

# Fempower

Magazine published by WAVE network & European Information Centre Against Violence – supported by Vienna Municipal Department for Women's Affairs

FOCUS

## Beijing +10

FOCUS

## Beijing +10: no milestone for women's rights

**The Platform for Action was defended but  
future-oriented strategies are still missing**

by Brita Neuhold

It is not easy to assess the processes and results of the meeting of the UN Commission on the Status of Women on Beijing +10. On one hand it was successful in achieving consensus on the historical meaning of the Beijing Platform for Action by progressive women's organisations and women's political networks from all regions of the world and to demand a complete and speedy implementation. On the other hand disruptive actions by the USA made it clear how enormous the resistance still is against real changes in women and men roles, especially in the reproductive rights. The unstoppable energy of the NGOs who – as usual in times of need – exceeded themselves once again – was not able to overcome the perplexity of what should take the place of the mobilising power of previous world conferences on women. Mantra like chants about the importance of goals such as gender equality and the empowerment of women as basic principles of the UN work could not hide the fact that the actual organisational reforms of the United Nations and also the programmes of development politics such as the "Millennium Development Goals" either pushed these goals to the side or dismantled their significance. >



NGO meeting New York 2005

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# Editorial

In March the 49th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women was held in New York, where the goals of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action were evaluated. A large number of government delegations as well as NGO representatives from around the world used this event to place women's rights on the stand and to discuss strategies for more gender democracy.

We chose Beijing +10 – the name for the evaluation of the goals from the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women – as focus for this issue of *Fempower* in order to highlight the history of the World Conferences on Women, the meaning of international documents and the role women NGOs have within this context.

The Austrian human rights expert Brita Neuhold starts right off with a critical view of the New York event which she personally participated in. In her report the journalist Brigitte Voykowitsch guides us back in history to the 1<sup>st</sup> World Conference on Women in Mexico 1975. Gemma Adaba, representative of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) to the UN explains in discussions with *Fempower* why it is so important to link the Beijing Platform for Action with the Millennium Development Goals, in order to make it possible for sustainable development politics for the benefit of women.

Julia Spronz from the Hungarian women's rights organisation NANE rounds off with a focus on a Hungarian woman who – for the first time within the framework of the CEDAW – individual complaints procedure got her rights.

You will also find in this issue of *Fempower* what's new and worth knowing regarding women's rights.

In closing some inside details: the new *Fempower* editorial team consists of Daniela Almer, Maria Pohn-Weidinger und Martina K. Steiner. Contributions, suggestions and critiques are always welcome!

**The Editorial team**

## **Tactical success but ...**

The culmination of the events of the CSW session – negotiations in the original sense should be avoided for fear of a repetition of a stalemate situation such as at Beijing +5 in the year 2000 – was the struggle with a "Political Declaration" which should serve as an expression of the countries' denominator for women politics, but has become more and more a scratching post between the USA and the rest of the world. The fact that this declaration was unanimously adopted by all countries after feverish consultations at the end of the first week should clearly be seen as a success, especially because the majority of the countries stood behind it with unanticipated insistence – regarding their word choice this provides hope for a positive implementation in the future. The mood in combination with the ceremonial adoption of the short document revived a hint of the spirit of Beijing and made the original commitment visible. Thus a clear position was made related to the universal and indivisible human rights of women.

On the other hand many NGOs were displeased to see the USA succeed again in blocking the session's events for a week and thereby slowing down other activities. Apart from that the USA, and other countries which usually stay in the background, requested explanations of vote after the official adoption of the Declaration, in mantra-like litanies for the rejection of all "new" human rights and repeated the denegation of the right to abortion. This naturally weakened the meaning of the Declaration once again.

The course of events was similar with the resolutions, where the USA with at times contradictory - as in the Resolution on Trafficking - or at times with very narrow and backward/old-fashioned recommendations – such as the economic advancement of women focusing on micro-crediting – let negotiations become very tense and absorbed the majority of the time, which burdened smaller countries especially. A positive aspect of this process was that in both cases a fundamental and comprehensive discussion took place, due to intensive activation by NGOs which led to a significant expansion and improvement of the original text – to the degree that the original initiators could no longer recognize it and in the closing phase made confusing remarks and took flustering steps.

A resolution to nominate a Special Rapporteur on Laws that Discriminate Against Women can be seen as progress and a sign of future-oriented thinking. With this nomination the Commission could strengthen its mandate and emphasize its legal aspect of its work.

### **... without future-oriented strategies**

In addition to these political negotiation highlights, which as was stated should not be referred to as such, there was a compact program profiled by the countries

themselves that was to cover the aspect of reviewing which took place in the form of round tables, panel discussions and countless side events. A major focus was placed on the Millennium Development Goals, but apart from basic demands such as the integration of gender perspective in all goals there was no concrete approach visible. All in all this talking exercise, as a participant expressed it, ranged from that of a high school to an elite think tank and the often quoted "thread" was more confusing than conspicuous, whether in significance or in its long term effect with the analysis and strategy development of previous World Conferences on Women, which cannot even be compared to the "Beijing +5 Conference" which almost failed. Beijing +10 was gender training on a high level but a concrete program for the future was not developed.

NGOs who travelled in much larger numbers than expected found some of their previous momentum back and were very present throughout, in the discussions with their governments as well as with their various programs. But all in all they celebrated themselves and their 30 year commitment. Because of the reluctance of large and dominant groups amongst them, it was not possible for them to push for another world conference on women or some other form of continuing the process. Nor were they able to be strong about long term concrete actions, they were victims of their own fear to get taken....

The entire hope of the international women's movement and the progressive countries is now placed on the implementation of the action platform and the partially reawakened momentum from Beijing +10. Whether this survives the daily routine in the ministry offices remains to be seen. In any case it is all that the women's movement now has in the hand, a piece of paper which should strengthen the meaning of the 1995 program. It is completely open how the follow-up evaluation process will look like or how the women's movement will articulate with their governments to effectively negotiate over it. Thirty years after the first World Conference on Women in Mexico City which initiated an awareness revolution and ten years after the international demonstration of women power in Beijing, this is a rather depressing situation.

**Brita Neuhold is a human rights expert, university lecturer and is engaged in the activities of WIDE (Women in Development Europe).**

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# Mexico +30: Economic hardships and legal progress

by **Brigitte Voykowitsch**

"I simply did not reckon with the power of feminism. What started off as a job became a life long engagement", says the Grenada born social scientist Peggy Antrobus. For many women who participated in the first women's world conference in 1975 in Mexico City, the conference was a kind of initiation rite. More than a few women attended as civil servants or social scientists and returned as feminists.

It is thanks to the engagement of women that the United Nations declared 1975 the International Year of the Woman and the years 1976 – 1985 the International Decade of the Woman. "This decade made it possible for women like myself to meet women from other parts of the world, women who were perhaps never before engaged in the women's movement", emphasizes Antrobus.

### From Mexico to Beijing

Yet, the Decade of the Woman and the first three World Conferences on Women in Mexico City 1975, Copenhagen 1980 and Nairobi 1985 were turbulent times. Debates on the situation of women were superimposed by large international controversies on apartheid and Zionism, imperialism and the call for a new economic world order. The sisterhood which some women from the North had imagined would take place encountered resistance by women from the South.

It was clear to the latter that even well meaning women in the North had no idea of the living conditions in the South. Also feminism was at first a sensitive word. For women from low income countries this term was for white extremists such as the so-called "bra burners", the women who supposedly burnt their bras and went topless.

Although in many ways also characterized as turbulent, the conference in Nairobi was seen by many women from the South as a turning point. At this conference it was the first time they were able to fully bring their issues to the table and for the first time the variety of feminisms was acknowledged. An important role was played by the Indian economist Devaki Jain and Peggy Antrobus who launched the network DAWN, meaning daybreak, and here stands for "Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era".

Until now the highlight was the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women which took place in 1995 in the Chinese capital

Beijing. Women scientists referred to it as a milestone on the path to pursuing a real gender equality.

### The fight continues

What has now been achieved by the four World Conferences on Women? The opinions vary, depending on whether one focuses on the progress in women's rights or the economic and social situation of women. Globalization and privatization have a negative impact on women worldwide. Women are more affected by the increased flexibility of employment structures and social welfare cuts than men. The feminization of poverty leaps forward. Worldwide more and more women are working in precarious labor conditions without decent salaries or social security.

Undisputable in contrast is the progress made in the field of women's rights, explains the Austrian judge and gender equality expert Lilian Hofmeister. The acknowledgement of women's rights as human rights, as well as the condemnation of violence against women in the 1990s were milestones in the awareness process and in the development of women's rights. Two documents have special meaning in this process. CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, as well as the Beijing Platform for Action. Both documents are often referred to as the Magna Charta of women's rights.

The implementation process is far from satisfactory. Apart from difficult economic trends, religious fundamentalism poses a great threat. At the United Nations Special Session "Beijing + 5" in 2000 in New York, conservative Christians and Muslims tried to curtail the sexual and reproductive rights of women, self-determination over their body and their sexuality. At the "Beijing +10" meeting in March 2005 in New York the USA launched an initiative against these rights but they were not able to prevail and Beijing Platform for Action was approved again.

But at the same time the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations adopted in the year 2000 really worry women. They are minimalist goals and only one goal relates to equalization and empowerment of women. Still Peggy Antrobus stays realistic: "It will never be easy, ultimately we are not just fighting for a few measures but for a complete societal transformation. We can only continue to fight."

**Brigitte Voykowitsch is a free lance journalist who focuses on women, development, South Asia.**

# "The women's movement would be better off being part of broad social movements for change."

**Gemma Adaba, the representative of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) for the United Nations in New York, has committed herself to working primarily for the economical, social and cultural human rights of women. In discussion with *Fempower* she presents her personal take on the 49th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and sheds light on the impact globalisation has for women in the job market.**

***Fempower:* Gemma Adaba, you attended the 49th Session of the CSW as the representative of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. What is your impression about the meeting?**

Adaba: NGOs present at the session expressed their disappointment at the slow pace of the advancement of women's rights and equality since the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. Notably, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions launched a publication entitled "Great Expectations – Mixed Results: The Beijing Platform for Action – Women and the Economy. The Trade Union View".<sup>1</sup> NGOs hailed it a victory when at the end of the first week of the session a strong declaration affirming the Beijing Platform was adopted, despite the efforts of the United States delegation to weaken the language of the declaration. NGOs had engaged in intense lobbying, particularly on the resolution on trafficking and the resolution on women's economic advancement, where initial drafts tabled by the United States were quite unsatisfactory in terms of gender equality and women's rights. These lobbying efforts paid off as final texts were considerably strengthened.

**What's your personal point of view? Would you suggest having a Fifth World Conference on Women?**

The current global political environment remains hostile to engagement in constructive discussions on the position of women and to forging consensus on a set of visionary principles that could move the women's agenda forward. It would be frustrating and counter-productive to engage in an intergovernmental process, which is likely to put the clock back on the hard-won gains of the women's movement represented by the Beijing Platform. For the foreseeable future, the women's movement would be better off harnessing its collective efforts and mobilizing its

## **FACTS – World Conferences on Women**

World Conferences on Women are held by the United Nations. The purpose of the conferences is to strengthen the position of women around the world with regards to their role in legal, economic, social and political context. Until now four women's world conferences were held: Mexico (1975), Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985) and Beijing (1995). Resolutions from the World Conferences on Women are adopted predominantly by means of declarations. Traditionally women's world conferences are accompanied by an extensive amount of activities by non-governmental organisations.

constituencies to be part of broad social movements for change, such as the World Social Forum with its feminist dialogues, and the women's mobilization in the Global Call to Action Against Poverty. Hopefully, such efforts will contribute to changing the political environment. So we must stand ready to reclaim the space for a 5<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women, when the time is right.

**You have expressed deep concern about the negative impacts of global economic policies on women's jobs and their work and life conditions. Can you give me more details?**

Yes, there is deep cause for concern when we examine the global policy-making environment. It is dominated by the neo-liberal economic agenda shaped by the G-7 Group of rich industrialized nations, and mediated through the multilateral institutions: the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). These policies are geared towards serving the profit-making interests of the market as well as the multinational corporations of the North. They prescribe tight fiscal and monetary policies for the countries of the South, cuts in public expenditure, user fees for services in education and health, privatisation of essential services such as water, flexible labour markets with little social protection, and they promote an export-led model of growth and import liberalization.

**What impact do these things have on the employment of women in the job market?**

These policies have the net effect of weakening >

<sup>1</sup> The publication can be downloaded from the world wide web: <http://www.icftu.org/www/pdf/FinalBrochureGreatexpectationsmixedresults2005.pdf> or be ordered at: [equality@icftu.org](mailto:equality@icftu.org)

the local capacity to create decent jobs and increasing the informal sector of the economy. Women are disproportionately affected by these trends. They find themselves concentrated in low-skill, undervalued, insecure jobs with little or no social protection, and where they are paid 12 to 60% less than men. Precarious employment in the informal economy and in the agricultural sector is the situation many poor women in developing countries have to deal with. Frequently, women experience sexual harassment in the workplace, suffer more and longer unemployment, and continue to bear the largest burden of family responsibilities. Privatization and cuts in public expenditures have served to shift the costs of essential service provision from the state to households, creating even greater hardships for women.

**These negative trends are increasing the risk for women to become victims of physical and economical violence. Do you agree?**

Yes, in the face of unemployment, women migrate in search of work and then find themselves in exploited domestic work or in the entertainment sector, and increasingly are trafficked, becoming objects of gender-based violence at the work place.

**Gender equality and women's empowerment are the specific focus of the third Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Can this third goal be achieved within the frame of globalisation?**



Governments must commit to incorporating a gender dimension in all policies and programs of the MDGs. Whatever the focus, whether poverty eradication, educational planning, reducing child mortality, combating HIV-Aids or ensuring environmental sustainability, policy analysts must adopt a rights-based approach, and design interventions that mainstream gender. They should carry out gender impact assessments in relation to policy interventions and develop gender sensitive benchmarks and indicators for monitoring the achievement of all the goals. Furthermore, they should use gender budgets as a tool for ensuring the mainstreaming of gender across all of the MDGs.

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### **FACTS – Platform for Action**

The "Platform for Action" was unanimously adopted by the United Nations at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. It is due to the implementation of the platform in countries around the world that discrimination against women is decreasing and actions that promote, strengthen and protect women are being targeted, in particular in the following twelve fields:

- Women and poverty
- Education and training, access to education
- Health (including prevention)
  - Violence against women
- Women and war (including conflicts in occupied regions)
- Economy and politics, specifically access to resources
- All fields of power and decision-making ability
- All fields which promote women's advancement
- Respect and protection of women specific human rights
- Media and communication: reducing stereotypes and unequal access
- Environment protection as well as access and maintenance of natural resources
- Reducing discrimination of girls and the abuse of their rights

The "Platform for Action" is a groundbreaking document which emphasizes the universality of women's rights as human rights. There are also clear statements on combating violence against women. The "Platform for Action" in countries that have ratified it has merely the look of recommendations.

**What role does the Beijing Platform for Action and the CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) have in this process?**

The MDGs are a narrow set of targets on development, and as such they are inadequate to achieve the structural and normative changes needed to make gender equality a reality. They need to be embedded in a framework of rights and gender policies. The Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW provide such a framework.

**Thank you for sharing your views with us!**

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# Victory or another pile of papers for the archives?

## Hungarian Domestic Violence Case before CEDAW

by Julia Spronz

On 26 January 2005 the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women made a decision in a case submitted by a Hungarian woman under the Optional Protocol to CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women). The verdict of the Committee adopted in the Hungarian case is of utmost importance in the advocacy work of Hungarian NGOs acting in the field of domestic violence. Not only because this is the first communication against Hungary, but also because this is the first time that the CEDAW Committee considered a claim to have merit (in the previous incident *Ms. B.-J. vs. Germany*, the Committee declared the communication inadmissible). Taking into consideration the lack of experience regarding the effect of CEDAW's Optional Protocol, the development after the adoption of the verdict will not be limited to the private affairs of Hungary, as the verdict has international influence as well.

Ms. A.T., the author of the communication, had been in contact with several NGOs and experts who dedicate their activities to combating violence against women and children, and they provided emotional support and attended some of the trials in her case. But for-

mally she submitted the communication to CEDAW Committee herself. Her case follows the average patterns of domestic violence proceedings taking place thousands of times a year in Hungary. Armed with a firearm and usually drunk, the former common law husband used to keep the woman and their two children in constant terror for years. The woman has been unable to escape as the very few "shelters" that exist in Hungary are not equipped to accommodate her son who is brain-damaged. The perpetrator could not be removed from the flat because of the lack of any protection order or restraining order available. Following the exhaustion of all domestic remedies, the plaintive submitted her claim to the CEDAW Committee in >

### FACTS – CEDAW

The "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women" (CEDAW) was adopted in 1979. This document which is binding under international law became effective in 1981 and until today has been signed by 163 countries. Many of these countries have also ratified the Optional Protocol to CEDAW which states among other things that single persons in the framework of the individual complaints procedure have a right to make a demand by the CEDAW-Committee against their country of origin, when the person has exhausted all effective remedies at the national level.

October 2003 and in the meantime, asked for urgent interim measures of protection.

### **Hungary to take immediate action**

After consideration of her claim, the CEDAW Committee stated the violation of the rights of the woman under the Convention.

To remedy the situation it called on the Hungarian Government to take immediate and effective measures to secure the protection of the woman and her children by providing her with a safe home, appropriate child support and legal assistance. In its general recommendations the Committee suggested that the Government take the necessary steps to protect victims of domestic violence in Hungary: promoting women's

human rights, fully complying with its legislative obligation under national and international norms, providing training on the requirements of CEDAW for legal professionals, implementing the Committee's former comments of the Hungarian country report, accurately investigating all allegations of domestic violence, providing women with safe access to the judicial system and lastly, by assuring rehabilitation programmes for offenders. The Committee also required that its verdict and recommendations be translated and distributed country-wide.

### **Views of a Hungarian activist**

The Hungarian Government received six months to take actions in compliance with the decision of the Committee. Now we are at half-time and so far no notable steps have been made by the Government including the Committee's request for interim measures. We believe it is useless to wait any longer.

The CEDAW decision gives us a perfect possibility to widen the present legal measures available to protect victims of domestic violence. Apparently the Hungarian Government will not act of its free will and CEDAW recommendations are legally not binding.

Women NGOs need to increase their activities demanding the enforcement of the recommendations concerning both the individual case and the general requirements. It is also our responsibility that the Convention shall not remain a formal declaration but an effective legal tool in our hands. Publicity shall be utilized not on-

### **FACTS – Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**

In September 2000 the heads of states and governments from 150 countries gathered for a summit meeting in New York. The result of the meeting was the adoption of the so called Millennium Declaration. It signals the beginning of a new global partnership for development. In the declaration eight international developmental goals are set:

1. to halve the portion of the global population suffering under extreme poverty and hunger
2. to provide all children with a basic schooling
3. gender equality and promotion of women's political, economical and social participation, especially in the field of education
4. to reduce child mortality
5. to improve the health of mothers
6. to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other communicable diseases
7. to improve environment protection
8. to develop a world-wide development partnership

With combined efforts the international community should achieve these goals by the year 2015.

ly to make the Convention known and propagate the Optional Protocol, but also to draw attention to the sabotage of the Hungarian Government concerning domestic violence legislation. By our actions we hope to induce the Hungarian Government to execute the CEDAW recommendations and this will have a positive impact on the international community as well.

**Julia Spronz is a lawyer and activist at the Habeas Corpus Working Group and the NANE Women's Rights Association in Budapest.**

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## New Focal Points

### Refuge Chiswick

The founding of the European women's shelter movement has a legend and it goes like this: in 1972 in a women's centre in the London district of Chiswick, a woman did not want to go home in the evening because she could not bear to undergo abuse by her husband again. The woman stayed and that set the foundation of the first women's refuge in Europe. Recently this oldest women's refuge is the youngest Focal Point of WAVE:

### Refuge

Lisa King  
2-8 Maltravers Street  
London WC2R 3EE/United Kingdom  
phone: ++44 (0)207 395 7700, fax: ++44 (0)207 395 7721  
www.refuge.org.uk

### Further new Focal Points:

#### PAPATYA – Kriseneinrichtung für junge Migrantinnen

Eva Kultus  
P.O. Box 410266  
12112 Berlin/Germany  
fax: ++49 30 2005 1991  
e-mail: info@papatya.org  
www.papatya.org

#### Women's Rights Center

Susanna Vardanyan  
20, Abovyan Str. 12  
Yerevan, 375009/Armenia  
e-mail: wcrarm@arminco.com

#### Network of Austrian Counselling Centres for Women and Girls

Sabine Gruber

Stumpergasse 41-43/II/R3  
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phone: ++43 1 595 37 60, fax: ++43 1 595 37 61  
e-mail: netzwerk@netzwerk-frauenberatung.at  
www.netzwerk-frauenberatung.at

#### Bulgaria Gender Research Foundation

Teodora Tsanovska  
P.O. box 938  
Sofia-1000/Bulgaria  
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www.bgrf.org/en/

#### Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS)

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www.medinstgenderstudies.org

## How does one become a Focal Point?

Non-governmental women's organisations throughout Europe have the opportunity to become a WAVE Focal Point if there are not yet enough contacts in the country and if the following requirements are met: the organisation must be active in the field of combating violence against women and children and be well linked with other women's organisations in the country. The main role of Focal Points is to be in contact with the WAVE Office in Vienna and to forward information to local organisations in their own country.

**Information:** WAVE Office, office@wave-network.org,  
www.wave-network.org

## WAVE Office News

### WAVE Office – new team

Since November 2004 the WAVE office is run by a new team: Maria Pohn-Weidinger and Martina K. Steiner are responsible for co-ordination and are supported in project management by Rosa Logar and Maria Rösslhuber.

Contact: office@wave-network.org

### www.wave-network.org – new look

The WAVE website was completely redone and in the future will be even more user friendly for the users. Just take a look in the world wide web to see for yourself.



Delivery to:

**Vladimir Spidla**  
**EU-Commission**  
**Brussels**



Sender:  
WAVE Office  
Vienna

**Vladimir Spidla, EU-Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities received mail from WAVE: in the package was the women's shelter manual "Away from Violence", along with a letter which introduced the European network and asked for a personal meeting with the Commissioner. The goal of this request is to strengthen lobbying at the European level for the aims of the network. At the time of printing no response was provided by Brussels.**

Vienna, March 30, 2005

Dear Commissioner Spidla,

It is a great pleasure for WAVE that a high-ranking politician of one of the new EU-Member States has assumed the important post of Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

We would like to introduce ourselves to you: Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) is a network of European women's non-governmental organisations working in the field of combating violence against women and children with the main focus on domestic violence.

Ten years after having been launched during the United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing, WAVE has grown into a truly European-wide network. Having started off with just six organisations, WAVE currently networks about 2000 organisations and experts in all of the European countries. Czech women's organisations have been partners in the WAVE network right from the start and have contributed a lot to the growing of the network.

The main networking activities are carried out with the support of 55 so-called WAVE Focal Points, key organisations within their countries.

Our main aims are to exchange information and expertise, to strengthen the links between different regions in the EU, to develop common standards to prevent violence and to co-operate closely with governmental bodies on the European and international level.

In 1998 WAVE developed the WAVE database on VAW (violence against women), the only information source in Europe of this kind. It includes inter alia addresses of services for women victims of violence, information about important international documents, research and statistics. The database and all our information is easily accessible to everyone who engages in combating violence against women and children. Please see our homepage on [www.wave-network.org](http://www.wave-network.org).

Funded by the European Commission (DAPHNE programme) WAVE produced the manual "Away from Violence – Guidelines for setting up and running women's refuge" as well as a training manual called "Training Programme: Sensitisation and Training of Professionals on Violence against Women." This manual is designed for use in training courses for professionals in various fields. Our current Daphne-project is called "Bridging gaps – Models of co-operation between Women's NGO's and the state authorities to prevent violence against women and children."

The enclosed manual "Away from Violence" shall provide an idea of our work.

The European Union has reinforced its measures against violence against women and children, particularly by establishing the DAPHNE-programme and other important initiatives. Violence obstructs women from de facto gender equality. Therefore, this problem affects also EU directives on equal opportunity. Clearly not all Member States of the European Union have adequate measures to combat violence against women. Hence, it is of high importance that the European Union continues its efforts in taking initiatives to harmonize standards for preventing violence as well as for the support of victims.

We hope your Commission will give further important impetus to the elimination of violence against women. It will be our pleasure to be at your disposal for any initiatives and if you wish we will support your work with our expertise at any time.

We therefore kindly ask you and the Unit for Equality for Women and Men to invite us for an appointment so that we can introduce the WAVE network and our work to you in person.

Sincerely,  
Maria Rösslhumer

Enclosure:  
A manual: "Away from Violence – guidelines for setting up and running a women's refuge"

## **SAVE: Sisters Against Violence Europe**

We cordially thank Maria Jonas, a very committed Austrian feminist and former General Secretary of the Socialist International Women (SIW), who on the occasion of her 65th birthday dispensed with presents and instead asked her guests to donate to SAVE.

SAVE is an initiative of the Austrian Women's Shelter Network (AÖF Association) that aims to support women's organisations in Eastern and South Eastern Europe.

This year SAVE would like to help in maintaining the service of the women's refuge ARTEMIS in Rumania – please donate!

Account holder	Verein AÖF / WAVE
Account number	610 782 047
Bank	BA-CA
Bank code	12000
IBAN	AT52 1200 0006 1078 2047
BIC	BKAUATWW