, websites and whatever was most effective in ensuring women's advancement. Having observed how various media tools could be used to promote networking, solidarity-building and consciousness-raising, women were interested in transforming all media and communication channels into vehicles for bringing about greater gender equality, social justice and a culture of peace.

(c)   Working Group III: Identifying strategies, initiatives and partners that promote access to greater economic opportunities for women and reduce poverty, focusing on the family and community.
Moderator: Ms Roza Otunbayeva

The moderator drew attention to the fact that the face of poverty in Asia, home to 70 per cent of the world's poor, was female. The number of poor women had increased recently as a result of the regional financial crisis. Poverty was spreading to include some countries in transition towards market economies. She emphasized that poverty reduction strategies called for labour-absorbing economic growth to generate income-earning opportunities for poor women, and for improved access to education, health care and other social services in order to help the poor to take advantage of those opportunities.

(d)   Working Group IV: A gender perspective on peace building and political decision-making.
Moderator: Ms Anuradha Chenoy

The moderator stated that women saw peace not as an absence of war, but as a process that would enable them to transform their lives and control their choices. With the continuance of wars and conflicts in Asian countries, women experienced them not as isolated events but as processes that began prior to, and continued long after, the actual conflict situation. The ideology of militarism was what introduced militarist values into civil society and legitimized the use of force that lay behind such conflicts. Traditional notions of national security and conflict resolution had been unable to solve those concepts and provide a just solution.

Highlighting women's commitment to a culture of peace, the moderator underscored their belief that a gendered human security approach would offer more viable and long-term solutions. That would involve issues of social justice, political negotiation, demilitarization, gender-balanced participation and rehabilitation as a cohesive part of security and conflict resolution.

F. Report of the working group discussions

The Working Groups submitted the reports of their discussions and recommendations to the Plenary, where it was agreed that the recommendations would form the base of the Asian Women's Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace and Sustainable Development.

G. Address by Ambassador Gertrude Mongella
Member of Parliament, United Republic of Tanzania

Ms Mongella shared with the Asian Conference the experiences of African women in the Pan African Women's Conference on a Culture of Peace, which was held in Zanzibar in 1999. She informed the meeting that African women had greatly suffered from wars and armed conflicts, and they strongly felt that it was timely for them to set their own agenda for peace and development. That conviction consequently led to the adoption of the Zanzibar Declaration and the African Women's Agenda for a Culture of Peace, the text of which she was pleased to note had been displayed at the Conference. She expressed the willingness of African women to work in close collaboration and solidarity with Asian women in promoting a culture of peace and non-violence. She thanked the conference organizers for extending an invitation to the African Women Committee for Peace and Development (AWCPD) and to her as President of the Zanzibar Conference and Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

H. Cultural activities

At the invitation of the Chairman of the Hanoi People's Committee, the participants attended a water puppet show put on by the Thanghong Troupe. Water puppets were an ancient form of traditional folk performance and communication enjoyed by the wet rice cultivating population in the Red River delta, reflecting the people's love for peace and sustainable development. The participants also had an opportunity to visit the Ethnology Museum in Hanoi, to view the display of the various ways of life and cultural diversity of the people of Viet Nam.

I. Adoption of the Hanoi Declaration and Asian Women's Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace and Sustainable Development

The Conference unanimously adopted the Hanoi Declaration and Asian Women's Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace and Sustainable Development by acclamation. The Conference also adopted the final report of the Asian Women for a Culture of Peace Conference.

J. Vote of thanks and closing ceremony

The Conference adopted a vote of thanks and appreciation to the Government of Viet Nam, UNESCO and ESCAP. In her closing address, the Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP thanked the host country for the generous hospitality shown to the participants and observers attending the Conference. She congratulated the Conference Bureau and the participants for their meticulous efforts in developing and adopting the Hanoi Declaration and Asian Women's Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace and Sustainable Development.

Ms Jaroslava Moserova, President of the General Conference of UNESCO, expressed her pleasure at having been able to participate in the Asian Women for a Culture of Peace Conference. She declared that women had the power to break the vicious circle of prejudice, hatred and distrust when bringing up young children, and thus contribute in a significant way to the culture of peace.

Ms Janet Burn, Director of the Southeast Asia Gender Equity Program (SEAGEP), Canadian International Development Agency, speaking on behalf of the sponsors of the Conference, congratulated the organizers and participants. She urged all concerned to make a personal commitment to the implementation of the Plan of Action, and indicated that SEAGEP would be funding a follow-up conference on "Men's Role in Violence Against Women" in 2001 in the Philippines.

Ms Ha Thi Khiet, President of the Conference, warmly thanked the participants for their rich and useful contributions as well as the cordial cooperation that had enabled the Conference to be successful. She also thanked the conference vice-presidents and the rapporteur-general, as well as all the chairpersons, moderators and rapporteurs of the Working Groups for their assistance and hard work. Finally, she thanked UNESCO, ESCAP and the other United Nations agencies involved, as well as the funding countries for the support and encouragement that they had given to the Asian Women for a Culture of Peace Conference.

Ms Nguyen Thi Hoi, Secretary-General of the Viet Nam National Commission for UNESCO, expressed her sincere thanks to all concerned for their friendship and cooperation in making the Conference a success, and in contributing to women's movements for a culture of peace and sustainable development. She looked forward to further cooperation with all the participants in implementing the adopted Asian Women's Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace and Sustainable Development and the Hanoi Declaration.

I. ADDRESSES AT THE OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

Address by Madam Nguyen Thi Binh
Vice-President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

It gives me a great pleasure to join you in the Asian Women Conference for a Culture of Peace. On behalf of the State and the people of Viet Nam, may I warmly welcome all the distinguished guests and participants to this important conference being held in Hanoi, the capital of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

The large number of participating researchers, eminent leaders in political, economic, cultural and social areas from Asia, and representatives from related regional and international organizations, presents a vivid testimony to the interest of all the Asian countries in women's concerns in this region today. It is particularly heartening since it is the International Year for a Culture of Peace and we are amidst our preparations for the United Nations Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010)

The twentieth century experienced the scourge of two world wars, some local wars and several armed conflicts that remain ongoing in some countries and regions. Women and children fall victim to, and endure, most of the sufferings and losses at such times and they, therefore, are the most dedicated to peace, stability and development, the culture of peace with respect for the right to life, human dignity and the cultural diversity of national identities.

The twentieth century has also been marked by the uprising of peoples in their fight for their own liberation, the independence and freedom of their fatherland, the development and prosperity of their country, and the equitable and friendly cooperation among countries. In this context, the role and status of women have been more and more affirmed, and their capabilities and important contributions as active members of society more and more recognized.

It was in the twentieth century that science, technology and production made tremendous advances that could guarantee the prosperity, well being and humane evolution of mankind, half of whom are women. However, it was also a century of an unacceptable gap between the rich and the poor, and of indebtedness, famine and epidemic outbreaks, especially in the developing countries. Global problems are threatening man's survival. The globalization process is being both expanded and intensified, thus generating both opportunities and challenges. In particular, the adverse impact of globalization has negatively affected women despite the opportunities, and the challenges of globalization should be placed high on all agendas that deal with economic, social and cultural development at the national and international levels.

As stated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in its studies on the prospects for the twenty-first century, "women are steering the world". As a matter of fact, in the present context of globalization, the capacities of women to contribute to peace, social harmony, sustainable development, the preservation and the development of cultural identity of the nation, and the values of the family are more obvious than ever before. That is why the content of this Conference is so significant, both from the strategic and the topical perspective.

After a long and arduous struggle for the independence and freedom of their fatherland, the Vietnamese people long for peace. They fully understand the values of peace

that is linked to independence and freedom, and are constantly striving for peace and national development as well as joining with peoples all over the world in peace-building. The aspiration for peace is deeply rooted in the history of Viet Nam and in the daily life of our people. The culture of peace is the cultural behaviour of our people: harmony in the family, courtesy in social relations, concord in community life, conciliation as a means solving differences of opinions, conflict situations, prejudice, reconciliation with those countries that caused suffering among our people and our fatherland, and integration into the international community. The culture for peace nurtured by the Vietnamese people is permeated with the ethics of generosity, tolerance, the spirit of cooperation and the respect for the national identity.

In the 1930s, gender equality and women's emancipation were affirmed by the platform of the Vietnamese Revolution. Our late president, Ho Chi Minh, was a dedicated fighter, in heart and mind, for the emancipation of Vietnamese women. All the guidelines and policies of our Party and of the Vietnamese government are suffused with his thoughts concerning the mission, role and place of women in safeguarding our fatherland as well as in building a prosperous country.

Having myself participated in political, diplomatic, educational and training activities as well as the peace movement, I am deeply convinced that women constitute a large and powerful force. Through the force of their commitment to justice and humankind, they have the capabilities and the intelligence to overcome violence, and to contribute actively and in an innovative way to a peaceful solution to conflicts. In their position as mothers and the first educators of children, the role of women in education and training in general, and particularly in the education of women and the girl child, is very evident.

For women to be empowered, we women have to articulate our role and position through the practice of activities and lifelong self-education and learning. We have the right to demand and hope for the positive response of government and society to our legitimate demands, but we cannot simply wait for that to happen. The achievements of Vietnamese women in the eradication of hunger and the poverty alleviation campaign constitute a symbolic example of women's dynamism, the results of supportive government policies and the capacity of Vietnamese women to materialize our entire people's ultimate goal of "a prosperous people, a powerful nation, a just, democratic and civilized society".

To grasp thoroughly the gender issue in all areas of our life constitutes a societal responsibility, the ineluctable process in which women should play an active pivotal role. This is also the key demand in pushing ahead with the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action as well as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

In the present context, the struggle for a culture of peace requires a multilateral and ethical approach by the peoples of the world, including women, in order to cope with the challenges and seize opportunities for a strengthened role and status of women in the world. From the perspective of reality as well as from our own experiences, we women must bring into play our strong solidarity and cooperation. Let us Asian women join hands in order to make our past and future decisions a reality. You are the architects and the designers as well as the planners of activities for a culture of peace and sustainable development among Asian women at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

Finally, I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all of you for your active contribution to the organization and work of the Conference, in order that we may achieve our desired results.

Address by Madam Sonia Mendieta de Badaroux
Chairperson of the Executive Board
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

It is a great pleasure and an honour for me to be invited as Chairperson of the Executive Board of UNESCO, to attend this very important gathering of Asian women working for peace, non-violent conflict resolution, development and full empowerment. I am particularly proud, since in my present capacity I am only the third woman to hold this position. I would like to thank the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for its invitation, while at the same time expressing my appreciation for the initiative of convening this conference on "Asian women for a culture of peace" in cooperation with UNESCO.

Please allow me, on this occasion, to congratulate the city of Hanoi on winning the UNESCO "Cities for Peace" award. This achievement testifies to the tireless efforts of the government and the people of Viet Nam to make peace a palpable reality. I would also like to express my most sincere appreciation to the Vietnamese National Commission for UNESCO, ESCAP, and all those who, through their hard work and generosity, have made it possible for us to come together in this beautiful and historic city.

Throughout history, disrespect for women has been rampant, and women have been the target of structural abuse and violence. As we approach the close of this International Year for a Culture of Peace, we should feel called upon to prepare for the challenges of the upcoming United Nations Decade on a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010). It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that we strive to develop viable strategies for promoting a culture of peace and non-violence for ourselves and the children of the world, on the one hand, and for ending the perennial violence against women, on the other. We should pool our visions, experience and skills to ensure that the future and the development of this region are built on the stable foundations of peace, respect for human rights and non-violence. Similarly, we need to ensure that during the coming decade our children will have equal access to quality education that will promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance. This will also give them the keys for developing egalitarian partnerships in leadership and decision-making and, indeed, in all areas of life.

The regional progress on the role of women is highly commendable. During the past few decades, Asian women have made great strides in their development, and today many women hold their own with their male counterparts in many aspects of civil society. To date, the region has witnessed two women presidents and no less than four women prime ministers. Sri Lanka proudly produced the first woman prime minister of the world in the early 1960s. There has been one woman Nobel Laureate for the region, and a substantial number of outstanding intellectuals. It is fitting to pay tribute to those who have paved the way for this milestone. In this connection, it is worthwhile calling to mind the recent launching of the book, *The Begums of Bhopal* (Ladies of the Palace), on which occasion the Ambassador of Pakistan commemorated the important contributions made to the development of Bhopal by its four women leaders who ruled for a period of more that 100 years, from 1819-1926. What is most interesting about the leadership strategies of those women was the focus they gave to solving or preventing conflicts through dialogue, and the importance they placed on justice, education, fair governance and intercultural respect, values which are embedded in the concept of a culture of peace.

It is common knowledge that as mothers and transmitters of cultural values, in particular to children and youth, women have played a legendary role in all periods of history. It is my conviction that by virtue of these traditionally specific roles, women should be considered instrumental in making a culture of peace a true reality.

During the past few years, UNESCO has also increased its support for the emancipation and full empowerment of women. At the Manila Expert Group Meeting on Women's Contribution to a Culture of Peace, which was convened in 1995 by UNESCO in accordance with resolution 11.1 of the 27th General Conference, participants explored options for integrating women's views into policy-making and action for a culture of peace. The UNESCO Statement on Women's Contribution to a Culture of Peace that was presented to the fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, and which clearly states the intricate linkages between peace, development and equality between women and men, had its roots in the Manila meeting.

Following the Beijing conference, the UNESCO General Conference adopted resolution 5.15 on "Women's Contribution to a Culture of Peace" at its 28th session, whereby it recognized, among other things, the distinctive experiences, competence and perspectives that women bring to the cause of peace among peoples and nations. Within the UNESCO programme and budget, women became a priority area of concern, and a strategy for mainstreaming a gender perspective into all the fields of competence of the organization. This resolution led to the establishment of the "Women and a Culture of Peace Programme" in 1996. At its 159th session in May 2000, the Executive Board recommended that women and gender mainstreaming in a culture of peace, poverty alleviation and development remain a priority of UNESCO.

In line with the five-year assessment held in New York in June 2000, it is most promising that this regional conference will examine the areas where progress has been made for women in Asia, and try to find ways to mobilize resources for promoting the intellectual role of women towards building a culture of peace. With our joint efforts we should be able to elaborate new approaches for enhancing the status of women in a sustainable way. I am therefore looking forward to a fruitful conference with constructive and meaningful dialogue on how to develop a unified strategy on achieving and sustaining a culture of peace, development and equality in society.

Address by Mr Koïchiro Matsuura
Director-General
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

This major conference of Asian Women for a Culture of Peace opens at a most significant time. This event is one of the high points of an International Year dedicated by the world's assembled nations to such a culture of peace. On 20 November 1997, the General Assembly of the United Nations decided that the year 2000 should be marked by worldwide mobilization of public opinion on behalf of a culture of peace, based on respect for cultural diversity, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, dialogue and reconciliation.

In September 1999, the General Assembly adopted a Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace to bring further, highly practical application to bear on these ideas, to be translated into truly effective realities through civil society in general, and non-governmental organizations in particular.

This International Year has proved to be an outstanding success. Seventy-two million people throughout the world, to date, have contributed their signatures to the Manifesto 2000, including more than 35 million in Asia alone. Such enthusiasm reflects a growing global awareness of the need for a culture of peace in the deepest sense. But a true international culture of peace may only take root, and flourish, in civil society at large - of which all the world's women are an equal, vital, essential part.

A most distinguished number of participants have gathered at this conference specifically to represent Asian women. You are the invaluable partners of UNESCO. This is why the organization of this Conference of Asian Women for a Culture of Peace constitutes such a profoundly significant event for us all. I congratulate the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for taking such an initiative.

I should also like to express my thanks to the organizing committee, the Vietnamese National Commission for UNESCO, ESCAP and to the Viet Nam Women's Union for their efforts to make this conference possible. I am also grateful to the other United Nations agencies and bilateral donors that have contributed so generously to ensuring the participation of women from all the countries of Asia.

A culture of peace, women's rights, and human rights in general are, in fact, all closely related issues. Indeed, they are so logically, profoundly and vitally connected that it may be somewhat abstract to promote them separately. Peace, in itself, is a human right. But it endures most when solidly rooted in respect for all human rights. In turn, respect for the full equality and dignity of women is one of the most basic human rights of all.

It is now an observable fact that Viet Nam today boasts the highest rate of political participation by women in all Asia. More than a quarter of the seats in the national Parliament are currently held by women. Such a proportion eloquently testifies to the commitment of the country in favour of the full empowerment of Vietnamese women, thus in turn creating an increasingly promising environment for the attainment and full realization of all human rights.

Women make up more than half of the world's population. Yet, in most societies, at least traditionally, women have been largely excluded by custom from formal decision-

making and so have been handicapped by binding social constraints. They have been effectively prevented from expressing their full creative potential in the many domains hereto mostly reserved for males. It is at least fair to say that the centuries-long exclusion of half the human race, from so many fields of self-expression, has been a truly tragic waste of talent and imagination for humanity in general.

Moreover, women have also paid a terrible price in recent conflicts. Many of these incidents, as we are all well aware, have been total wars, which means that non-combatants have often suffered casualties in far larger numbers than soldiers actually under uniform. Sad statistics in this regard for the past few decades certainly help explain why, in retort to war's violence, so many women from every country and all walks of life on the Asian continent, from all walks of life, are at this very moment striving to replace war's grim logic with the dynamics of democracy, tolerance and human rights.

This gathering is also a tribute to all those courageous women in Asian lands now working so hard to help improve the lot, and daily lives, of all their sisters, which is to say, of their whole peoples. We remember here those outstanding women who will be unable, for various reasons, to attend this event with us. Numbered among them is Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi. Your concerted action and mutual communication can help devise measures to discourage localized social practices that still seriously handicap women and girls in particular, as targets of outright and often violently imposed domination or segregation. In this context, UNESCO remains vigilant, and welcomes positive developments in efforts to put a stop to various extreme and absolutely unjustifiable examples of gender discrimination.

I am convinced that this forum's debates will help us acquire deeper insight into the complex causes that lie at the roots of violence and conflict. I hope that by the end of this conference, by drawing on your different experiences and backgrounds, and by pooling your many talents, you will be able to outline a comprehensive, joint strategy, with real and most practical suggestions for action, to be carried out both by individuals and communities, and both nationally and regionally.

Your recommendations will be important. This International Year dedicated to a Culture of Peace marks a beginning, not an end. It heralds another year, 2001, focused on dialogue among civilizations, a key to promoting mutual and deeper knowledge, understanding, sympathy and, hence, true peace between the world's different cultures in all their precious diversity. It also ushers in an entire United Nations Decade for Non-Violence and a Culture of Peace for the Children of the World, for which the United Nations designated UNESCO as its lead agency. The General Assembly has indeed just passed a resolution to this effect, which highlights two parallel approaches for us to follow: to strengthen our partnerships within the global movement; and to promote education on behalf of all the world's children.

On the one hand, the resolution states that the global movement "needs to be continued and strengthened in order to involve everyone, at all levels of society, in the transition from a culture of war and violence to a culture of peace and non-violence". On the other hand, the resolution states that throughout the Decade "priority should be given to education, including the teaching of the practice of peace and non-violence to children. All other areas of action for a culture of peace should take children into special consideration."

This is also why the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) will be closely associated with UNESCO efforts to promote both formal and non-formal education, at all levels.

The resolution states that "education should be engaged in the broad sense of the term, not only formal education in schools but also out-of-school and informal education in the full range of social institutions, including the family and the media. It should involve the full participation of governments, intergovernmental organizations and civil society. The strategy should follow the strategy adopted by the education ministers of the world for education for peace, human rights and democracy: an approach that is comprehensive and holistic, involving all educational partners and various agents of socialization, including non-governmental organizations and community organizations in a process of democratic participation."

In the course of your discussions, I am sure that you will find means to promote the kind of education that could nourish a true culture of peace: education, the importance of which was so recently stressed at the Dakar Forum on Education for All.

The very concept of a culture of peace provides us with just the unifying, driving and highly motivating force that we need for harnessing so many complementary energies, as represented by governments, the United Nations family, and civil society.

PEACE 2000 INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR THE CULTURE OF PEACE **IS IN OUR HANDS** 🏛 🌐

- *Respect the life and dignity of each human being without discrimination or prejudice;*
- *Practise active non-violence, rejecting violence in all its forms: physical, sexual, psychological, economical and social, in particular towards the most deprived and vulnerable such as children and adolescents;*
- *Share my time and material resources in a spirit of generosity to put an end to exclusion, injustice and political and economic oppression;*
- *Defend freedom of expression and cultural diversity, giving preference always to dialogue and listening without engaging in fanaticism, defamation and the rejection of others;*
- *Promote consumer behaviour that is responsible and development practices that respect all forms of life and preserve the balance of nature on the planet;*
- *Contribute to the development of my community, with the full participation of women and respect for democratic principles, in order to create together new forms of solidarity;*

Manifesto 2000 for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence

Speech by Dr Hoang Van Nghien
Chairman of Hanoi People's Committee

First, allow me on behalf of the people and the authorities of Hanoi, the "City for Peace" as recognized by UNESCO, to express our warmest greetings and welcome to all the distinguished guests and delegates at the Asian Women for a Culture of Peace Conference. Our thanks also go to Mr. Koiichiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, and to UNESCO and ESCAP for their confidence in choosing Hanoi to play host to this conference. My sincere hope is that you all will be most comfortable during your stay in our city. I am certain that the conference will be crowned with success.

Hanoi was our imperial city nearly 1,000 years ago and is the now the capital of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. For the Vietnamese people, Hanoi symbolizes and instills the nation's traditional culture, tolerance and love for peace. Deeply embedded in our character and repeatedly demonstrated in our national history is our people's earnest desire to live in peace. Having fallen victim to foreign aggression and domination, we have come to fully understand the values of, and the necessity for, a sustained culture of peace for each and every individual and, concurrently, to vehemently object to all forms of war and cultural imposition. In the evolution of society, that spirit of peace and tolerance should be maintained in each family, community, city, nation and the world as a whole.

We are fully aware that for the culture of peace to be promoted, it is imperative to involve the entire population, half of which is comprised of women who often fall into the most vulnerable and disadvantaged group.

It is our national tradition to pay high respect to the role of women, especially in the family. However, throughout history, particularly in feudal times, women were underestimated, and subject to unjust and repressive treatment. The Vietnamese revolution has taken steps towards their emancipation. In times of war and peace, many mothers and wives have assumed very hard housework and social affairs for which they deserve the highest honour. Given the nature of their gender, and inspired by the nation's tradition of altruism, Vietnamese women are the symbolization of a genuine culture of peace. They are actively contributing to building and consolidating the family institution, child upbringing and national socio-economic development.

Our capital, Hanoi, is honoured to be the host city for this significant conference. In 1999, Hanoi was awarded the "City for Peace" Prize and was one of the locations from which the International Year for a Culture of Peace was launched. Most recently, Hanoi commemorated its 990th anniversary as a step in the process towards its millennial foundation anniversary to be held in 2010. This will also be the Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World, initiated by the United Nations. The people and the authorities of Hanoi will do their utmost to make worthy contributions to achieving those lofty goals as part of our endeavours to build a modern and civilized city that is deeply permeated with national identity and humanity.

Once again, may I extend my best wishes to all distinguished guests and participants and wish the conference a great success.

II. ADDRESSES AND MESSAGES

Address by Mr Nguyen Dy Nien
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
At the reception held on the occasion of the
Asian Women for a Culture of Peace Conference

On behalf of the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, I extend my greetings to all the participants in the Asian Women for a Culture of Peace Conference and offer you all my warmest welcome to Hanoi, the capital city of Viet Nam and "the City for Peace" as designated by UNESCO.

I sincerely thank both Madam President of the Executive Board and the Director-General of UNESCO for their kind words about Viet Nam and its people. The Vietnamese people, and women in particular, fully support the UNESCO Statement on Women's Contribution to a Culture of Peace, that "there can be no lasting peace without development, and no sustainable development without full equality between women and men".

Peace has remained a long-cherished and burning dream for generation after generation of humankind. Particularly for women, endowed by nature to be wives and mothers, peace is of paramount importance. Like all peace-loving peoples in the world, the Vietnamese people have, through successive generations, fought hard and made untold sacrifices to restore peace to their homeland. Therefore, more than anyone else, we cherish peace and do our utmost to develop culture of peace for today and tomorrow, for our lives and future generation. The legend of the Sword Lake, a historic site in the heart of Hanoi, is a symbol of the peace-loving tradition of the Vietnamese people.

Based on our history of nation-building and safekeeping, and the history of other countries, we have come to fully understand the constructive and attractive role played by women in all aspects of daily life, ranging from the family and the community to the common concerns of the country, the region and the world.

The silent sacrifices made by women, together with their inherent industriousness and patience, will become our immense internal strength and vigorous enthusiasm if their potential and enthusiasm are fully tapped. Their kind-heartedness, benevolence and altruism have become a great source of encouragement for the entire Vietnamese society to strive for authenticity, good and beauty.

The culture of peace is the yeast that lifts up virtues, courage and human beings' will and strength of justice and reason in the struggle against violence, oppression and imposition. Women are the actors able to allow a culture of peace to deeply permeate into the minds and behaviour of humankind in their social activities and relations, despite the painful fact that a large number are still victims of violence, hunger, poverty and social prejudices.

It is for these reasons that this conference is of strategic significance, with a far-reaching long-term influence. You are the designers of the success that the people, and women in particular, throughout Asia are expecting from the conference, which was referred to by the Director-General of UNESCO this morning as "one of the high points of the International Year for a Culture of Peace".

With that in mind, may I request all of you to join me and my wife in a toast for the great success of the conference, the prosperity that will be bestowed on the Asian people, the further advancement of Asian women, the happiness of your families and the best of health for you all.

Message from Ambassador Anwarul Karim Chowdhury
Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations

The twentieth century was the most violence-ridden century in the history of mankind. In the name of country, ethnicity, religion or belief, people were harmed only because they appeared to be different – neighbours harmed neighbours, women were dishonoured and children were robbed of their future.

We suffered in a culture of war and violence. Yet, in that hate- and violence-filled century, we also saw the power of non-violence. We saw people come together for peace in the middle of conflicts, working and sacrificing in order to bring understanding and tolerance into our communities and neighbourhoods. Forces advocating violence and hatred were unable to extinguish the spirit in women and men that upheld the ideal of a global culture of peace.

As we look ahead in this new century and millennium, we hope for a new beginning a beginning for peace and non-violence all over the world, a global movement for a culture of peace.

To me, the culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes and ways of life based on the principles of freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, and respect for diversity, dialogue and understanding.

In September 2000, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. The adoption of that document has been our most significant achievement at the United Nations in promoting the culture of peace.

The Declaration and Programme of Action provides all of us with a clear set of guidelines for action. It is a universal document in the real sense transcending borders, cultures, beliefs and societies. It identifies actors who have a role in advancing the culture of peace. In addition to States and international organizations such as the United Nations, it includes religious and community leaders, parents, teachers, artists, professors, journalists and students – in fact, people from all walks of life.

The areas identified in the Programme of Action – education, sustainable development, human rights, equality between women and men, democratic participation, advancing understanding, tolerance and solidarity and international peace and security have been priorities of the United Nations since its foundation. What is new is their linkage through the culture of peace into a single coherent concept. This is the first time that all these areas have been interlinked so that the totality of their complementarities can be developed.

Adoption of the document is, however, only the first step. Our success will rest on the strength of the partnerships we build for its implementation. For the success of our movement, we need a "grand alliance" for a culture of peace. During the ongoing International Year of the Culture of Peace, we have seen such a grand alliance come together. It is heartening to see the culture of peace receiving wider and wider global acceptance. Through United Nations efforts, especially UNESCO, as well as the national committees and national focal points that were developed during the year, the implemention of projects nationally and locally, the widespread involvement of civil society, declaratory statements by regional organizations, and the organization of symposiums, workshops and seminars all over the world, we are witnessing the movement gather a momentum that cannot be reversed.

Civil society, including the private sector, has a very important and definite role in that alliance. Without their proactive role, we can never involve communities and societies in the building of a global culture of peace.

While I was in Amman recently, attending the Global Summit on Peace through Tourism, I was really impressed by the way that the tourism industry – the world's largest industry, employing 1 out of 11 workers – has come on board to join our efforts to create a world at peace. The Amman Declaration on Peace through Tourism that was adopted at the Summit welcomed the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace and expressed the determination to implement the objectives contained in the document.

Another example is the first Global Conference on a Culture of Peace organized by civil society, to be held at Madrid in January 2001. Such conferences underline the commitment of civil society to the culture of peace.

The strength of the collective commitment to promote a worldwide culture of peace will be tested when the United Nations begins its observance of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World from 2001 to 2010. The Decade provides us with the opportunity to further consolidate the culture of peace worldwide.

On 1 December 2000, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution that provides a boost to the activities for the observance of the Decade. Bangladesh, on behalf of 59 co-sponsoring countries, tabled the resolution that calls upon States, the United Nations system and civil society to become involved in partnerships aimed at promoting a culture of peace. It designates UNESCO as the lead agency with responsibility for coordinating the activities during the Decade. The resolution invites civil society at all levels to widen the scope of activities for promoting a culture of peace and non-violence. It also encourages them to further the objectives of the Decade by adopting their own programme of activities to compliment the initiatives of States, the United Nations system, and other regional and global organizations.

The resolution stipulates that at the mid-point of the Decade in 2005, the General Assembly should hold a special day-long meeting to review how far the objectives of the Declaration and Programme of Action have been implemented. The United Nations Secretary-General would be requested to present a progress report at that meeting, with inputs from all actors. I would suggest that whatever activities the participants of this forum undertake, the Secretary-General should be informed of those activities so that they can be reflected in the report.

For a long time, there has been an impression of women as helpless victims of wars and civil conflicts. The role of women in fostering peace in their communities and beyond has often been overlooked. However, from Burundi to Somalia, from Northern Ireland to the Middle East and to Cambodia, women have shown great capacity as peacemakers. They have assumed activist roles while holding together their families and communities. At the grassroots and community levels, women have organized resistance to militarization, created space for dialogue and moderation, and weaved together the shattered fabric of society.

We must ensure that women get more avenues to promote peace, not only at the local level but also at the national, regional and global levels. By bringing their experiences to the peace negotiations, women can inject into the peace process a practical understanding of the various challenges faced by civilian populations, the mechanisms that come out of such involvement are naturally more sensitive to the needs of civilians and therefore, more sustainable and useful.

Women also have a great role to play in promoting a culture of peace in strife-torn societies, which lies at the root of lasting peace and reconciliation. Unless there is a culture of peace with women at its helm, long-term solutions will elude us.

Women have proved again and again that it is they who often foster a culture of peace by reaching out across divides and encouraging others to do likewise. It is women who do all the small but right things that teach people to be tolerant and respectful of the different views, it is women who can keep the movement for a culture of peace both vibrant and strong.

I am confident that the Regional Conference on Asian Women for a Culture of Peace will be useful in bringing forth ways that women can contribute to advancing a culture of peace worldwide and raising awareness in this regard among the Asian countries. UNESCO deserves our special thanks for organizing this regional conference and for bringing together women from various Asian countries on the eve of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World. I hope the conference will act as a catalyst in advancing the culture of peace by encouraging women to become more and more involved.

The statement by the President of the Security Council on the International Women's Day

As the first International Women's Day of the new millennium is observed throughout the world, members of the Security Council recognize that peace is inextricably linked with equality between women and men. They affirm that the equal access and full participation of women in power structures and their full involvement in all efforts for the prevention and resolution of conflicts are essential for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. In this context, members welcome the review of the Fourth World Conference on Women as an essential element in achieving this goal.

Members of the Council also recognize that while entire communities suffer the consequences of armed conflict, women and girls are particularly affected. The impact of violence against women and violation of the human rights of women in conflict situations is experienced by women of all ages. Women also constitute the majority of the world's refugees and internally displaced persons.

Members of the Council note that although women have begun to play an important role in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building, they are still under-represented in decision-making in regard to conflict. If women are to play an equal part in security and maintaining peace, they must be empowered politically and economically, and represented adequately at all levels of decision-making, both at the pre-conflict stage and during hostilities, as well as at the point of peacekeeping, peace-building, reconciliation and reconstruction.

Members of the Council also note that during times of armed conflict and the collapse of communities, the role of women is crucial in preserving social order, and as peace educators both in their families and in their societies, thereby playing an important role in fostering a culture of peace in strife-torn communities and societies.

Members of the Council call upon all concerned to refrain from human rights abuses in conflict situations, often in gender-specific ways, respect international humanitarian law and to promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and a culture of peace.

Members of the Council recall the obligation to prosecute those responsible for grave breaches of international humanitarian law, while welcoming the inclusion as a war crime, in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), of all forms of sexual violence and noting the role the Court could play to ending impunity for perpetrators of such crimes.

Members of the Council stress that efforts should be strengthened to provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women in conflict situations.

Members of the Council underscore the importance of promoting an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes while addressing armed or other conflicts.

Mr Anwarul Karim Chowdhury,
the President of the Security Council,
on behalf of the Council, 8 March 2000

Message from Ms Angela E.V. King
Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women
United Nations

The impact of armed conflict on women and girls has only recently been discussed, and then discussions have usually concentrated on their role as victims. A number of landmark events during the year, in particular the open debate held in the Security Council on 24 and 25 October 2000 on the topic "Women, Peace and Security", have shown that we have come a long way in a relatively short time. The fact that women have an unique and largely untapped contribution to make to the conceptualization and realization of a culture of peace, as acknowledged during the first Expert Group Meeting on Women's Contribution to a Culture of Peace held in Manila from 25 to 28 April 1995, is increasingly being recognized.

The growing number and changing pattern of conflicts are a matter of grave concern. That pattern has further emphasized the need to integrate a gender perspective in peace support operations. Around the world, we witness how civilians in growing numbers have become targets of conflicts. It is estimated that close to 90 per cent of current war casualties are civilians, the majority of whom are women and children.

We have also witnessed how civilians increasingly have become instruments of conflicts. Appalling examples include children being recruited or kidnapped to become child soldiers, and women and girls being systematically raped as a tactic of war. Furthermore, lawlessness has characterized many recent conflicts, in which warring parties have shown total disregard for international law providing protection to civilians, and a culture of impunity has surrounded those violations. It is also well known that women and children today constitute the majority of the world's refugees and internally displaced populations.

We know that peace and security is posited on rapid response to early indications of conflict, imaginative conflict-prevention strategies and creative conflict resolution, and peacekeeping and peace-building. Women have begun to play an important role in all those areas. There are examples from Angola, Burundi, Northern Ireland, Sierra Leone and Somalia where women have been extremely effective in bridging differences. Moreover, as was recognized in the presidential statement of the Security Council on the occasion of International Women's Day on 8 March 2000, in times of armed conflict, and the resultant collapse of communities, women are critical actors in preserving social order, serving as peace educators, both within their families and their societies.

Despite some progress, however, women remain underrepresented in decision-making with regard to conflict, be it conflict resolution or at the post-conflict stage, including rehabilitation and reconciliation within their societies. At the same time, the value of the contribution that women can make, both to conflict prevention and the achievement of a culture of peace, has yet to be given full and proper recognition. At Windhoek, Namibia, in May this year, on the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG), concrete recommendations for ensuring further progress in these areas were adopted in the Windhoek Declaration and Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations.

The Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action were endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 1325 (2000), which was adopted unanimously by the Council on 31 October. In that resolution, the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, and in peace-building, was reaffirmed. Furthermore, the equal

participation and full involvement of women in all efforts at maintaining and promoting peace and security, and the need to increase the role of women in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution was emphasized.

With a clear international mandate and a wealth of knowledge derived from women's practical experiences in building peace within communities, we cannot deny the need for women's equal partnership in peace processes. Gender equality issues are, as numerous examples have shown us, absolutely essential to the success of any peace operation. True peace and security cannot be built upon equality or upon a culture of impunity. Women must be empowered politically and economically so that they can play an equal part in the maintenance of peace and security. The activities undertaken by UNESCO within the framework of the Women and a Culture of Peace Programme are of great importance to the process of bringing about this change.

The fundamental human right to have and enjoy equality was emphasized by the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, and reaffirmed in the Beijing+5 Outcome Document and in the Millennium Summit. There can be no peace without gender equality, and no development without both peace and equality. Without equal and fair participation of women in decision-making positions we will never achieve the vision outlined in the United Nations Charter.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999, 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 and 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, as well as relevant statements of its President, and *recalling also* the statement of its President to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace (International Women's Day) of 8 March 2000 (SC/6816),

Recalling also the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century" (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict,

Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and *recognizing* the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and *stressing* the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Reaffirming also the need to implement fully international humanitarian and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts,

Emphasizing the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls,

Recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard *noting* the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693),

Recognizing also the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations,

Recognizing that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,

Noting the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,

1. *Urges* Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;

2. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes;

3. *Urges* the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard *calls on* Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster;

4. *Further urges* the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations, and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel;

5. *Expresses* its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and *urges* the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide to Member States training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peace-building measures, *invites* Member States to incorporate these elements as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment, and *further requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training;

7. *Urges* Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies;

8. *Calls on* all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia:

(a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction;

(b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements;

(c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary;

9. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, especially as civilians, in particular the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;

10. *Calls on* all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict;

11. *Emphasizes* the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls, and in this regard *stresses* the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions;

12. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolutions 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998 and 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000;

13. *Encourages* all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants;

14. *Reaffirms* its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to give consideration to their potential impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the special needs of women and girls, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions;

15. *Expresses* its willingness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women's groups;

16. *Invites* the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution, and *further invites* him to submit a report to the Security Council on the results of this study and to make this available to all Member States of the United Nations;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General, where appropriate, to include in his reporting to the Security Council progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls;

18. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

Adopted by the United Nations
Security Council on 31 October 2000

Speech by Dr Abdullah Cholil
Chairperson of the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Women

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to be able to congratulate the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, UNESCO and ESCAP for their joint initiatives and cooperation in organizing this important Regional Conference on Asian Women for a Culture of Peace in Hanoi.

As the Chairperson of the ASEAN Sub-committee on Women (ASW), and on behalf of the 10 member countries, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, I would like to share with you the following information. During the recent twenty-second meeting of ASW, which was held in Bali from 14 to 16 November 2000, we were very much in full agreement with supporting these initiatives for conducting this regional conference. In fact, in that particular meeting we requested the ASW focal point in Viet Nam, the National Committee for the Advancement of Women of Vietnam, to report at the next ASEAN meeting all recommendations agreed during this conference. This move is part of a possible action plan that could be developed by ASEAN member countries in the near future.

In addition, the twenty-second meeting of ASW also recognized the other emerging issues to be addressed by government and civil society, that is, violence against women, and trafficking in women and children. If we are really serious about developing a culture of peace, it is absolutely essential to eliminate such violence and to combat such trafficking.

Another important issue in ASEAN, as well as in all developing countries, is the need to address poverty in order to improve the quality of life of disadvantaged women and children. With regard to this particular aspect, the ASW meeting also supports the maximization of communication and information technology, the optimization of skills training for women, and the utilization of research findings.

To ensure all those things (the development of a culture of peace, addressing violence and trafficking, and the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes) become reality, there is a critical prerequisite condition. The governments in Asia as well as around the world, together and in partnership with civil society, must realize gender equality and justice within the family, society and nation. In doing so, the strategy of gender mainstreaming has to be put into real practice in all the development programmes of each country.

Finally, through the active participation of all the participants of this conference and the able joint leadership of the Government of Viet Nam, UNESCO and ESCAP, supported by all international organizations concerned, we hope and believe this Regional Conference of Asian Women for a Culture of Peace will be successful and will contribute significantly to the world peace process for the benefit of all humankind.

Speech by Ms Mata 'Afa La' Ulu Fetaui
Pan Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association

I am honoured to have been asked to represent the Pan Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association (PPSEAWA) at the Conference of Asian Women for a Culture of Peace. It is also my privilege and pleasure to represent women of my own country at the conference.

PPSEAWA was founded in 1928 in Honolulu by a group of women with international concerns, with the aim of promoting peace through understanding and friendship. Since then, in order to realize that aim, PPSEAWA has held international conferences approximately every three years, bringing women together at meetings, lectures, workshops and cultural programmes concerned with women and families. For example, the 1958 conference held in Tokyo brought women of the Philippines and Japan together in reconciliation after the Second World War.

The twenty-first conference was held in November 2000 in Rarotonga under the theme of "Ignite the Power of Peace". Although "pacific" means "peace", sadly, peace has broken down in Fiji, the Solomon Islands and the western part of Papua New Guinea. At that conference we tried to identify the varied expressions of the absence of peace in the family, community and nation in order to find solutions and bring back peace.

At this point, and having this opportunity to talk to you, the women of Asia, I want to lay before you the challenge of halting arms build-ups: is it possible for us, the women of Asia and the Pacific, to stop the race in arms trading? Can we dare to influence the highly industrialized nations in stopping the manufacturing of weapons?

As has been said, I believe that blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the children of God. It is my prayer that the women of Asia and the Pacific have the spirit of courage, love and a sound mind to continue our race to achieve the crown of peace.

III. KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Vietnamese women join hands
with women in the rest of Asia
to strive for equality, development and peace

Madam Ha Thi Khiet
President, Viet Nam Women's Union
President, Viet Nam National Committee for the Advancement of Women

Peace has, throughout time, been the desire and goal of the struggles of all peace-loving nations and women all over the world. As mothers and wives, women are, more than anyone else, deeply concerned about a peaceful world in which people live in altruism, tolerance and fraternity.

Looking back at the time-honoured history of nation-building and safeguarding, and the preservation and development of the national cultural identity, Vietnamese women are proud of their immense devotion and contributions. Our late president, Ho Chi Minh, once said "the beautiful nation of Viet Nam is made even more beautiful by our women, both young and old". The figures of Vietnamese women can be found vividly depicted in the legends, folk arts, literature and history of the nation.

For the Vietnamese nation, the twentieth century was the one of monumental suffering and losses, but also one that stands out with glory. In the past century, with Ho Chi Minh's thoughts and the Viet Nam Communist Party's policies on women's liberation, Vietnamese women, together with the whole nation, have freed themselves from the double slavery imposed by foreign aggressors and feudalism to become citizens of an independent and free country. Women have the right to vote and can stand on an equal footing with men before the law. They rightly deserve the title given by Ho Chi Minh of being "heroic, indomitable, kind-hearted and resourceful".

As a member State of the United Nations, Viet Nam was one of the first countries to follow the United Nations Conventions on the rights of the women and children. The National Committee for the Advancement of Women (NCFAW) was established in 1993. It functions as the national machinery for coordinating relevant ministries and government agencies in their efforts towards women's advancement. Committees for the Advancement of Women (CFAWs) have been set up in 61 provinces and cities, and in 47 ministries and associations. Since its establishment, NCFAW has worked closely with its members in fulfilling the tasks of monitoring and assessing the implementation of the CEDAW Convention by the government and in drafting and submitting the second, third and fourth periodical reports on that subject to the United Nations.

As an active member of NCFAW, the Viet Nam Women's Union (VWU) acts as a social and political organization representing the rights and interests of Vietnamese women from all walks of life. On the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of its foundation, the VWU was honoured with the State Independence Order for its valuable contributions to the development of the country. The VWU is well-organized with four levels connecting the central level and villages, and it has 11 million members covering all strata of the population. The VWU itself has formulated an action plan in response to the National Strategy for the

Advancement of Women set forth by NCFAW with 10 objectives of raising quality of life for women in Viet Nam.

Four priority objectives for implementation have been defined:

1. Generating jobs and raising income for women, as part of the efforts towards hunger elimination and poverty reduction (HEPR) and enhancing women's economic status. VWU provides an efficient and effective channel in the government HEPR programme. Many credits and savings models have been introduced in all provinces of the country. Since 1996, more than 2 million women have received loans totalling VND 4 trillion (Vietnamese Dong). The repayment rate has remained at between 95 and 100 per cent. The VWU has established more than 80,000 women's saving credit groups, opened workshops to provide women with capital, technology, breeding stock, seeds and production know-how. It has also set up hundreds of district and provincial vocational training centres that have attracted the participation of millions of women, who have then been able to create jobs for themselves. In 1999, the VWU was honoured with the First Class Labour Order by the State for its record in this field. A Vietnamese ethnic minority woman has become an HEPR prize laureate, which was presented by the United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan in New York.

2. Providing equitable access to education, literacy and comprehensive empowerment for women. The literacy rate for Vietnamese people aged 10 years and above stands at 88 per cent for women and 94 per cent for men; thus, education has been fundamentally universalized at the secondary school level. The VWU has forwarded its recommendations to the Ministry of Education and Training on measures for balancing the number of boys and girls at all levels of schooling in order to guarantee universal education for girls in the targeted groups. It has collaborated with the education service and in particular with border defence units in organizing literacy classes for members of women's unions at all levels and girls in remote areas. In addition, the VWU has raised scholarship funds in support of poor pupils who do their best to overcome difficulties. It has organized "Affection Classes" for children who have no access to formal education, and training workshops on managerial skills, environmental sanitation, essential knowledge for daily life, literacy etc.

3. Improving the conditions of health care for women: To date, more than 30 per cent of the communes have access to doctors, and 82 per cent to midwives and obstetrics nurses. The mortality rate in children aged under 5 years has been reduced from 55 to 48 per cent. In 1999, Viet Nam won the United Nations Population Prize. The VWU at all levels has provided women with necessary information and knowledge on women's and children's health care as well as provided free health testing. Classes have been organized on nutrition, demographic information and family planning, workshops have been held on child upbringing and women have been encouraged to have their children vaccinated to prevent common diseases. In addition, the VWU has been acting against drug use and other social vices such as trafficking in women and children, and family violence.

4. Promoting women's participation in politics and social affairs. For the Government and the Party, "the emancipation of women is a crucial objective and content of the

renovation process (*doi moi*). More and more women are taking their place in the leadership of the country and involvement in political and social affairs.

The VWU has worked closely with NCFAW to launch campaigns in order to win more votes for women throughout the country. Unions at all levels are active in nominating women and creating favourable conditions for them to get in touch and exchange views with voters. Training courses have also been organized for 50 per cent of the female candidates. As a result, the percentage of female deputies in the National Assembly was raised from 18.48 per cent in the ninth legislature to 26.22 per cent in the tenth legislature – 118 women out of a total of 450 deputies in the current National Assembly.

In the spirit of "Viet Nam wants to be a friend to all countries", the VWU has continuously developed its external relations, especially with the rest of South-East Asia. Up to now, it has established links with more than 300 organizations in 60 countries.

One remarkable feature in the culture of peace of our country is the popular movement involving people, and especially women, at all strata in "paying tribute and thanks to those who have dedicated meritorious services to the nation". The activities of this movement include taking care of martyrs' families, the building of "affection houses" and "affection gardens/orchards", donation in the form of "saving account books" and taking lifetime care of Vietnamese Heroic Mothers.

At the close of the twentieth century, our achievements in the advancement of women are immense. However, formidable obstacles remain. This world will become ever more beautiful if each of us, from our individual perspectives, does the utmost to build and safeguard an authentic peace, sustainable development and cultural diversity the common roots in Asia and the world.

IV. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The culture of peace from a gender perspective

Ingeborg Breines
Director, Women and a Culture of Peace Programme, UNESCO
and
Ingrid Eide
Former president of the Norwegian National Commission for UNESCO and Former member of the Executive Board of UNESCO

A. Towards a culture of peace: the need for a joint vision

The UNESCO Constitution states that "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed".[1] The culture of peace initiative is a revitalization of this basic moral and intellectual mission, seen in relation to the present geopolitical situation, with its new opportunities, as well as to the need to address adequately the increasing use of force, violence and armed conflicts in an attempt to settle disputes and pursue selfish economic interests. It is in the spirit of its basic mandate that UNESCO insists on the prevention of violent conflicts as a priority; in order to avoid the terrible waste of human lives and material resources occasioned by violent conflict and war.

The concept of a culture of peace should be seen as an effort to build a vision that could be widely shared. During the cold war period, the notion of "peace" was mainly used in the East, while the West spoke about "democracy and human rights". The culture of peace concept encompasses both, as well as the greater concern of the South for development. The vision of a culture of peace has already proven to be effective for mobilizing groups and individuals for change, as it inspires hope, political commitment and creative participation and engagement. This psychological factor should not be underestimated in a period when large groups of people feel marginalized and alienated, sometimes to the extent that it threatens democracy.

Such a global vision that would transcend the cleavage between "utopia", which is considered unachievable, and the concept of "real-politik" that tends to take into consideration only limited and measurable facts. Visions and scenarios of the future are as vital for our planning as descriptions of the actual situations; in other words, "the reality". Both are needed, and both need the full democratic participation of all citizens.

In the vision of a culture of peace, dialogue and respect for human rights replaces violence, intercultural understanding and solidarity replace enemy images, sharing and free flow of knowledge and information replace secrecy, and egalitarian partnership and full empowerment of women replace male domination.

A culture of peace encompasses not only peace as an absence of war, but focuses on the content, substance and conditions of peace. To prevent war as the ultimate expression of what we can call the culture of violence, we must also address issues such as: the denial of fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms; acts and reflexes of aggression in

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[1] Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 16 November 1945.

everyday life, in homes and the street, the banalization of violence in the media and in games; the use of stereotyped images of "the other"; and the explicit glorification of war heroes as well as the implicit glorification of war in the teaching of history.

Building the culture of peace entails unlearning the codes of the culture of war and violence that has pervaded our existence in myriad ways. It entails daring to question the institutions, monuments, priorities and practices of this culture, as well as the destructive production, trafficking and use of arms and illegal drugs.

It further entails challenging a series of concepts and notions such as the current notion of development based primarily on economic criteria; the narrow concept of security, often measured by the counting of arms, instead of measuring human and environmental security; and the notion of power seen more as power over, rather than shared power.

Concepts, such as that of a Culture of Peace, are important as containers for human experiences and pointers for attention, reflection and action. They are labels for concerns as well as expressions of emotion and commitment.

Other concepts that have been effectively launched during recent decades are cooperative peace, sustainable development, biodiversity, human development, gender equality, creative diversity and human security. These concepts are conceived and debated in the context of our planet's unprecedented potential for both destruction and development, and also its unprecedented range of human efforts to prevent destruction and ensure the life of future generations.

B. United Nations Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace

The process of transforming societies away from expressions of war and violence towards a culture of peace and non-violence has become a United Nations system-wide challenge. In September 1999, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the United Nations Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace after having proclaimed the year 2000 as the International Year for the Culture of Peace and the subsequent period from 2001 to 2010 as the United Nations Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World. The United Nations Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace provides us with an agreed definition of the concept of a culture of peace as a set of values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behaviour and ways of life, emphasizing:

- The fostering of a culture of peace through education
- Promoting sustainable economic and social development
- Promoting respect for all human rights
- Actions to ensure equality between women and men
- Actions to foster democratic participation
- Actions to advance understanding, tolerance and solidarity
- Actions to support participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge
- Actions to promote international peace and security.

It further presents an outline and structure for developing national programmes of action, or programmes linked to organizations and institutions. The United Nations encourages Member States and other Parties to use the International Year for the Culture of Peace and the coming Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World to broaden partnerships and strengthen visibility of actions in favour of a culture of peace. Countries, cities, movements and individuals are participating in the International Year through different initiatives and taking on particular tasks.

In an effort to communicate the spirit of this comprehensive United Nations text more widely, several Nobel Peace Prize Laureates drafted a concentrated version of its basic principles in the form of a Manifesto. Manifesto 2000 is being used to mobilize broad support for a culture of peace.[2] More than 65 million people have pledged their commitment to "respect all life, reject violence, share with others, listen to understand, preserve the planet" and "rediscover solidarity".[3] If signatures are followed by action in families, at work, and in communities, countries and regions, we will see the beginning of a new global movement for a culture of peace, giving evidence of people's longing for peace in their daily lives.

The motto of the International Year for the Culture of Peace is "cultivate peace" and "peace is in our hands". This has connotations to primary production, basics and the need for care and healing, and long-term perspectives when we act. As we all know, it takes years and often a great deal of care for a tree to grow after a seed has been planted, but it takes only a few minutes to cut it down.

> *"Promote greater involvement of women in prevention and resolution of conflicts and, in particular, in activities promoting a culture of peace in post-conflict situations."*
>
> United Nations Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, B.14.j (1999)

C. Long-term prevention versus emergency intervention

Seen against the disturbing fact that wars continue to be fought, societies fall apart, lives are unnecessarily lost, and crime and violence are on the increase in most societies, the urgent need for a culture of peace is obvious. During the past century alone more than 100 million persons died as a result of war and war-related activities. With modern, sophisticated warfare and a growing number of internal conflicts civilian victims largely outnumber any other group as the casualties of war.

From 1990 to 1995, 70 States were involved in 93 armed conflicts, which killed 5.5 million people. Current wars increasingly include extreme sexual abuse as part of their strategy. The past decade saw some 100 wars, and the number of soldiers involved in United Nations peacekeeping missions in this period rose from around 10,000 to some 85,000. The costs of such operations also increased tenfold, shifting resources away from preventive peace-building initiatives, be it infrastructure, access to education or healthcare. The vast

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[2] http://www.unesco.org/mainfesto2000
[3] Manifesto 2000, International Year for the Culture of Peace, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Paris.

amounts of resources used for military purposes, peace-keeping and in-conflict and post-conflict humanitarian assistance highlight our failure to meet basic human needs and concerns in an adequate and timely manner.

Long-term preventive measures to radically attack the root causes of violence – poverty, exclusion, ignorance, inequality and injustice – would be both more humane and less costly. Hence the importance to reconfirm the humanistic, long-term values of development. If not we all have to become part of a humanitarian "fire brigade". On the other hand, most people, both men and women, demonstrate some degree of a culture of peace in their daily activities. Nearly all professions are "peace inclined"; however, the military with its capacity for violence and destruction is an institutionalized exception. Human interaction is, in general, based on trust and predictability. Without it societies could hardly be sustained.

Among the many obstacles to a culture of peace are the commonly held beliefs that (a) if you want peace, prepare for war, and (b) nothing can change because violence is inevitable and intrinsic to human nature, and violence is an effective method for solving problems and disputes. However, if we want peace we must prepare for peace. We must not only have prestigious military academies, but obligatory peace education at all levels of the school system; not only peace research that follows the development of new weapons and registering new armed conflicts, but peace research that truly helps us learn to resolve conflicts in non-violent ways.

The culture of peace concept provides us with an opportunity to reflect and refine our vision for the future. We are encouraged to confront such fundamental questions as:

- Why is the world seemingly more willing to pay the costs of war than the costs of peace?
- How can we reduce the enormous gaps between military and social expenditure?
- What are the main obstacles to a global culture of peace?
- Who benefits from the culture of war and violence?
- How do we learn to value differences?
- How do we educate our children for cooperation and sharing?
- What are the real 'survival skills' needed at this time in history?

While these questions are not new to the human quest for peace, never before in history have they had the same urgency. Modern weapons are capable of unprecedented destruction, and the number of people who suffer from violence, both direct and structural, is larger than ever.

D. Education: a leading modality

For UNESCO, relevant quality education for all is the key to democracy in everyday life and a guarantee of a sufficiently broad basis for democratic recruitment to decision-making positions. Education, both formal and informal, in schools and the family, and through mass media and social institutions, is the most important process by which people can attain the values, attitudes and behavioural patterns that are consistent with a culture of peace.

However, if education is to be successful in promoting a culture of peace, it is essential that it include the excluded, notably girls and women. In addition, it must be relevant to different socio-cultural contexts, of high quality, gender-sensitive, and encourage interpersonal, intercultural and international dialogue. Education for human rights, peace, democracy, non-violence and tolerance is particularly important for bringing about a change towards a gender-sensitive culture of peace. The UNESCO Associated Schools Project links some 6,000 schools in more than 100 countries in innovative efforts to understand and tackle these global challenges.

The world's Ministers of Education meeting at the 44th session of the UNESCO International Conference on Education in 1994, underlined the intention "to take suitable steps to establish in educational institutions an atmosphere contributing to the success of education for international understanding, so that they become ideal places for the exercise of tolerance, respect for human rights, the practice of democracy and learning about the diversity and wealth of cultural identities".[4] The meeting also pledged "to pay special attention to improving curricula, the content of textbooks, and other educational materials including new technologies, with a view to educating caring and responsible citizens, open to other cultures, able to appreciate the value of freedom, respectful of human dignity and differences, and able to prevent conflicts or resolve them by non-violent means".

Universities and other institutions of higher education are in a unique position to help shape the knowledge base and attitudes of leaders and decision makers. These institutions have an important role to play in the transformation of societies towards a culture of peace and non-violence. Universities can provide both students and larger communities with the ability of critical reflection, skills of dialogue and insight in important global issues, and successful outcomes of non-violent approaches to disputes and dilemmas.

At the World Conference on Higher Education, organized by UNESCO in October 1998, it was noted that a culture of conflict was manifest also in the university curricula, in research for the military, and the dissemination of war rhetoric to students and faculty. By promoting the recent trend of establishing peace studies departments, some institutions of higher education now impart knowledge of skills in conflict transformation and resolution. UNESCO contributes to this development by establishing and supporting UNESCO Chairs on these topics and through the UNITWIN project,[5] thus encouraging closer cooperation between universities, especially south/south and north/south cooperation.

Universities could also assist in the realization of a culture of peace by bringing forward possible new strategies and practices that are adequate for the complexity of a growing number of intra-State confrontations. These confrontations involve many of the around 3,500 groups claiming some kind of autonomy from the nearly 200 recognized nation States. A major challenge in dealing with a complex world is to avoid simplistic and obsolete approaches and methods and, instead, bring forward adequate, creative and innovative strategies and practices. A huge intellectual effort and innovative scientific research are needed in this transitional period of redefining security at an international level and reorganizing it on a national level. Operationalizing international laws and norms is a very important part of this work. We might also have to start seriously reflecting on whether all

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[4] Declaration and Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy, 44th Session of the International Conference on Education, Geneva, October 1994.
[5] UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs is a network aimed at strengthening international cooperation between higher education institutions and programmes in favour of developing countries.

scientific personnel should take an oath, such as that taken by medical doctors, agreeing to an ethical code of conduct guaranteeing that their work would be in the service of humanity and its environment.

In its 1996 report to UNESCO, entitled *Learning the Treasure Within*, the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century outlined four pillars of education: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together; the greatest emphasis was placed on the challenge of learning to live together, which was seen as a "second literacy", as indispensable to a culture of peace as literacy itself.

Consequently, UNESCO, as the coordinating body of a vast commitment to providing quality education for all as a follow-up to the Dakar World Forum on Education, 2000, has decided to make this a top priority. For UNESCO, education, notably education for a culture of peace, is the single most effective way to bring about the changes being sought in values, attitudes and beliefs.

E. Gender perspective on a culture of peace

Equal rights and opportunities for women and men, and girls and boys, are essential for the full realization of the UNESCO vision of a culture of peace. UNESCO thereby underlines the close inter-linkage between gender equality, development and peace.

"There can be no lasting peace without development, and no sustainable development without full equality between women and men."

Statement on Women's Contribution to a Culture of Peace, UNESCO, 1995.

The United Nations, attentive to the concerns of women, has provided global forums to further equality between women and men. Since the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, the United Nations system has been committed to the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all its activities and policies.

"Women, who historically have developed care-taking functions, have an important role to play in transforming the culture of violence into a culture of peace. A culture of peace does more than accept or tolerate difference. It is based upon the appreciation and respect of the 'other', drawing strength from diversity. A culture of peace that strives to root out injustices, discrimination, poverty and violence, can only be achieved within the context of full equality between women and men."

UNESCO Agenda for Gender Equality, 1995.

Mainstreaming a gender perspective requires the compilation and analysis of statistical data showing the life conditions of women and men, how women and men are involved in society at different levels, what they each contribute, their particular needs and interests, and how women and men benefit or suffer from policies and projects, including how resources and power are distributed and used. A true gender perspective would ensure that the needs and interests of girls and boys, women and men would be catered to on equal

basis. The Beijing Conference further underlined the need to consider women as important agents of change and not only as victims.

The recent five-year assessment of the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action showed that despite some achievements, many obstacles to gender equality remain in place, whether due to religious fundamentalism or a lack of political will. Violations of women's human rights and a lack of equal opportunities for women and men are the most systematic injustices in the world to the extent that, in some cases, the only adequate description for it is "gender apartheid". Sixty per cent of the 113 million out-of-school children are girls, 70 per cent of the 875 million adult illiterates are women, 70 per cent of the 1.3 billion persons living below the poverty line are women, as are 70 per cent of refugees.

Strategic Objective E.4:
Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace

Actions to be taken
146. By governments, international and regional intergovernmental institutions and non-governmental organizations:

(a) *Promote peaceful conflict resolution and peace, reconciliation and tolerance through education, training, community actions and youth exchange programmes, in particular for young women;*

(b) *Encourage the further development of peace research, involving the participation of women, to examine the impact of armed conflict on women and children, and the nature and contribution of women's participation in national, regional and international peace movements; engage in research and identify innovative mechanisms for containing violence and for conflict resolution, for public dissemination and for use by women and men;*

(c) *Develop and disseminate research on the physical, psychological, economic and social effects of armed conflicts on women, particularly young women and girls, with a view to developing policies and programmes to address the consequences of conflicts; and*

(d) *Consider establishing educational programmes for girls and boys to foster a culture of peace, focusing on conflict resolution by non-violent means and the promotion of tolerance.*

Beijing Platform for Action, 1995.

Women make up more than half of the world's population and yet their intellectual and creative potential remains, to a large extent, underutilized. Women have been broadly excluded from formal decision-making. Yet, due to their experiences gained from gender-specific socialization and roles assigned throughout different life stages, demands related to their "mothering and caring functions", and collective experiences from family and community work, women often have different perspectives, alternative visions and new approaches to the traditionally male-dominated and male-defined power structures.

A growing number of countries are now moving towards democracy. Nonetheless, the majority of existing democracies are still "unfinished democracies". Only in 20 countries do women hold 25 per cent or more of parliamentary seats. One third of the countries of the world have between less than 5 per cent and no women in Parliament. Throughout world history there have been approximately 30 elected female heads of state or government. At present, only five countries have an elected woman head of state or government, for example, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and New Zealand. A few kingdoms have Constitutions, allowing women to become heads of state, thus permitting "queendoms". With only 1.5 per cent women as elected heads of state or government, 9 per cent women as ministers (and very few of them heading ministries such as foreign affairs, interior and finance) and 13 per cent women as parliamentarians, we are far from the 33.3 per cent that is considered a "critical mass" in order for any minority group to influence the majority.

Consequently, we do not as yet have irrefutable evidence that women can make a difference in such positions of power. However, there are some research data, such as a study by Scheie in 1995 of Norwegian women parliamentarians that indicated women had both different working methods and political agendas. According to the study, women worked more easily than men did across party boundaries, and values and issues traditionally linked to women (such as social welfare, health care, education, environment and international cooperation and solidarity) were higher on their political agendas.

A 1993 study by Bjereld on differences in attitudes towards foreign policy and defence issues between Swedish women and men showed considerable gender differences. Women were more positive than men about continuing foreign aid, receiving refugees and decreasing defence costs. Women were more negative towards Swedish participation in European defence cooperation and in peacekeeping operations, if it meant a risk of involvement in acts of warfare. The largest difference was found to exist over the issue of exports of war materiel, with many more women than men wanting a total ban on Swedish arms exports.

Other studies have also described foreign policy, and notably defence issues, as areas in which women and men are deeply divided in their attitudes and policy preferences. There is, however, a need for much more research in the field. Due to their socialization, more women are said to be pacifist and "dovish", subscribing less readily than men to the myth of the efficacy of violence, while more men tend to be "hawkish", advocating the use of force and violence in international conflicts. It is, however, vital not to stereotype this approach but, instead, to look into the continued strongly differentiated socialization of boys and girls from birth onwards. Most societies educate girls and boys differently, encouraging toughness and physical and technological competence in boys, and empathy, communication and more domestic type skills in girls. Such patterns of socialization are, however, changing, mostly in the direction of more equality and equity. But these processes are uneven, slow and varied.

Women are beginning to realize their strength is in numbers as they enter the public sphere more actively as citizens, workers and consumers. Women are engaged in both informal and formal economic activities in community development and, sometimes, politics. Generally, their incomes are lower than men's, their positions are at lower levels, and their job offers within a more limited range. But women combine this new empowerment with traditional attitudes of caring for the continuity of life and the sustainability of livelihoods. These attitudes and values are often reflected in artistic expressions: songs, tales and images. Women know from personal experience or information received that they are particularly

vulnerable when conflicts erupt in violence, both in their homes and when wars are waged. There are links between violence acted out in the home and the levels of violence in communities and societies at large.

> UNESCO *established the Women and a Culture of Peace Programme* (WCP) *in 1996 as a follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing. In addition to mainstreaming a gender perspective in the transdisciplinary project "Towards a Culture of Peace", the programme priorities are:*
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> - *Supporting women's initiatives for peace;*
> - *Empowering women for democratic participation in political processes to increase their capacity especially in economic and security issues;*
> - *Contributing to gender-sensitive socialization and training for non-violence and egalitarian partnerships, with a special focus on boys and young men.*

Military training for violent action has, until recently, not included women. A small percentage of women have now joined the military, and in a few countries some women have participated directly in wars of liberation, violent revolutions etc. Many more participate, however, in non-violent resistance and peace actions. Women's actions during wars are generally geared towards survival, maintenance and provisioning, but also intelligence and communication. Since women's direct access to political decision-making is restricted, and because few women are elected or appointed to positions where decisions on war or peace are passed, women remain marginal to decisions on security, war and peace.

> *Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention of conflicts and in peace-building, and stressing the importance of the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution...urges Member States to ensure increased implementation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts.*
>
> *Security Council Resolution 1325, 31 October 2000.*

To pursue their interests, express opinions and propose alternatives, women typically have to resort to "extra-parliamentary activities": demonstrations, campaigns, organizing movements, coalitions, secretariats, centres for research as well as relief, and networking within and beyond national borders or regions. Work by women to provide alternatives to violence and wars is most often located in civil society and often relates to daily life experiences.

The United Nations system, with strong encouragement from some women's organizations, passed an unprecedented United Nations resolution on women, peace and security in the Security Council on 31 October 2000. That resolution was an important step towards a gender perspective on security issues, which might lead to stronger emphasis on human security in the future.

F. Women's peace initiatives

Women's peace initiatives often stem from frustration and anger over decisions that they have not been in a position to influence, while they too have to suffer the consequences. Sometimes, these women activists establish new roles as true political actors, as in the highly effective campaign against landmines; sometimes, they enact traditional roles as mothers and grandmothers in public arenas. Women's actions can be spontaneous or decade-long protests that are concerned with the disappearance or loss of relatives, the fate of conscripted sons and husbands, or the futures of grandchildren compelled to live under the "nuclear umbrellas" of military strategies, or under misguided international sanctions.

Women's actions for peace are manifold and provide a huge encouragement. Some excellent examples are:

- Colombian women refusing to give birth as long as violence prevails, inspired by Lysistra, the mythological figure from ancient Greece. (According to Aristophanes, she managed to stop the war between Athens and Sparta by getting all the women to refuse to make love until their men stopped fighting.)

- Mothers of Russian soldiers refusing to send their sons to war (Tchetchenia) and rejecting the hero-status medal that could never be a substitute for a living son.

- Liberian women initiating a broad disarmament process.

- South African women insisting on gender equality in the Parliament.

- The Mothers of the Plaza del Mayo, in Buenos Aires, demonstrating for human rights and justice. (They received the UNESCO Peace Education Prize in 1999.)

- The "Rwandan Pro Femmes Twese Hamwe", an umbrella organization of 33 women's non-governmental organizations. (They were awarded the UNESCO prize for Tolerance and Non-violence in 1996 for their construction of peace villages that adopt orphan Hutu and Tutsi children. They also launched efforts to educate young boys who were released from prison, and they are recognized for their advocacy for reform of the inheritance laws to give women the right to inherit land.)

- Buenos Tiempos Mujer Culture of Peace radio programmes in El Salvador. (Former opposing parties working together on building a gender-sensitive culture of peace based on the development of self-esteem, dialogue and the overcoming of violence, both in the family and in society.)

Women's activism often draws on their traditional roles and skills, their expressive and artistic skills, and their conflict management practices. In some cases, they have even resorted to a revival of traditional ritual to prevent or overcome crises. In this sense, they are building culture of peace processes from below – from where the women are, at present.

Many women, however, shy away from activism just as they shy away from open conflicts for reasons of subordination or comfort. The non-violent character of such activism may, however, overcome their reluctance and fears and attract more women. One major challenge arises in the context of formal democracies. How can women activists communicate with elected representatives, particularly women members of councils, parliament and government? Again the non-violent character of peace activism facilitates contact and dialogue. Transparency creates shared information flows, and frequency of interaction creates a shared understanding of policy alternatives, provided there is a will to

confront the real problems rather than just confronting each other. Most probably, some women activists will gradually be recruited into formal political positions; for them, even more than for their male colleagues, their political futures will depend on their dialogue with women constituencies. Of course, female and male voters elect both male and female representatives, and their dialogues should not be gender segregated. The challenges to women politicians who enter policy areas that are extremely male-dominated lie, however, in not giving up women's perspectives.

Women's organizations are the most active supporters of the culture of peace, often showing "active disgust for war" to use the terminology of the first woman Nobel Prize Winner, Bertha von Suttner, in her 1905 book, entitled *Down with the Weapons*. Some individual women are shining examples of courage and innovative thinking, such as von Suttner, who managed to convince her friend Alfred Nobel to establish a Peace Prize in addition to the scientific prizes, and Eleanor Roosevelt, the "mother" of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, who is also remembered for her words "nobody won the last war, nobody will win the next".

> *Ten women have received the Nobel Peace Prize since it was established in 1901: Berta von Suttner (Austria), 1905; Jane Adams (United States), 1931, shared with Nicholas Murray Butler; Emily Greene Balch (United States), 1946, shared with John R. Mott; Mairhead Corrigan and Betty Williams (Ireland), 1976; Mother Theresa (India), 1979; Alva Myrdal (Sweden), 1982, shared with Garcia Robles; Aung San Sui Kyi (Myanmar), 1991; Rogoberta Menchu Tum (Guatemala), 1992; and Jody Williams (United States), 1997, shared with the International Organization against Landmines.*

In a globalized and open world, conflicts abound. They are necessary for human development. But for human security it is necessary that they are acted out, managed and settled without resorting to violence. The transition to a culture of peace is both urgent and never-ending. To gain ground, such a transition must respond to women's concerns and interests, and involve them as equals.

G. Male roles and masculinities

In the context of the Culture of Peace Project, UNESCO is exploring the social, cultural and economic conditions and factors that produce violence, particularly among men, and the political and practical strategies for reducing this violence. Socializing boys in ways that emphasize such qualities as emotional response, caring and communication skills are vital to a culture of peace. In 1997, UNESCO organized an expert group meeting on Male Roles and Masculinities in the perspective of a Culture of Peace. The report of the meeting emphasized that a culture of peace could only be established through more egalitarian, partnership-oriented male roles that replaced stereotyped views of masculinity based on dominance, force and aggressiveness. It also reflected the understanding that rigid and stereotyped gender roles prevented individuals from realizing their full potential, and that they run counter to the principle of participatory democracy. It was acknowledged that while women's roles and status had been broadly debated over the past few decades, men had been seen as the standard human being – the norm – and men's roles and positions had hardly been discussed, much less questioned.

Statistics (however incomplete) reveal that men (often the young) are responsible for almost 90 per cent of all physical violence; it must, however, be emphasized that most men are not violent.

> *"It is scientifically incorrect to say that war or any other violent behaviour is genetically programmed into our human nature."*
>
> Sevilla Statement on Violence, UNESCO, 1989.

It has been argued that men, in general, through their upbringing, feel entitled to dominant positions in the family, work and political life, and react negatively when that entitlement is not fulfilled. These reactions might lead to domestic violence, violence in schools or the street, adherence to extremist gangs and sects, or wanting to join institutions that may use force, such as the police and the military. Some groups of men are becoming a risk factor, not only to themselves, but also to society at large, notably the poorly educated, the unemployed, demobilized soldiers and groups linked to authoritarian power structures.

It is also worth noting that there appears to be a trend towards a general "masculinization" of societies, and not least the emergence of militarized masculinities in communities under threat. This masculinization has, in some societies, also reached young girls who have started using violent methods in their search for equality and recognition.

Special emphasis must be given to awareness raising and training in addressing uncertainties, conflicts, frustrations and feelings of disempowerment in order to prevent recourse to violent behaviour. State-supported parental leave for fathers, establishment and/or strengthening of young men's anti-violence networks, and training in non-violent conflict transformation and resolution at different levels of the school system are among the many urgent needs in the building of a post-patriarchal society for the new millennium.

H. Partnerships, networks and commitments

Mobilizing traditional and new partners in a process towards a culture of peace is vital to UNESCO's catalyst role in the transdisciplinary project "Towards a Culture of Peace" that was established in 1994. Particular focus and incentives are given to networking with and between UNESCO National Commissions, educators and schools, researchers, media professionals, artists, politicians (notably parliamentarians and mayors), armed forces, religious groups, Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, and women and youth groups. Modern means of communication, especially new information technologies, also provide important networking opportunities among some women peace activists by giving access to information, as well as strengthening early warning systems and providing links of solidarity. Many voluntary groups that are working for sustainable development, human rights, social justice, non-violence and cultural pluralism, relate to the culture of peace vision in order to get a more global perspective on their own work, while also seeking inspiration, information and exchange of experiences. The culture of peace project helps strengthen and make visible all these partners that have a vast democratic potential.

The challenge of transforming a culture of peace from a utopian vision to reality is so broad and far-reaching that it can only be met when it becomes a priority of the entire United

Nations system, governments and societies at large. This process of transforming societies away from expressions of war and violence towards a culture of peace and non-violence is already under way. This interest is reflected in the wide range of requests that UNESCO receives, notably from war-torn societies, non-governmental organizations and the world intellectual community. However, the scope must be broadened to include the world's business community, including multinational companies and corporations, as well as trade unions.

A major challenge before us is to assume a more global identity that does not necessarily replace, but rather builds upon, other multiple identities such as family, community, ethnicity, nationality, profession, sex and age. Awareness of global, multiple identities will underline the growing interdependence among peoples and countries. Already, actions in one part of the world most often have worldwide implications, with environmental devastation being a powerful and scaring example of how global common goods are mismanaged. Some 500 years ago, Leonardo Da Vinci stated that "we are all in the same boat at peril of sinking". It is this universal human identity as citizens of the world that could provide the strongest foundation for the culture of peace, as well as an approach to the globalization process that responds to the fundamental interests of most people – to live in a peaceful society, free from fear and want.

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Role and status of women in Asia and the Pacific in building peace

Thelma Kay
Chief, Women in Development Section
Social Development Division
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Countries in the Asian and Pacific region have benefited greatly from the regional cooperation and the relative peace and stability that have fostered an environment for economic growth and development. In a survey conducted by ESCAP in 1996, only five countries in the region indicated that they had undertaken any activities in the critical area of concern of "Women in Armed Conflict". However, in recent years, the perpetuation or intensification of ongoing conflicts and the eruption of new tensions in several countries of the region have demonstrated that underlying inherent social instabilities threaten the region's stability. The region has recognized this changing reality. In the Central Asian Republics, six out of eight countries have included women and armed conflict in their national plans of action. In an Expert Group Meeting on Regional Implementation of the Outcome of Women 2000, organized by ESCAP shortly before the Asian Women for a Culture of Peace Conference to strategize on regional implementation of the outcome of the global review of the Beijing Platform for Action, peace was identified as one of the priority concerns of the region.

In this region, peace has been largely seen within the context of ending armed conflict and negotiating post conflict treaties. However, with events in recent years, it is evident that this is a critical and pivotal time for countries in the region to strategize on the prevention of further conflicts and on the steps that need to be taken to achieve and maintain peace. The breakup of the former Soviet Union, which brought to an end both the socialist safety networks and the Cold War, and the recent economic crisis in Asia have been contributing factors to the incipient destabilization of the region. The conflicts in the region are primarily internal struggles couched in various terms such as independence movements and ethnic divisions, but which are fundamentally based on the reality of relative deprivation, human rights violations and competition for goods, land and other resources.

What is explosive is the inequality that results when power and resources are unequally distributed between groups that are also differentiated in other ways (race, religion or language), particularly when the rights of one group are subordinated in favour of another. Social despair, the persistent disparity and deprivation resulting from failed or limited human development, provides fertile ground for violence, especially when combined with violations of human rights and governance that is not transparent, accountable and participatory. Effective prevention therefore entails addressing the structural faults that predispose a society to conflict.

Long-term conflict prevention should therefore focus on balanced economic development and the alleviation of poverty, while ensuring that benefits are shared equally among all communities and members of society. The widely promoted focus on territorial security through armaments needs to be changed to a focus on human security (i.e., freedom from want and freedom from fear) and sustainable development. Very importantly, and as emphasized by the ESCAP Expert Group Meeting on Regional Implementation of the

Outcome of Women 2000, faulty development strategies can sow the seeds for future conflict, discord and tension, giving rise to civil unrest and armed conflict.

A critical and usually undervalued component of sustainable development and long-term human security is the empowerment of women and the improvement of their overall status in the family, the community and the workplace, and their full involvement in the planning, implementation and assessment of development policies and programmes. Because of their role in the family, community and society, women are in an excellent position to act as agents of human development and lasting peace, a potential that has been greatly undervalued. It is therefore necessary to address gender inequalities as well as the significant role women can play in ensuring the degree to which development policies benefit all segments of society equally while not exacerbating existing disparities. Gender inequality holds back the growth of individuals, the development of countries and the evolution of societies, to the disadvantage of both women and men. The facts of gender inequality, and the restrictions placed on women's choices, opportunities and participation, have direct and often malign consequences for women's health and education as well as their social and economic participation.

What, then, is the existing status of gender equality in the ESCAP region? At the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting organized by ESCAP in October 1999 to review regional implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, many countries reported significant progress as well as major obstacles. Progress had been achieved, particularly in literacy, health, economic participation, amendments to discriminatory law, decision-making at the local level, strengthening of gender focal points, and the increasing role of civil society. However, women in poverty continued to suffer economic and social exclusion. The region's economic crisis affected the employment and social conditions of women. The meeting noted that globalization had intensified and that while its positive impact had expanded opportunities for women, its negative impact had increased the vulnerability of women in Asia and small island developing States in the region. The proportion of women in decision-making stood at around a low 14 per cent. Women and children were increasingly becoming victims of problems such as trafficking, sexual exploitation and irregular migration. Women continued to suffer from violence, including from localized armed conflict, with increasing insecurity to their well-being.

It is clear that security from conflict and freedom from fear necessitates that women and men have security in their homes, communities, schools, workplaces and countries. A recent World Bank publication on the integration of gender into poverty reduction strategies pointed out that the lack of security and resulting vulnerability were an integral part of the experience of poverty. It also showed that gender-related security risks included: (a) those based on household relations due to changes in structure that eroded the household as a social unit; (b) the consequences of community and domestic violence and conflict; (c) physical and cultural isolation and marginalization; (d) ambiguity in legal status and rights; impact of environmental degradation; and (e) precarious access to water.

Conflict prevention and the building of peace therefore require emphasis on development, the alleviation of poverty and despair, and the strengthening of mechanisms to ensure the protection and promotion of human rights and equality along gender, class and ethnic lines. In this context, the critical role of women in development efforts and peace building cannot be overestimated. We therefore need to challenge ourselves to find ways to

encourage, strengthen, develop and highlight the role of women in development and peace, particularly in the critical areas identified for this present conference.

Some significant efforts have been made in the region to encourage women's contributions to fostering a culture of peace, and these should be highlighted. These efforts have been focused primarily in the area of peacekeeping, and the inclusion and contribution of women's groups in discussions regarding the development of strategies for the prevention of conflicts and the amelioration of the root causes of internal and regional conflicts. Women's perspectives have been solicited, particularly those instrumental in post-conflict rebuilding of societies and communities, and in calling for an end to the gender-based brutality and abuse that is becoming increasingly prevalent during times of armed conflict.

Women's peace activism has been largely confined to grassroots and civic organizing, and they often face an uphill struggle in reaching official political structures, partly because they lack the resources for, or experience in, developing effective strategies for engagement. Political power usually rests firmly in the hands of an exclusive, predominantly male elite that considers the concerns and actions of women, including community development projects, as being separate from the formal political processes. Women have therefore devised creative and effective strategies for advocating for peace and development and for participating in peace-making processes. They have striven to articulate peace in terms of meeting basic human security needs, health, food and water, education, a clean environment, housing and childcare – a vision based on the issues and concerns that arise in their daily life experiences.

Women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and advocacy groups have made a particularly significant contribution in countries where internal violence has erupted, not only in calling for a cessation of the hostilities and condemning violence, but also in working to heal the rifts that have developed and in rebuilding shattered communities. Women's activism is fostered in some places by the more general women's movement for women's rights and gender equality. In other cases, it is simultaneously paving the way for women's involvement in official peace negotiations and nurturing women's activism in a range of other development issues. Strong women's civil society organizations cultivate skills and broaden opportunities for women to gain entry into political and peace processes, as well as articulate new social agendas that link peace to critical development issues and use gender to bridge deep political, ethnic and religious divides. Women's civil society organizations are also critical to the development and realization of women's full capacity for leadership.

In this region, there are many examples of efforts by women to foster the peace process through building bridges and promoting development. Among them are:

- Sri Lanka, where several women's groups have emerged that are focusing on building peace and democracy at the community level, especially in the Tamil-dominated areas of the north and east.

- North-eastern India, where women's groups have continued to express their desire for peace and condemn the violence accompanying the ethnic conflicts in the region. The Naga Mother's Association, one of the most prominent among such groups, has played a prominent role in conflict resolution in the area.

- Cambodia, where women have created a vibrant civil society movement with the assistance of international organizations, and subsequently have built a

comprehensive new programme for women's development. The first Cambodian women's NGO, Khemara, was founded in 1991 and focused on elections without violence, which was a key issue in Cambodia's development at the time.

Another area where women have shown leadership in promoting human security is in advocating for environmental and land security by calling for complete bans on land mines and nuclear testing. Women have played a critical role in Cambodia, where landmines cover approximately 36,000 km^2 and maim an estimated 300 people a month. In addition to the loss and pain suffered, landmines exact an additional devastating cost in the loss of arable land and the debilitating psychological trauma inflicted on victims. Cambodian women have made their voices heard on this issue, joining with monks, nuns, war veterans and other groups in calling for a complete ban on mines. On 1 March 1999, the Ottawa Treaty, formally known as the Convention on the Prohibition on the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, came into force.

Women's NGOs and advocacy groups in the Pacific are also making their voices heard in calling for a complete ban on the testing of nuclear weapons, the signing of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the Biodiversity Convention, and the destruction of any remaining nuclear stockpiles. They advocate with a clear understanding of the detrimental effects of continued nuclear dumping on their extremely fragile island ecosystem and environment, and the consequences of environmental degradation for their communities. Concern has also been expressed that valuable resources are being wasted instead of being directed towards badly needed development programmes that will lead to stability and peace.

International consensus has already been reached on the need to include women in all aspects of decision-making related to peace. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted by 189 countries, promotes women's equal participation at all stages of the peace process, including the level of decision-making. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, ratified to date by over two thirds of the countries in the ESCAP region, calls for using quotas and reservations to increase the number of women at all levels of political decision-making.

In the ESCAP region, the latest available data show that in 40 countries between 1993 and 1999, the proportion of women in national legislatures increased in 70 per cent of the countries, decreased in 20 per cent and remained the same in the other 10 per cent. A significant increase was seen in Australia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia and Viet Nam; no significant decrease was seen in any country. Many countries have expressed a clear intention and commitment to the encouragement and fostering of greater participation by women, and some have instituted actual mandates and goals to be attained. However, overall, women continue to be a minority in every country in the region. This situation has to be redressed as women need to be involved in the decision-making process. Women must be in positions to shape the direction of important decisions, and to be where critical decisions are taken, particularly in the allocation of scarce resources.

One of the most significant barriers to women's contributions to peace efforts remains the relative and absolute absence of women at decision-making levels with regard to conflict, both at the pre-conflict stage and during hostilities, as well as during peace-keeping negotiations and as part of peace-building and reconstruction missions. The representation and participation of women remains extremely low, especially when compared to the disparate impact of armed conflict on women and the post-conflict role women play in

rebuilding families, communities and societies. Peacekeeping and national security remains, by and large, the domain of men, who dominate most decision-making levels. This is primarily due to traditional concepts of women's roles in society, a lack of support and encouragement for the full participation of women and a lack of adequate training to strengthen women's capacity to take on leadership roles.

Cambodia is the only country in the ESCAP region that has had a woman in defence affairs at the ministerial level. In the Philippines, a woman has headed the Office of the Presidential Advisor on the Peace Process (OPAPP), an advisory body set up to assist with coordinating the peace negotiations with rebel groups. As of 1988, women had been included in two of the peace panels. The Government of the Philippines has expressed its commitment to appointing more women to serve on the peace panels and negotiations. Despite this progress, women still remain at the periphery of peace negotiations and inadequately represented at decision-making levels. To date, no women from the ESCAP region have headed their countries' delegations to the Security Council of the United Nations.

Much needs to be done in order to respond to the call made by the Security Council, in its resolution of October 2000 on the role of women in the peace process, to ensure "increased participation of women at the decision-making level....", and to the call to action made at Women 2000 to "encourage the full participation of women in all levels of decision-making in conflict resolution, peace-keeping, peace-making and preventive diplomacy".

It is crucial to recognize the nexus between development of the role and status of women in society and in public life as well as the critical contribution of women towards achieving peace and addressing the critical issues of human security and the development of their communities and their countries. Women's roles need to be highlighted and their full and meaningful participation not only encouraged but actively solicited and incorporated at the highest decision-making levels, in peace negotiations and conflict resolutions, at the local, national, regional and international levels.

Therefore, the participants at this important Asian Women for a Culture of Peace Conference must, with their collective wisdom and experience, provide concrete steps for women to address the following issues:

- The need to play a role in shaping the direction of the development process, particularly in a rapidly globalizing world;

- Finding a voice in the decision-making process;

- Ensuring accountability for the use of resources;

- Drawing up an action agenda that will focus on development as a critical means of conflict prevention and a cornerstone for the building of peace.

In conclusion, it is important to reiterate that peace efforts should be linked to development strategies and policies. However, we must ensure that development policies do not lead to future discord and conflict; instead, women and men together must build an inclusive and peaceful society.

V. SUMMARIES OF PRESENTATIONS[*]

Ms Deena Hug
(Bangladesh)

Bangladesh had adopted a non-aligned foreign policy based upon the principles of peaceful co-existence and friendship towards all. Commitment to peace enabled the country to mobilize and concentrate its efforts and resources on combating poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy and unemployment. The government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had brought about an end to decades of conflict by the signing of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord in 1997 and the Ganges Water Sharing Treaty with India in 1996. Further, the Prime Minister had participated in the Hague Appeal for Peace Conference in 1999, and had signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Test Ban Treaty and the Anti-Personnel Land Mines Treaty, attesting to her personal commitment to peace and her country's constructive role in the agenda for peace. Her political courage and contribution to peace was recognized in 1998 with the UNESCO Peace Prize. Bangladesh also took the initiative in promoting the concept of a culture of peace in the United Nations. This action led to the adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action for a Culture of Peace at the United Nations General Assembly in 1999, which provided a clear set of guidelines for action.

Ms T. N. Gurung
(Bhutan)

Proclaiming the happiness of the people to be the ultimate purpose of the government, His Majesty the King of Bhutan instituted "Gross National Happiness" to guide concerted policies and activities of the government in realizing the goals of ensuring the emotional well being of the people, preserving Bhutanese culture and preserving the natural environment. Happiness was given precedence over economic prosperity. Thus inspired, the people of Bhutan were pursuing the goals of "Gross National Happiness" as they understood and internalised the philosophy. For example, the pristine natural environment of Bhutan was a testimony of the effectiveness of the development policies and the commitment of the people to ecological ethics. Recognizing that violence and conflicts were symptoms of certain underlying conditions, measures at the fundamental level such as altering institutions were stated to be necessary in order to reduce intolerance, hypocrisy, racism and greed. Addressing the underlying conditions was also necessary to transform society towards a culture of peace, with which people share happiness without exploiting the population or the environment. The presenter proposed to the Conference that the development philosophy of "Gross National Happiness" be taken as especially relevant to a new way of guiding such a transformation of societies.

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[*] Participants made presentations on the situations in respective countries in their personal capacity. The summaries of the presentations for this publication were done by the organizers based on the texts submitted to the Viet Nam National Commission for UNESCO.

Ms Mu Sochua
(Cambodia)

The legacy of war continued to have an impact on the lives of Cambodians, especially women. As a direct result of military conscription, death and disability among men, women had to take on increasing economic responsibilities in addition to their family caregiver role, although most were engaged in unskilled and low-paying positions. Even among those who had proven their entrepreneurial abilities, their economic vulnerability increased as the poverty situations worsened. Prolonged conflict also caused trauma and destroyed family support systems, contributing to increased violence against women. Many women had been driven to prostitution, and an estimated 30,000 women had been trafficked outside the country. With the health-care delivery system torn down by war, Cambodia now faced the highest rate of HIV/AIDS infection in South-East Asia and the highest maternal mortality ratio in Asia.

Despite the realities of a post-conflict society, women in Cambodia had begun to transform themselves from victims to survivors, nation builders and peace promoters. The Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) was given a mandate in 1996 as the national machinery to promote the status and role of women in Cambodia. MWVA, working with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), had placed top priority on the elimination of gender-based violence, women's participation in politics and governance, and promotion of a more positive portrayal of women.

Examples of best practices were presented, including: KHEMARA, a community development NGO for the economic empowerment of women and peace; the Women's Media Centre, which was dedicated to promoting the status of women through the media; the Project Against Domestic Violence and the Cambodian Women's Crisis Centre, which were to undertake research and monitoring, and assist victims of gender-based violence; and Gender and Development-Cambodia, which was a network of women-oriented NGOs.

Ms Duan Gohui
(China)

The presenter from China, the host country of the Fourth World Conference on Women that produced the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, reiterated that women could achieve development only in a peaceful environment, and that women could and should play a role in maintaining peace. She also pointed out that violence against women would obstruct the achievement of equality, development and peace. Nonetheless, cases of family violence were on the rise, and criminal activities against women and children existed to a considerable degree. China revised the Criminal Procedure Law and the Criminal Law in 1996 and 1997, respectively, in order to fight more effectively against the criminal activities of abducting women and children, and forcing women into prostitution. The All China Women's Federation had endeavoured to eliminate family violence in many ways, including a programme called "Civilized Family", which was aimed at educating people about the key issues involved in ensuring a healthy, peaceful and stable family relationship, a harmonious neighbourhood and preserving the environment. The Federation was coordinating with the "Half the Sky" television programme in breaking down gender stereotypes and promoting positive images of women.

Ms Margaret Alva
(India)

The people in the Indian subcontinent were still being subjected to the divisions and problems left behind by the colonial rulers, and had to witness wars, distrust and tension. Efforts had been made to ease tension, including the bus journey by the Indian Prime Minister to extend the hand of friendship to the Pakistan leadership, a journey that was followed by women's bus trips between the two countries. Despite the militaristic incidents that halted the friendship trip, contacts between the peoples of the two nations, led by women, were growing. Indian women had taken many steps along the path of peace, such as the "Women's Initiative for Peace in South Asia", the "Fellowship of Reconciliation", the anti-nuclear movement with the slogan of "Goli Nahin, Boli" (No bullets but words), youth exchange programmes and the NGO-SAARC forum.

Actions taken personally by the presenter from India included founding the World Women Parliamentarians for Peace, which had pioneered the dialogue between the United States of America and the former Soviet Union. Women, who had been forced to pay the price of war without being given a say, should demand an end to gender bias and an end to war. Funds released from military build-up should enrich human development priorities such as food, water, sanitation, medicine, schools and housing. Women should demand an end to conscription, as well as launch movements against violence, the popularization of toys of violence and destruction, and the glorification of violence in the media, and violence in the family.

Ms Wati Hermawati
(Indonesia)

Indonesia was characterized by its great diversity, comprising about 300 ethnic groups and some 250 languages. The social and cultural heritage was viewed as one of the positive assets of Indonesia, although it was also recognized through the country's 55-year history that the diversity could be a liability. The regional economic crisis that started in 1997 had made it difficult to maintain peace and security. Tension and hostility due to the political situation resulting from the economic crisis had precluded people from learning how to live in peace. Riots and other forms of violence continued to occur throughout Indonesian society. Although the country had passed through the worst of the situation in May 1998, the impacts of the crisis were still being felt even at the end of 2000. Both the maternal mortality ratio and infant mortality ratio remained high, while 30 per cent of the population was still living in poverty. Women were suffering more in the current situation. For example, the majority of students who dropped out of school during the crisis were girls.

The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia granted all citizens equality, and the State Ministry of the Empowerment of Women had been established to enhance the role and full participation of women in the development process. Despite a clear legal basis for equality, however, many constraints were still observed, including some constraints created by women themselves. Elevating women's access to education and such resources as information, technology and funding should make them more visible, enabling them to participate in community empowerment for poverty alleviation and enhancement of quality of life. The Science and Technology for Rural Development Programmes of the Indonesian Institute of Sciences had proved that science and technology could benefit women in terms of their human development in addition to income generation. Development should be people-oriented, and economically and environmentally sustainable. Self-development through science and technology would bring women internal peace, enabling them to become peacekeepers in their families, communities and the nation.

Ms Elahe Koolaee
(Islamic Republic of Iran)

Despite its own suffering from years of war, the Islamic Republic of Iran had provided protection and support for a growing number of refugee men, women and children. As of 2000, the country was the host to 3 million refugees. The Islamic Republic of Iran had tried to expand more holistic support for the displaced, including those who had suffered all forms of abuse, to ensure equal access to adequate nutrition, clean water, sanitation, shelter, education, and social and health services. There was wide recognition of the need to integrate a gender perspective into the planning and implementation of humanitarian assistance, with an increasing number of NGOs playing important roles in addressing the needs of refugees and displaced women and girls. An increase in international assistance was called for to assist the growing number of refugees and internally displaced persons. Steps needed to be taken at the international level to stop the abuse of women and end the impunity of those committing crimes against women in situations of armed conflict and the catastrophic process in occupied territories.

Education was considered to be the basic instrument for promoting the culture of peace. In Islam, education was considered very important regardless of sex. The Islamic Republic of Iran had witnessed a rapid increase in the number of female students in higher level education. In 2000, more than 60 per cent of new university students comprised women, which would influence the process of human development in the near future. Strengthening democratic institutions and procedures was among the most important goals of the reform programme, which could consolidate basic infrastructures to attain the peaceful settlement of conflicts. Dialogue should be encouraged and conflicts should be solved in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation. Many Ministries of War had been renamed Ministries of Defence, but they should be further developed into Ministries of Peace. Legislative measures and actions were needed to eliminate violence against women and stop the use of new information and communication technologies for trafficking in women and children.

Ms Nagako Sugimori
(Japan)

Peace was inextricably linked to equality between men and women as well as development. Since 1995, Japan had taken positive actions towards building a gender-equal society as a fulfilment of the commitment made at the Fourth World Conference on Women. A Basic Law for a Gender Equal Society was enacted in 1999, to be followed by a new national plan of action for gender equality beyond 2001. The Council for Gender Equality was being established in the Cabinet Office, which would, among other things, monitor the implementation of measures taken by the government and undertake research on the impacts of those measures on the formation of a gender-equal society. In July 2000, the Council submitted a report to the Prime Minister that identified violence against women as a serious problem and called for immediate action. Japan continued to promote international cooperation with governmental agencies and non-governmental activities for gender equality and empowerment of women, including funding through the UNDP-Japan Women in Development Fund and the UNIFEM Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women.

The presenter from Japan was head of the Japan Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), which was the oldest women's organization for peace. Since its establishment at the International Conference on Women, held at The Hague in 1915 to protest the war in Europe, WILPF had been actively developing peace education and research as well as opposing all forms of militarism. WILPF Japan had conducted the "Peace Caravan 2000" that started from Hiroshima, with the aim of developing a peace network among women throughout Japan and Asia.

Ms Jalmagambetova Svetlana
(Kazakhstan)

A National Commission on Family and Women's Affairs had been established with the mandate to strengthen and empower gender mainstreaming in programming and monitoring. The Commission, acting as the national institutional catalyst, had facilitated multisectoral dialogues to find solutions for women's problems and had developed the National Action Plan on the Improvement of the Status of Women in Kazakhstan. United Nations agencies in Kazakhstan, coordinated by the Gender in Development Bureau in UNDP, had assisted in the formulation and implementation of the National Action Plan, especially in the four fundamental areas of political participation, combating violence against women, economic advancement and health.

Although the Constitution of the Republic conferred equal rights on men and women, the latter were under-represented at the decision-making level. To achieve gender balance, all national legislation was under review and a collection of statistics, entitled Women and Men of Kazakhstan, had been published that showed the gender situation in the country. More than 100 women's NGOs were actively promoting women's political participation, and the first women's party, the Political Alliance of Women's Organizations, had been registered in 1999.

The National Commission had successfully raised political and public awareness about violence against women and, with the help from mass media, had disseminated information programmes aimed at preventing such violence. The government had sponsored a crisis centre shelter for women victims of violence and was developing a statute on domestic violence. On economic empowerment, the government had implemented a micro-credit scheme, two third of the beneficiaries of which were women. The National Commission was also supporting women entrepreneurs involved in production with a special credit line. Women's health was a problematic sphere. Two thirds of women in the country suffered from anaemia and a significant increase in cancer cases had been observed, attributable to some degree to nuclear testing in the past. The government was taking countermeasures although resources were limited in the current transition period.

Ms Khemphet Pholsena
(Lao People's Democratic Republic)

The war in the past had victimized the population of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and subsequently adversely affected their lives for decades. The government was continuing to provide assistance to war victims and deal with unexploded ordnance, while endeavouring to create a peaceful environment, which was crucial to the development of prosperity. The Lao Women's Union (LWU) was established in 1955 as the Association of Lao Patriotic Women with the aim of uniting Lao women of all ethnic groups and all walks of life for the sake of national liberation. At the founding of the Lao People's Democratic Republic in 1975, the Association was renamed the Lao Women's Union, with a new mandate to ensure equal rights and capacity-building for women of all ethnicities as well as promote their role and status in society.

In 1999, the government adopted a national development and population policy, with an aim of promoting the status and roles of Lao women in the development process. A five-year basic education project for girls (1999-2005) was launched with a long-term goal of elevating women's roles in the mainstream of development and a short-term objective of expanding access to primary education for girls in ethnic minority areas. LWU had been cooperating with the international community and NGOs in implementing projects to improve the quality of life for women, especially in rural areas. Those projects had such goals as (a) poverty alleviation through capacity- and skills-building, micro-credit and other alternative approaches to finance, (b) strengthening the capacity of women's organizations at the local and village levels, and (c) the eradication of illiteracy and promotion of health, including prevention and care of HIV/AIDS victims.

Monitoring by LWU of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action had found positive changes, such as growing participation of women in the administrative and management sectors, wider access to financial resources, and increased representation in leadership positions. For example, the number of female parliamentarians had increased from 4 per cent in 1992 to 21.2 per cent in 2000, although monitoring also found significant hindrance remained to gender equality.

Ms Fatima Hamid Don
(Malaysia)

Malaysians had enjoyed decades of peaceful conditions necessary for sustainable development and they hoped to continue doing so. However, war and violence were real in the minds of the young, owing to the media and computer games. Children were observed to believe that war was their destiny and that the possession of destructive weapons would make them more powerful, even though Malaysians valued peace and political stability. In Malaysia, people strove to foster harmony among the various ethnic constituents of the multi-ethnic population and the government had implemented components of the curriculum for national unity through the education system. The latest of such national unity measures was the "Vision Schools" project. Participating schools shared common facilities and co-curricular activities, aimed at allowing students of various ethnic communities in different schools to interact and play together, so that they developed a common identity as Malaysians.

Malaysia had adopted a National Policy on Women in 1989 and a Plan of Action for Women's Advancement in 1997. The National Council for Women's Organizations had successfully campaigned to pass new legislation on domestic violence, rape and sexual assault on women. More Malaysian women had been made aware of their legal rights as a result of a nationwide programme on legal literacy and CEDAW. Malaysian women also played roles as volunteers and initiators of programmes in various organizations for providing voluntary services internationally, such as Yayasan Salam (Peace Foundation) and the Malaysian Sociological Research Institute, in order to rehabilitate conflict devastated communities.

The Malaysian Chapter of the Pan-Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association (PPSEAWA) had held an essay-writing competition on the theme "Igniting the Power of Peace", which had attracted more than 800 entries, especially from young people below the age of 17 years. The PPSEAWA International Conference in Cook Islands appealed for peace to be given priority in all environment forums and vice versa, given that efforts to preserve the environment could be nullified by instant destruction by wars.

Ms Husna Razee and Ms Aishath Velezine
(Maldives)

The Maldives comprised 1,200 small islands scattered over a territorial area of 115,300 km^2, where 269,010 persons resided at the end of 2000, with almost 45 per cent of the population aged below 15 years. Maldives was a youthful and peaceful nation. However, the people were fully aware that in the face of globalization and ensuing changes, the country would not remain insulated from violent external realities without positive efforts to ensure peace remained as a way of life based on dialogue and understanding, tolerance and forgiveness, and freedom and democracy. Issues that could disrupt the peaceful Maldivian life should not be ignored, such as violence against women, conflicts between wards, and intolerance.

Although there were no empirical data to show the extent of violence against women, the problem remained an issue. Inter-ward rivalry existed in some islands to an unhealthy extent. In small island communities, physical violence would have shocking repercussions. There was also resistance on some islands to accepting people who had been relocated from other islands. Intolerance of differences was notable, especially in areas such as Male, the nation's capital, which had a high population density that included a large expatriate population of mostly non-skilled expatriate workers. Tolerance needed to be incorporated in the curriculum as part of life skills development, an area that had been ignored in the formal education system.

Some social practices such as early marriage, multiple marriages and easy divorces needed to be addressed in order to prevent any disharmony between individuals and groups from having a negative impact on societal harmony. In 1998, 1,193 marriages and 778 divorces were registered in Male, or 65 divorces per 100 marriages. Identifying the problem as an issue of immediate concern, a new Family Law in line with CEDAW was passed to regulate marriage and divorce in fair and just ways. In order to address those problems that were of interest to women, the low level of representation of women in policy-making needed to be addressed.

Ms Damdiny Baljinnyam
(Mongolia)

The representation of women in Mongolian history revealed many contrasting positions forged by the nomadic culture and a feudal social organization. Women commanded respect in Mongolian society because of the nature of a nomadic pastoral society where a woman's contribution to family survival was critical. However, women had been excluded from public life during the four centuries under feudal theocracy of Lamaist Buddhism. Almost always the second son born to a family was customarily entered into Lamaist celibate monasticism, resulting in an exceptionally low fertility rate and a small population. The People's Revolution in 1921 brought major changes, and the first Constitution of Mongolia in 1924 declared equal rights for all citizens irrespective of their ethnic origin, religious belief and sex.

The government's proactive policy for women reflected the transformation of women's status during the socialist era. In 1989, 86 per cent of women were in the workforce, 96 per cent of women were literate, and 43 per cent of university and technical college graduates were women. Since 1990, Mongolia had been going through transition to democracy and market economy, which had brought both opportunities and challenges, with the challenges having greater adverse effects on women. Women were the first to be laid off and the first to be affected by the undermining of the universal social protection system. Unemployment, poverty and alcoholism had led to an increase in crime and domestic violence. Increased poverty and poor access to health and social services had caused further deterioration of the status of women and girls.

However, with the vibrant and dynamic involvement of women, more than 40 women-related national NGOs, were addressing those women's and gender concerns. In 1996, using the Beijing Platform for Action as a guide, the government had endorsed the National Programme of Action for the Advancement of Women. In 1997, the government had introduced the concept of gender and mainstream gender concerns into government policies and was now trying to expand them to include men's concerns.

Ms Yi Yi Myint
(Myanmar)

Myanmar's predominant religion was Theravada Buddhism and palpable in the daily lives of the population. Pilgrimage to and worship before special events at the Golden Shwedagon Pagoda were important to the people from all walks of life in Myanmar. The World Peace Pagoda also symbolised the national commitment to peace, compassion and universal love. After 1988, Myanmar departed from being an inward looking socialist State to a more outward looking market-oriented economy with increasing interaction with Asian neighbours. In 2000, Myanmar joined the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). The ASEAN way of consensus-building, peaceful conflict resolution and respect for each nation's sovereignty became the key sentiments around which greater and closer interactions took place.

In Myanmar, senior women were held in high regard as "mother figures", and were freer to play the role of mentors of peaceful spiritual lives that was basic to the Buddhist philosophy. In 1996, the Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs (MNCWA) was formed, providing a national focal point with eight working committees functioning at the central, state division and district township levels. The Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association was formed based on the Myanmar tradition of community living and sharing in 1991, with community participation in 321 township associations and 5,279 branch associations as of 2000. The Association harnessed the energies and capabilities for community-centred welfare and development needs of the country.

Women's vital roles at home in resource allocation, mediation, tender persuasion and family cohesion should be preserved and enhanced despite the competing demands of modern economic life, by introducing flexibility in the work place and measures to support women. The heightened awareness of women's issues and the dynamism of MNCWA that had also involved men appeared to have created a synergetic force necessary for the higher tasks of building peace and non-violence at every level of society in the country.

Ms Ambika Panta
(Nepal)

Despite many democratic changes, the world continued to be beset with problems such as armed conflict, violence, terrorism, poverty, environmental degradation, violations of human rights and discrimination against women, which would prevent achieving lasting peace as well as hinder the stabilization of democracies, and social and economic progress. The role and status of women are based on inequality and injustice. Women were being denied their rights to education and therefore did not have access to school. Further, they were being made to do manual work for all family members and often had to suffer from domestic violence and religious fundamentalism. Recognizing these issues surrounding women, Nepal ratified CEDAW, which provided the basis for promoting equality between women and men by ensuring women's access to education, political, economic and public life, and the enhancement of their roles and status.

The United Nations had, and continued to play an important role by adopting important measures and focusing attention on the problems faced by women. The concept of a culture of peace had great significance for a world torn by conflict and violence, and it constituted the basis for harmonious, democratic and peaceful societies. Women had to play a contributory role in promoting and preserving the values inherent in the culture of peace, and in consolidating unity and diversity.

Ms Wong Liu Shueng
(New Zealand)

New Zealand had been declared to be "nuclear-free" through the works of the political leadership and the grassroots social movement, Nuclear Free New Zealand. NGOs such as the Culture of Peace Network, Peace Movement Aotearoa and YWCA supported the value of peace while church groups sent messages of peace and cities celebrated Peace Week. New Zealanders had also led the world in women's political empowerment. In 2000, women occupied the highest offices of the country, including the head of the government and the opposition. In the Parliament a third of the seats were taken by women due to the newly introduced Mixed Member Proportional Electoral System, which also enabled minority groups to be represented.

The country was not free from problems, however, as shown by the alarming number of cases of child abuse and domestic violence that had received increasing attention. In 1992, the New Zealand Police began implementing a "Bully-free Zone" programme for schools in order to teach school-aged students the "no to harassment" campaign and how to seek mediation. Linguistic and cultural minorities, including indigenous people and recent immigrants, and older persons and persons with disabilities found their differences from the majority to be barriers to their access to vital information, resources and services, and employment. Among new immigrants who were unable to find employment, some had developed addiction to gambling, and some had returned to their homelands to find work, leaving their families behind in New Zealand in isolation and with little resources. The new immigrants included refugees who had survived ethnic cleansing, mutilation, rape and loss of family in their homelands, which necessitated special support and care. Countermeasures were being developed.

In 1995, the Crimes Act of 1961 was amended to allow the prosecution of the offenders of the extraterritorial crime of committing sexual acts with children abroad, upon their return to New Zealand. It also allowed prosecution of those who organized and promoted child sex tourism. In the workplace, the Employment Relations Act, 2000, cleared the way for filing personal grievances over both sexual and racial harassment. The Human Rights Commission published Everyone Sees Things Differently: Sexual Harassment 2000 and implemented a weeklong educational programme. Although overcoming discrimination out of intolerance of, or ignorance about, differences was still a formidable challenge, the presenter found a sense of optimism that small women's groups that were springing up would develop into a greater community voice.

Ms Kiswar Naheed
(Pakistan)

The founding of Pakistan in 1947 after the long colonial domination was accompanied by horrific killings that left traumatic memories. Despite communal riots that erupted afterwards, however, the Pakistanis enjoyed cultural activities including international cultural exchanges with India just as with any other country. Since the first war between India and Pakistan in 1965, however, such exchanges had been replaced by exchanges of hostile language. The nuclear testing in the two countries had further undermined the foundation of political understanding in the subcontinent. The people, however, made their own efforts to build a culture of peace and non-violence, undertaking private trips from Pakistan to India and Bangladesh, and vice versa. The India-Pakistan People's Forum for Peace and Democracy took up double track diplomacy, inviting politicians, artists, poets and intellectuals to express their opinions and engage in serious dialogues.

Women's goodwill missions travelling both from India and Pakistan to each other shocked the fundamentalists who had rejected the concept of peace. Yet women in general all over Asia remained an underutilized resource The world should change its view of Asian women as dancing girls or objects of sex tourism because it was such a view that had permitted the pervasive trafficking of women in the whole Asian region. The killing of women in the name of family honour also needed to be eliminated. Since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action, Pakistan had taken steps to eliminate gender disparity. A National Commission of Women was established to bring political and legal equality. For the election scheduled for 2000-2001, 33 per cent of the union council seats had been allocated exclusively for women. Women of Pakistan stood for peace and stability in the region, not at the cost of national integrity but for legal and political peace for humanity at large. They continued to work for cultural freedom by protecting alternative ways of living, and encouraging experimentation, diversity, imagination and creativity.

Ms Alma Evangelista
(Philippines)

In 1995, the Philippines hosted the first Expert Group Meeting on Women's Contribution to a Culture of Peace, which would later contribute to the Beijing Platform for Action. At the time of the Beijing Conference, building peace was a national multisectoral effort in the Philippines. Although men dominated the formal leadership of various peace initiatives, women played prominent roles in peace advocacy, building constituencies and peace education. Five years after Beijing, hope for peace had not improved, nor had women's representation at the national level peace process. Nonetheless, women were taking the innovative with forward-looking strategies for building peace at the community level, where the effects of armed conflict were most severely felt.

The experience of women in Mindanao was worthy of noting. Mindanao women had adopted peace-building strategies for potential, ongoing and post-conflict settings as the conflict there had been going on for more than 20 years. In the multi-ethnic society of Mindanao, people needed to strive to live in harmony and with respect for each other's beliefs, traditions and aspirations. In 1997, representatives of Muslims, Christians and indigenous women joined together to make various peace-building efforts for a lasting peace. The most notable of their efforts was the tri-people dialogue aimed at defining a common agenda for peace among the three groups. The dialogue also served as a venue for healing and reconciliation, and peace education and advocacy. When peace negotiations between the government and the rebel group began to falter, the Mindanao Council of Women Leaders publicly called for a cessation of hostilities. The Council developed an action plan to foster social and economic development for women, mend the social fabric and enhance religious integrity. Furthermore, to enhance the prospects for a sustainable peace, they argued for increased women's participation in negotiations to ensure any agreement would be responsive to daily realities on the ground. The peace table thus became not only a forum for conflict resolution but also for laying the foundations of a social order guided by the principles of social justice, human rights and equality.

Far removed from the centre of national-level peace processes, women in Mindanao and elsewhere were effectively rebuilding their communities, healing former combatants, planning and implementing relief, reconciliation and reconstruction programmes, and struggling to put a gender perspective in place.

Ms Jeong Soo Kim
(Republic of Korea)

To overcome conservatism and militaristic sentiments, it was necessary to raise the question of "security" from the viewpoint of women's everyday life, and from the perspective of women's human security. Of the national budget of the Republic of Korea, social welfare received about 5 per cent while more than 25 per cent was allocated for defence. Some studies attributed men's violent and sexist tendencies to their experiences during military service. The Korean War from 1950 to 1953 divided the Korean peninsula into north and south. Until the joint communique by the leaders of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was issued at the summit in June 2000, movements for peace were identified as pro-communist, making it difficult for ordinary people to be involved.

Although the participation of women in the peace process at the governmental level had been kept low, women's efforts at the non-governmental level had been very active. Visits by women from the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to each other were the first exchanges at the non-governmental level. In the mid-1990s, when official relations between the two governments were frozen, women on both sides met abroad to take joint action towards persuading the Government of Japan to solve the so-called "comfort women" issue.

After the Beijing Conference, Korean women held conferences that focused on women's role in overcoming the division of the Korean peninsula. Under the slogan of "Sharing Rice, Sharing Love", women in the Republic of Korea had sent food aid to women and children in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Since the early 1990s, women's peace groups had conducted a series of disarmament campaigns such as collecting and sending signatures to the National Assembly, sending postcards to the Blue House (the presidential residence), street campaigns, and public hearings and education programmes on the defence budget. They also proposed the transfer of military expenditure to welfare for women and children.

All levels of violence, from domestic violence to state violence, and from children's excessive competition to serious violence in the army, were interconnected. Knowing this fact, Korean women were promoting peace education to eliminate the culture of violence and militarism. Peace education was aimed at training and changing attitudes and skills for bringing about peace, non-violent conflict resolution and coexistence.

Ms I. I. Khaleeva and Ms Rodmonga K. Potapova
(Russian Federation)

Fostering a culture of peace required universal educational activities in which Russian women had historically held the principal place. The Moscow State Linguistic University, which led the field of linguistic genderology, had established the Centre of Gender Research. The Centre conducted comprehensive studies of psychological and social linguistic problems from a gender perspective in order to facilitate development of the concept of a culture of peace. Gender issues approached in that multidisciplinary manner had a special importance for the Russian Federation, which had multilingual, multicultural and multi-confessional traditions throughout its society. That special importance stemmed from the role of women in forming the very concept of "Russia". The view of women and the image of motherhood in medieval Russia had fostered the sense of national identity as feminine. The mother stood for the earth in ancient Eastern Slav mythology. The land symbolized maternal care. The cult of Maria had a special status in Russian Orthodoxy because she was considered to be the patroness of Russia. Thus, the notions of woman, femininity, maternity, help and pacification in Russia in the Middle Ages determined the basic provisions of the Russian Orthodox Church. Russia was symbolized by woman, as she possessed a special role in the life of the country.

The Russian Federation had inherited from the Soviet Union educational equality and women's active participation in the community. As women take predominant roles in the formal education in the Russian Federation, where education was key to developing a culture of peace, it was possible to point out the continuation of tradition concerning the role of women combined with female orientation in national identity. The strengthening of women's movements for a culture of peace was giving Russian society a new character. The Woman for Life without War and Violence organization in the northern Caucasus region was highly regarded and was working to protect the rights of citizens in general and military men in conflict areas in particular, in cooperation with other women's organizations involved in peace-making and protecting the rule of law.

Ms Kanthi Gunawardana
(Sri Lanka)

Sri Lanka produced the world's first woman prime minister and was now led by a woman president. Traditionally, gender discrimination was largely absent in Sri Lanka, providing a strong and enduring foundation for women to take up modern challenges as men's equal partners with unique and remarkable success. However, problems persisted for Sri Lanka women in a number of spheres. Many laws and regulations, including the marriage and divorce laws, were outdated and prejudiced against women. Violence against women was a major issue, with a distinct increase in incidence, including domestic violence, rape and other sexual violence. Many cases went unreported as women decided to suffer in silence. In order to afford meaningful protection, the biases in some of the laws pertinent to violence against women needed to be amended. Heightened vulnerability to sexual exploitation and harassment among unskilled domestic workers should be addressed, as the number of women from the lower income group who were seeking employment abroad was increasing. Records of those women migrant workers were not well maintained and their destinations were often unknown, thus adding to their vulnerability. Many of them were exploited both in their home countries and in the countries where they were employed. Those countries should consider entering into bilateral agreements to provide necessary safeguards. They also needed to develop a code of ethics on employment, and ensure the safety and security of such workers. The United Nations Convention on Migrant Workers should be strengthened and its provisions addressing those issues should be fully implemented.

Women had less employment prospects partly because of fewer vocational training opportunities and partly because of household chores, frequently confining them to lower paid and more casual segments of the labour market. Together with poverty, malnutrition among women, particularly pregnant women, needed to be addressed. Nutritional deficiency among women occurred because they fed the family first and neglected their own health. Poverty alleviation programmes addressing diet and more equitable intra-household food distribution should be implemented. Furthermore, women should be given adequate access to capital, technology and land for commercial ventures. Special efforts should be made to rehabilitate women refugees and female-headed families resulting from unfortunate internal conflicts, including relief grants and assistance in obtaining suitable employment.

Ms Muchiba M. Yakubova
(Tajikistan)

Tajikistan was among the first of the Commonwealth of Independent States to ratify CEDAW, the Convention on Women's Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of Children. The Constitution and all legislation of Tajikistan were clear on equal rights between men and women. In 1998, in order to implement the Beijing Platform for Action, Tajikistan adopted the National Plan of Tajikistan on Improving the Status and Role of Women. In 1999, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan issued a presidential decree that promoted women's participation in social life and public administration, followed by a national policy entitled the "Men and Women Equality Provision State Policy". To ensure the materialization of genuine equality, the policy was aimed at ensuring equality in the results of government measures. It also called for economic, social and cultural changes, increased awareness of gender issues and partnership between the government and civil society.

Since 1995, Tajik women, with support from international organizations, had been actively participating in NGOs and other organizations that promoted women's roles in democratization and provided social protection, education and legal literacy, science and health for women. They had worked to mitigate the consequences of wars and build peace, conduct research on the issues of violence against women and rehabilitation of victims, as well as protect and educate women and adolescents about reproductive rights. Founded in 1995, the Association of Women Scientists of Tajikistan (AWST) was among those organizations. Its mission was to utilize the contributions of women scientists to natural, medical and social sciences in promoting social protection, human welfare reproductive rights and human rights of women. AWST was also a member of the Public Council of the Republic of Tajikistan, which was established at the president' initiative to enhance the country's civic capacity in peace-building. Through research, conferences, publications and hot-line services, AWST had assisted women victims of war and violence to rebuild their psychological well being and their social status.

Ms Prisna Pongtadsirikul
(Thailand)

Women were taking part in building peace at all levels as peace nurturers and instructors on bringing up children in the family, society, community and the broader society from the grass-roots level up to the international community. Since the Fourth World Conference on Women, Thailand had achieved significant progress in gender equality. The 1997 Constitution of Thailand provided for equal rights of women and men, the protection of human rights, women's participation and non-violence. Mechanisms such as the National Human Rights Commission, the Administrative Court and the Ombudsperson were established for citizens to submit appeals in cases of human rights violations. To eliminate violence against women, including trafficking in persons and sexual harassment, Thailand had developed a legal framework, preventive programmes and awareness raising campaigns.

The National Economic and Social Development Plan, which emphasized human resources, and the National Policy and Plan of Action for the Prevention and Eradication of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children were pertinent to protecting women and children from violence. They provided for the protection of women's human rights, law enforcement and multidisciplinary approaches to the treatment of victims and networking for comprehensive implementation. They were prevention-oriented with the aim of strengthening the family institution as a necessary and integral part of society, in order to respond to the issue. Thailand had designated November as the month for annual campaigning to eradicate violence against women and children. In addition, one-stop service centres for providing care to victims by multidisciplinary teams had been established at public hospitals in the Bangkok Metropolitan area. Other progress that needed to be noted was the increased participation of women in labour and as both voters and candidates in local and national elections.

Ms Burcin Erol
(Turkey)

After the Beijing Conference, a Turkish National Action Plan was launched. Among others, the Plan aimed to establish equality in education, eliminate illiteracy among women and eradicate violence against women. The length of compulsory education was increased from five to eight years while several schemes, such as scholarships for girls, contributed to the narrowing of the gender gap in attendance. At the higher level, an open lycee system was introduced to enable female school dropouts to earn diplomas while the number of female faculty members was increased. School curricula and textbooks were reviewed to remove gender stereotypes. With regard to violence against women, some positive developments were observed, such as implementation of anti-violence education and awareness programmes and establishment of hotlines and women's shelters. Further, the 1998 Family Protection Act enabled violence victims to stay in the family home with the offenders being banned from them. In line with the Turkish Constitution, which prescribed equality before the law, women's law commissions were working for the removal of discriminatory elements from the existing laws. They were also providing education on women's rights and legal assistance to the staff of the police and the judiciary and women. Women had won rights such as those to hold property and work, and to use their maiden names after marriage.

With increasing number of channels, the media had begun to focus on formerly tabooed or neglected issues, such as violence against women and women's rights, thus raising social awareness over those issues. Nevertheless, women's images and roles in the media were still limited and it was felt that the media could do more. Limited women's representation was also observed in the areas of formal employment and politics. Many women were refused employment opportunities ostensibly because of a lack of education and training, while many others were forced to leave work when they married or gave birth. In the political arena, the highest women's representation (4.6 per cent) in the Parliament had been recorded in the country's first election in 1935, a figure that had not been surpassed since. The two major earthquakes in 1999 had further delayed progress, as extensive loss of life and property had required the reallocation of resources to rebuild the social infrastructure. Against those odds, however, Turkish women were continuing to strive to attain peace

Ms Nguyen Thi Bich Hu
(Viet Nam)

A person living in a peaceful family with a respectable mother would be more likely to keep away from a bad lifestyle, crime and hatred. The Vietnamese family, faced with social changes and the impacts of social evils, had to bear a higher responsibility. In the feudal society, although women hardly received formal education, they were the first teachers of their children. Women stood by their husbands while bringing up children in such a way that the children would later dedicate their ability to the family and the nation. Modern society introduced various complicated problems together with new opportunities and advantages, thus creating challenges for Vietnamese families. The intense competitiveness of a market economy diverted the attention of many people away from the family towards earning money. Consequently, intergenerational ties in many families had been loosened and become materialistic while social ills such as drug addiction were undermining Vietnamese children and families.

Recently, the roles of Vietnamese women had been expanding significantly: that is, women were also actively undertaking many public duties in addition to the traditional role of maintaining the family. In addition, the social status of Vietnamese women had changed drastically alongside national development, with women now occupying many high positions, including the vice-president, five ministers and 25 deputy ministers. In reconsidering key issues concerning the family and social changes, the importance of building and maintaining a cultured family in which women's roles were indispensable, needed to be emphasized. A cultured Vietnamese family, according to traditional definition, was a family where multi-generational members respected and cherished each other, and observed rules and orders of the family. In recognizing the significant roles of women, family education must be included in school curricula, while policies that would enable women to dedicate themselves to public and family duties, including raising children, should be introduced.

Ms Nguyen Thanh Hoa
(Viet Nam)

As early as the August revolution in 1945, the people of Viet Nam already recognized that poverty could endanger the country's hard-won independence. When a family suffered hunger and poverty, it was in danger of breaking up. In order to achieve complete independence, peace and the people's well being, hunger eradication and poverty reduction (HEPR) had been made key goals of the Party and the State of Viet Nam. While Vietnamese women now accounted for 50.8 per cent of the total population, the rate of skilled female workers was 20 per cent, with women's access to formal credit remaining limited. Despite their remarkable contributions to the country's development, the living standards of women, especially those in the countryside, remained low, with more than 20 per cent living below the poverty line.

The Viet Nam Women's Union (VWU) was undertaking income-raising programmes, with HEPR at the centre of its activities, including: financial assistance for women in credit savings groups and technical assistance in acquiring know-how and skills and job training. The assistance included scientific and technological advancement, and financial management and business planning in order to upgrade women's efficiency in utilizing loans and improving their labour productivity. Those activities empowered women to take part in the

decision-making process in the family together with their husbands, and in other community activities. Building on those achievements, VWU was assisting women, especially poverty-stricken women in rural areas, to set up micro-businesses. In addition, female owners of small/household enterprises were being helped to develop their businesses in order to generate more jobs for poor women, and groups of enterprises with commonality were being assisted in establishing linkages through group loans and enterprise consultative networks. VWU was also collaborating with other ministries to raise women's income while increasing gender awareness and using the media for advocacy and dissemination of models of women's successful enterprises. VWU also wanted to expand exchanges of successful experiences to the regional level by learning from other countries.

Ms Leela Devi KC
(Nepal)

In the past, Nepalese people lived in the extended family system, sharing happiness and sorrows together. Secluded from outside influence, the needs of the people were limited. The modernization process, which started in the 1950s, had exposed the nation to the outside world and led to the people comparing their existing society with other countries. Nepal suffered from rapid growth of population, poverty and environmental degradation due to meagre knowledge of appropriate technology.

The majority of women in Nepal were the poorest of the poor. They led a life of ill health and disease, being forced to give birth to children with ill health. The life expectancy of Nepalese women as of 2000 was 55 years, less than that of men. The reason was the high maternal morality ratio due to the backwardness of women's life in Nepal. Because of the preference for sons, the girl child was not so valued. Daughters were not fed well and were undernourished, and were overloaded with domestic and farm work. Before reaching the age of 16, a Nepalese girl was likely to be married. If the young wife gave birth to a girl child, that child would receive the same treatment that her mother and grandmothers received. Even basic security such as food, shelter, clothing, health, education and social security was generally inadequate in Nepal. Traditionally, women had been recognized as a symbol of peace while men determined the norms of society. But the situation had changed. Both men and women now had to play roles in peace and decision-making. The change required an improvement in female education and the re-education of men for solidarity and peace, so that a culture of peace could flourish through cooperation between men and women.

Ms Maryline Kajoi
(Papua New Guinea)

Ms Kajoi, Gender and Development Planner of the Government of Papua New Guinea, contributed a paper to the conference that provided a general view of the situation in the Pacific and a case study on the success of Bougainville women in peace-building. Unfortunately Ms Kajoi was unable to participate in the Conference but the organizers welcome her paper, which is published here in summary form.

Pacific women were beginning to experience and assert a Pacific identity, which was founded upon the island tradition that gave primacy to the family and the strong affinity of the people with the land. To meet both old and emerging challenges, they had adopted the Pacific Region Platform for Action, which was aimed at accelerating the full and equal partnership of women and men in all spheres of life. Challenges included traditional attitudes about women's roles, persistent poor health status, an education system that was unfavourable to women and resulting in prevalent illiteracy, lower wages and a lack of access to business capital. Violence against women in the family was, to a large extent, tolerated and the incidence was high, while the cultural stigma attached to such violence resulted in the incidence being under-reported and invisible. Women and children were also the first to be affected by ethnic violence, which was very much alive in the subregion.

Education of women about their human rights and awareness training for decision makers had helped to bring about a consciousness that violence should never be tolerated. The Law Reform Commissions of the countries in the Pacific had been instrumental in national legislative reviews in ensuring that the judicial system took into account the voices of civil society. In Papua New Guinea, the Commission pioneered a major national survey, which recommended changes in law, especially family and customary laws. The Commission and its partners successfully implemented a massive six-year education campaign to raise awareness of the fact that wife-beating was wrong and that women had the right to be free from violence. The campaign also informed the public of existing laws that protected women and communities, and encouraged the police to enforce more strictly the laws pertinent to domestic violence.

Fiji and Vanuatu were currently in the process of looking at domestic violence legislation. Fiji had pioneered the Women's Crisis Centres programme and assisted many countries in the Pacific to establish their own centres, including training on a short-term attachment basis for women from NGOs and governments, particularly policewomen, of other countries. Fiji had also facilitated the public consultation process on the introduction of domestic violence-related legislation. Women's NGOs in the Pacific were actively advocating for women and children's human rights, providing counselling services including counselling by men for men, and counselling and para-legal training for various community-based organizations. Programmes to raise awareness of CEDAW and CRC had helped many Pacific island countries in their consideration of the ratification of the two Conventions. In turn, ratification had enhanced the efforts made to eliminate violence against women, although a few countries had yet to ratify the Conventions.

Women's contribution to restoring peace on Bougainville Island

Peace-building could be defined as a collection of strategies used to reverse the destructive processes of violence in order to bring reconciliation to the fractured community while protecting and respecting human rights of women and men. In Melanesian society, especially in the highlands of Papua New Guinea, peace-building took place in a reciprocal manner whereby the mediation of a particular conflict was conducted through an exchange of wealth, feasting and dancing by the conflicting parties. Such peace-building ceremonies were carefully planned and conducted by chiefs or clan leaders. In addition to such traditional methods, a number of collaborative efforts had been developed to minimize violence.

It was women who acted as peace brokers to end the 12-year-old war on Bougainville Island by compelling the initial discussion of the first-ever dialogue for a cease-fire agreement. Bougainville women consistently maintained a neutral stand without making any public statement against any of the warring parties, when they were advocating for restoring peace and order through non-violent means. Instead of taking part in combat, Bougainville women, who had received training in trauma counselling, participated in rehabilitating their male relatives who had been confined to combat areas. They also encouraged men to start thinking and talking about peace and reconciliation on the island. For example, after the 1994 cease-fire agreement, women revived the Kieta District Council of Women in order to urge youths to come out of hiding in the jungles and rejoin the community. That was not an easy task, and many women risked their lives in their efforts to change the minds of the young former combatants who feared for their safety. There was also a general feeling of fear and mistrust. Even among women, there was great tension between opposing factions because many of the women had lost their family members.

By 1997, women's groups in Bougainville had agreed to concentrate their efforts on facilitating the peace process on the island. The groups included the wives of rebel leaders, who delivered messages of the need to restore peace on the island. To date, the women were still at the forefront of facilitating the peace reconciliation ceremonies among the formerly warring tribal groups. The fact that Bougainville Island was a matrilineal society helped women to take part in decision-making. In the matrilineal society, women inherited land rights and performed other important customary obligations such as the distribution of land and other wealth. These rights and obligation had given them due respect. The active participation of women in peace-building had made the governmental leaders of Bougainville recognize women's roles, thereby providing women with greater opportunities in politics and governance. Currently, Bougainville had six women in the Interim Provincial Assembly, while the other 19 Provincial Assemblies in the country had only one woman representative each. The number of women representatives was expected to increase when the Bougainville provincial government achieved permanent status.

Through their active participation in peace-building and reconciliation, the women of Papua New Guinea had learnt that:

1. Women's organizations were avenues that the government and international development partners could use for the purpose of mediation and conflict resolution;

2. Women's participation was essential at all levels of the peace negotiations;

3. Women were very effective agents of change, and that the government and international development partners could utilize them in bringing about positive change in armed conflict situations.

International development partners should provide technical support, training and possible funding for women's organizations, to enable them to act as grassroots-level peace makers who could effectively play a part in armed conflict situations, particularly through non-violent means, in reconciliation efforts and restoring peace. Capacity-building among women as potential peace workers was crucial to achieving desired peace restoration and reconciliation.

VI. ISSUE PAPERS

Working Group 1

Education, training, socialization and research
Learning the tools for living together peacefully
and with respect for differences

Diane Bretherton
Director
International Conflict Resolution Centre, University of Melbourne

Our task is to address the topic "Education, training, socialization and research: learning the tools for living together peacefully and with respect for differences". I would like to introduce this working group by grounding our discussion in some reflections about the meaning of the key concepts, followed by a talk about the layered nature of cultural learning and then home in on gender and cultural learning.

Key concepts

The word "peace" in English comes from the Latin, *pax*, which denotes a pause in fighting and successful dominion over the subject races. This is a negative concept of peace. It carries the connotation that war is natural and normal. The implication is that law and order must be maintained by force. Within this perspective, security can only be ensured by strong leaders. This negative concept suggests that peace is the business of heads of state and military leaders, leaving little room for ordinary people to have their say.

Peace researchers have tried to move this understanding towards a more positive idea of peace. Rather than seeing peace as "not war" they stress the qualities and attributes of peace. They view peace as a network of harmonious relationships, a social space in which differences are resolved without violence.

This positive definition of peace gives more room to the concerns of women. Peace becomes not just the domain of diplomats and politicians, but of all citizens. The struggle for peace is, then, to be made not only in the high arenas of international politics but also in workplaces, neighbourhoods, schools and homes. Child rearing and the socialization of children become key issues on the peace agenda. Issues such as the manufacture of war toys, the portrayal of violence on television, and teaching young children non-violent conflict resolution skills become central.

Recasting peace in a positive light gives women a voice and a place in peace-building. So what value is there for women in adding the concept of culture and talking of a culture of peace? There are many definitions of culture. Academic disciplines such as anthropology and cultural studies take culture as their starting point. Central to these definitions is the idea that culture can be defined as the patterns of action and communication that characterize a people, but it is most importantly the meaning that is given to those patterns that constitute the essence of culture.

The idea of a culture of peace goes beyond the idea of positive peace. The move from negative to positive peace is a political change, a change that involves everyone, including women and children in process of global peace-building. The further step from positive peace to a culture of peace embeds peace in everyday actions and enriches our thinking by adding the subjective element of meaning. "In a culture of peace," according to Breines (1999), "dialogue and respect for human rights replace violence; intercultural understanding and solidarity replace enemy images; sharing and the free flow of information replace secrecy and partnership; and the full empowerment of women succeeds male domination."

Women participants from many different countries in Asia have already introduced themselves and shared their visions of a culture of peace, using not bullets, but words. I was struck by the difference between our approach and the one that might have been taken by a group of male decision makers. It was clear that for us, peace begins in the family and expands in an outward motion from the home to the community and nation. The peaceful family was described by the delegate from China as having equality between men and women, between young and old, and extending these harmonious relationships out to neighbours. In this ideal setting, children can learn peace by example. The father respects the mother, the parents are respected by, and in turn respect, the children and older people. The family respects other families who differ from themselves, be it a difference in language, religion or culture. In such an ideal world, the children would not need to be taught about peace, they would simply absorb peaceful values. Thus, they would learn the tools for living together peacefully and with respect for differences through socialization.

However, the world is still far from ideal and there is a need for peace education. Groff and Smoker (1996) drew attention to the lack of peace in our social world. "If the concept of peace is interpreted in the feminist framework, then the cultural conditions necessary for peace do not exist in any country. Physical and structural violence at the micro level, in the community and family, on the streets and in the schools, is widespread, and the cultural, social, political and economic changes required to create a feminist culture of peace represent a major challenge to every national society... ".

The layered nature of cultural learning

Whether we are talking about education, training, socialization or research, the cultural learning that takes place will be complex and layered. A simple metaphor might aid our thinking. I am indebted to Fiona Swee-Lin Price (2000) for the idea that cultural learning can be pictured as the layers of an onion.

Following Hall's (1959) schema of cultural learning, the outer skin of the onion is technical learning. This is the type of learning that takes place in a classroom or training session. Things are consciously "taught" by a teacher or trainer or even as an educational package on the computer. A foreign language may, for example, be learnt in this way. Education, training and research are usually in this domain.

Inside this layer there is a skin that we can call informal learning. Knowledge of our mother tongue and the ways of our culture are learnt through experience and everyday interactions. Many aspects of what we need to know to navigate our way through a culture are learnt in this way. Turn taking in speech, table manners, the interpretation of body language – these are but a few examples. This is the domain of socialization processes.

At a still deeper level is cultural learning acquired in early childhood, before the acquisition of speech. This may take the form of a taboo, so that breaking a taboo will give rise to strong feelings such as revulsion, aversion, anguish and horror. Options to the rule are not discussed. It is repulsive to talk, or even think, of such things. The religious restriction on pork in Muslim communities, for example, can become deeply embedded in a person's psychological makeup; in earlier times, rubbing pig fat on slaves was a cruel form of punishment and torture.

These inner layers of the "cultural onion", the informal learning and taboos, tend to shape thinking and behaviour in ways that are outside normal awareness. Our own culture feels normal, natural and right. This is one reason why meeting with people from other cultures is very educational, teaching us not only about others but also about ourselves. In other cultures things are done in other ways and our rules get broken. Sometimes it is only when a rule is broken that we can see it exists. Cultural awareness, then, is not just being open to learning from other cultures; it is also relates to understanding one's own culture.

Gender and cultural learning

Gender is at the very centre of the cultural onion and socialization starts at birth. The first question to be asked will be "Is it a boy or a girl?" The adult needs to know the sex of the child so he or she knows how to relate to the child in the culturally appropriate way. The newborn child will be understood, held and talked to in a different way depending on the sex of the child. The clothes the child wears, the toys he or she is given, the stories he or she is told, and the television he or she sees will depend on the child's sex. Given the fundamental nature of gender socialization we can expect issues relating to gender to sometimes be highly contentious, ill defined and deeply felt. When we talk about gender, people can become quite upset. A suggestion that boys ought not to be given toy guns might be taken as a personal insult, countered with a hostile remark that one is putting boys in petticoats and making them effeminate. It will not be surprising if bits of unclaimed cultural baggage drift into our discourse. When campaigning against violent toys, I have even been told (in front of a television camera) that "my husband ought to shoot me". To make progress in dialogues about gender, we need to be prepared to deal with irrational as well as rational responses.

Let me give you a practical example. In the "Afters: Gender and Conflict in After-School Care" project, two colleagues and I taught conflict resolution and gender awareness to teacher trainees and then videotaped them teaching conflict resolution to children in after-school care. It became clear that, despite the training in gender awareness, the trainee teachers' own gender socialization influenced how they taught the conflict resolution skills to girls and boys. There is a danger that conflict resolution will be confused with politeness and listening for girls, self-expression and effective problem solving for boys. We stressed the importance of monitoring and feedback. By watching the videotapes, the teachers became aware of their own behaviour and were able to make changes. A number of strategies were used to create the conditions in which the teachers could be comfortable in watching, discussing and learning from the video tapes together.

An atmosphere of trust must be created before people can look at themselves without becoming defensive. Criticism that is harsh, or made without respect for the person's cultural perspective and personal intentions, will lead to resistance rather than willingness to change. To become aware of our own socialized patterns of behavior we need more than formal instruction. We need learning strategies that give feedback and monitor changes. This conforms to an action research model, with its cycle of planning, implementing and

evaluating change. Giving feedback in a manner that is constructive is an art, and a key tool for living together peacefully and with respect for differences.

Putting together our understanding of peace and culture, we have the view that a culture of peace is a radical (in the sense of going to the root of the matter) concept. It will be a positive concept that implies broad cultural change. There will be an emphasis on meaning, with the recognition that different cultures have their own perspectives. We will need to be aware that cultural learning is not just the things that happen in a classroom, but also the things that happen in real life. Therefore, our educational methods must move beyond formal education where the teacher talks and the students take notes. We need to be realistic and recognize that deeply ingrained cultural rules will be highly resistant to change.

To the extent that ideas of peace are gendered, we are dealing with beliefs that are at the core of the cultural onion. This means that we need to be highly creative and innovative in our methods. We cannot change culture just by resolving to do so. A deeper transformation will be needed. We need to develop skills of observation, monitoring, evaluation, giving feedback and reflection, as well as social action.

Further, the culture of peace is not only a goal for the future; it is also a prescription for how we should relate in the present. The key values of a culture of peace can be used as a way of checking our own process in the working group. Are we being respectful? Are we listening in order to understand? Do men and women have equal opportunity to speak? And so on. This sounds simple, but in practice it is very difficult to do.

We have talked about the peaceful family, where the children would learn about peace from life. Parents can strive to make their family life more peaceful. However, a family does not live in isolation. To be at peace, the family needs security, economic well being, respect, freedom from conscription into war and violence, laws that prevent abuse, and media and toys that promote peace and knowledge of others.

So women need to be active outside the home as well as within it. Our speakers have identified the family as an important starting point for peace in Asian societies. We need also to be aware that the family can be the focal point of patriarchal values, trapping the woman in a stereotype of the good, nurturing wife and mother, a stereotype that excludes her from tougher decision-making roles around matters of war and peace. As women, we are under-represented in deliberative bodies throughout the world. We need to work together in solidarity and through informal as well as governmental channels, to achieve change.

In our working group, we will consider education, training, socialization and research. We need to think about tools for living together in the family and in the wider community. We need also to think about how we can take the strengths of women from the family out into the public arena to create the educational, economic, political and legal structures that support a culture of peace in the wider society.

I hope these reflections will assist us to ground and guide our thinking. We have an extensive set of questions to address and can anticipate a full and lively discussion, which will be summarized in the conference papers.

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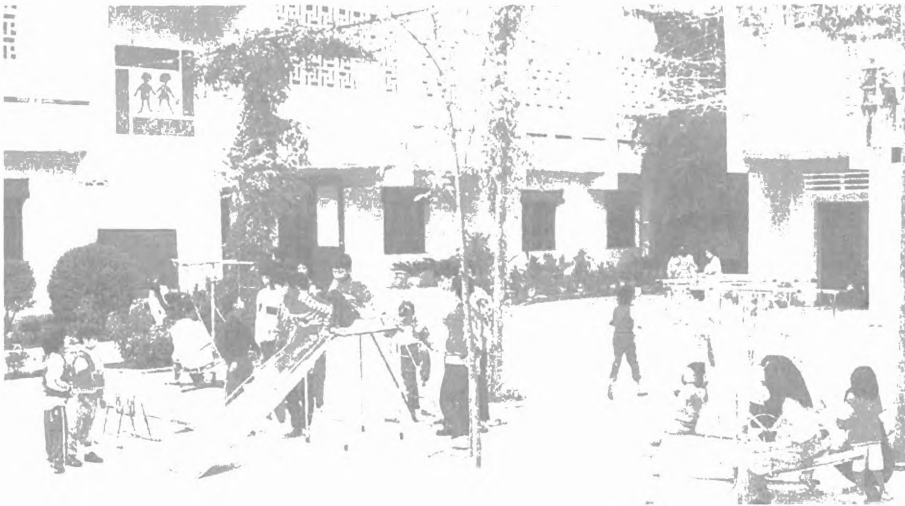
Engaging women in the mass media and communication in Asia against violence and for building peace

Susanna George
Executive Director
Isis International Manila

A. Re-examining the notion of a culture of peace

Women and men who struggle for gender equality and social justice know better than anyone else the power of persistent suggestion in changing norms and values of the society. A little over three decades ago, as the flower generation rumbled against wars in South-East Asia, and civil rights activists fought for long denied human rights of racial minorities, the second generation of feminists in the North put forward once again the notion of women's equality and rights. Their voice found resonance with those of women in the South who were also struggling within their newly emerged nations for social and political justice, development and freedom from the dominance of their national elite and their former colonizers.

From the street demonstrations, posters, pamphlets, songs and writings of feminists of three decades ago, emerged a notion that has lingered strongly even today, indelibly changing the every discourse that has emerged since – that women are equal to men but have long been denied the rights and respect that equals deserve. Women activists of today continue to keep this notion alive and actively struggle against the many covert and overt attempts to minimize, explain away, interpret or even deny this truth.

We all are aware that the reality of true gender equality has yet to be realized in any society whether in the North or in the South. Even so, the notion of gender justice stands tall like a beacon that guides those who believe in it and who in little and big ways work towards realizing it in their homes, communities, societies, nations and between nations. This notion has been enshrined in international documents, has shaped the deliberations and plans of the United Nations, development agencies, parliaments, religious institutions, educational institutions, thinkers, social activists everywhere. Even those who try to preserve traditional division of labour between sexes intact have to face the reality that their attitudes are loosing currency.

This is also true with the understanding of violence against women. This is a fairly recent concept that was developed through analyses and activism of dedicated women globally that has pushed for social norms and values to change. If male aggression against women was previously explained as having a biological, cultural or social basis, it is now increasingly seen as unacceptable, heinous and something to be struggled against. If this aggression was previously the silent shame of women everywhere, today it is the shame of communities and societies as a whole.

The notion of a culture of peace is gaining currency for the same reasons. Nation states have shown power through the might of their armed forces, their artillery and their nuclear power, where the concept of might was right, and the an eye for an eye tactics prevailed in international diplomacy, and where virtues such as tolerance, humility and

forgiveness were preached only for those on bended knee. The reality of war and violence, of desperate poverty in the midst of opulent wealth, of the disadvantaged and marginalized hundreds of millions having their lives determined by the powerful minority, of social and cultural aggression by mainstream societies against minorities and indigenous peoples all made for a very bleak picture.

It is in such times that we need alternative concepts that can irrevocably shift prevalent social norms, values and behaviours in the direction of non-violence, respect for diversity and differences, peaceful co-existence, reconciliation, justice and equality. As every other social movement has realized, such concepts can only become woven into the fabric of society when there is a base of understanding and analyses which informs and creates awareness. The current belief system of the inevitability of war, human aggression, hegemonic rule, and the submission of the weak to the will of the strong needs to be dismantled. New concepts need to enter the mainstream and influence our understanding of what is possible.

It is in this milieu that women have taken a lead in giving meaning to the notion of a culture of peace. A culture of peace is not just the absence of violence and war, but more significantly the presence of transformative mechanisms for social justice to be realized. Feminists have long since spoken about violence as not being merely physical violence, but psychological, economic and social as well.   These concepts can help locate women's struggle for realizing a culture of peace where social justice is central.

B. The role of media in creating "Others" and creating receptiveness to violence and war

One significant player in this process of changing norms and values is the media. As an institution that has become an integral determinant in the shaping of human consciousness, the media play potent roles both in changing perceptions and influencing decisions. Even as the media reflect commonly held values of a given society, the media's role in shaping and giving rise to new norms and standards has been understood and used by actors that desire to exert control over those prevailing. This is evident in the aggressive advertising campaigns of multinational corporations and the selling of products as lifestyle enhancement and markers of modernity.

Stereotyping is one of the great "sins" that is easy to commit in the media, and one that many, including women's activists, have protested time and time again. It is easy to commit this "sin" primarily because such stereotypes of the "Other" readily exist to various degrees in society and are convenient ways of understanding very complex situations.   For example, in any given situation of armed conflict, mainstream media implicitly or explicitly distinguish for us the "victim" from the "aggressor," the "good guy" from the "bad guy" and who to support and who to oppose. Those of us who are conditioned to regard mainstream media outlets such as television, radio and newspapers as being objective or as providing the true, blow-for-blow account of armed conflict situations, would be inevitably swayed with the dominant interpretations of conflict situations.

Being a powerful tool for eliciting public support (or outrage as a situation may require) media institutions are viewed either as an adversary to be curbed and limited or strategic tools for skewing public perceptions. Governments everywhere have effectively created alliances with media owners to support or defend certain political positions while curbing others through the denial of a diversity of views being reflected in mainstream media.

Today, every military manoeuver even in conditions of "peace" are supported and strengthened by even more skilled information manoeuvers that seek to engender support (or opposition) for a war.

Even insurgent groups have realized the strategic importance of gaining media attention, and "making news." Since international news is rarely made by a group of people holding candles in front of an embassy or a police officer reading out a statement of principles, extreme measures are often sought for the sake of arousing media attention to making marginal views heard. Sadly though, many mainstream media outlets focus but briefly on the sensational aspects of a hijacking, kidnapping or a bombing, accompanied perhaps by some "pop facts and figures" about a given insurgent group. Within days, a sensational event would have lost its scintillating news worthiness and drops out of the sight of the public. It is rare that such events result in the causes of insurgent struggles being understood even marginally by those whose opinions matter.

Outside of news reportage, television programming, the movie and video production industry and the rapidly growing interactive computer games industry pave the way of an tacit acceptance of violence and aggression, the need for superheroes in world politics and stereotyped signals on who the "Other" is. War movies and action thrillers as they are referred to rely on archetypes and stereotypes that many times skew geopolitical and cultural realities. Graphic scenes of humans fighting and killing each other as solutions to conflict are common place. Images of humans being tortured, maimed, raped, blown up into a million pieces are the regular fare of movies that are billed as action thrillers. In such films and on countless televisions shows, the designated "bad guys" are appropriately done away with, and get the punishment deserving to them. Vengeance is often the selling formula in these entertainment shows. The "good guys" live to tell the tale while the "bad guys" are blown up into smithereens. This kind of dramatic justice appears to have a greater appeal than any other entertainment formula. Peace in fact can only be realized once all the bad guys have been eliminated – the return to normalcy often is to the exclusion of the perceived negative elements. Concepts such as negotiation, reconciliation or co-existence have very little appeal commercially.

What is perhaps even more worrisome is how computer games technology has enabled adolescents and adults alike to engage in "game" sequences that include hunting, murdering, trapping, bombing and enacting all forms of violence in the name of fun. Children who were once frightened of sleeping with the lights off can become desensitized to images and concepts of violence prevalent in television, films, electronic games and toys to such a degree that they actually seek out such adrenalin-charged viewing experiences. Bloody horror, torture, chain saw and machine gun gore and brutality, like staged sex scenes, have a popular appeal that might be rooted in various psychological or primal needs. Such images often degrade and stereotype the "Other" and are far from the values proposed in a culture of peace.

Even so, the overkill of violent images as entertainment has numbed our senses of what happens in real people's lives. This blurred line of what is real and unreal confuse children particularly in societies where suffering is most often not a physical but a mental experience. Many link violent crimes perpetrated by adolescents and teenagers in countries to the tendency to use television, videos, and computer games as "baby-sitters".

Another highly influential information vehicle today is advertising. Advertising is an almost exclusively commercial exercise that was originally aimed at informing consumers on the value of a particular product as a means of encouraging sales. With globalized competition for the sale of products and services, advertising has turned into a highly scientific art of manipulation of the tastes, values and attitudes of consumers. The manipulation of reality in turn manufactures the desire for products and services, based on a sense of lack and learnt inadequacy. Most often racial, ethnic and gender stereotypes are utilized to market products and services, as is an assertion of cultural hegemony of North over South, rich over poor, and men over women. Civilization and culture is described in terms of what you possess and where you are seen rather than who you are. The pervasive sense of physical inadequacy amongst women and an increasing number of men in terms of their body features, shapes and skin colour have very much to do with what we see in advertising.

For a culture of peace to exist, the first crucial step is to replace the intolerant, stereotyped, one-dimensional image and half-truths of the "Other," with diverse, balanced, representative, sufficiently complex and unbiased images and perspectives in mainstream media and in all forms of communication. The next crucial steps would be to simultaneously demand and allow for more objective, critical, alternative and accountable mediums of communication to emerge and thrive.

C. The status of women and the media in Asia

a) Access and control

As in all other regions of the world, the communication media in Asia have been used to empower women through consciousness raising, knowledge dissemination and non-formal education in rural and remote parts, among other things. Nevertheless, women generally do not have sufficient access to nor control over the various mediums, even in terms of the nature and length of the coverage of their own issues and concerns, partly because few women have training in technical matters necessary to occupy positions to oversee productions.

Freedom of expression and state control of media remain a highly contentious issue. In Asia, most of the radio and television stations remain government-owned, military-controlled or publicly-funded. However, an increasing number of these entities are in the process of being corporatised or privatized. The print media are mostly private-controlled in many of the countries.[1] The high costs of setting up a publishing firm or broadcast station have left the field to big business corporations , including incursion of foreign or transnational capital in major media institutions, that have clearly placed a premium on profit over public service.

Government control of media institutions tends to be confined to determining media ownership and licensing, and in some cases enforces media codes that guard against "immorality" and anything that might destabilise the state. Rarely does the government play a role in examining the structures and practices that continue to discriminate against women within media institutions and limit women's perspectives from being articulated or incorporated. These include but are not limited to areas such as programming content, gender

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[1] Isis International Manila, "State of Women and Media in Asia: Focus on Violence Against Women: A Preliminary Report", unpublished paper, March 1998, p. 8.

division of labour, participation of women in decision-making, and sexual harassment. On the other hand, women media practitioners have generally expressed preference for self-regulation of media institutions, e.g., establishing codes of conduct on media's portrayal of women, over state regulation that is deemed as a threat to freedom of expression and women's rights.

The rapid development of information and communication technology (ICT) has put pressure on the authoritarian states to loosen its traditional grip on the dissemination of information.[2] The Internet and cable television in particular have rendered state regulation almost obsolete as information is disseminated across national borders with very limited or no control. Although governments continue to enact laws and policies, the geographical limits of their authority and their own economic and political limitations have effectively placed transborder media beyond their control. There are now some initiatives to bring to bear international judicial systems that can monitor transborder media dissemination, particularly the Internet.

b) "Globalization" of the media

"The convergence of new media technologies and owners, especially in the context of globalization, is increasingly changing the nature and structure of the media industry. Media has become a transnationalized business enterprise tied to international trade bodies and agreements such as WTO and GATT..."[3]

Today a handful of media conglomerates determine the mix of information, images and discourse that find its way to the global population through major media networks that beam 24 hours programming made possible by satellite systems. The shift towards the monopolistic power of these new media moguls can be traced to two major developments: the rapid development of information and communication technologies that have blurred the boundaries between information, communication and the various types of media, and the dominant public policy that supports concentration of the information and communication industries towards private enterprise.[4]

These transnational media giants have aggressively pushed communication technologies such as cable television, satellite transmission and computerization. UNESCO has cautioned that "the pattern of ownership of both cable and satellite TV indicates a tendency for small, local initiatives to be either taken over or marginalised by large companies or communication consortia. This leaves women less opportunities to have any more production or editorial control within the new systems than they have had within the traditional media".[5]

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[2] Ibid., p. 9

[3] "Women and Media Workshop Report – Emerging Issues", The Asia Pacific Regional NGO Symposium, 31 August to 4 September 1999, Bangkok, Thailand.

[4] Ramilo, Chat Garcia, "Empowering Women in the Global Information Era", paper presented at the Conference on Vision for Asia-Pacific Women in the Information of the 21st Century – Women's Status and Communication Technology Information Era, Seoul, Korea, November 1998, p. 2.

[5] Cited in "State of Women and Media in Asia: Focus on Violence Against Women: A Preliminary Report", p. 12..

The Asian Institute of Journalism has noted that:

> Private ownership has facilitated the growth of giant and oligopolistic transnational interests, which indirectly control mass media through their huge advertising budget. This form of indirect control hooks up the Asian mass media in promoting information designed to build up a consumer-oriented culture. The mass media have been gradually integrated into a global scheme that creates cultural alienation. It also serves as a vehicle for promoting western values. Owners dictate editorial policies and promote their own interests. This curtails the will of the Asian press to provide objective accounts of processes and events where the public could draw adequate sources of information.[6]

The commercialization of media and new information and communication systems is part and parcel of the global integration of free markets, trade and financial flows. The quantum leaps being taken in the field of media and communication heightens the power of corporations in their efforts to capture and control new markets, raw materials and labour worldwide. Media conglomerates are the norm these days and mergers and buy outs are bringing a greater number of media interests into the hands of fewer and fewer people. It has also become common practice for very large non-media corporations to invest in multimedia and entertainment corporations, using the mediums to create needs for products where they did not exist previously. In this context, information and knowledge are regarded as commodities rather than tools for human development in the service of greater societal good.

Cultural norms and standards are further homogenized to blend with the preferences of the ruling elite, and socially constructed gender roles are further entrenched— yielding more negative impact on the cause of promoting respect for cultural diversity, tolerance for difference, gender equality and social justice.

The connections among global business, the state, the military and media have led to a concentration of power to determine socio-cultural discourse, and the shaping of socially approved values, perceptions, attitudes and behaviours. While media institutions may have promulgated principled ethics to abide by, such standards are often compromised in situations where institutions are controlled by elite interests. It is not past any state, business or military institutions to feed "enhanced" information as a way of channeling public opinion in favour of certain geo-political and economic positions. It goes without saying that such connections limit media democratization and the promotion of diverse socio-cultural and political worldviews, including portrayal of women in the media.

c) Women in the media

While there are clearly a larger number of women media practitioners and experts in the field of information and communication than before, most women have not gained much parity with men in terms of participation and decision-making in the media. Top management is still largely male-dominated and patriarchal even as a few women hold senior positions in media organizations.[7] These women do not have much access to various forms of control of the media and tend to receive limited technical training and time/space allocation.

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[6] Ibid., p. 11.
[7] Ibid., p. 12.

Male dominated and limited by the values of a patriarchal society, media institutions, including film and television industries, tend to be insensitive to gender concerns, if not completely biased against them, capitalise on sensationalist and violent images, which places women at a far more disadvantaged position.

Women's presence in the higher echelon of the media organisations is generally a function of her share in its ownership rather than signalling positive developments in gender parity. Even if women are in positions of authority, without a developed gender consciousness, resistance to violence and commitment to values of a culture of peace, it is unlikely that women can bring about transformation in media institutions.

Stereotyped attitudes, sexual harassment, salary differences, unfair treatment in assignments and promotions, traditional gender hierarchies (including premium on family responsibilities), lack of support mechanisms for working women and low education deter women from joining the media or assuming decision-making positions. In some countries women in media institutions have even decreased in numbers.[8] In Asia and the Pacific, the widespread cases of sexual harassment within media organisations was particularly cited as a means to control and exclude women from occupying key positions in the industry.[9]

The Secretary-General of the United Nations reported that:

Freedom of the press and women's rights in the media cannot be seen in isolation from one another. If women do not enjoy the same opportunities for access and expression as men, freedom of the press has not been achieved. Women journalists from developing countries have been claiming that there is a link between the suppression of women in the media and the attainment of media freedom as a whole. In certain countries women's growing participation and visibility in the media, which is a symbol of their growing involvement in the public sphere, has often made them targets of gender-specific violence, intolerance and even terrorism.[10]

The gender division of labour is very much evident in the way coverage of stories are assigned. Women still tend to be assigned to "soft issues" such as culture, arts, lifestyle while men are assigned to political and economic stories which are considered more as "real issues". On their part some women journalists tend to have a narrow range of interest and focus their attention to culture and the arts only, even in countries where women journalists are accorded the laws on gender equality and equal opportunity and encouraged to cover political, economic and legal affairs. Many women journalists have tackled news beats previously seen as male domains but their understanding of gender sensitivity and of women's issues continue to be constrained by more traditional definitions of what is newsworthy and what is not. The main motivation in finding and judging news values is what will sell the newspaper, television and radio programmes. These standards have contributed to the marginalization of women's themes in the mainstream media. [11]

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[8] Ibid., p.14.

[9] "Women and Media Workshop Report – Gaps", The Asia Pacific Regional NGO Symposium, 31 August to 4 September 1999, Bangkok, Thailand.

[10] United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, "Elimination of Stereotyping of Women in the Mass Media", report of the Secretary-General at the CSW 40th session, New York, March 1996, p.5.

[11] *State of Women and Media in Asia: Focus on Violence Against Women: A Preliminary Report*, p. 13.

Although women have become more visible particularly in radio and television as presenters, announcers and reporters, the gender division of labour is highly pronounced in production; Creative and technical departments are still very much male-dominated. Women are usually announcers and newscasters whose youth and looks are given premium based on socially-defined standards. Women's groups share the observation that women media practitioners are not automatically gender-sensitive by virtue of their gender, and that feminist perspectives find space in the media not only because of women being in positions of editors or directors but because these women have a developed gender consciousness and feminist lens. Even so, it is recognized that there is value to having a critical mass of women in media who with a sharpened gender lens can challenge existing discriminatory practices and catalyse changes.

d) Media monitoring

There are government and non-government monitoring groups and agencies in Asia. Some non-government networks and groups have representatives from the media and government bodies.[12] While most official monitoring mechanisms are meant to address general media issues (such as unfair reporting, respect of privacy, decency, morality) and hardly pay attention to media's portrayal of women, there exists independent women's monitoring groups in countries such as Thailand, Fiji, Cambodia, China, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Japan, Sri Lanka and India. These monitoring groups look into media's treatment of women and children, especially as it relates to issues on violence against women.

Some of these women's groups are considered government partners in media monitoring as in the case of Cambodia, where the Ministry of Information and the Women's Media Centre, an NGO, have launched a campaign against pornography (though the latter does not support the closure or suspension of newspapers). In India, the Bombay-based Women and Media Group has initiated action against trivialising women's image in the media. These initiatives have resulted in changes in legislation, withdrawal of offensive advertisements, discontinuation of television serials, among others.[13]

e) New information and communication technologies (ICT)

Most Asian countries are now connected to what is referred to as the information superhighway. The new ICTs that also serve as media distribution channels have provided women with opportunities to share information and resources, and link and network with one another faster. However, while the region's online population grows rapidly, women's presence in this new communication space still lags behind. Access to this new medium is particularly difficult for women in poorer and less urbanized areas where telecommunications infrastructures are poor and unaffordable. Lack of skills, training and language accessibility also serves as major deterrents.

Girls and women continued to be discouraged to pursue science and technology education, leading to women's under-representation in the technical aspects of the information and communication sector. Women have not been raised and trained to engage in science and technology. Advancement of ICT has also created contradictory realities for women such as new work opportunities (particularly in production of electronics and computer hardware; computer encoding) to increased unemployment (bank tellers, telephone operators), greater interaction and intercultural exchange and activism to deeper exclusion,

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[12] Ibid., p. 18.

[13] Ibid., p. 19-20, p. 22.

and a widening gap between the information-rich and information-poor.[14] Women are mostly concentrated in assembly and clerical work while only a few are engaged in computer systems administration and technical development. Women in low grade technical and service jobs also make up the largest group of computer users. Men continue to crowd out women in training for higher skilled work.

Although technology as we know it is not neutral and brings with it an inherent overlay of cultural norms and values, the socio-cultural implications of women's use of ICT is hardly explored. What impact it will have on nullifying or rendering meaningless women's knowledge, skills, traditions and culture is yet unknown. When access to ICTs remain limited and costly, the inroads of ICTs dissipate informal channels of information exchange. Where women used to be regarded as a source of traditional knowledge, the inroads have further marginalized women's role as knowledge providers.

Given that ICT is still being controlled primarily by the North, many critics fear that ICT might bolster re-entrenching the firm grip that former colonial and neo-capitalist forces have had over developing countries in the past generations. In order to participate in the new world order and the emerging information society, women are recognising the need to understand and be part of the development of new ICT. At the same time, women are also aware of the need to maintain a critical view of ICT so that they can utilise the new technology for women's advancement and empowerment.[15]

D. Women's strategies to counter gender stereotyping in the media

Women are no strangers to the experience of being stereotyped, misrepresented or made invisible by mainstream media. We have seen over the past two decades clear indicators that media institutions are neither monolithic nor unresponsive to the persistent demands for greater and better representation of women. Even so, women media practitioners and communicators have strategized to work both within and without the mainstream media to transform the media from an artillery of stereotypes, violent and denigrating images, and sporadic truths to a reliable source of information that promotes and defends values of equality, justice, tolerance and peace.

Alternative media: Women activists have sought to create alternative streams of information, strengthened channels of communication that have supported the affirmation of feminist principles, promoted networking and solidarity building. This has been a conscious and deliberate strategy of women's movements as it has been with other social movements that have used communication tools to strengthen their various struggles. Women's information and communication organizations the world over seek to strengthen women's capacity to create their own news and information, document their experiences, strategies and voices, and persistently challenge prevalent stereotypes of women and the "Other." Various forms of media have also been effectively used over the past two decades to successfully raise silenced and/or taboo issues such as violence against women, incest, child abuse, HIV/AIDS, and reproductive health and sexuality issues.

The vibrancy of folk and alternative media are being harnessed in educational and consciousness–raising efforts, by not only women's and civil society organizations, but also

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[14] Ramilo, Chat Garcia, Op. Cit., p. 1.
[15] "Information and Communication Technologies: A Women's Agenda Workshop Report", The Asia Pacific Regional NGO Symposium, 31 August to 4 September 1999, Bangkok, Thailand.

by government bodies and international agencies interested in reaching rural, tribal and/or peoples who have little access to mainstream written materials. It is not uncommon to see development programmes for literacy, health and education utilize songs, street theatre, puppetry, and other means of communication taking root. The interactive and community nature of these mediums has an edge over other communication mediums that tend to be one-way as well as more individual in nature.

Radio: Radio's potential in reaching more communities and, therefore, more women is increasingly being recognized. While there is a dearth of women-specific programming in most radio channels, there is greater awareness of this need, particularly amongst community-based radio stations that are working to meet the targeted information needs of the communities they serve.

ICT: Of all the alternative mediums of communication, perhaps the one with the most radical impact on the women's movement is ICT that support information dissemination and communication channels. Regionally as well as globally, there are some dramatic evidences of women using electronic communications to strengthen their advocacy, lobbying and solidarity building efforts. These technologies provide greater potential in being able to build wider consensus, develop more democratic information and communication systems, and faster and more efficient sharing of knowledge and building alliances.

Such alternative streams of communication have strengthened women's advocacy the world over. Thus strengthened women's advocacy has succeeded in establishing acts of violence against women as morally and legally unacceptable. Women have spoken up on issues of women's political and economic empowerment, discriminatory policies and practices in educational, political, religious and social institutions, and have taken up their causes in both local and global arenas. These alternative streams, once existing on the margins, can be said to now have significant influence on local, national, regional and global arenas of policy and decision-making.

The success of women's advocacy at this level is evident in the promulgation of international documents such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies and the Beijing Platform for Action amongst others. These documents, though by no means perfect or complete, have laid significant groundwork in establishing the acceptability or unacceptability of various societal norms and standards across diverse cultures and contexts.

To date, women the world over have worked both as catalysts and critics of the mainstream while working at creating alternatives. Women media practitioners opened collaboration with women activists to leverage greater access and control and promote gender equality within media institutions as well as positive representation of women in media messages.

Women working to address issues such as violence against women, gender discrimination and injustices of armed conflict situations have used various means of creating visibility for their protests, most often making non-violent principles central to their protests. Their strategies have been various and the results encouraging. Some examples of these include:

- Feminist International Radio Endeavors (FIRE)[16], an international feminist communication organization with an aim to make women's "little" voices "big" enough to be heard demonstrated how women's "little experiences" can be projected and used as a potent tool to advance just causes.

- The power of silent gatherings in the face of life-threatening military aggression can be exemplified by the Mothers of May Square. Through silent gatherings as a way of expressing their outrage at the injustice committed against their families and societies, the women have constantly made efforts to educate their governments, the public and the media through vigils and press statements. The Mothers of May Square was awarded the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education 1999 for establishing an information and communication centre, which trains young people into responsible writers and journalists.[17] These women's groups have become for the women of the world models of courage and perseverance with unbroken vigils.

- The Women in Black is a means of mobilization and a formula for action that was started in Israel in 1988.[18] The movement brings to fore the might women can gather in pressuring their own governments to find non-violent, political ways of settling differences.

- The Association for Progressive Communications' Action Alert uses the net to lobby the United Nations by mobilizing women around the world through electronic news combined with signature campaigns.[19]

- The Revolutionary Afghan Women's Association has used an effective electronic awareness raising campaign through their website and mailing lists to alert the world to the situation of Afghan women.

- The International Women's Tribune Centre has used a world-wide mailing list to inform its subscribers of the arguments and strategies used by the factions that attempt to restrict women's rights so that the subscribers could strategize and lobby more effectively to protect and expand women's rights in internationally agreed texts.

- The Women Action Network, a network of diverse women's information and communication organizations, worked through the process of reviewing the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action that culminated in the global review in June 2000. The Network created a global campaign of awareness raising, information dissemination and capacity building to enable women activists to contribute to the Beijing Review process at sub-regional, regional and international levels. Documents, alternative reports by non-governmental organizations and national level assessments conducted by women's organizations were made available on linked web sites, creating the possibility of greater lobbying and advocacy at

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[16] Raising Women's Voices – Peacebuilding (Susan McKay and Dyan Mazurana) (www.ifuw.org/peace/peacebuilding/raising-womens-voices.htm)

[17] www.unesco.org/cpp/uk/projects/mothers.htm

[18] Jewish women Call for Peace: A Handbook for Jewish Women in the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict; 1990.

[19] Flash news and signature campaign on United Nations Security Council Resolution (1325 (2000)) on women, peace and security.

national and international levels to strengthen government commitments to the Beijing Platform for Action.

- Isis International-Manila has as its very mandate the strengthening of dialogue, analyses and networking within women's movements. Through its publications and media advocacy campaigns, Isis has sought to support and strengthen the works of women activists regionally and globally in their advocacy, capacity building and awareness raising efforts. The organization has also sought to enable women to become communicators, to tell their own stories, create their own networks and utilize communication tools more effectively through its training programmes. Working with media professionals, academics and women activists, Isis is developing a code of conduct on gender-fair reporting, which is aimed at contributing to mainstreaming a gender perspective in media policies in the hope of eliminating exploitative images, gender-biased reportage and programming.

Strategies for action

A culture of peace requires that we look at conflict, violence and war with multiple lenses. As we reviewed earlier, racist and stereotyped notions of the "Other" need to be addressed: violence against the least valued and most marginalized in a society, the enforcing of policies and legislation that favour the interests of large corporations to the exclusion of the poor, the skewing of news in favour of a particular diplomatic stance or a particularly powerful state and biased portrayal of women and all "Others" in the media – all of these are linked to one another and need to be addressed in all its complexity.

With the experiences of challenging and negotiating various forms of oppression in our lives, women are in the best position to provide the efforts for a culture of peace with the complexity of analysis and the longer-term commitment that such efforts would require. As activists and advocates, we also have experienced the challenges of making unpopular notions such as gender equality a part of mainstream consciousness, and for the most part, doing it using peaceful means. The following are some strategies that we might use in our efforts towards fostering a culture of peace through influencing media institutions, utilizing media strategies, and shaping public opinion:

- Lobby governments, United Nations agencies such as UNESCO and other international community actors to encourage and support the entrance of women in the field of media, journalism and new ICT through the provision of scholarships and training opportunities;

- Build and strengthen partnership among the networks of women media practitioners, inclusive of all interested in the region, so as to facilitate greater information dissemination and to create a web of support for women media practitioners seeking greater social justice and gender equality in the institutions they work for;

- Promote and encourage women's steady increase of access and control of various forms of media and strengthen women's alternative media, which shall hopefully result in truly ensuring that women's voices and perspectives are reflected in important local and global issues;

- Make use of media and other venues for two important goals: Women's equal representation especially at the highest levels of decision-making in conflict resolution; and, women's participation in preventing and resolving conflicts through indigenous wisdoms and approaches;

- Develop a global directory of media organizations and women's information and communication organizations that are interested in developing an international code of conduct for fair reporting, which shall include commitments to gender sensitivity and promotion of tolerance and diversity as understood in a culture of peace. Such a directory can go a long way in the strengthening of an international network of women media practitioners;

- Acknowledge the growing scope and influence of cyberspace, and strategize together to develop a strong critique that pushes for greater democratization of the medium and its accessibility and greater control by those of non-English speaking cultures;

- Carry out lobbying with relevant government and United Nations agencies, as well as directly engage media owners, to inspire in them a respect for cultural diversity in their programming, while shifting away from stereotypes, discriminatory and biased images and reporting;

- Work towards curbing the dominance of media moguls that has turned such public facilities as media institutions and ICTs into corporate enterprises. We can do this by creating alternative streams of information even as we demand greater public accountability of globalized media corporations;

- More effectively utilize media advocacy as one of the key strategies in monitoring the commitments and the implementation of all recommendations made in the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of its five year review, and in particular those sections on Women in Armed Conflict, Violence against Women and Women and the Media;

- Promote inclusion of media literacy and critical analyses in educational curricula so that children and young adults are more equipped to deconstruct stereotyped messages and symbols that perpetuate ignorance, xenophobia, racism and hatred that would give meaning to and legitimatize war and violence.

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Working Group 3

Economic empowerment of women

Roza Otunbayeva
Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan to the United Kingdom of
Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Asia is home to nearly 70 per cent of the world's poor, or about 900 million people. Together with other parts of the continent, Central Asia, a region comprising five countries with 50 million people, was also severely hit by the Asian financial crisis of 1997-1998. During the transition period the populations of the Central Asian countries, which had previously been protected by the Soviet safety net system, fell into deep poverty. Two-thirds of the unemployed in each of these countries are women. After the devastating civil war, Tajikistan is slowly recovering. In the past two years, the security of emerging new countries has been threatened by the intrusion of Islamic extremists from Afghanistan.

Fergana valley is the most sensitive area in Central Asia and it visibly demonstrates the danger threatening the peace of the region, the social vulnerability of the population, the scope of mounting social and economic problems at the national, regional and community levels. Shared by three countries, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and with a total population of 10 million, the valley is beset by serious problems including water, land and border disputes, unemployment, and drug trafficking from neighbouring countries to the West.

How can we escape crises that might occur in such a situation? How can we make the difficult transition more rapidly, yet make it a peaceful, gradual process? How can we resist religious extremism that targets such unstable social areas? This is just one example of how economic instability is threatening the very basis of the sovereignty of countries. It clearly shows how the lack of economic opportunities, poverty, unjust distribution of incomes and assets, and frustration and dissatisfaction with the status quo can lead to unrest and chaos, instability and war in any society.

The truth is that "the face of poverty in Asia is a female one". Within the framework of this Regional Conference of Asian Women for a Culture of Peace, we should try to find ways to encourage, strengthen, develop and highlight the role of women in development, peace-building and promoting non-violence in Asia.

Everybody recognizes that microcredit, one of the strongest innovations of the past century, has reduced poverty among millions around the world. With the help of microcredit, women are weaving the basic economical fabric of many Asian countries. Microcredit has, in fact, become women's economics. The World Bank, United Nations agencies and, more recently, the Asian Development Bank have stated that the main thrust of their economic efforts against poverty will be micro lending. Vietnamese newspapers these days are reporting that microcredit in that country is even spreading to the most remote mountainous places in that country. The World Bank and other international financial institutions have started to question their previous policy of channelling large sums of credit to non-accountable governments, and are now turning to new players such as non-governmental organizations as well as regional authorities within countries.

Asia is probably the most dynamic continent with a broad spread of microcredit projects. Many countries in the region are proud to demonstrate their record of successful lending to millions of women.

How can we promote and spread the best examples of micro lending to countries and regions where it has not yet been implemented? Grameen Bank of Bangladesh is among many other donors to micro-lending projects in Kyrgyzstan. In 1995, Dr. M. Yunus gave the first loan to women in the remote Batken region to enable them to start a micro-lending programme. We should continue the South-South dialogue in order to help to each other. Are any other microcredit incubators that are accessible to countries wanting to start such a programme; instead of waiting for foreign donors and looking for international sponsors, should we not also be considering the rich in poor countries, and encouraging them to invest in such programmes?

As a follow-up to the 1997 World Microcredit Summit in Washington DC, it is time to organize an Asia Microcredit Conference that will enable governments and the international community to intensify their joint efforts in the struggle to overcome poverty in Asia, the largest poor community in the world. Those countries with many years of ongoing micro-lending projects clearly show that microcredit just helps people to survive from day to day. The next step towards sustainability of the poor is to set up special funds or a "Bank of the Poor". The best examples of such practices are to be found in Bolivia, Bangladesh, Kenya, Indonesia and Malaysia.

The most interesting activity will be the application of the micro-lending mechanism to the problems among groups of excluded and marginalized people, especially as such problems are threatening the stability, integrity and sustainability of our societies.

The bulk of the 27 million migrants and refugees around the world are living in Asia. Delegates from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan have pointed out this fact in their statements. In our group, we would like to hear about the experiences of the participants with micro lending to families of refugees, and especially to women. What were the failures and what lessons have been learnt? Can you tell us of any success stories of micro lending among indigenous people and ethnical minorities in remote regions? Can you share with us any stories of how the cultivation of illegal crops in your countries was substituted with other crops instead of opium? Where have peasants, especially women farmers been given microcredit to encourage "positive culture".

Women's entrepreneurship is an "empowerment strategy". What trends, problems and barriers face women's businesses and how can we deal with them? How should women secure their rights for their part and stake in the ongoing massive privatisation process in many Asian countries?

Legal and regulatory barriers

In many countries, property and particularly land – the universal collateral – is usually registered in a man's name. Some countries have laws that prevent women from entering into contracts under their own names or from owning or selling land. In other countries, legal and regulatory restrictions prevent women from participating in the labour force on equal terms with men. What kind of initiatives, approaches and partners can you suggest to us from your experience gained in tackling those problems?

In the current globalized world there is a distinct and growing gap between the information-poor and information-rich. Therefore, women should try to join with to those who have access to the information super highway. Our cities in Asia are full of Internet cafes, but we cannot compete on the family or individual level with other continents where personal computer ownership is widespread. Developing countries need to shape up to the new digital literacy.

What is the progress of online activities run by UNDP and other United Nations organizations concerning micro lending? Do you use such sites to find information about the work of other community groups in development or different funding sources for micro lending?

In this time of global e-commerce and e-business awareness, we need computer empowerment of women in order to develop women's entrepreneurship so that they can enter into international trade. We could attempt to provide a mechanism for linking women entrepreneurs and women's associations throughout Asia in order to promote their participation in the global market. This could be in the form of launching an Asian women's trade network.

Working Group 4

Gender perspective for peace and decision-making

Anuradha M. Chenoy
School of International Studies,
Jawaharlal Nehru University

INTRODUCTION

For women, peace is not just "an absence of war" but a process that enables us to transform our lives and ensures justice and human rights. We have formed this definition because conflict and war are not isolated events, but processes that begin before a conflict and continue long after the event is over. This process is backed by the ideology of militarism that brings militarist values into civil society, justifying violence by both the State and civil society. Militarism is entwined with patriarchy, and both sustain and reinforce each other. At the same time, it is not enough for us to say that there is a connection between private and international conflicts, or that we need equal rights to be part of a militarized national security regime.

It is our contention that for a gender perspective of peace and for engendering decision-making, we have to reconstruct the notion of national security. We have to establish how it is militarist and nationally chauvinistic, and indicate how it should be engendered and widened to include human security. This is particularly important because despite the expected peace dividend in the post-cold war period, wars and conflicts, especially in the Third World, have not decreased.

In Asia today, there is an arc of conflicts that extends from Afghanistan, through Tajikistan, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar. Causes of these conflicts include issues of ethno-nationalism, militant secessionism, militarism, fundamentalism, territorial disputes, national chauvinism and economic deprivation. There have been hundreds of thousands of victims of these conflicts. Women and children have been vastly affected. All these conflicts have been perceived as threats to the national security of the States involved and tackled through the use of force. None have been resolved. Should we, then, continue to retain the traditional notion of national security? Or can we think of an alternative?

A. Reconstructing the notion of national security

National security is of paramount concern to the modern State and is the basis of foreign policy and international relations. The task of the State is seen as one that will create and maintain political and other structures to ensure the security of the State. This security is linked to the State's strategic vision that is shaped by traditional national security concepts. Realist and neo-realist theories provide the theoretical foundation for the practice of traditional national security and international relations. For such theorists, security is the essence that ensures the survival of the nation state. National security is linked to the military and state power, which is seen as essential in times of conflict or potential conflict. Realism and, currently, neo-realism are the dominant theories used by most States in their daily practice of international relations.

Realists argue that since States are the primary providers of security, an individual secures his or her security by virtue of membership of the national community. The security of the individual is inextricably linked with that of the State because the principle role of the State is to protect and preserve the social order as well as protect individuals from invasion by foreigners and from injuries to one another.[1] From this perspective, the State is the focus for security concerns; individuals are not the appropriate starting points in thinking about security. Realism adapted the political theory of Thomas Hobbes who showed the dominance of man in an anarchic state of nature. Realists thus advocate that international politics must be understood predominantly as a realm of anarchic interaction between sovereign authorities.

Since conditions of anarchy and the ruthless pursuit of divergent national interest characterize the realm of international politics, States operate in a world where their security and autonomy are constantly threatened. This anarchy, in the absence of any regulating authority, leads to a generic relation between States based on a balance of power. Neo-realists adapted anarchy and the lack of formal governance as the main principle of the international system and characterize international politics as one of anarchy between States. Whereas realists doubted interdependence because it implied some level of vulnerability, neo-realists such as Kenneth Waltz (1959) argue that there is no automatic mechanism to adjust clashing interests, and so balances form in which the freedom of choice of any one State is limited by the actions of all others.[2]

Realism (and its offshoot neo-realism) is deeply rooted in the history of the State and to that strand of political theory that builds on the conception of the state as an actor based on the abstraction of the "sovereign man", the hero and warrior in political theory especially from Machiavelli to Hobbes. Morganthau, the founder of realist thought, takes from Hobbes and writes that the "nature of man" is the starting point for theorizing on international relations. In this theory, power is seen in terms of a hierarchy dominated by men who can influence others, if necessary by force, and it is natural for man to dominate so that society is organized on this basis. The neo-realists improvised on this and their main actor was the man of rational choice, a figure common to neo-classical economic theories and methodological individualism. These foundational theories of international relations have excluded women from the political stage, as has the practice of international relations. Initially used by the West, the neo-realist doctrines of national security are the foundations on which Asian States have increasingly based their own theories of security.

In this framework, patriarchy is a natural and necessary aspect of the social order for sustaining the State. Since it is believed that national security would be threatened if the prevailing definitions of man as the political actor are challenged, it becomes contingent to exclude women.[3] Since the State is the basis of patriarchal relations, women are the "other" or the outsider. Neo-realists such as Waltz adapt from the social contract theorists and exclude women from their construction of the nation state.[4] While the realists and neo-realists characterized the State with rationality and capabilities, women were kept outside the public sphere of rationality.

Although patriarchal customs preceded state formation, the State played a critical role in structuring patriarchy in all its institutions. The consent-making (ideological structures), and the coercive powers of the State have legitimized class and gender relations. Given this tradition, patriarchy, power, security apparatuses and militarism are entwined. Women's role in the domestic sphere and their relegation to secondary status in State and society has been legitimized by state policies and is reflected in legal rights and economic, social and political

position in state structures.* The State has been the main organizer of power relations of gender, and continues to be engaged in the mystification of its patriarchal base by constructing and manipulating the ideology that distinguishes between public and private life.[5]

The State further formalized gender power relations by retaining male domination of the top personnel within States. Gender differentiation is also evident in the presence of a disproportionate number of men in the coercive structures of the State (army, police etc.) and women in the service sector (teachers, health, clerical support etc.). In fact women were "protected" from the so-called "tough" professions in order to keep them out and retain gender stereotypes. Men were eligible for better jobs and better pay in the modernized societies while women got these privileges only after long struggles, in which women had to counter debates that predicted social anarchy, breakdown of family values, and the spectre of male unemployment, if they were awarded these privileges. It is because of the long history of patriarchy and exploitation and its legitimization by state structures, that the entwining of patriarchy and political system became so acceptable, and appeared apolitical and natural.

Despite the changes in modern States where gender issues have been recognized, international relations have continued to deal primarily with the patriarchal aspects. Gender has remained outside the sphere of concern for realism and neo-realism because of this intellectual tradition as well as neo-realism's preoccupation with inter-state relations, war and the balance of power. International relations theorists and practitioners did not relate to the women's movement or the changes that affected social and political systems. The tools available to international relations remain heavily influenced by gender bias, and its concepts are used without disturbing the status quo that they represent.

Neo-realists confine themselves to male-identified roles as the basis of political identity and do not recognize multiple identities as categories in international relations. This leads to a "masculinist" understanding of the world, which goes in favour of male power and status. In this way, sovereign man can make a rational choice of legitimizing violence. Women can be subject to control by various methods, either through direct violence or indirect control through conceptions of "women's work", the "cult of motherhood", inadequate health care, sexual harassment at work, gender-based wage differentiation and unequal access to resources. The complicity of the State comes in at points where the State has a policy of non-intervention in domestic violence or may directly support laws that allow gender discrimination. For example, a number of States have refused to ratify all the clauses of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Throughout history, the very construction of the concept of the "masculine" has been linked with the notion of power. Feminists challenge this difference in order to overcome it. This does not mean that all men think in patriarchal stereotypes, but rather that concepts and institutions reflect historically and culturally conditioned ideas about the world, which are identified with a markedly masculine experience.[6] A socially constructed masculine

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* Women lost their right to property and were treated like property themselves. The individual household unit rendered women vulnerable to, and dependent on, fathers/ brothers/husbands and weakened their access to countervailing power and support from larger kin networks. With new inheritance claims, sexuality and reproduction was also regulated by the State. For example, women's adultery became a crime against the State and was publicly punishable.

experience is validated as a universal experience and imposed on women. This preserves masculine privilege and social practices in the private and public realms. Women (and men) accept this ideology as "value neutral" and practice it as "given" or natural. For example, in 2000, a survey of the National Family Health Association of India showed that over 65 per cent of the women surveyed justified wife-beating as a form of discipline. This survey cut across age groups and the rural-urban divide.[7] Women also tend to reflect male experience as the "natural" experience when they enter male-dominated professions such as politics or security. It is essential, then, to decipher the implications of representing the male experience as the only human experience, and to show that it is incomplete and an exclusionary view of human relations and international relations.

Feminists and other scholars who question the very activity of theorising and the politics of knowledge have challenged the neo-realist argument that international relations is gender neutral and that gender can be excluded from this dialogue. The feminist argument is that international relations does not constitute just the study of structures and processes but is also a critical reflection of how this knowledge is constructed. Moreover, since social and political dynamics are linked with the construction of theory, theory is itself constructed to sustain this dynamism. Clearly, the neo-realist emphasis on anarchy in the Waltzian type analysis is actually a subterfuge that keeps women from discerning patterns of patriarchy.

The anarchy theories deny how events are interconnected. Isolating events and denying the interconnection of things prevents us from seeing all of reality. The theory and practice of international relations then, does not deal with the issues of social justice or gender inequity as an issue. Neo-realism removes the problems of race, class, ethnic and gender issues from the field of study of international relations.[8] Further, the importance of communities and non-governmental actors cannot be adequately assessed in this framework. Once these issues are bypassed, conflict resolution becomes essentially conflict management by force. The real issues behind the conflict are not addressed. Women in the process of conflict resolution must question the history of international relations and engage in redefining and enlarging the traditional notions of the State and its security regime, in order to encompass the role of women and non-State actors, especially the marginalized.

The neo-realist paradigm then, attempts not only to describe the world as it is, but is the ideology that maps a world in a way that serves to justify and perpetuate the kind of social and political order that it describes. On the basis of this critique, feminists' works analyse the way in which ideas about gender are constructed and used to legitimate and perpetuate inequalities. Moreover, since women traditionally have been excluded from the political order, and especially in matters of international politics, the historical development of the subject, the language that it employs (of power, virility and masculinity) remain part of the realist paradigm.[9] To cite some examples from India, images of manhood, war and power were interlinked and invoked by chauvinist forces when India and Pakistan carried out nuclear tests in May 1998. Statements made by right-wing leaders after the nuclear tests called the tests a symbol of "Hindu revivalism", and there were proposals for instituting religious symbols ("Shakti Peeth") at the Pokhran site. The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) took upon itself the task of distributing the radioactive "holy sand" from Pokhran to distant corners of India. All previous governments that had abjured from the tests were described "as a bunch of eunuchs".[10] The nuclear tests were cited as a testimony to the "manhood" of the State as voiced by Shiv Sena (a regional right-wing party) supremo Bal Thackerey in his statement: "We have to prove we are not eunuchs". There were echoes of sentiments of "national pride" at various levels of civil society.[11]

Such a discourse has multiple purposes. National security is privileged and is identified with a particular religion and more specifically with the male in the religion. The State is shown to be virile and "masculine" only when it has more than adequate force and nuclear capacity. Without this nuclear capacity it is seen as emasculated and categorized as a "eunuch". The "enemy" state is asked to "wear bangles" because it not capable of a response and is relegated to the lower rank of female.

What distinguishes the feminist critique of realist national security doctrines is that we would like to see an engendering of power and security concepts. Well-known critics of realist theory such as Robert Keohane[12] emphasize that neo-realism does not take into account institutional characteristics of systems and thus provides no way for the system to change except when the capabilities of States change. An understanding of world politics must involve the changing complexities of institutions and their effect on States. Other critics such as Rosenburg[13] argue that realism is flawed because the theory of anarchy as a determinant in international relations is fixed in specific periods and cannot explain historical transition and change. Moreover, international relations are not just about inter-state conflict but show that domestic conflicts can be internationalized and that international conflicts can be a major aspect of domestic issues (for example, Russia in 1917, China in 1949, and the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in 1989-1991). Although realism concerns itself about stability and order, it does not relate to internal conflict or its reasons. These critiques reveal the contradictions of realism and neo-realism but do not focus on its gendered nature.

Feminist theorists find common ground with democratic groups who also criticize neo-realism as a profoundly elitist doctrine that restricts itself to actors of state power and privileges, and the concerns of the State over human and popular concerns. Issues such as human rights that include women and children's rights are not considered as part of the security discourse. Feminist theorists have broadened the study of international relations by encompassing emancipation, rights, equality, identity and empowerment into its debates. Neo-realists have not been comfortable with these issues, and are prone to dismiss them as ambiguous, or idealist activism that is not of relevance to the statist discourse. Since realism does not address internal issues, it does not concern itself with matters of social justice, rights, equity, freedom or empowerment that are the real issues that cause conflict both between and within States. In conflict resolution and international relations, if these issues are not addressed adequately they are bound to create new conflicts and deepen existing ones.

Our position that there is a link between the family and State can be traced back to Aristotle's description of the patriarchal family that "politics begins with the family". Since children are socialized in patriarchal notions of power, the militarist version of national security and State power are easily accepted. Because of this, instead of resolving conflicts through peaceful conflict resolution, the dominant discourse is to prepare citizens to resolve it militarily. As women engaged in peace it is the system behind conflicts, that of militarism, that we have to understand and contest.

B. Countering militarism

Militarism is the ideology that values force as a means of security for resolving conflict and, in doing so, legitimizes state violence. National security doctrines rely on militarism and justify it in the name of national interest, which is shown as the "supreme interest" of the nation. In instances when the civilian leadership increasingly uses military power in civil use "to save the nation" and solve political problems by citing instances of

instability or sectarian strife, gives civilian leadership authoritarian overtones and militarizes society. Militarism of States seeps down and militarizes civil society. The ideology of nationalism (especially in its extreme forms) that constructs the notion of the nation state, often lends support to militarist ideas. An important task of national security doctrines is to use nationalism to reinforce the legitimacy of State violence for the sake of ensuring the preservation of national security.

The militarist idea of a nation is one that is welded together not in peace but in adversity; "die for your country" and "stand up for your nation" are expressions of notions of power that are expressed through militarism. This notion of power advocates a hierarchy in social relations, where women have a specific role as a subordinate support system for men. As patriarchy and militarism intersect, the use of force for conflict management is legitimized and there is a simultaneous privileging of "physical prowess". In this way, a masculinist method and privilege becomes the common denominator in inter-state, national and private politics. Clearly, while it is possible to draw connections between militarism and masculinity, they are not identical but have "become entwined".[14]

Militarization involves cultural as well as institutional, ideological and economic transformations.[15] Political systems make decisions that keep patriarchy and militarism alive through active political decisions of the State rather than by tradition or culture.[16] Militarization exists during peace and war, and it can occur in any part of society that may or may not be controlled by the military. Thus virtually anything can be militarized; toys, scientific research, motherhood and curricula are prime examples.[17] A State does not have to be dominated by the military to be militarist. Democratic States can use militarist methods to deal with other States in their foreign policy, and can deal with opposition and internal dissent through militarist methods. In fact, almost all States continue to adhere to this ideology and method. Militarism rests on the theory of realism and neo-realism.

Militarization occurs when any part of society becomes dependant upon military or militarist values. Non-State movements that oppose regimes or State systems can be as militarized. Political groups, especially fundamentalist groups, can advocate policies of militarism within civil society and can have a militarist organization and outlook. They give their cadres military training and advocate the use of military methods to deal with the "enemy other".

Further, militarism interconnects with other ideologies and increases their oppressive control. The masculinity of the war discourse helps maintain gender differences and assigns a lower rung to women in the social and power hierarchy. In all cultures, men are linked with the military (man of steel) and display the "coat of arms". In all periods of history, from feudalism to the nuclear capitalist period, matters of military, war and conflict, their organization, resolution and narrative are handled primarily by men. Throughout history, war and militarist methods have defined for men what 'maleness' means, and are a confirmation of the masculine identity.[18] War and militarist values became a proof of manhood, and male superiority was traditionally tested this way. The test of superiority in the military field was extended to society through cultural and social practices. Literature, media, films and texts echo these practices. The privilege and status given to men as warriors excluded others, especially women. At the same time, the military and the overall ideology of militarism also defines women as complimentary or adjunct to men. Femininity is thus presented as a (inferior and "natural") contrast to masculinity. Militarism reinforces role models and behavioural patterns of men and women within the military and in society itself.

The ideology of militarism presents violence as a "normal male practice", one that should be linked with the male identity. Thus, aggression becomes an accepted code for men, whereas the pacific/victim is the natural code for women. (How often have we heard in our societies, after males have committed aggression, that "boys will be boys"?) Similarly, men are to serve the State/polity and women are to serve men. (Men in the boardroom, women in the bedroom.) The gender differences and hierarchy played out in positions of power and decision-making have ensured that the status of men remain superior in all structures and institutions. Moreover, propaganda for war promotes national unity and silences dissent, and women especially are "shown their place" during such times. Subjugation of others is part of the militarist ideology that is also inculcated as a male practice. This "other" can range from the other gender, to community, class, region, enemy nation etc. Thus, for example, peace activists in countries that are engaged in war and militarization are invariably termed "anti-national".

Society and State recognize (both legally and socially) the distinct but unequal gender roles and favour women's sacrifices for the State's wars. Women accept male privilege and the male-militarist mystique. All of society, and women within it, has routinely internalized these values and even promoted them. States thus take care to honour the wives of soldiers killed in wars. The sacrifices made by mothers and wives are part of the traditions and myths of all wars and of all countries. It is important to note here that just as war and militarism reinforce the traditional roles of women, they have also unintended consequences of changing some roles for women. Wars have forced women to go to work in the absence of men or take up war-related auxiliary tasks and thus become part of public life. In many cases, when wars are over, men resume their natural positions as leaders and women often go back to the home, as the State extols the virtues of home-making. Nonetheless, feminists have conceded that wars do create new spaces and roles for women. At the same time, the public roles given to women during wars reinforce militarist values and subordinate women as part of an unequal hierarchy. Militarism and military values based on patriarchal tenets continue as basic norms.

Movements associated with racism and fundamentalism invariably advocate militarist methods and ideology. Most secessionist movements based on ethnic/sectarian/regional mobilization and even nationalist movements have sections that advocate militancy and militarism.

C. Entwining nationalism, militarism and patriarchy

Most nation states of the world have been created through the ideology of nationalism and their boundaries have been defined after conflicts.[19] Values and feelings of nationalism that characterize the "modern period" further sustain the twin values of militarism and patriarchy. Many modern States, both in Europe and the post-colonial States of Asia and Africa, were linked with the rise of nationalism and came to be constructed with the formation of identities linked to the nation state. Nationalism played a progressive role in history linked with the process of modernization, anti-colonialism and secularisation. However, since patriarchy and militarism were endorsed by nationalism during those critical periods, they have been retained in the ideological and institutional structures of the State. At the same time, women also identify with the nation and are not excluded from it as other groups of different ethnicity, race or colour may be.

Nationalist movements encouraged the homogenization of identities against oppressive outsiders, and colonial or feudal systems. At the same time, nationalist movements built internal hierarchies and suppressed internal differences such as class, gender, race etc. These hierarchies and unequal power relations continued to exist and, in some cases, intensified in the newly-formed nation states, which were run by the successful nationalist elite. These States in their new incarnation were based on the principle of maintaining the status quo in domestic politics and realism in international politics. It was only progressive movements and the push of democratization that forced state structures to concede rights and incremental social justice. Militarism and patriarchy were thus constant aspects of those States.

An analysis of many of the new nation states reveals that they attempted to maintain elite privileges that were patriarchal in nature. Nationalism was used to paper over gender, class and other differences. Feminist scholars systematically showed how the nation was represented primarily by male voices in all decision-making bodies and how male agendas were continuously reinforced. As we have seen, gender is central to the construction of the nation itself. Since nationalism draws heavily from cultural images of an imagined past, often going back to the idea of a culture that was destroyed because of foreign domination, nationalism reinforces traditional conceptions of women. [20] During the national movement in India, for example, myths around the women as "custodians of the past" or "as heirs to wisdom and traditions" were propagated, while women were kept within boundaries set by the nationalist elite.[21] Although women participated in the nationalist struggle, they continued to be kept within specific boundaries, and were not given the rights that were promised to them during the struggle.

In many nationalist discourses, the nation is depicted as the "motherland". As Benedict Anderson has shown, the power of nationalism lies in its image of "belonging" and of "being home". The association of women with the home and the private domain reinforces the powerful imagery of merging the national community with the selfless and devoted mother. As this imagery appeals to male society, it simultaneously legitimizes male domination over women.[22] The language of nationalism is itself gendered and the image of the nation is often linked to the mother or mother goddess. As national identity is equated with gender, race, and colour, women become identified with the nation and their bodies are used to reproduce the boundaries of the nation and as transmitters of national culture.

Since women are identified as territory and linked with the "honour" and control of this territory, rape has always been part of the act of conflict and women's bodies become "the privileged signifiers of national difference".[23] Thus, the aggressor by violating the women attacks the honour of the enemy, and the act is symbolized as "violating the national honour" of the "other", the enemy. This gendered nationalism is entwined with militarism that is inherent in both the making and maintaining of the nation state, and is part of the discourse of power. Women's bodies are thus "owned" by the community and are to be controlled by norms set by the male-dominated community. Two examples from May 2000 are enough to show how rampant the militarized concept of honour is in South Asia. In Pakistan, an attempt to pass legislation against honour killings and blasphemy laws was withdrawn in the face of sustained hostility by the mullahs and Islamic forces within the military. In India, while laws may guard against such practice, the honour of women remains a major issue. For example, a local council (*panchayat*) in Punjab ruled that two feuding families would have to pay "with the blood of a virgin girl" if they continued to feud.[24]

In both the above cases, conflict was linked to the honour of women. Women's bodies symbolized both protection and violation of honour. The autonomy of women was to be controlled by the patriarch whether in the State or the community. The women had no say in setting the policy or in the decision, and honour was to be held and tested in the hands of the male-dominated community. The failure to protect honour was the fault solely of the woman, who had to pay for it either with her life or by forfeiting her virginity, which is equated to honour. The protection versus the violation of honour became symbolic to the protection or subjugation of territory. Women have had to pay a special price in all South Asian conflicts where women's bodies have been subject to the interplay of militarism and patriarchy through the concepts of honour and territory. Thus, the sectarian/communal conflicts throughout South Asia have had some common ingredients.

In all the conflicts that involved ethnic or religious identity issues, women were targets of mass rape. The honour (*laj/izzat*) of nation and community are identified with woman and become interchangeable with them in conflict situations, revealing the deeply entwined nature of the militarized and patriarchal discourse. All ideas that advocate militarism, essentially making the male citizen privileged by giving women a secondary role, they tend to exclude or marginalize the latter or, at best, give women a token presence. At the same time, the concept of "honour" is metaphorized in the body of women and militarism is used to "protect" that honour.

Neo-realism assumes that the nation state is the primary source of identity and allegiance for individuals. Issues that concern national security generate a sense of shared political purpose under the guise of nationalism that is further heightened during times of war. National security perceptions and nationalism are instruments of political use by most political parties. Military budgets are thus high priority items in most regimes, regardless of the party in power. The political use of nationalism varies and is used by most parties. Right-wing political parties based on national chauvinism construct a false form of national security threat to mobilize support, and generate a mass consciousness that will help build a homogenized community of citizens who perceive themselves against some "other" community, domestic or foreign, that is perceived to be an enemy.

For example, ultra-nationalists can see those subscribing to religions other than that of the majority's as the "other", the outsider to their nation. They question the loyalty of thus defined "others" and link them to countries that are regarded hostile. The minority communities are viewed as "outsiders" and unpatriotic, and are constantly called upon to prove their patriotism. This connection is sharpened during conflict, when minority communities are under pressure to support the war effort and display their patriotism, which was given prominent place in the press. Patriotism of the minorities, which is continuously tested, whether it is during cricket matches or war, is watched and recorded.

This communal construction serves to construct a contiguous internal and external enemy that is a threat to the entire homogenous construction of the nation. Social, ethnic, gender and other differences are papered over through a dominant nationalism. Since everyone has a fixed place in a nationalist hierarchy (man, woman, native, foreigner, class and caste), this legitimizes the state system in which violence is used as the ultimate arbiter of social conflicts. This process also attempts to curb the autonomy of women.[25] National chauvinism glorifies or makes privileged the positive characteristics of the dominant culture and poses it against the alleged inferior/inimical characteristics of other nationalisms. National chauvinists are thus prepared to use violence against the "other" communities.

Historically, the construction of nationalism has promoted the image of male domination and male leadership.

The danger of nationalism comes when sectarian forces twist it for xenophobic purposes. The slide from nationalism/patriotism to chauvinism/jingoism is easy and often goes undetected. That is why many excuse national chauvinism as part of an exercise in nationalism. In instances of xenophobic nationalism, an attempt is made to construct an enemy "other" as a threat, since the "other" groups are seen as disintegrative to internal unity and territorial integrity or any other attribute of sovereignty. When realism bases itself on ethnic homogeneity and nationalism, it is moving on a razor's edge because it can pander to chauvinist forces that, in turn, use the ideas of realism and neo-realism for legitimacy. In circumstances where militarist ultra-nationalism prevails, internal resistance is taken as a surrogate for foreign involvement and as the "other". This is part of the practice of internal militarization of States that want to construct a homogenous nation and in the process local communities attack the "other".

Literature and analysis of war associates men with combat, violence and activity, and women with peace, nurturing and passivity. These images are explained by biological, social and historical references. National chauvinism exaggerates the negative aspects of nationalism. By conflating manhood, combat and militarism, national chauvinism reproduces violence and glorifies it as a natural expression of masculine and nation state identity.[26] Thus the image of the "heroic" male warriors is extended to the behaviour of States. The success of a State, like the success of a man, is measured in terms of power, honour, valour, self-reliance and other aspects linked primarily to male ego. Clearly then, nationalism is often used as cover for militarism. National chauvinism has the closest links to militarization.

It is because the nation state continues to function as the irreducible component of identity that gender, together with race, class or other factors, continues to be invisible in international relations. The nation state continues to be privileged in this theory. In fact, many studies on national security continue to show how particular distinctive communities can be protected (i.e., from "outsiders" of that race/class, community etc.). The idea of a national interest as a basic organizing principle in international relations relies on the assumption that our identification with the nation is more important and overrides all other social and political identities and concerns.[27] It assumes that our identities are homogeneous, stable and without contradictions or confrontation. Further, even if any of these categories are challenged, (e.g., at times of social conflict) it is the national interest of the State that must prevail. The idea of subnational identities is thus not compatible with international relations.

South Asian States generally have the phenomenon of aggressive and insecure nationalism. The ideologies of nationalism support a conception of womanhood that links women primarily with the family and the home (reproduction). Their role is seen as nurturer, and sacrificing supporter for those (mostly males) who are decision-makers, executors, protectors or producers. This role is similar in "normal" periods or during conflicts.[28] Historically, these identity and gender differences and power equations provided legitimacy for further militarization in the minds of the people. National security privileged "at any cost", rested in the hands of a "macho" State that provided protection, with the traditional task of the male, the patriarch in the family.

The role of the woman was not passive but part of a given role that was always secondary or supportive. This included vocal support in nationalistic patriotic terms like

giving up personal items (e.g., gold bangles and money saved for domestic goods) for the "cause of war", sending "messages" to the soldiers, and encouraging husbands and sons to go to war and become martyrs. Women were part of war and became an agency for militarizing society. The images from conflict zones produced for popular consumption had an emotional substructure of masculinity and its connections to war. War was shown as a masculine enterprise, and an endorsement of the attempt to strengthen a nationalist militarism through sentimentality and gender differences. These militarist attitudes help permeate our gendered cultures and go against a culture of peace.

It is through the messages of nationalism that civil society can be militarized. Women are an important agency in militarizing civil society. Women carry this message through the message of a militant nationalism. The nation itself is symbolized as a woman such as, for example, *Bharat Mata* or Mother India. This symbolism helps evoke the most fundamental of all imageries. It is in this context that the forces that use militant nationalism in India, employ the patriotic song "*Vande Mataram*" (Hail Mother). With this, women's bodies are replaced as national territory, to be protected and possessed, just as the "other" or enemy territory (symbolized also by the woman-mother image body) has to be violated and dispossessed.

Militarism has many sources. The most essential site for militarism is the State, which sustains its legitimacy through a balance between consent and coercion. Force and militarism are legitimized by the State itself, which opts for military methods to deal with foreign policy issues. In both cases, there is a militarist policy. States spend large amounts on defence expenditure, which in many cases, especially in Asia and Africa, comes at the expense of social expenditure. India opted to exercise the nuclear option, followed by Pakistan in May 1998. The defence expenditure and militarization of the economy of both countries rose dramatically with this.

Public policy can advocate militarist traditions and symbolism. In order to give special status to the army and encourage militarism in civil society, attempts are made to keep the memory of a war alive and reconstruct it long after it was over. Many countries have some kinds of war victory celebrations as annual events, and have roads and schools named after war heroes. This shows bringing militarism into civil society is part of concerted state policy. Long after the military episode, the State is interested in associating students with militarist heroism. This is important to the State in legitimizing militarist methods, justifying military expenditure and keeping the military machine going.

Institutions of civil society are also sources for militarism. Organizations and political parties in civil society can have militarized ideologies and use militarist methods in their organizations and functioning. For example, cultural organizations and political organizations can be based on militarist-nationalist ideologies, and they train their cadres on that basis. Thus, various civil institutions and movements can become militarized. The media is an important source of militarism during times of war and peace. During war, the media choreograph the images of war and death, while the slogans of war are beamed into homes by television, like a "stealth bomber".

The family, community and schools can all be agencies for militarization. If socialized with militarism symbols, children can be militarized. Young boys speak of joining the army and donate pocket money. A race between institutions for donation of blood and money can further rouse young minds. Poster and essays competitions on the war theme can play the same role. The mad rush of youths to join the army can be presented as patriotic

fervour, covering up the desperate unemployment and insecurity that leads to such displays. The roots of militarization were thus spread through civil society.

There have been frequent and regular attempts by militarist institutions within States and societies to make women a necessary agency in supporting all acts of war and militarism. Women are used to prepare for conflict. They are the ones who first hand toy guns to their sons and dolls to their daughters. They call upon their sons and husbands to go to war and weave the stories of heroism and nationalism. During conflict, women play different roles to support the conflict. They work as nurses and wives of soldiers, they replace men at war, they drum up support for the war, and they collect funds and channel domestic savings into the war effort. They organize the "home front" as part of the war effort. Women suffer war and conflict through being widowed and raped. After the war, when men are heroes and honoured, women seek to rebuild lives for themselves, their traumatized children, wounded men or as widows. They face the ecological and economic consequences after the ravages of war. Women are an unrecognized resource for war and militarism. They are part of the infrastructure, just like oil or industry.

Women who become part of resistance movements ape militarist attitudes and patriarchal values including militarism. They adhere to stereotype attitudes of women in war and continue to reinforce patriarchal attitudes within militarist movements.[29] Moreover, because external and internal threats are seen in militarist forms by neutral observers, they tend to identify threats and resistance with militarism; the belief is that the only way to fight foreign and internal threats is through militarist ways. (Turn the other cheek and it will also be slapped). This collectivized experience further accentuates socialization into militarism and is the natural basis for the widespread acceptance of militarist notions.

Feminists emphasize the cultural underpinnings of militarism because the cause and consequence of militarization is not simply to do with war, nor is it the opposite of peace, but is part of the entire process that makes the methodology of war a part of everyday life. State violence is legitimized by the use of such key concepts such as "autonomy" and "national interest", which are based on masculinized concepts of social control and hegemony. Feminists argue that both the ideology and the practice of the State are masculinized. (It is primarily men that are given licences to carry arms.) The major practices of the State such as diplomacy; governance and national security are formulated in a context of masculine ideology that is designed to give the appearance of "toughness", or even endorsement by national interest and force.

D. Women and peace

Women are concerned with militarization for a number of reasons. Women and children are the prime and long-term victims of policies that they do not plan or execute. It is men who participate in and define public life, and take decisions about war and militarization. Even today, across the world only around 10 per cent of representatives in parliaments are women. In many countries, especially in the Third World, there are no women at all in the higher decision-making bodies of the executive such as Cabinets. War has an impact on men and women differently. Military training and military casualties in conventional wars have been men. Women, too, constitute direct casualties of war. Wars increasingly are carried out in civilian areas and current statistics show that more than 75 per cent of the casualties are non-combatants that include large numbers of women and children.[30] Modern weaponry is

designed to hurt the largest possible numbers and is indiscriminate in causing injury and death.

Wartime sexual violence against women has occurred in almost all conflicts throughout history. It is used as an instrument of coercion against the enemy in war as well as intercommunity conflict during ethnic and sectarian conflicts. The relationship between conflicts and the violation of women's bodies was established beyond doubt during ethnic conflicts that marked the emergence of the breakaway republics of former Yugoslavia. The belief that mass rape is part of genocide, humiliation and destruction of the "enemy" flows from the patriarchal understanding that a woman's body is symbolic of territory or property belonging to the enemy and which must be violated. The psychological torture and trauma associated with rape and pregnancy caused by an enemy is incomparable to other forms of torture.

Women are victims of war and conflict in a variety of other ways. The loss of family members, including husbands, brothers and children, has long-term psychological effects on women. The record of women as caretakers of family members who are war casualties is legendary, and women alone endure this form of prolonged and unique suffering.[31] Their loss is not purely an emotional loss; in most instances, it is also an economic loss and a decline of social legitimacy. In societies such as Afghanistan, where women continue to be second-class citizens or where women form the bulk of the illiterate and unemployed (as in most of the Third World), the loss of male family members in a conflict is irreparable for women. In this case, they lose the main earning member and many economic and social rights that accrue from their income. For women, destitution follows quickly on the heels of a war. It is because of this that nationalist slogans call on women to be part of the war effort and "to give their sons/men to the nation".

It has been documented by international organizations such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) that 70 to 80 per cent of the world's refugees are women and children. Women are often the sole caretakers of children, and they support the extended family, play a central economic role, nurture traumatized children and families, and restore a semblance of normalcy.[32] Famine, food scarcity, destruction of infrastructure and basic facilities such as water pipelines, roads, bridges, buildings, hospitals and farmland have an impact on the entire social structure and community. Studies have shown that in conditions of food scarcity, women are likely to decrease their own food intake. In South Asia, during peace but in conditions of poverty it is the girl child who would be deprived of basic needs and education.

The destructive impact of war on the natural environment has a devastating consequence for women. Given their role as food providers and caretakers, the responsibility of finding alternative sources of food and water and rebuilding the environment falls on women, increasing their burden disproportionately. In regions such as El Salvador and Viet Nam, where 80 per cent of the vegetation has been devastated by war, studies have shown that peasant women bear the burden of finding wood for fuel and growing food.[33] The impact of the Gulf War and the economic sanctions imposed on Iraq have badly affected women and children, making them the hapless victims of international politics and state policies.

Women have a stake in national security doctrines and international relations since it effects their lives. They have to take positions and intervene in issues of international relations in order to change the notion of security itself.

E. Changing national security to a gendered human security

The concept of human security has become familiar in the dialogue of policy makers and international organizations. Security analysts and international relations scholars, however, remain skeptical of this concept as being vague and impractical.[34] The concept of human security is not entirely new. Radical economists who have criticized the dominant development models and proposed alternatives have examined issues of economic security and ecological security since the 1970s. The most significant reports among these were the North-South Commission, the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues (the Olaf Palme Commission), reports by UNDP and Mahbub ul Haq.[35] These reports emphasized that "poverty, deprivation and economic inequality" threatened the Third World. For them, development was possible not through arms but sustainable development.[36] UNDP also made concrete suggestions on human security.[37] In its *Human Development Report, 1994*, UNDP similarly focused on this people-centred approach, including freedoms from want and fear as part of basic security. Food, health, and personal and economic security were thus placed within the basic common security agenda.[38] Other statesmen and reports have taken on this lead to develop the goals of human security.[**]

The human security concept provides a sharp contrast to the national security concept. While national security looks at security primarily for the State, human security primarily seeks security for the individual. In the national security paradigm, it is the value of territorial integrity and national independence that is important, while human security values personal safety and individual freedom. The threat perception in national security is the threat from other States, whereas the threats for human security are from States, non-State actors and indirect threats. National security uses as its means for achieving security the instruments of force, balance of power and alliances between States. In contrast, human security would not rely on force but on norms and institutions of civil society, especially democratic and representative institutions. Further, human development would be of primary importance.[39]

While we would support the concept of human security, we believe that the concept as it has evolved so far needs to recognize women's security much more than it does. Human security as conceptualized by UNDP and others such as Kanti Bajpai, emphasizes individual needs; we have broadened it to show that the values, threats and means of security of marginalized communities, women and other groups have been neglected for so long that they need special emphasis (see table on the next page). As we have examined in the previous sections of this paper that deal with national security, militarization and the impact of conflicts, it is these groups and especially women who suffer long-term adverse effects, and who tend to be the most vulnerable. Moreover, the history of conflicts has shown that these groups derive the least benefits from state policies and are often the last to be rehabilitated. It is therefore to them that human security must turn. Human security concepts should be gendered because peace is a critical part of this concept. Given women's location, they have a vested interest in peace. The politics of feminization is part of the politics of democratization, which is an aspect of human security.

[**] According to Kanti Bajpai, the Canadian Government has made significant proposals on this concept.

Notions of security

	National security	Human security	Gendered security
Security for whom?	Primarily the State	Primarily, the individual	The individual, communities, ethnic groups etc., and especially women, since their rights are not protected either at home or in society
Security of what values?	Territorial integrity and national independence	Personal safety and individual freedom	Security to exercise individual and collective freedoms, and to be able to exercise one's choice and enjoy personal security.
Security from what threats?	Direct threats from other States	Direct threats from States, non-State actors and indirect threats	Direct threats from States, non-state actors and indirect threats such as economic deprivation, militarist, racist, fundamentalist masculinist ideologies and practices.
Security from what means?	Force as the primary instrument of security, to be used unilaterally for a State's own safety. Balance of power is important; power is equated with military capabilities. Cooperation between States is tenuous beyond alliance relations. Norms and institutions are of limited value, particularly in the security/military sphere	Force as a secondary instrument, to be used primarily for cosmopolitan ends and collectively. Balance of power is of limited utility; soft power is increasingly important. Cooperation between States, international organizations and non-governmental organizations can be effective and sustained. Norms and institutions matter; emocratization and representatives in institutions enhance their effectiveness. Human development is an important instrument of individual-centred security	No use of force except in exceptional circumstances. Through rule of law at all levels, from international to civil to personal laws; gender justice and social justice to be aspects of conflict resolution. Cooperation between institutions of State and civil society and increasing democratization. Gender equity should be part of human development and governance processes.

Sources: Kanti Bajpai, 2000, *Human Security: Concept and Measurement; and School of International Studies,* Jawaharlal Nehru University.

F. Peace-building

The discourse of peace is not new and women have continuously raised the issue of peace; however, there is a need to raise new questions and work out alternative strategies. Given the prevalence of international tensions, national diversities and conflict situations, there is every potential for even peaceful situations being destabilized into conflict. Therefore the basic condition for propagating and ensuring peace is the exposure and rejection of militarism. It is important for women to recognize, deconstruct and resist militarism, and women and peace movements need to strategize in order to expose the linkage of patriarchy and militarism, and the consequences it has on the lives of ordinary people, especially women. What sustains militarist actions and attitudes is militarist ideology; at the core of militarist theory is the doctrine of realism and neo-realism. If militarist ideologies are jettisoned and replaced with the notion of a gendered human security it would be possible to defend States and construct a positive and benign nationalism that is not chauvinist or militarist.

Peace, like militarization, is a process. Just as wars are first planned in the minds of men, peace has to be constructed as the dominant political culture. There can be a transformation of conflicts for peace. The process of demilitarization and conflict transformation that involves social justice and gender equity will have to be a movement similar to the women's movement and the surge of democratization in the twentieth century that initiated the empowerment of women and the marginalized. In international relations, women were "added" and trained in the realist discourse. It is time now for women to speak in favour of a peace discourse. This has to come from the sites where women are located. It starts from the home, extends to the community and can be established in the workplace. Since women are socializers, educators and propagators, they can connect the private to the public and play a key role in this process.

It is not enough for women to say that the private is international, but to give evidence of how conflicts, whether domestic, local, regional, national or international, are interconnected and have an impact on each other. We need to show that, for us, peace is justice and the ability to maintain control over our lives. To link the personal to the international, we have to show interconnectedness of conflict, war, patriarchal and fundamentalist repression, and how they entwine with militarism. Women need to adequately criticize the process behind wars – that of militarism – and analyse in their own environment how militarism and patriarchy are linked.

Women need to be part of the peace discourse at every level, since there are conflicts at all levels, and women can show the interconnectedness of conflicts. Violence in the home, the community and the State has to be resisted by women through various ways. This is not easy and requires a culture of peace. Understanding the roots and interconnection of violence, and building community-level opposition to it, can initiate this process. Women need to be included in the security discourse, not to demand equality in being part of the militarist discourse but to oppose it and to speak in favour of peace and non-violence. Women need to show that international relations are not based on anarchy between States as advocated by neo-realists, or controlled by a power bloc, but that social reality and security are interlinked. It has been established that many conflicts continue to exist despite conflict resolution because the issue of equity or social justice was inadequately addressed.

Women and peace movements were considered secondary and therefore excluded in international relations and the realist discourse. But feminists have effectively challenged this. Women have to advocate that they need the positions in policy-making apparatuses not to be part of security apparatuses, but to speak on behalf of peace and gender empowerment. They can promote a culture of peace from wherever they are situated, because for women peace begins at home and extends to the community, civil society and the State. While we do not believe in the biological determinant argument of essentialism,*** we can see the unique position of women in society as being one that is capable of shedding the dominant patriarchal discourse in favour of peace as well as militarism even after they have been trained in it.

It is well known that there is a tradeoff between guns and butter, so that the money spent on weapons would be used to provide a more humane existence for the millions of underprivileged among whom women and children are dominant. Women need to establish this connection and actively participate in disarmament movements. Given the potential of modern weaponry for death and destruction, and given the inequalities and consumerism, there is tremendous potential for conflict. Thus, the urgency for engendering concepts of power, State and nation. This is necessary for the survival of the human race and the planet and, in the most immediate term, the avoidance of the terrible devastation caused by regional conflicts and internal revolts. The twenty-first century is one of tremendous potential with revolution of science and technology. But if militarist ideology dominates, this potential will, instead of being used creatively, be used destructively at tremendous cost.

*** In the essentialist analysis, the very nature of women is described as essentially a pacifist one. Since women were engaged in mothering and caring, there has been a gender stereotyping of women that helps re-enforce a structure of male power over women. In history, the notion of gender stereotypes, males were identified as idealized warriors and women with the pacifist activities of "motherhood" and "women's work". These bipolar stereotypes only serve to maintain and bolster the grip of patriarchy on society.

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VII. ADDRESSES AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY

Closing address by Ms Kayoko Mizuta
Deputy Executive Secretary
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

First of all, I would like to congratulate you on your accomplishments and join you in welcoming the Hanoi Declaration and the Asian Women's Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace and Sustainable Development. I also note with appreciation your deep insights and your passionate concern for a culture of peace.

It has indeed been my great pleasure to be with you throughout the conference and in a position to witness the launching of the Hanoi Declaration and the Asian Women's Plan of Action.

As a woman of Asia, I share with you your concerns over violent conflicts and your desire for peace. We have been through devastating wars and civil conflicts, starvation and chaos, blood, losses and tears. We have had to witness how cruel human beings can be, and what a human being can do to another human being. I am not the only one whose heart aches for the pains of women who have lost their loved ones in war, and for women who have been maimed by bullets and landmines. If it is human beings who bring violence and misery to the world, it is also human beings who can stop the violence and misery and build human security for all.

Now, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, women have finally reached the point where they can, and must, say "No" to violence, "No" to war. Women have ceased to be only the suffering victims of violence. As reaffirmed at the "Women 2000" meeting in June 2000, women and men must work together as equal partners to build stable families, communities and nations, and for sustainable development and peace. In October of 2000, the Security Council of the United Nations made history by adopting a resolution reaffirming the commitment of Member States to the roles and concerns of women in security issues.

Allow me to quote Mr Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, from his speech at the Security Council on 20 July 2000. The Secretary-General stated that it was high time we gave prevention the primacy, in all our work:

> There is a consensus that prevention strategies must address the root causes of conflicts, not simply their violent symptoms. Increasingly we see that democracy, human rights, good governance, justice and the rule of law are not rewards to be claimed at the end of the development process, but essential ingredients of development itself.
>
> The best form of long-term conflict prevention is healthy and balanced economic development. And, since peace and development are the two great responsibilities of the Untied Nations, that gives this organization a special role to play.

As the Regional Commission of the United Nations for Asia and the Pacific, ESCAP is working to promote economic and social development for men and women so that they can fully develop their potential, free from fear and free from want, with a culture of prevention as the cornerstone of human security.

It is our great pleasure to join UNESCO in bringing women of this region together to work on fostering a culture of peace as an essential part of preventing violence and war. Indeed, the Hanoi Declaration and Asian Women's Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace reflects the aspirations of Asian women for peace in the region, and their commitment to take concrete action to achieve a culture of peace. I am pleased to note that the Plan of Action contains priority measures linking peace to education, the media, economic development and decision-making. There are also potentially significant actions to be taken, such as the development of a Gender Human Security Index and the building of Asian women's networking for peace.

Now that we have adopted the landmark Hanoi Declaration and Plan of Action, it is time for all of us to start implementing it together for gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century.

I would like to thank the Governments of Norway, Japan and the Republic of Korea, as well as the South-East Asia Gender Equity Programme of the Canadian International Development Agency, UNFPA and UNICEF for their generous support for the Conference. Finally, but not least importantly, I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the host of the Conference, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, specially Mr Chu Tuan Cap and Ms Nguyen Thi Hoi, and the staff of the Vietnam National Commission for UNESCO. This Conference would not have been possible without their dedication.

Closing remarks by Ms Janet Burn
Director
Southeast Asia Gender Equity Program
Canadian International Development Agency

A few days before arriving in Hanoi for the Conference, I was in Cambodia to meet with some leaders of women's organizations. I mentioned this Conference, and one of the leaders told me: "If there is no peace in the household, there is no real peace in the land. If there is no peace in the land, there is no development. That is what gender, development and peace is all about". I believe we have confirmed that astute observation over the past few days.

The Southeast Asia Gender Equity Programme of the Canadian International Development Agency chose to support UNESCO and ESCAP in the organization of the present Conference, because of our commitment to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in South-East Asia. We agreed with them that the time was ripe for concerted discussion and reflection on gender and peace in Asia and the Pacific, which has been a neglected issue. We were confident that the participants would produce a strategic and innovative regional Plan of Action.

You have indeed done so and I congratulate all of you. You have crafted a number of practical recommendations, which reflect the particular concerns of the region, for action by UNESCO, national governments, donors and other bodies, and by women activists themselves. That means our participation in the Conference does not end here. I urge each of you to think about the ways in which you can contribute to the implementation of the Plan of Action in your country and organization.

I can tell you three things that I will do as the Director of a CIDA project. First, in 2001, my project will support a South-East Asian Regional Conference on Men's Role in Violence Against Women, in the Philippines. The Conference will examine how socialization contributes to familial violence, and it will look at how men can get involved in ending violence against women. It will draw and build upon the groundbreaking work done by UNESCO on male roles, masculinities and violence, and the results of the present Conference.

Second, as you know, Canada has played a lead role internationally in promoting the concept of human security. In 1999, CIDA's Peace-building Unit published discussion papers on "Women Empowerment in the Context of Human Security", and a "Framework on Gender Equality and Peace-building", which are available through CIDA's new gender website at <www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/equality>. I will certainly ensure that this work is informed of the results of our Conference, so that it can be considered in the context of CIDA programming.

Third, also in the area of CIDA programming, I believe the results of the present Conference are important to the full understanding of the concept of "good governance", which has been identified as a priority area for future CIDA programming in South-East Asia. Gender equality is a clearly a governance issue. But I think we have demonstrated that gendered human security and a culture of peace must also be part of the discourse on good governance and democratic development. Therefore, I will engage in some "internal advocacy" to increase the awareness and understanding of my CIDA colleagues of these issues.

In closing, I want to commend UNESCO/ESCAP for their determination to hold this Conference in Asia, and thank our hosts in the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the Vietnam Women's Union and the city of Hanoi, for their gracious hospitality.

Closing speech by Madam Ha Thi Khiet
President of the Viet Nam Women's Union

Our conference has drawn to its end. We have unanimously adopted the Hanoi Declaration and Hanoi Plan of Action. These are the results of more than three days of intensive and responsible work undertaken in a spirit of solidarity, cordiality and cooperation. This was made possible by the active contribution, both in the plenary sessions and the working groups, by the participants, resource persons, and members of the UNESCO Secretariat, ESCAP, the Viet Nam National Commission for UNESCO and the UNESCO Office in Viet Nam.

The conference results demonstrate these concerted efforts, achieved through the talents of women in the Asian region and our will to make a culture of peace a reality in all aspects of our daily lives, with a view to materializing the urgent and long-term goal of gender equality, development and peace.

Our conference also owes its success to the dedicated service by all members of the organizing committee, the Conference Secretariat, the interpreters and the logistics staff, both in the conference hall and behind the scenes.

On behalf of the Conference Bureau, I would like to express my appreciation of, and heartfelt thanks for, your active and effective contributions, without which our conference could not have been so successful. The organizing committee would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge with sincere thanks the financial support from United Nations agencies, i.e., UNESCO, ESCAP, UNICEF and UNFPA, and the governments of the UNESCO member states of Canada, Japan, Norway and the Republic of Korea. Without that valuable and effective support, our meeting would have been impossible.

With the adoption of the Hanoi Declaration and the Hanoi Plan of Action, I am delighted to note that our conference has been responsive to the concerns of the women in the region as well as those of the leaders from UNESCO and ESCAP, and from the host country of Viet Nam.

The Hanoi Declaration and Asian Women Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace will act as the guidelines and the tools for women's actions at the dawn of the twenty-first century. The Declaration and the Plan of Action put forth concrete points for our efforts toward a culture of peace, development and actions by women in our region.

It is necessary that we further build on our talents and advantages to allow a culture of peace to permeate deeply into the minds and the behaviour of people in their social activities and relations, both at the subregional and regional levels of Asia, as stated in the UNESCO Constitution: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be built."

If the twenty-first century is to be seen as the century of women and the Asia-Pacific region, as predicted by many, then Asian women who make up half of the number of women in the world have a heavy but admirable responsibility to contribute to the advancement of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Plan of Action in each country and in the region. This means that we must include the contents of those documents in the objectives of our struggle.

Let us Asian women join hands with one another and with Asian men in order to translate the content of the Hanoi Declaration and Asian Women's Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace into reality.

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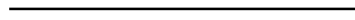
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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. BUREAU OF THE CONFERENCE

Chairperson:

Ha Thi Khiet (Ms)
President, Viet Nam Women's Union
Chairperson, National Committee for
the Advancement of the Vietnamese Women
39 Hang Chuoi Street Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 9713436
Fax: (84 4) 9713143
Email: **vwunion@netnam.org.vn**

Vice-Chairpersons:

ALVA Margaret (Ms)
Member of Parliament,
Chairperson, Parliamentary Standing Committee
on the Empowerment of Women
12, Safdarjung Lane
New Delhi - 110 011, India
Tel: (9111) 3792777
Fax: (9111) 3013579
Email: margaret@yahoo.com

MU Sochua (Ms)
Minister of Women's and Veteran's Affairs
Street 169, Sangkat Veal Vong
Khan 7 Makara (Borei Keila)
Phnom Penh, **Cambodia**
Tel: (855) 12 831 040
Fax: (855) 23 883 251
Email: MWVA.bt@bigpond.com.kh

Rapporteur General

SUWANSATHIT Savitri (Ms)
Inspector-General, Ministry of Education
Bangkok, **Thailand**
Tel: (662) 280 2882
Fax: (662) 280 2884
Email: savitsuw@emis.moe.go.th

Moderators:

CHENOY Anuradha M. (Ms)
Professor, School of International Studies,
Jawaharlal Nehru University
158 Uttrakhand
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi 110067, **India**
Tel: (9111) 6177492 / 6164330
Fax: (9111) 6210765 / 6485116
Email: **chenoy@vsnl.com**

BRETHERTON Diane (Ms)
Director, International Conflict Resolution
Centre
Psychology, University of Melbourne
Victoria 3010, **Australia**
Tel. (61 3) 8344 4912
Fax. (61 3) 9347 6618
Email. d.bretherton@psych.unimelb.edu.au

OTUNBAYEVA Roza (Ms)
Ambassador of the Republic of **Kyrgyzistan**
to the United Kingdom
119 Crawford St., London W 1 U 6 B J,
The United Kingdom
Tel: (44207) 9351462
Fax: (44207) 9357449
Email: Kyrembuk@aol.com

GEORGE Susanna (Ms)
ISIS International-Manila
#3 Marunong St., Central District
Quezon City 1100, **Philippines**
Tel. (63 2) 435 3405/ 436 0312/436 7863
Fax. (63 2) 924 1065
Email. susanna.george@isiswomen.org

2. INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPANTS

ACHMAD Sjamsiah (Ms)
Senior Advisor, Regional Secretariat for Gender,
Science and Technology in Southeast Asia and the
Pacific
PDII-LIPI, 3rd Floor, Jl. Jenderal Gatot Subroto 10
Jakarta 12710, **Indonesia**
Tel: (6221) 52964828
Fax: (6221) 52964827
Email: sjamsi@centrin.net.id

ANANTAPEUCH Chatuporn (Ms)
Programme Officer for Social and Human Sciences
The Thai National Commission for UNESCO
External Relations Division, Ministry of Education
Rajdamneon Nok Ave., Bangkok 10300, **Thailand**
Tel: (662) 6285646-8
Fax: (662) 2810953
Email: Chatuanan@yahoo.com

BALJINNYAM Damdiny (Ms)
Executive Board Member, International Women's
Association of Mongolia
P.O. Box 993, Ulaanbaatar-13, **Mongolia**
Tel/Fax: (976 11) 312573
Email: edambal_e@yahoo.com

BANPASIRICHOTE Chantana (Ms)
Associate Professor, Faculty of Political Science
Chulalongkorn University
Phyathai Road, Patumwan
Bangkok 10330, **Thailand**
Tel / Fax: (662) 2187231
Email: chantana.b@chula.ac.th

BORTON Lady (Ms)
Representative, Quaker Service - Viet Nam
American Friends Service Committee
218 Doi Can, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (844) 8325229
Fax: (844) 8325819
Email: afsc@hn.vnn.vn

CHOLIL Abdullah (Dr)
Chairman
ASEAN Sub-Committee on Women
Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and
Executive Secretary
State Ministry for the Role of Women
Republic of Indonesia
Jl. Merdeka Barat No. 15, Jakarta,10110 **Indonesia**
Tel: (6221) 380 55 63
Fax: (6221) 380 55 62 / 380 55 69

DEVI Leela K.C. (Dr)
University Professor, Tribhuvan University,
P.O. Box. 2530, Kathmandu, **Nepal**
Tel: (9771) 430910
Fax: (9771) 373004
Email. mdhungana@snv.org.np

DON Fatimah Hamid (Dr)
Deputy Chair, National Advisory Council
Women in Development
16 Jalan 14/37, 46 100 Petaling Jaya, **Malaysia**
Tel/Fax: (60 3) 7956 1471
Email. fdon@pc.jaring.my

DUAN Guohui (Ms)
The All-China Women's Federation
15 Jian Guo Men Street, 100730 Beijing, **China**
Tel: (86 10) 65225369
Fax: (86 10) 65136044
Email: yzhch@women.org.cn

EANG Yos (Mr)
Deputy Secretary-General
Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO
No. 74, Preah Sihanouk Ave, Boeung Keng Kang 1,
Khan Chamcar Mon, Phnom Penh, **Cambodia**
Tel: (855) 15 830 793
Fax: (855) 23 210 369

EROL Burcin (Dr)
C/o Turkish National Commission for UNESCO
60, Sok 4/3 Emek 06510 Ankara, **Turkey**
Tel: (31 2) 2236321 / 2978484
Fax: (31 2) 2992025
Email: burc@haccttcpc.edu.tr

EVANGELISTA Alma R. (Ms)
Executive Director
Office of the Presidential Adviser
on the Peace Process (OPAPP)
7th Floor, Ortigas Centre, Pasig City, **Philippines**
Tel: (632) 6320087 / 6360701
Fax: (632) 6311614 / 6354053
Email: are@compass.com.ph

GREASLEY Virginia (Ms)
Doctor, Institute for International Relations
67 Lang Thuong, Dong Da
Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 834 3645
Fax: (84 4) 834 3543
Email: virggreasley@hn.vnn.vn
vmgreasley@yahoo.com

GUNAWARDANA Kanthi (Ms)
Assistant Secretary, Education Reform Unit,
Ministry of Education, "Isurupaya", Battaramulla,
Sri Lanka
Tel: (941) 866 371
Fax: (941) 865 162

GURUNG Tshering Nordon (Ms)
Assistant Secretary
National Women's Association of Bhutan
Thimphu, **Bhutan**
Tel: (975) 2 322642

GURUSAMY Ramani (Ms)
Deputy President
National Council of Women's Organisation
No. 26 Jalan 14/29
46100 Petalng Jaya, **Malaysia**
Tel: (603) 795 43008
Fax: (603) 795 63959

HERMAWATI Wati (Ms)
Head, Science and Technology Cooperative Division
Centre for Analysis of Science and Technology
Development,
Indonesian Institute of Sciences (PAPIPTEK-LIPI)
Widya Graha Building 8th
R. 824. Jl, Jend. Gatot Subroto
No. 10, Jakarta 12710, **Indonesia**
Tel: (6221) 5251542 ext. 710
Fax: (6221) 5201602
Email: wati_maryunani@hotmail.com

Hoang Lan (Ms)
Vice President and Secretary General
Disabled People Foundation
21 Bat Dan St., Hanoi, Viet Nam
Tel: (84 4) 8263026
Fax: (84 4) 8225841

Hoang Minh Nguyet (Ms)
Director, Department of International Relations
Voice of Viet Nam
58 Quan Su St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 04) 8240044
Fax: (84 04) 8261122
Email: qhqt.vov@hn.vnn.vn

HUQ Deena (Ms)
Joint Secretary
Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
Bangladesh Secretariat
Dhaka, **Bangladesh**
Tel: (880 2) 8617550
Fax: (880 2) 8612892

JALMAGAMBETOVA Svetlana (Ms)
Deputy Chairperson
Commission on Family and Women Affairs
Oblostnoy akimat, st. Abai, Kokshetau,
The Republic of **Kazakhstan**
Tel: 7-31622-50259
Fax: 7-31622-55519

KIM Jeongsoo (Ms)
Chairperson of Policy Committee,
Women Making Peace, Seoul, Korea
81-1, Dongbinggo-dong, Yongsan-gu,
Seoul 140-230, **Republic of Korea**
Tel: (82 2) 312-2302
Fax: (82 2) 312-2303
Email: WMP@chollian.net

KIM Kyung-Ai (Ms)
Secretary General of the Presidential Commission
on Women's Affairs,
Government of the Republic of Korea
520-3, Banpo-dong Seocho-gu
Seoul 137-756, **Republic of Korea**
Tel: (82 2) 3477-4070
Fax: (82 2) 3477-4073

KISHWAR Naheed (Ms)
Media Specialist
Hawwa Crafts, Mount View
Plaza, Supermarket, F 6/3
Islamabad, **Pakistan**
Tel: +92-51-2275757 / 2874669 / 2294754
Fax: +91-51-2275157
Email: hawwa@isb.comsats.net.pk

KOOLAEE Elahe (Ms)
Professor of University, Member of Parliament
Islamic Consultative Assembly
Iran - Tehran - Majlis
Tel: (9821) 64-61351
Fax: (9821) 64-61746
Email: koolaee@mail.com

MANALO Rosario G. (Ms)
Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs and
Secretary-General, UNESCO National
Commission of the Philippines
Department of Foreign Affairs, 2330 Roxas Blvd.
Pasay City, **Philippines**
Tel: (632) 832.3312
Fax: (632) 834.1451 / 831.8873
Email: rgm@dfa.gov.ph

MATA 'AFA La 'ulu Fetaui (Ms)
Representative of the Pan Pacific South East
Asian Women's Association (PPSEAWA), **Samoa**
C/o Ms Munyan, 1 Lexington Ave.,
New York City 10010, USA

MONGELLA Gertrude G. (Ms)
Ambassador, Member of Parliament
Dar-es-Salaam
United Republic of **Tanzania**
Tel: (25551) 451.307 / 255.811.327.022
Fax: (25551)451.308
Email: awa@twiga.com

MONIAGA Bali (Mr)
Counsellor, Permanent Mission to the United
Nations of the Republic of **Indonesia**
325 East 38th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016, USA
Tel: (212) 972-8333
Fax: (212) 972-9780

Nguyen Thi Bich Ha (Dr)
Director
Centre for Studies on Women
National University of Hanoi
144 Xuan Thuy Rd., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 7680471
Fax: (84 4) 7680429
Email: qui@vnu.ac.vn

Nguyen Thi Lap Quoc (Ms)
Member of the National Assembly
President, Women's Union of Ho Chi Minh City
32 Tran Quoc Thao Street,
Ho Chi Minh City, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 8) 9300428
Fax: (84 8) 9307532
Email: phunuhcmc@hcm.tpt.vn

PANTA Ambika (Ms)
Member, Upper House of Parliament
G.P.O. Box 11361, Kathmandu, **Nepal**
Tel: (977 1) 482 125
Fax: (977 1) 412 460
c/o Nepal National Commission for UNESCO
Email: unesco@nncu.wlimk.com.np

PAOPRAMOT Pornsom (Ms)
Policy and Planning Analyst,
Office of the National
Commission on Women's Affairs,
Office of the Permanent Secretary to
the Prime-Minister's Office,
Government House, Bangkok 10300, **Thailand**
Tel: (662) 2825296
Fax: (662) 2813690
Email: tncwa@thaiwomen.net

PHOLSENA Khemphet (Ms)
Vice-President, Lao Women's Union
P.O. Box 59, Vientiane, **Lao** PDR
Tel: 856-21-2143 03
Fax: 856-21-214306
Email: laowu@laotel.com

PHONETHIP Chansoda (Ms)
Deputy-Director, Lao Women's Union
P.O. Box 59, Vientiane, **Lao PDR**
Tel: 856-21-214307
Fax: 856-21-214306
Email: chansoda@laotel.com

PONGTADSIRIKUL Prisna (Ms)
Director, Office of the National Commission on
Women's Affairs, Office of the Permanent Secretary
to the Prime-Minister's Office
Government House, Bangkok 10300, **Thailand**
Tel: (662) 2825296
Fax: (662) 2813690
Email: tncwa@thaiwomen.net

POTAPOVA Rodmonga K. (Ms)
Professor, Head of Department
Moscow State Linguistic University
Ostozenda, 38
119837 Moscow, **Russia**
Tel/Fax: (95) 246-2807
Email: potapova@linguanet.ru

RASHIDOVA Sayora (Ms)
Member of Parliament, Authorized Person
for Human Rights (Ombudsmen),
The Oliy Majlis (Parliament)
1, Xalqlar Dostligi Av.
700035 Tashkent, Republic of **Uzbekistan**
Tel: (99871) 139 8136
Fax: (99871) 139 8555
Email: office@ombudsmen.gov.uz

RAZEE Husna (Ms)
Director General and Member of National
Women's Council Institute of Health Sciences
Majeedhee Magu
Male' 20-06, **Maldives**
Tel: (96 0) 317 655
Fax: (96 0) 316 498
Email: hrazee@dhivehinet.net.mv

SUGIMORI Nagako (Ms)
Professor, Japan Women's University
President, Japan Section of Women's International
League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)
2-45-9, Kichijoji-Higashi-cho, Musashino-shi
Tokyo 180 - 0002, **Japan**
Tel/Fax: (81) 422-21-2855
Email: nsugimor@ikuta.jwu.ac.jp

WONG Liu Shueng (Ms)
Manager – Education
Office of the Race Relations Conciliator
47 Hepburn St., Freemans Bay
Auckland, **New Zealand**
Tel: (64 9) 307 2352
Fax: (64 9) 377 0123
Email: wongls.culturaldiversity@xtra.co.nz

YAKUBOVA Muchiba M. (Dr.)
Chairperson, Association Women Science of
Tajikistan
Apt.1, bld. 32, Rudaki St., 734025 Dushanbe,
Tajikistan
Tel: (99 2) 372 21-19-18
Email: wstaj@wstaj.silk.glas.apc.org

YI YI Myint (Ms)
Advisor (Health) to Myanmar National
Working Committee for Women Affairs
27/2 Golden Valley Rd., Bahan 11201
Yangon, **Myanmar**
Tel: 95-1 531852
Fax: 95-1 254477

3. NATIONAL DELEGATION

Guests of honour

H.E. Mme **Nguyen Thi Binh**
Vice President
of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

H.E. Mr **Nguyen Dy Nien**
Minister for Foreign Affairs
1 Ton That Dam St.,
Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

H.E. Mme **Truong My Hoa**
Vice Chairperson
National Assembly

H.E. Mr **Hoang Van Nghien**
Chairman of Hanoi People's Committee
79 Dinh Tien Hoang St.,
Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

H.E. Mme **Nguyen Thi Hang**
Minister for Labour, War Invalids
and Social Affairs
12 Ngo Quyen St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

H.E. Mme **Tran Thi Thanh Thanh**
Minister, Chairperson of the National
Commission for Protection and Care of Children
35 Tran Phu St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

H.E. Mme **Tran Thi Trung Chien**
Minister, Chairperson of the National
Commission of Population and Family Planning
12 Ngo Tat To St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

H.E. Mme **Vo Thi Thang**
Director General,
Viet Nam Tourism Authority
80 Quan Su St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

H.E. Mme **Tran Thi Tam Dan**
Chairperson of the Committee
of Culture, Education, Youth and Children,
National Assembly
35 Ngo Quyen St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

H.E. Mme **Duong Thi Thanh Mai**
Vice President,
People's Supreme Court
48 Ly Thuong Kiet St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

National Participants

Bui Thi An (Dr)
Centre for Materials Technology and Environment
9, Tran Phu Street
Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel / Fax: (84 4) 8232823
Email: anbt@vnd.ncst.ac.vn

Chu Thuy Quynh (Ms)
Secretary General
Viet Nam Dancers' Association
B7 Nghia Tan, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 7564640
Fax: (84 4) 7560326

Chu Van Muoi (Mr)
Deputy Director, Department of Culture
Central Committee for Culture and Ideas
Viet Nam Communist Party
7 Nguyen Canh Chan St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

Dang Thi Cam Ha (Dr)
Head of Lab., Institute of Biotechnology,
National Centre of Science & Technology
Hoang Quoc Viet St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

Dang Thi Nhung (Ms)
Vietnamese Mother of Hero
C/o Hanoi Women's Union
72, Quan Su St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel/Fax: (84 4) 9 423132

Dao Thi Nhien (Ms)
Director, Viet Nam Women's Museum
36 Ly Thuong Kiet St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 825 9936
Fax: (84 4) 825 9129

Do Thi Bich Lien (Ms)
President, Women's Union of Ninh Thuan
16/4 Road, Phan Rang Town, Thap Cham
Ninh Thuan Province, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 68) 824789

Do Thi Hao (Dr)
Committee for the Advancement of Women,
National Committee of Social Sciences and
Humanity
36 Hang Chuoi Street
Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 834 8840

Duong Thi Loi (Ms)
President, Women's Union of Bac Giang
Bac Giang Province, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 240) 853441

Duong Thuy Vien (Ms)
Secretary, Viet Nam UNESCO Courier
Viet Nam News Agency
33, Le Thanh Tong Street, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 826 4603
Fax: (84 4) 8252984

Hoang Thi Mai (Ms)
Women's Union of Dien Bien Phu Town
Noong Bua Commune, Dien Bien Phu Town
Lai Chau Province, **Viet Nam**

Hoang Thi Mai (Ms)
Expert, Department of International Relations
Ministry of Culture and Information
51-53 Ngo Quyen St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 40) 943 7558
Fax: (84 40) 943 7401

Le Quynh Chi (Ms)
Bureau of Anti-Social Diseases
Ministry of Labour, War Invalid and Social Affairs
2 Dinh Le Street, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 824 6113
Fax: (84 4) 826 7099

Le Thi Bich (Ms)
President, Women's Union of Ninh Binh Province
Ninh Binh Province, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 03) 871197

Le Thi Hong Hiep (Ms)
President, Women's Union of Yen Bai
Yen Bai Town
Yen Bai Province, **Viet Nam**

Le Thi Ngot (Ms)
President, Women's Union of Quang Ninh
Tran Hung Dao Road, Quang Ninh, **Viet Nam**
Tel. (84 33) 829945

Le Thi Quy (Ms)
Centre for Family and Women Study
6 Dinh Cong Trang St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 511 2521
Fax: (84 4) 933 2890
Email: LTQuy@netnam.org.vn

Le Thi Tam (Ms)
President, Women's Union of Da Nang
2 Phan Chau Trinh
Da Nang City, **Viet Nam**
Tel/Fax: (84 511) 821329

Le Thi Thanh Lien (Ms)
Vice President, Women's Union of Binh Thuan
247 Tran Hung Dao Road, Phan Thiet City
Binh Thuan Province, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 62) 821668

Lu Thi Pua (Ms)
President, Women's Union of Son La
Khau Ca Hill, Son La Province, **Viet Nam**

Ma Thi Ngay (Ms)
President, Women's Union of Cao Bang
Cao Bang Province, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 26) 853 409
Fax: (84 26) 853411

Mai Thi Ngoc Mai (Ms)
Member of the Presidium
Viet Nam Women's Union
T60, 60 Vo Van Tan Street
Ho Chi Minh City, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 8) 9304412
Fax: (84 8) 9305575

Mua Thi My (Ms)
Member of Parliament
Office of the People's Committee of Lai Chau
Dien Bien Phu Town,
Lai Chau Province, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 23) 827 546

Ngo Ba Thanh (Ms)
Vice President
Vietnamese Lawyers' Association
27A Tran Hung Dao, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel. (84) 9436275
Fax: (84 4) 9434636

Nguyen Minh Huong (Ms)
Chairperson, Women's Union of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
1, Ton That Dam St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 1992501
Email: MinhHuong54@hotmail.com

Nguyen The Doanh (Mr)
Director, International Relations Department
Government Committee on Religions
53 Trang Thi St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 8246439

Nguyen Thi Bich Thuy (Ms)
President, Khanh Hoa Women's Union
22 B, Hung Vuong St., Nha Trang City
Khanh Hoa Province, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 58) 822366

Nguyen Thi Chinh (Dr)
Vice Head of Microbiology Department,
Faculty of Biology, University Science
Hanoi National University
334, Nguyen Trai St., Thanh Xuan District
Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 8582809
Fax: (84 4) 8582069
Email: Vtcong@FPT.vn

Nguyen Thi Lan (Ms)
Deputy Head of Chancery
National Commission for Child Care and Protection
35 Tran Phu St., Ba Dinh, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 8233340
Fax: (84 4) 8237983
Email: esaco-adhn@hn.vnn.vn

Nguyen Thi Lien Ms)
President, An Giang Women's Union
6, Le Loi St., My Binh Ward
Long Xuyen City, An Giang Province, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 76) 852874

Nguyen Thi Ngoc Ha (Ms)
Student, Institute of International Relations
67 Lang Thuong, Dong Da District
Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

Nguyen Thi Tam (Ms)
President, Women's Union of Nam Dinh Province
70 Tran Phu Street, Nam Dinh City
Nam Dinh, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 350) 843161

Nguyen Thi Thanh Hoa (Ms)
Section Chief
Viet Nam Women's Union
39 Hang Chuoi St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 971 7225
Fax: (84 4) 9713143
Email: vwunion@netnam.org.vn

Pham Hoai Giang (Ms)
Member of the Presidium,
Chief, International Relations Section
Viet Nam Women's Union
39 Hang Chuoi St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 971 7225
Fax: (84 4) 9713143
Email: vwunion@netnam.org.vn

Pham Khac Tu (Mr)
Vice President and Secretary General
Viet Nam Committee for Catholic Solidarity
9 Vong Duc Street, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

Pham Thi Sen (Ms)
Vice President, Health Workers' Trade Union
Vice President, Committee for the
Advancement of Women, Ministry of Public Health
138C Giang Vo Road, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 846 1715
Fax: (84 4) 846 3971

Phan Thi Tam (Ms)
President, Women's Union of Vinh Phuc
Vinh Yen Town
Vinh Phuc Province, **Viet Nam**

Quang Thi Un (Ms)
President, Women's Union of Lai Chau
Dien Bien Phu Town,
Lai Chau Province, **Viet Nam**

Thich Dam Hao (Senior Nun)
Member of the Management Board
Central Committee of Viet Nam Buddhism
Hoang Mai Pagoda, Hai Ba Trung District
Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 863 3569

To Yen Khanh (Ms)
Chairperson, Hanoi Women's Union
72, Quan Su St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 9 423132

Tran Kim Lan (Dr.)
Deputy Director, Department of International
Cooperation, Ministry of Education and Training
49, Dai Co Viet, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 8692396
Fax: (84 4) 8693243

Tran Thi Dan Que (Ms)
Chairperson, Au Co Photographers' Club
59 Xa Dan 2, Dong Da District
Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

Tran Thi Minh Chanh (Ms)
President, Women's Union of Phu Yen
61, Nguyen Trai St., Tuy Hoa Town
Phu Yen Province, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 57) 823425

Tran Thi Van Anh (Ms)
Centre for Family and Women Study
6 Dinh Cong Trang St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 8252372
Fax: (84 4) 9332890

Tran Tien Duc (Mr)
Director, IEC Department, National Commission
on Population & Family Planning
12 Ngo Tat To Street, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 823 5806
Fax: (84 4) 8431562
Email: ttdu.iec@hn.vnn.vn

Trinh Thi Hanh (Ms)
Vice President, Women's Union of Thanh Hoa
Thanh Hoa City, Thanh Hoa Province, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 37) 752.348

Truong Thi Dac (Ms)
Senior Expert, Department of External Relations
Government Office
1 Hoang Hoa Tham Street, Ba Dinh District
Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84) 08044939

4. OBSERVERS

BRAHMA KUMARIS, CHINA

CHEN Maureen (Ms)
17 Dragon Rd., Hongkong, **China**
Tel: (852) 280 6 3008
Fax: (852) 288 7 0104
Email: cultureofpeace@rajayoga.com.hk

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN (IFUW)

KHOO Rosemary (Ms)
Senior Fellow, National University of Singapore
Department of English Language and Literature,
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Blk. AS5 #03-10, 7 Arts Link
Singapore 117570
Tel: (65) 874 6127
Email: rosemarykhoo@nus.edu.sg

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS & RED CRESCENT SOCIETY, VIET NAM DELEGATION

Le Ha Van (Dr)
Program Officer
19 Mai Hac De St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 9438 250
Fax: (84 4) 8229 283
Email: ifrcsw@hn.vnn.vn

INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION (INFOR)

SEBASTIAN Beena (Ms)
General Secretary
Fellowship of Reconciliation / India
Project Director, Cultural Academy for Peace
41/2197, Annie Thayyil Building
North Railway Station Rd.
Kochi-682 018, Kerala, **India**
Fax: (91484) 390 486
Email: cap@kelnet07.xlweb.com

JEUNESSE DU MONDE

SEMINARO Andrea (Ms)
Program Officer
920, rue Richelieu, Quebec (Quebec)
GIR-IL2, **Canada**
Tel: (418) 694-1222
Fax: (418) 694-1227
Email: jeune@jeunessedumonde.qc.ca

LIVING VALUES: AN EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Trish Summerfield (Ms)
Representative
5B Le Thanh Ton, District 1
Ho Chi Minh City, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 8) 8250942
Email: ryinfo@hcm.vnn.vn

MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

FRIESEN Frances M. (Ms)
Viet Nam Representative
116 F17 Thanh Cong, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 514 0151
Fax: (84 4) 856 1159
Email: mcc@netnam.org.vn

Dinh Thi Van (Ms)
Program Officer
Email: mccrcd@netnam.org.vn

OXFAM SOLIDARITY BELGIUM -VIET NAM

CAMBEL Josie G. (Ms)
IPO Box, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Email: josie@oxfambproject.netnam.vn

Pham Minh Hang (Ms)
Programme Officer
B10 / 25 Lang Ha St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 5142 542;
Fax: (84 4) 8561 627
Email: pmhang@oxfambproject.netnam.vn

PAG-AALAY NG PUSO FOUNDATION

DALUMPINES Ma. Theresa B. (Ms)
Project Director
International Fellowship of Reconciliation
Women Peacemaker's Program in the Philippines
Quezon City, **Philippines**
Telfax: 63-2-413-10-44
Email: ppf@navotas.com.ph

SAVE THE CHILDREN / JAPAN

Nguyen Thi Linh Van (Ms)
Project Officer
186 A, Doi Can, Ba Dinh
Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 7220385
Fax: (84 4) 7221355
Email: nlvan2001@yahoo.com

SOUTHEAST ASIA GENDER EQUITY
PROGRAM-CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (SEAGEP-CIDA)

BURN Janet (Ms)
Director
7 Amoy Street 302-02 Canada House
Singapore 049949
Tel. (65) 236 01 45/46
Fax. (65) 538 7236
Email. seagep@pacific.net.sg

WOMEN WAGING PEACE

AMIRI Rina (Ms)
Research Coordinator
79 John F. Kenedy School, Harvard University,
Cambridge, MA 02138, **USA**
Tel: 617-496-4786
Fax: 617-496-6154
Email: Rina-Amiri@harvard.edu

WOMEN'S ACTION AND RESOURCE
INITIATIVE

TANTIWIRAMANOND Darunee (Dr)
52/619 Muang Ake, Rangsit,
Pathumthani 12000, **Thailand**
Tel: (66-2) 997 - 7279
Fax: (66-2) 997-7536
Email: wariq@yahoo.com

5. DIPLOMATIC CORPS

H.E. Mr Sayed Al-Masri
Palestinian Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary to Viet Nam,
Dean of Diplomatic Corps

H.E. Mr KUMAR Saurabh
Indian Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary to Viet Nam

H.E. Mr NAKAMURA Takeshi
Japanese Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary to Viet Nam

H.E. Mr OTTERBECH Jens
Norwegian Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary to Viet Nam

6. ORGANISATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMME (UNDP)

WATTEZ Edouard (Mr)
Representative to Viet Nam
26-29 Phan Boi Chau St, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel. 84 4 9421495
Fax. 84 4 9422267
Email: registry@undp.org.vn

Khuat Thu Hong (Ms)
Program Officer

HYUN Mia (Ms)
Senior Technical Advisor
UNDP Project VIE/96/011
National Committee for the Advancement
of Women in Viet Nam
39 Hang Chuoi St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 971-1350; Fax: (84 4) 971-1348/9
Email: vie96011@undp.org.vn

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSION
FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR)

Vu Anh Son (Mr)
Officer in charge
60 Nguyen Thai Hoc,Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 845 7871
Fax: (84 4) 82383055

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND
(UNICEF)

NISSUES Eva (Ms)
Senior Program Co-ordinator
72 Ly Thuong Kiet St, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Te: (84 4) 942 1170; Fax. 84 4 942 2641
Email. enissues@unicef.org

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND (UNFPA)

ERTUR Omer (Mr)
Representative to Viet Nam
3B/3B Giang Vo, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 845 4763
Fax: (84 4) 846 2826

WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION (WHO)

MEYER Nadia (Dr)
Representative to Viet Nam
P.O Box 52, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (84 4) 943 3734
Fax: (84 4) 9433 740
Email. meyer@vtn.wpro.who.int

7. UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANISATION (UNESCO)

7 place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP, **France**

MOSEROVA Joroslava (Ms)
President of General Conference

MENDIETA DE BADAROUX Sonia (Ms)
President of UNESCO Executive Board

MATSUURA Koïchiro (Mr)
Director General

WOMEN AND A CULTURE OF PEACE PROGRAMME
7 place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP, **France**

BREINES Ingeborg (Ms)
Director
Women for A Culture of Peace Programme
Social and Human Sciences
Tel: (33 1) 45 68 12 12
Fax: (33 1) 45 68 57 25
Email: i.breines@unesco.org

SMITH Eunice (Ms)
Assistant Programme Specialist
Social and Human Sciences
Tel: (33 1) 45 68 10 82
Fax: (33 1) 45 68 57 25
Email: e.smith@unesco.org

UNESCO Office in INDIA

PADGAONKAR Latika (Ms)
National Information Officer
UNESCO, 8 Patrvi Marg
Vasant Vihar, New Delhi, **India**
Tel: (91 11) 6147310 / 6140038
Fax: (91 11) 6143351
Email: l.padgaonker@unesco.org

UNESCO Office in VIET NAM
23 Cao Ba Quat Street
Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Tel: (88 4) 747 0275
Fax: (88 4) 747 0274

DURAND Rosamaria (Ms)
UNESCO Representative in Viet Nam
and Head of Office
Email: durand@un.org.vn

HAGNE Madeleine (Ms)
Project Cordinator

SCHWARTZ Aprile (Ms)

SLATIS Thomas (Mr)

HUSSEY Seki Sarika (Ms)

LI Yung (Ms)

8. UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC ANDSOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA ANDTHE PACIFIC (ESCAP)

United Nations Building
Rajadamnern Nok Avenue
Bangkok 10200, **Thailand**

KAY Thelma (Ms)
Chief
Women in Development Section
Social Development Division
Tel: (662) 288 1989
Fax: (662) 288 1018
Email: kay.unescap@un.org

MIZUTA Kayoko (Ms)
Deputy Executive Secretary

JITSUKAWA Mariko (Ms)
Expert on Women in Development
Women in Development Section
Social Development Division
Tel: (662) 288 1697
Fax: (662) 288 1080
Email: jitsukawa.unescap@un.org

9. NATIONAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE

VIET NAM NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO

8 Khuc Hao Street,
Ba Dinh District, Hanoi, **Viet Nam**
Fax: (84 4) 823 0702
Email: unescovn@netnam.vn

Chu Tuan Cap (Mr)
President
Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs

Nguyen Thi Hoi (Ms)
Secretary General
Tel: (84 4) 199 3510

Vu Duc Tam (Mr)
Secretary
Tel: (84 4) 199 3512

Ho Minh Tuan (Mr)
Specialist
Tel: (84 4) 199 3605
Email: unesco.tuanhm@mofa.gov.vn

Le Kim Hong (Ms)
Specialist
Tel: (84 4) 199 3520 / 199 3519
Email: unesco.honglk@mofa.gov.vn
honglk2001@yahoo.com

Nguyen Pham Van Huong (Ms)
Specialist
Tel: (84 4) 199 3516

Lai To Tam (Ms)
Specialist
Tel: (84 4) 199 3602

Nguyen Khanh Bao (Mr)
Specialist
Tel: (84 4) 199 3518

Nguyen Thanh Son (Mr)
Specialist
Tel: (84 4) 199 3520 / 199 3519

Tran Manh Ha (Mr)
Specialist
Tel: (84 4) 199 3514

COLLABORATORS

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
1 Ton That Dam St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

Dinh Thi Minh Huyen (Ms)
Director
Department of International Organisations
Tel: (84 4) 199 3300
Fax: (84 4) 199 3145

Nguyen Thi Nha (Ms)
Assistant Director
Tel: (84 4) 199 2406

Pham Thi Kim Anh (Ms)
Specialist
Department of International Organisations
Tel: (84 4) 199 3305
Email: Kimanh_pham@hotmail.com

Nguyen Luong (Mr)
Former Ambassador to the United
Nations Office (UNO) at Geneva
C/o Viet Nam National Commission
for UNESCO
8 Khuc Hao Street
Ba Dinh District
Hanoi, Viet Nam
Tel: (84 4) 8438091

Nguyen Thi Nhu Phi (Ms)
Counsellor
Viet Nam Permanent Delegation to UNESCO
2 rue Le Vernier - 75006 Paris, **France**
Tel: (33 1) 44 32 08 79
Email: nhu-phi@wanadoo.fr

VIET NAM WOMEN'S UNION
39, Hang Chuoi St., Hanoi, **Viet Nam**

Nguyen Bich Thuy (Ms)
Specialist
International Relations Section
Tel: (84 4) 9717225 / 9715061
Fax: (84 4) 9713143

Nguyen Hoai Linh (Ms)
Tel: (84 4) 971 7225
Fax: (84 4) 971 3143

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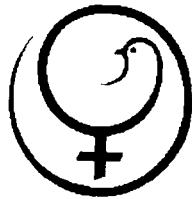
Viet Nam National Commission for UNESCO
8 Khuc Hao Street, Ba Dinh District
Hanoi, Viet Nam
Tel: (84.4) 199 3510 / 199 3520
Fax: (84.4) 823 0702
E-mail: unescovn@netnam.vn

The Women and a Culture of Peace Programme
UNESCO
7, Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP, France
Tel: (33.1) 45 68 12 12
Fax: (33.1) 45 68 57 25
E-mail: i.breines@unesco.org
http://www.unesco.org/cpp/wcp

Women in Development Section
Social Development Division
United Nations
ESCAP
Rajdamnern Avenue
Bangkok 10200, Thailand
Tel: (66.2) 288 1234
Fax: (66.2) 288 1018
E-mail: wid.unescap@un.org
http://www.unescap.org/wid