

## JULY e-BULLETIN

### Dear UNIFEM members and supporters

Welcome to all members and supporters of UNIFEM. Our regular e-bulletins keep you in touch with news which we hope you will find interesting. Please also visit our website [www.unifemuk.org](http://www.unifemuk.org) for more information about activities.

We are delighted to share the news with you that at the United Nations General Assembly on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2010 member states unanimously decided to establish **UN Women**, the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The creation of a strong UN organisation will build on the work of UNIFEM and three sister entities working on gender issues. It will be a champion to promote and advance the rights of women and girls worldwide which has always been an ambition if the targets set by the Millennium Development Goals are to be met. More on this in the 'News from UNIFEM New York' section below.

UN Women will be fully operational from next January. Until then, references to the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) will be followed by the words 'part of UN Women' which will also be added to UNIFEM insignia.

Ines Alberdi, Executive Director, has written to all UNIFEM National Committees noting that we have been strong partners for advocacy, outreach and fundraising, and that our continued support will be important for and valued by UN Women. From 1 January 2011, UNIFEM National Committees will be renamed as **UN Women National Committees**.

We hope you will continue to support the work of your National Committee and we will keep you informed of progress.

With best wishes

Jan Grasty  
President – UK National Committee for UNIFEM

### Index

[News from the UK](#)

[News from UNIFEM New York](#)

[Dates for your diary](#)

## NEWS FROM THE UK

### UNIFEM UK offers a new membership level

The Board of the UK National Committee for UNIFEM has introduced a new membership level with an annual subscription of £100.

With the transition from UNIFEM to UN Women, the UK National Committee is keen to encourage as many people as possible to support the agency and so increase the funding that the UK provides. We do not want to discourage anyone from joining the organisation and our current membership rates have been retained - £25 per year for standard membership, a £10 concessionary rate and an introductory offer of £5 for students who join.

What we are now doing is to provide a new premium membership level of £100 per year for those who want to be more closely involved. As a thank you to those contributing at the £100 level there will be free admission to all our events and an invitation-only event hosted by our President, Jan Grasty.

Download a membership application form [here](#)

### Women's National Commission under review by the Government

The Women's National Commission (WNC) was set up in 1969 as the official independent advisory body giving the views of women to the UK Government. It is publicly funded as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) of the Government Equalities Office. Along with other 'quangos' it is now under review by the new Coalition Government.

President Jan Grasty and Secretary Wendi Momen, members of the United Nations Advisory Forum of the WNC, attended its July meeting to learn that the Commission is under review. The expectation is that a decision is likely to be made about its future by the end of July.

UNIFEM UK has signed a joint letter from the UN Advisory Forum group to the Ministers for Women (The Rt Hon Theresa May MP and Lynne Featherstone MP) pointing out the important function the WNC has performed as the bridge between women and women's organisations and successive Ministers for Women from both main political parties. Following its establishment as an independent Commission in 1969, the WNC has maintained an important dialogue with women and worked through international mechanisms such as the UN Commission on the Status of Women to improve women's equality. It has frequently been enlisted by Government to conduct wide-ranging consultations and focus groups. The WNC represents the voices of over eight million women to government through its 625 partnerships. Major partners include the Federation of Women's Institutes, the Mothers Union, Soroptimist International of GB and Ireland, Operation Black Vote, Unison and the Conservative Women's Organisation.

UNIFEM UK believes that the WNC fully meets all of the criteria for retention set by the Cabinet Office as part of its review of NDPBs, that its role is a unique one beyond what the profit and not-for-profit sectors provide, and that it acts independently and with expertise. We await a favourable decision.

### Wales Women's National Coalition closes

The WWNC has provided a forum for women in Wales to contribute to policy and decision making at all levels since 2001 with annual funding from the Welsh Assembly Government's Advancing Equality Fund. It has now closed as Felicity Fletcher, Chair of UNIFEM in Wales, reports:

The WWNC had its application for core funding rejected this year and closed its doors at the end of June. UNIFEM in Wales, along with other women's organisations wrote to the Minister asking him to reconsider, particularly as without WWNC there is no voice for the women of Wales on EU and international bodies. His reply was a polite refusal. UNIFEM in Wales committee member Pam Allison was our representative at WWNC and we appreciate her hard work for both organisations.

## News of a new UNIFEM branch in Northern Ireland

UNIFEM in Northern Ireland is growing! Branch Chair Hazel Holmlund reports:

The Northern Ireland Branch already has some members north of Belfast so in June we organised a meeting at the University of Ulster Coleraine campus to look at the feasibility of setting up a new branch in the area. Twelve people attended the meeting and apologies were received from three others who indicated they want to be members of the new branch. Seven new members signed up on the night and they, along with others who are already members, will meet on 12 August to elect the committee. The first responsibility of the committee will be to organise a promotional activity at the university during Freshers' Week.

If you live in Northern Ireland and would like to get involved, contact [northernireland@unifemuk.org](mailto:northernireland@unifemuk.org)

## NEWS FROM UNIFEM NEW YORK

### Historic day for women at the UN!

On 2 July the General Assembly unanimously agreed a resolution establishing **UN Women**, a new UN organisation for gender equality and the empowerment of women which will be fully operational from 1 January 2011. **UN Women** will merge UNIFEM with three sister UN entities working on gender issues and will be headed by a new Under-Secretary General.

UNIFEM and many other women's organisations around the world have been making the case for a stronger gender equality body since the UN set up a panel to look at reforming its structures in 2006. The latest resolution is the result of discussions which have been going on since last September when the General Assembly agreed that there should be a single UN entity to promote the advancement of women. UNIFEM will merge with DAW (Division for the Advancement of Women), OSAGI (Office of the Special Advisor for Gender Issues) and INSTRAW (the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women).

In her message following the historic vote on 2 July, UNIFEM Executive Director Ines Alberdi said:

'This afternoon the United Nations General Assembly unanimously decided to establish **UN Women**, the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The creation of a strong UN organisation that will be a champion to promote and advance the rights of women and girls worldwide has been a goal we have been advocating for many years, and I know that you will join me in celebrating and embracing this momentous achievement.'

For more information, see the news story on our website.

A special issue of the **UNIFEM Currents** electronic newsletter has also been issued on the creation of **UN Women**. It includes Ines Alberdi's message, a statement from Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, and the text of the General Assembly resolution.

Read this issue in full at [http://www.unifem.org/news\\_events/currents/issue201007\\_en.php](http://www.unifem.org/news_events/currents/issue201007_en.php)

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

UNIFEM branches are taking a break over the summer before announcing their autumn programme but see below for information about events which have already been organised.

### UNIFEM at the Belfast Mela

The Northern Ireland Branch will be running an information and fundraising stand at the 2010 Belfast Mela, the annual international festival which has become a highlight in the city's cultural programme. Visitors will be invited to sponsor non-stop musical performances by younger members of the NI Branch and the stand will also feature silver jewellery from Sri Lanka.

Date and time: **Sunday, 29 August** 12-6pm  
Venue: Botanic Gardens, College Park, Belfast BT9 5AB  
Contact: [northernireland@unifemuk.org](mailto:northernireland@unifemuk.org)

### Violence Against Women

UNIFEM in Wales, in partnership with BAWSO (Black Association of Women Step Out) and the Law Society Wales, have organised a conference to explore the devastating effects of violence against women and to ask whether the legal framework to protect victims is adequate.

Date and time: **Friday, 15 October** from 9.30am to 4.00pm  
Venue: County Hall, Committee Room 2 & 3, Cardiff SA1 4PE

#### Guest speakers:

<b>Hannana Siddiqui</b> (Southall Black Sisters)	Forced marriage/Honour based Violence
<b>Nanna Otoo-oyortey</b> (FORWARD)	Female Genital Mutilation
<b>Erin Pizzey</b> (pioneer in women's refuges)	Therapeutic interventions in domestic violence
<b>Sally Montier</b> (Poppy Project)	Trafficking of Women

Speaker from the **Law Society Wales** to be confirmed

Registration fee: £120 for legal professionals, with CPD points included  
£ 60 for staff from local authorities or statutory agencies  
£ 40 for individuals and members of voluntary organisations

Contact for bookings: Lorraine Johnson at [lorraine@bawso.org.uk](mailto:lorraine@bawso.org.uk) Tel:02920 644633

### Women in Leadership: the 2010 UNIFEM in London Annual Autumn Conference

Details and booking arrangements will be confirmed shortly.

This will be an evening event at Linklaters, One Silk Street, London EC2Y 8HQ.

For latest information contact [london@unifemuk.org](mailto:london@unifemuk.org)

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

If you wish to unsubscribe from receiving our e-bulletin please email [info@unifemuk.org](mailto:info@unifemuk.org)