



UN-NGO-IRENE UPDATE

Issue no 15 – January 2005

WHAT'S NEW

◆ UN-NGO-IRENE Mission to Tunisia

UN-NGO-IRENE/Programme Coordinator and Senior Advisor/UNDESA Ms. Najet Karaborni undertook a mission to Tunisia from 11-20 January 2005 to provide advisory services to two leading NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC as follows:

- Tunisian Mothers Association UN-NGO-IRENE/Africa Regional Coordinator: Launching of the preparatory work including an NGO Survey for the NGO/Civil Society International Forum of 23-25 April 2005 (Tunis, Tunisia) that will contribute to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) of November 2005 and to the ECOSOC High-Level Segment (HLS) of July 2005 in New York.
- L'Association Tunisienne des Droits de l'Enfant "ATUDE:" Participation in the International Seminar on "Children's Rights and the Information Society," that took place in Tunis from 14-15 January 2005, and presentation of the message of Ms. Hanifa Mezoui, Chief of the NGO Section/DESA, at the opening session. With the assistance of Ms. Karaborni, the International Seminar successfully concluded with the Tunis Declaration: "Children's Rights and the Information Society" based on participant recommendations and proposals that will feed the NGO Forum of 10 March 2005 (New York), the NGO Forum of 23-25 April 2005 (Tunis) and serve as an NGO statement to the HLS of ECOSOC of July 2005.

◆ UN-NGO-IRENE Mission to Portugal

In Lisbon, Portugal, Ms. Karaborni represented the Chief of the NGO-Section/DESA and presented her message at the opening session of the International Forum "Local Agenda, Sustainability and Municipalism," organized by FOCA, an NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC, in partnership with academia and local authorities. The UN-NGO-IRENE/Programme Coordinator also made a PowerPoint presentation on "Integrated and Comprehensive Approaches for Poverty Alleviation: "Sustained Economic Growth and Sustainable Development at All Levels to Ensure Efficient Local Agenda 21 Implementation." The Forum successfully concluded with several useful and key recommendations in the form of the "Sinatra Declaration" that will serve as FOCA's statement to the ECOSOC HLS of July 2005 and will feed the NGO Forum of 23-25 April 2005 (Tunis) and possibly the Secretary-General's Report on the Firth Year Review of the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs.

◆ **UN-NGO-IRENE Mission to Spain**

In Madrid Spain, Ms. Hanifa Mezoui, Chief of the NGO-Section/DESA attended the Board Meeting of the Foundation for Social Promotion and Culture (FPSC), an NGO in General Consultative Status with ECOSOC. She made two presentations, one on UN-NGO-IRENE activities to support NGOs in the implementation of the MDGs and another one on the recent UN “High-Level Panel on Threats and Challenges.” She promoted NGO activities for the 2005 ECOSOC High-Level Segment theme and in several other United Nations events of 2005, New York including the ECOSOC NGO Forum of 10 March, the Spring Meeting of the Bretton Woods Institutions, the High-Level Segment of ECOSOC of July 2005 and the Conference on the Prevention of Armed Conflict of 19-21 July 2005. Following this successful meeting, the Board of FPSC expressed its strong support to the cooperative activities of the Foundation with UN-NGO-IRENE.

◆ **2005 Regular Session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations**

Concluding its session two days ahead of schedule, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations successfully completed the proceedings of a rigorous and demanding 2005 Regular Session at United Nations Headquarters. Summarizing the accomplishments of the session, representatives of the NGO Section/DESA stated that the Committee had review 135 applications during the session. Of those applications, it had recommended 85 NGOs for consultative status, deferred the review of 46, closed the files of 2 applications and recommended reclassification of status to 1 NGO. Two applications were also withdrawn. The Committee also proceeded to review the quadrennial reports of 84 NGOs, of which it had taken note of 71. In addition, it is worth noting that the Committee once again successfully completed the session using paperless technology, allowing delegations and staff to view all documents electronically on computers. Please visit the NGO-Section website for more information and the release of a Special Report. The Committee is expected to meet again for its 2005 Resumed Session at a date in May to be announced in the United Nations Journal.

◆ **NGO Activities assisting the South-Asian Tsunami Relief Efforts**

Several NGO’s in consultative status with ECOSOC have taken the lead in facilitating and contributing to the vast relief efforts in Southeast-Asia and Africa after the horrible earthquake and tsunami that devastated the region in late December. In several statements, Secretary-General Kofi Annan has commended the tireless work of NGOs in the relief effort. These NGOs include the Friends Society in Social Service, Foundation Nour, All India Women’s Education Fund Association, Medecins sans Frontieres, All India Movement for SEVA and Istanbul International Brotherhood and Solidarity Association. Examples of these NGO work include the collection and transportation of humanitarian goods to Sri Lanka and India by the Friends Society in Social Service, coordination of medical services and treatment in almost every affected region by Medecins sans Frontieres, and the ambitious establishment of a permanent humanitarian coordination outpost in Banda Ache province, Indonesia by Istanbul International Brotherhood and Solidarity Association. These NGOs and many more are working with

Governments and International agencies in the affected regions as the relief effort responds to the crisis and the needs of millions of lives. The work of these NGOs is exemplary and their efforts can be encouraged by our support. To contribute to the efforts, kindly contact the NGOs individually (contact information can be found at: www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo) .

COMING SOON

- ◆ Lawyers without Borders (LWOB), a NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC, will be hosting a NGO Forum in relation to the 48th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, 9 March 2005 3:00pm in UN Secretariat Room B. LWOB has also requested that participants complete an online survey (found at the following URL: <http://freeonlinesurveys.com/rendersurvey.asp?id=82028>)
- ◆ ECOSOC NGO Forum on 10 March 2005 in the ECOSOC Chamber, NY in Preparation for the 60th Session of the General Assembly, and the ECOSOC HLS and Coordinating segment of July 2005, New York. Contact the NGO-Section/ECOSOC/DESA for more information at desangosection@un.org or Karaborni@un.org
- ◆ International Conference on Gender Mainstreaming and the Millennium Development Goals, 28-30 March 2005, Islamabad, Pakistan organized by APWA with the support of UN-NGO-IRENE/NGO Section in partnership with the Government of Pakistan and the sponsorship of several UN agencies and partners.
- ◆ NGO/Civil Society International Forum (23-25 April 2005, Tunis, Tunisia) and NGO Survey in preparation for the upcoming Second Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) of 16-18 November 2005. Contact Ms. Najet Karaborni at karaborni@un.org for Survey participation and attendance details and registration.
- ◆ First International Conference of the UN-NGO-IRENE Coordinators and Partners, 24 April 2005, Tunis, Tunisia, to review the progress report of the UN-NGO-IRENE activities, discuss the means to develop its General Voluntary Fund and agree on a UN-NGO-IRENE future strategic action plan.

SOURCE OF INSPIRATION / EXAMPLE *To Follow*

◆ **Conference: “Domestic Violence: Strengthening Community Participation; Promoting Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women”** in the context of achievement Millennium Development Goals 3 and 8 took place on 27-28 January 2005 at the New York University School of Medicine, New York City. Organized by the UN-NGO Section/DESA, New York University School of Medicine Center for Health Disparities Research, with the support of the US Department of Health and Human

Services Region II Office on Women's Health, New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, and several NGOs in consultative status with UN/ECOSOC, the Conference was the first collaborative endeavor to unite different efforts working against this alarming public problem in order to recommend methods and instruct health and behavioral professionals working in private practices to properly identify and address domestic violence cases. Special attention was paid to the increased domestic violence against Latin-American and Caribbean women in New York State. Participants of the conference, led by moderators Dr. Gilda Alarson Glasinovich, President of the Council on the Status of Women, and Lalla Khan, UN Conference Focal Person, recommended that more health care practitioners and educators engage and participate in discussions and specialized trainings so as to help them address domestic violence and eradicate the "disease."

UPCOMING EVENTS 2005 *Not to Miss!*

- ◆ 9-18 February 2005: 43rd Session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD-43), United Nations Headquarters, New York
- ◆ 28 February – 11 March 2005: 49th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW-49), United Nations Headquarters, New York. Contact the NGO-Section/DESA office for visit the CSW website for details for NGO registration
- ◆ The 13th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-13), 11-22 April 2005, New York. Policy Year: "Decisions on practical measures and options to expedite implementation in the thematic cluster of water, sanitation and human settlements."

USEFUL LINKS:

- ◆ **NGO-Section/DESA:** <http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo>
- ◆ **Friends Society in Social Service:** <http://www.friends-society.org>
- ◆ **Istanbul International Brotherhood and Solidarity Association:** <http://www.istanbulibs.org>
- ◆ **Medecins sans Frontieres:** <http://www.msf.org>
- ◆ **CSocD NGO Forum:** <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ngo/forum/invitation.htm>
- ◆ **Commission on the Status of Women:** <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/>
- ◆ **International Conference on Gender Mainstreaming and the MDGs:** <http://www.pakconference2005.com>
- ◆ **Foundation for Social Promotion of Culture (FPSC):** www.fundacionfpsc.org
- ◆ **Lawyers Without Borders (LWOB):** <http://www.lwob.org>

NGOs' CONTRIBUTION

Submit your contribution

◆ **Update Submitted by Friends for Disabled Association, Dr. Charafeddine:**
Recent Developments at the International Disability Convention: Several NGOs participated in the International Disability Convention, including Friends for Disabled Association and Inclusion International. In an exciting development during the conference, many governments supported the inclusion of some reference in the convention to people with disabilities in risk situations, such as armed conflict and natural disaster. The Coordinator of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador MacKay, responded to this development by proposing a new draft article on risk situations. Given recent events in Asia and the devastation caused by the tsunami, it is crucial for Inclusion international to ensure that the does ensure protection and access to humanitarian assistance in such emergency situations. For feedback discussion, please contact Valerie Bloomfield, Coordinator of Inclusion International at info@inclusion-international.org

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For further information on our monthly Update or if you wish to add a friend to our free mailing list, please send an e-mail entitled "Subscribe" to Karaborni@un.org. You can read all Updates at the UN-NGO-IRENE Website at www.unpan.org/NGO-updates.asp
For any further information please contact Ms. Hanifa Mezoui, Chief, NGO-Section at mezoui@un.org and Ms. Najet Karaborni, UN-NGO-IRENE Project Coordinator at karaborni@un.org