

Priority Goals for Women in the 21st Century

A One-Day Conference

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and
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CONFERENCE REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The May 2004 Conference on **Priority Goals for Women in the 21st Century**, held at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, brought together women and men to consider progress on the many issues surrounding women since the 1995 Beijing Conference. Hosted by the **United Nations Association of Greater Boston** and the **Women and Public Policy Program** of the Kennedy School of Government, the conference considered the topics of

- violence against women;
- women and religious fundamentalism;
- women's work in building peace; and
- women, girls and the global economy.

Arthur Holcombe, President of UNA-GB, in his opening remarks mentioned that women in countries around the world had done much to follow up on the specific recommendations of the 1995 UN Women's Conference in Beijing, but many key goals of the Women's Conference Platform of Action had yet to be achieved. The upcoming 10th Anniversary of the Women's Conference offered an opportunity for stocktaking on progress and constraints faced by women in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. This Conference on Priority Goals for Women in the 21st Century was intended to contribute to the stocktaking and if possible make specific recommendations on measures able to help further advance the status of women around the world.

Ambassador Swanee Hunt, in her opening remarks, noted a shift in thinking from women as victims to women as agents of change. She stressed the importance of focusing on the strengths of women, and urged Conference speakers to explore not only the problems that are faced by women, but also the ways that women are working to overcome them. This helped to set the tone for the discussion that followed.

Rethinking Goals for Women in the Context of Globalization

Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of UNIFEM, opened the conference with her thoughts on goals for women in the context of globalization. This globalization has meant that our lives are so intertwined that decisions in New York have an impact on remote places and vice versa. Trade, capital flows, investment, employment shifts, and information technology are currently shaping the globe. The implications of globalization for women's lives are multiple.

Globalization has an Impact on Women's Lives. In the area of women's work, globalization has had a direct impact. For example, women's work is increasingly concentrated in the unskilled sector. Economic gains for women are largely realized in the better classes, and losses are in the poorer

classes. Ms. Heyzer pointed out that there is still an undervaluation of women's work, particularly work associated with childbearing, care of the elderly and more generally, work carried out in the home.

Globalization has also had an effect on women in decision-making. While women have made gains in government in many parts of the world (for example women hold 49% of parliamentary seats in Rwanda), the power of decision-making increasingly rests in international institutions and multi-national companies. The opening up of borders has led to increased **trafficking of women**, reflecting not only women trafficked into sex work, but also an increased demand for service-sector laborers in the midst of tightening immigration controls. HIV/AIDS has destroyed the productive capacity of many communities, and in some areas, young women are infected five times more than boys. This has contributed to a **feminization of poverty**, which is inter-generational.

Despite these grim realities, much has been gained for and by women in recent history. Ms. Heyzer cited the growing recognition of women as contributors, not merely victims. There are, of course, areas for improvement.

Globalization has led to an erosion of state power with the rise of multi-national corporations. While there has been an increased accountability of nation-states with regard to human rights for women (and men), there is a growing need for this accountability to be applied to corporations. Where codes of conduct look at working conditions, healthcare, and male/female wage gaps, countries like the United States could be seen as promoting prosperity and care for women and men.

Within the Security Council, we now are looking at enforceable declarations regarding war, conflict & girls, the gap in protection and assistance, and women at the peace table.

Globalization, if it is to benefit women, must not be just about economics. It must rest on a set of core values grounded in principles of human rights.

We need to bring the men on board, mobilizing new resources and new energy.

Summaries of each panel discussion follow.

PANEL 1: WOMEN, VIOLENCE, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Brenda McSweeney of Boston University's Women's Studies Program opened the first panel discussion with a quote from Kofi Annan: "Gender based violence is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation and it is perhaps the most pervasive. It knows no boundaries of geography, culture or wealth. As long as it continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development, and peace."

Quoting a statistic from the World Bank, she highlighted the pervasiveness of violence against women noting that one in three women in their lifetime will be beaten, raped, assaulted, trafficked, harassed or forced to submit to harmful practices like female genital mutilation, usually by someone she knows. Ms. McSweeney emphasized that the relatively recent recognition of women's rights as human

rights has been empowering to women around the world. As a result, women increasingly see themselves not as victims, but as agents of change.

Violence Against Women as a Human Rights Issue

Charlotte Bunch, Executive Director of the Center for Women's Global Leadership, opened by noting that many advances on women's human rights have been made over the past ten years, many of which relate to violence against women, such as the creation of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, UN Security Council Resolution 1325, and national legislation against domestic violence. Thus, on the eve of Beijing plus ten, it is important to gauge progress in combating violence against women and consider challenges ahead.

Framing violence as a human rights issue has allowed us to progress.

Visibility and awareness of violence against women. Comparing violence against women to

other human rights violations such as torture or terrorism has made people aware of the severity of this issue. It has also enhanced an understanding of global responsibility for non-state actors who commit human rights violations.

Empowerment for women. The international recognition that violence against women is a human rights violation has allowed women to validate their experiences. Ms. Bunch stated, "I can't tell you how many stories we hear over and over again about the transformation that takes place as women begin to realize that what they have experienced is not just life."

Increased access for women to international human rights systems and standard-setting mechanisms to hold violators accountable.

More mechanisms have been created in the last decade including the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, the first legally binding convention on violence against women in the Inter-American system, and instruments created by UN agencies on violence against women.

Women now have concrete tools to hold people accountable for both individual violations, and also for state and international actor inaction around those violations.

However, this progress and increased awareness has not led to a decrease in the incidence of violence.

Ms. Bunch noted, "we might ask with all that progress why does there seem to be no discernable decrease in the incidence of violence

The generation of new forms of violence is perhaps one of the most frightening things for those of us who work on this issue- the multiplicity of forms that we see today

against women? The generation of new forms of violence is perhaps one of the most frightening things for those of us who work on this issue-

the multiplicity of forms that we see today... What does it mean to have this awareness and yet not yet see that we have begun to change the impact of violence in women's lives?"

Advice on issues to consider as we continue examining violence against women.

What does it mean to create political will around this issue? Leaders must go beyond rhetoric and commit concrete resources and political capital to combat the issue of violence against women. Current gender budgets and global foundation-giving reveal very little commitment or resources dedicated to this issue. We must question what it means "both at the national level and at the international donor level that this issue which is symbolic of women's oppression and has gotten so much attention in the press is still the most under-resourced issue in women's lives." Additionally, it is essential that we collect data to measure what we are discussing. The current lack of data on violence against women shows a lack of commitment and makes it impossible to gauge effective solutions.

The impact of the resurgence of a culture of militarism and the national security discourse. The violence continuum from the home to the community to the world is well embedded, and consequently an escalation of military rhetoric, militaristic values, and warrior discourse, also increases violence in the world, and justifies and reinforces the notion of violence as a solution. Challenging a culture of violence is difficult in a world where huge amounts of money are made on arms sales, wars, and media violence.

The complex intersectionality of violence against women with other forces. Violence against women is interconnected with everything else—poverty, racism, intolerance,

of age and aging, disability etc. Violence exists across all of these lines, and the shapes and forms that violence takes are affected by all of these areas. Thus, any effective work must look at the intersection of violence with other issues.

The interconnection between violence against women and the issue of female sexuality. Both women's reproductive rights and women's sexual rights are absolutely central to the issue of violence against women. "Whether it is honor killings or the family banishment of pregnant unwed women, or the putting away of women in mental hospitals because they didn't meet gender stereotypes, or the current gender disorder diagnosis of some lesbian girls to be put away for gender identity disorder, or the rape and violence of women because they have strayed from the sexual norm of any particular group. .. And I think we have to face the fact that much of this violence is very connected to the notion that the sexuality of women has to be controlled—has to be controlled by society, by men, by their partners, by their families."

Greater community accountability to reduce the culture of impunity towards perpetrators of violence. We must not only progress in our laws, but more importantly at the level of community accountability. Despite community laws, there is still culture of impunity towards violence against women, which protects perpetrators and allows them to get away with it both legally and in the eyes of their friends, community, and family. Thus, we must seek change in the way in which we understand our own accountability at a community level.

Human rights involves changing cultural practices

"All human rights work involves changing cultures. Name a human rights issue that doesn't involve working to change cultural practices. Human rights is about trying to advance the human condition by changing how we see ourselves, each other, our relationship to each other, and what is tolerable and not tolerable... We have to stop using phrases like traditional practices as if

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globalization, warfare, intolerance on the basis of sexual orientation, intolerance around issues

somehow violence were not a contemporary practice. I think we have many new contemporary forms of violence against women that are just as destructive as traditional practices of violence against women.”

Cultural diversity and universality of human rights: moving beyond cultural relativism

Often we understand cultural relativism to be recognition of diversity. However, it is more appropriate to understand diversity as the fact that women experience violations of their human rights in different ways, requiring, therefore, diverse solutions. The process of trying to understand what would be the universal realization of rights for all people is not the same as implying that all women are the same or that they would choose the same things in pursuing their rights.

Trafficking of Women Across Borders

Focusing on a specific form of violence against women, **Jacqueline Berman** of Tulane University discussed the topic of trafficking of women. She focused primarily on the limitations of the crime control approach for dealing with trafficking, and examined various international protocols that attempt to deal with the issue of trafficking.

Limitations of the Crime Control Approach

The dominant stories of trafficking are very emotive and often portray innocent, naïve, often white girls who are trafficked against their will. The traffickers are portrayed as dark, menacing, and evil criminals who have tricked and have beaten them into slavery and prostitution against their will. These images create a sense of panic that criminals are everywhere, are penetrating our borders, and must be stopped.

The crime control approach to trafficking is overly simplistic. These sensationalized images lead us to an overly simplistic answer to the problem: the crime control approach or the criminalization of trafficking. “What ends up happening in a crime control approach is that all of the complex circumstances that surround a

women’s choice to migrate and move are collapsed into an image of criminality.”

Assistance to trafficked women becomes of a secondary importance. “In other words, it is assumed that by stopping criminals and putting them in prison, we have assisted women. There is no impetus to create programs to support women who have been trafficked or to address the issues that motivate trafficking in the first place or motivate women’s decisions to move in the first place.”

Often the result is stricter immigration control of both legal and illegal immigration, which creates more opportunities for women’s exploitation. Women are on the move globally and stricter immigration controls will mean that they will more often need to find ways to get around immigration laws. Furthermore, this increases assumptions about poor women – that

they are illegal immigrants, trafficked women, or migrant sex workers. Officials then harass people who are simply women travelers from developing countries or refuse them visas to travel in the first place.

Limitations of International Provisions that Deal with Trafficking

The crime control approach also pervades the UN treaties that deal with trafficking. The *Palermo Treaty* (2003), an international convention against organized crime, has two protocols that related to the issue of trafficking. One of the protocols - the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons* - takes a crime control approach and has very strong law enforcement provisions to deal with trafficking women. It also includes the first international definition about what trafficking of women is.

The new protocol does not articulate any commitment to provisions or services for trafficked persons. The protocol does not require governments to provide any services for trafficked persons. Governments are often only willing to give assistance and protection to trafficked persons if they are valuable as

witnesses to help prosecute the criminals, but often deport the women once a trial is over. Thus, underresourced NGOs often provide services that the government does not.

The definition of trafficking is problematic and takes no clear position on the relationship between prostitution and trafficking. The definition is “extremely vague on the meaning of force and exploitation, and therefore generally ambiguous on what trafficking itself is.” The definition is not clear as to whether it is possible to have consensual commercial sex work, without considering it exploitation. Thus different groups with varying political agendas have interpreted the definition differently. For example, on one hand some interpret the definition to imply that any migration that involves sex work is trafficking, implying that a woman can never consent to sex work. On the other hand some groups make a distinction between forced and voluntary labor, implying that not all adult participation in sex work is trafficking. The ambiguous language and lack of agreement on the meaning makes the protocol of little help in dealing with this issue.

The second protocol to the Palermo Treaty- The Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants- highlights gender differences in how we frame human rights issues. This protocol is addressed specifically to voluntary migrants, in contrast to the trafficking protocol, which pertains to involuntary migrants who are female. This difference implies that men are constructed as active and consenting, whereas women are constructed as passive victims whether or not they consent. Women lack agency and consensual power in the terms provided by this treaty.

Such ambiguous international agreements are unlikely to be useful in helping to advance the position of women, and might even make the situation worse.

“International agreements that are made ambiguous because they don’t want to require governments to provide services or protection that are necessary...These treaties are not going to stop women from migrating, they’re not going

to stop women from working in the sex industry, they’re not going to stop women from migrating for sex work. They’re not going to stop women from harnessing trafficking networks to get them in to the places they want to be. But what they might do, what they often do is create situations where women are vulnerable to further exploitation at the very point at which we were supposed to help them.”

Intersectional Approach to Violence against Women

The third panelist, **Nira Yuval-Davis** of the University of East London spoke about the need to examine the context in which we understand violence against women, and the importance of adopting an intersectional approach.

We have to challenge the assumptions that perceive and construct women as a homogenous body. When discussing UN Security Council Resolution 1325, there is often a tendency to talk about a need to include women in all peace negotiations, without a clear idea about which women we are talking about. “What women, which kind of women? I grew up in the Israel of Golda Meir; I lived in the Britain of Margaret Thatcher, there is no way that I can think or collude with this kind of assumption that women are *inherently* peacemakers. And as long as we do not challenge these kinds of implicit assumptions, I think we are going to be in big trouble.”

We must go beyond essentialist thinking and recognize that women act and are motivated by their specific experiences and positions. A lot of essentialist constructions of men as aggressive and violent, and women as peace loving and victims of this aggression often feed justifications to go to war for the sake of women and children. We have to recognize ambiguities. For instance, some claim that there are inherent characteristics in the ideology and practice of mothering that can become a foundation of anti-militaristic movements. However, the opposite has also been argued such that women will go to war and not care what happens, as long as their children survive.

We also have to recognize that women are not always victims of war, but can also be perpetrators. Women take on many different roles and it is important differentiate among women- “those who were raped, those who stood aside, those who benefited from it, those who sometimes encouraged or participated.” It is problematic to only remain at the level of generalities.

An intersectional analysis is essential in recognizing that sexism is always enmeshed in the intersection of other factors. It is important to consider other aspects such as race, class,

ethnicity, sexuality, ability, and stage in the life cycle. “Feminists and women have countries. But they don’t only have countries, they have ethnicities and race and class and other kind of situations and locations. But we have to avoid simplistic reductionist identity politics. We have to differentiate between locations, identities ... And what we are talking about here, is about promoting participation of those with feminist thinking who are looking for participation, and not just women.”

PANEL 2: WOMEN AND ISLAM

UNA-GB President Arthur Holcombe observed that this panel might have been better designated as “Women and Religious Fundamentalisms.” Moderated by **Noleen Heyzer**, the panel took a closer look at the effects of religious fundamentalism on women’s perceived and actual role in society and government.

Women and the Islamic Culture

Mahnaz Afkhami of the Women’s Learning Partnership for Rights, Development, and Peace spoke on “Women and the Islamic Culture.”

We cannot justify atrocities, such as genital mutilation, that happen to women just because some women say it is okay.

“Take any group of women in any part of the world and ask what their aspirations are. In one hour they will come out with the declaration of human rights.”

Women must be reached one at a time. Afkhami is part of a network of women in Muslim majority countries who are trying to bridge their culture with modernity while staying connected to their roots. Instead of looking at the numbers in terms of women’s global status, the group works to make women lead in a participatory way, assuming that every woman is a leader.

We must create a new understanding of what leadership is all about.

Afkhami suggests that we must look at this as a practical and feasible way for women to gain power in all parts of the world. The group promotes this through a curriculum of stories of real women who lead in this way. The challenge of the 21st Century, then, is to create a real transformation by removing the deep structures of resistance and creating a new understanding of what leadership is all about. Afkhami concluded by sharing a slogan created by women at a recent training session for Afkhami’s program in Afghanistan. “Let those who think it cannot be done step out of the way of those who are doing it.”

Women’s Political and other Human Rights in Saudi Arabia

Isobel Coleman, Senior Fellow for the Council on Foreign Relations, focused on the more specific state of women in Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia affects us all because it is both an oil center and the spiritual center of Islam. Saudi influence has spread one interpretation of the Koran and suppressed another, financially supporting its beliefs in other countries and supporting regimes such as the Taliban.

The ‘women’s rights’ movement in Saudi Arabia can be seen as a barometer of change.

The only consensus amongst reformers is the need for economic reform to include women in the faltering Saudi economy.

Today only about 5% of the workforce is made up of women while women make up 70% of the university student body. This is due to the various educational, political, and social restrictions put on them. With 70% of the country’s population under the age of 30, last year’s destabilizing bombings, declining living standards, increasing population, and huge pressures from both the west and Saudi’s own terrorists, “The country does not have the luxury of time.” Things must change now, and women must work as drivers of the change process.

Legacy of Injustice: Gender Justice, Governance and Citizenship

Shahla Haeri, Director of Women’s Studies at Boston University is an Iranian Muslim woman.

She insists that we cannot use religion as the only determining factor in looking at women’s rights because it would “defeat the purpose of gatherings like these, which is to challenge preconceived stereotypes and facilitate a genuine understanding of the “other.”

“It seems that for every woman who goes into power, several others silently recede further into the depths of poverty.”

Haeri focused on South Asia, where there are many religions and cultures, and where violence against women is universal. “It seems that for every woman who goes into power, several

others silently recede further into the depths of poverty.”

While women’s rights are increasing, violence against women is on the rise because women asserting authority and competing with men politically, economically, and socially increases the occurrence of violence.

Haeri cited a recent study in India that shows that “A woman’s risk of being beaten, hit, or kicked rose along with her level of education.” Conversely, the study showed that 32% of men with no education committed an act of sexual violence against a woman, while 57% of men with 6-10 years of education or more committed an act of sexual violence against a woman. In terms of governance, women-friendly laws and regulations are “necessary but not sufficient.” Haeri suggests 3 ways to help women to be partners in governance:

1. Through the role of the state: Representation of women in local and national levels, perhaps through quotas
2. Through the role of civil societies and women’s organizations of all types
3. With coordination between international conventions and charters and national programs so that international organizations see to it that national organizations implement their laws

PANEL 3: WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP IN SECURING PEACE AND SECURITY

A panel discussion, moderated by **Ambassador Swanee Hunt**, addressed the topic of women’s leadership in securing peace and security. Seven women from around the world including Guatemala, Rwanda, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Philippines, and Northern Ireland spoke in person and via video about their experiences working for peace and security in their

respective countries and beyond. A common theme discussed by panelists was that although women must be included in peace processes and we have made a lot of progress to this effect during the past decade, a lot still needs to be done to ensure that these gains are implemented.

Ambassador Hunt opened the panel discussion with a consideration of **why women must be included in peace processes**.

- **Fairness:** women represent half of the population, therefore it is only fair that they are represented.
- **Compensation:** women are victimized during conflict, so the least we can do is to involve them.
- **Representation:** if you don't have women around the table representing their interests, the men at the table will not build the structures that are needed for women.
- **Efficiency:** women bring something different. Certainly not all women are the same, but there are some differences in the norms.

Ambassador Hunt emphasized that although we don't want to make generalizations and fall into simplistic gender categorizations, we must also recognize certain themes, some of which she described based on her interviews with about 500 women who experienced some 20 conflicts.

Women are particularly adept at bridging divides

Monica McWilliams, an organizer and professor in Northern Ireland, spoke via video about the founding of the Northern Irish Women's Coalition and the unique role that women have played in bridging divides during the peace process and beyond. The peace process needed women that had "experience of standing in each others shoes and having experience working across the divide." Women had already had experiences working across lines in their work for instance in centers for women victims of violence and in the women's rights movement. These experiences helped women know more about what was needed on each side. And still in 2002, the Northern Irish Women's Coalition is the only political party still accepted in all communities.

Women have their fingers on the pulse of the community

Women more often understand what is happening in the community and think more practically in terms of everyday life. **Dr. Vjosa Dobruna** of Kosovo, spoke via video about her experience as a Government Minister and her understanding of the importance of listening to people at the community level. In Kosovo, she held community forums so that she could listen to people's fears and visions. "I really listened to them, and I didn't send my advisors, I went myself... I really had the pulse of people...I listened to people and knew what was going on....And because I was a woman, I was more interested to find out what was going on and I had the opportunity."

Women are community leaders, with and without formal authority

Because women are often outside of the power structure, they are particularly good at coming up with innovative ways to get things done. At the age of 26, after the genocide, **Aloisea Inyumba** from Rwanda was charged with such tasks as figuring out how to house 500,000 orphans and bury 800,000 corpses. As the Secretary of National Unity and Reconciliation, she went village-to-village preparing people for the post-genocide life in creative ways. For instance, she had villagers do psychodrama and write songs as a way to deal with the trauma.

Ms. Inyumba spoke via video about her invaluable prior experience working with grassroots women's organizations that greatly informed her work as a Government Minister. She noted that many women in leadership positions in Rwanda have also come from NGOs and the grassroots level. "We are the products of the grassroots women. All these women you see at the top involved in policy level were down there...When we talk about policy makers, I think they should all have to listen to these women.... Community based organizations and NGOs are doing very good work and are providing the leadership in a lot of these government programs and doing implementation."

Women are highly invested in preventing, stopping, and recovering from conflict

Men and women often value different things. Women more often want a safe place for their children and are less obsessed with where the lines and territories are. **Josephine Perez**, who directs a peace institute in the Philippines, also spoke via video about the special role that women have in peace processes. “It’s in our experience that in making important crucial decisions, women are left out, especially in decisions that would lead to violence and war. And I think because of our gift of nurturance and life ...If they (women) were consulted in these decisions, I’m sure they would say no to violence and war. Women would provide alternatives and think of other ways than being violent and going to war. (Women) would be very helpful in negotiations, as women provide different perspectives and see things that are not seen by men.”

Women and Peace: Building in Africa’s Great Lakes Region.

Nathalie Gahunga of Rwanda spoke about women’s important and often pivotal role in peace building in the great lakes region of Burundi, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). She highlighted the fact that although women are taking greater roles in the reconstruction processes and increasing their representation, there is still a lack of commitment to fully integrate and provide resources to ensure the inclusion of women.

Women of the great lakes region have made important contributions to the peace processes.

The tremendous violence in the region has been characterized by gender-based and sexual crimes against women. For example, between 250,000 and 500,000 women were raped during the Rwandan genocide. Prompted by the advocacy work of local and international activists, the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda marked the first time in history that an international tribunal found rape as a tool of genocide. Additionally in Rwanda the national

women’s organization joined with female parliamentarians and government officials to play a significant role in reconstruction efforts. As a result, the new constitution is gender sensitive and requires 30% of parliamentary seats to be held by women. Last year women represented 49% of the seats in the Rwandan parliament, which was a greater proportion than in any other parliament worldwide.

Likewise, during peace agreements in Burundi, women fought to gain a place at peace talks, and their recommendations were included in the final peace accord. These included key recommendations such as punishing the war crime of sexual violence and, requiring minimum (30%) representation of women in decision making. It is “important to notice that successful integration of gender equality into the Arusha peace process in Burundi played an important role in bringing the Security Council ...in October 2000 to convene its first open debate on women and peace and security which resulted in Security Council Resolution 1325.”

A strong regional women’s network has played an important role in the peace processes and in regional development.

“It is important to recognize and highlight the work that has already been carried out by the regional network of three countries, work that put them in the position to contribute to building the framework of the post conflict construction period.”

Despite women’s increased decision making power and important contributions to the peace process, there is still a lack of real commitment to ensure women’s participation.

And in many cases donors do not take the priorities of women’s organizations into account. “The importance of the women’s regional network has often been misunderstood and there is a lack of commitment from international donors.”

Additionally many women’s organizations and networks are still young and developing, and have concentrated on issues of economic recovery, rights of women and governance. However, it is “also important for these women

to think about human security and to define their own perspective of human security. And it is very important for the international community to assist in this process. First to provide funding and secondly to develop more programs- not only conflict resolution and leadership- but also in all areas related to policy making- in the area for example of regional security including the military dimension, regional integration and cooperation.”

There is an important message – it’s a political message – that gender equality deserves to be part of peace agreements.

Injecting Gender Equity into the Guatemalan Peace Accords

The second panelist, **Luz Mendez** of the National Union of Guatemalan Women, shared the experiences of Guatemalan women in the process of peace negotiations and peace building, and provided insights into the challenges that we still face to fully integrating women.

Ms. Mendez, who took part in the peace negotiations as part of the team representing the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (URNG), was the only woman in the two parties for several years. However, she admitted that at the beginning of the process, she was unaware of any gender inequalities. “I was fighting for social justice for democratization, for having the army play a different role in the Guatemalan society, but I wasn’t aware of the gender inequalities... but two things happened that changed not only my position, but my life.” The first of which was her feeling of being discriminated against as a woman, and even being mistaken by some international observers as the assistant of her delegation.

The Beijing conference and platform of action had a significant impact on legitimizing the inclusion of gender in peace processes.

After Beijing, for the first time UN representatives initiated a meeting with Ms. Mendez to discuss how gender issues were going to be included in the current agreement.

“Then I felt I came back to the table of negotiations legitimized because of the Beijing platform of action including the issue of women and armed conflicts. So it made a difference really at the table of negotiations.” This international legitimization aided the inclusion of the needs of Guatemalan women into the peace agreements. “There is an

important message – it’s a political message – that gender equality deserves to be part of peace agreements. It made a difference, an important difference. And it has been of course a very important basis for all the activities we have been implementing in Guatemala in order to produce changes in the legislation.”

Good peace agreements do not imply that they will be implemented.

Although the overall situation in Guatemala has improved, many of the social and economic reforms have not been implemented. “The lessons that I have learned is that whatever we achieved in the negotiation stage, it is necessary to support and sustain during the peace building...We need women at the peace table, but we also need women in power in the post conflict stage, because finally what we need is...to have better societies, and these changes are not only achieved through the peace agreements.”

Although we have achieved remarkable gains, we now have the challenge of putting words into action “of what we have achieved not only politically, but in terms of our feelings.” Ms. Mendez recalls vivid memories that remind her of the important progress that has been achieved. For example, she reminisced about, “the moment we signed the first peace agreement including gender provisions. It was so touching that moment when I saw in the paper we signed that it was recognized that discrimination against women existed in Guatemala, and something had to be done to overcome that social problem. Those memories follow me and fill me with strength to go on.”

Women's Involvement in the Afghan Peace Process

As the final panelist, **Rina Amiri** of Afghanistan spoke about the challenges of helping women gain a united voice to increase their representation in the peace processes and the public arena generally.

Women's inclusion in the peace processes of Afghanistan was initially more central than in other conflict areas.

“When the peace broke out in Afghanistan, perhaps one of the most positive things is that for once, people didn't ask why women, but in answering the questions of why war, the issue of women came up....The issue of brutality of the Taliban regime against the women was perhaps one of the strongest arguments made by the Bush administration and by the international community... It was perhaps the first time in my recollection where an international community decidedly was in support of women's participation in the peace process, and benefiting from the peace process.” The Bonn agreement and the mandate of the United Nations assistance mission in Afghanistan both had provisions that helped ensure women's participation. This resulted in women's increased representation in the public arena, and for the first time in Afghanistan's history, a Ministry of Women's Affairs.

What has this initial inclusion of women in the process meant for Afghanistan? “I think that the answer to that is complicated. I wish I could say that there is a marked difference within the lives of Afghan women and within the political leadership and the peace process. But I think if we're realistic and honest, we would have to say that it's been a very bumpy road, it's been a very difficult road.”

There are three limitations that women have faced in Afghanistan that come from themselves- as much as the society.

Lack of grassroots women's leadership in Afghanistan. The cultural complexity of women's identity in Afghanistan. More so than

in other societies, in Afghanistan very little of a woman's identity is constructed around being a woman. A large part of identity is built around such factors as family, local, and tribal identity. “And the idea of thinking of yourself as a woman, and advancing your interests as a woman has not really been there in Afghanistan, and unfortunately I think that that is still the case although there has been some progress.”

Women often compete with and undermine one another. The pie is small for women, and “women look to each other as competition and it takes a lot of work to get women to see each other as being able to advance each others interests, and being able to support each other...If women are going to make advances they have to stop undermining each other.”

These factors have placed serious limitations on what has been achieved, particularly in the emergency Loya Jirga.

In the emergency Loya Jirga, it was promising to even have 10% representation for women. However, although women were represented in leadership, they were fragmented. Organizations such as UNIFEM conducted trainings with women to help them realize that “unless they were united, they weren't going to make a difference, their voices were going to be drowned out- and that's exactly what happened. On some issues I think women's voices resounded, but in terms of the woman's voice, there wasn't one.” Women were very broken along factional, political, and regional lines.

It was a huge challenge to unite the women for the constitutional Loya Jirga. For the constitutional Loya Jirga, a national advisory committee for women's elections was created and consulted with. The committee included representatives from the Ministry of Women's Affairs, women's NGOs, and women from civil society and the professional sector. As a part of its strategy, the committee decided that the Electoral College for women's elections needed to include only women who had within their mandate a mission of serving women.

“So the women with great coordination and effort did start speaking in one voice... and ended up doubling their representation for parliament.” A gender law group came together at the Ministry of Women’s Affairs that was supported by UNIFEM and other women’s organizations. The group prepared a recommendation for women’s interests to be represented in the constitution, and created a platform of action with ten points to be advanced by every woman member of the Loya Jirga. During the constitutional Loya Jirga, even when it was breaking up along factional and ethnic lines, the women stood together to advocate for their increased representation. “It was really an important moment because the women slowly, and initially reluctantly, walked up, stood together, went and talked to the

leadership and demanded an increase in their representation, and ended up doubling their representation for parliament.”

“They disagreed on all other issues- they wouldn’t talk to each other on other issues- but when it came to women’s representation, suddenly they all spoke in one voice. And I think in the last two years that is the key success that I see as a significant achievement. Not only doubling their representation, but women recognizing that they can agree to disagree on all other issues- they don’t have to like each other- women are as deeply conflicted with each other across regional and ethnic lines as men, but they have to speak in one voice on the gender issue.”

PANEL 4: WOMEN, GIRLS AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

Kristen Timothy of the National Council for Research on Women moderated the fourth panel. She highlighted **sustainable livelihoods as a priority for women in all parts of the world in the 21st century**. Although women now make up 1.1 of the 2.8 billion worldwide labor force, a disproportionate number of them are in forms of employment such as temporary, part time, or home-based work. This kind of work is designed to maximize profits of others, pays low wages and offers no benefits. “At all levels of the labor force,” Timothy said, “women still earn less than men for jobs of equal value, at an average of 25% less.” The panel members used their case studies and research to discuss ways to help these women.

At all levels of the labor force, women still earn less than men for jobs of equal value, at an average of 25% less.

600 million women in the developing world working in agriculture.

Zimbabwe Cotton Company. First she described a cotton-buying company in Zimbabwe that kept to its company policies of equal opportunity hiring and employment despite all the money it was losing.

Thailand Chicken-Processing Company. Next, a chicken-processing company in Thailand that improved its efficiency by decreasing turnover through an after-work education program for workers to get their 6th grade, 8th grade,

or high school certificate while earning overtime pay.

Poland Dairy Co-op. Finally, she described a dairy co-op in Poland purchased by Land O Lakes that increased profit margins while keeping up its high levels of health, safety and training as well as its practices of equal opportunity employment.

Globalization and the Employment of Women

Kate Cloud, a leader in the movement for women and development, was the first panelist. She described and analyzed her three-case study on agro-business management. There is great interest in this sector because 80% of women in the developing world live in rural areas, and very little is known about the conditions of the

Why do some companies behave in a positive way toward employees?

- Government regulations
- Good company codes of conduct and policies
- Strong Unions
- Pressure from NGOs and/or consumers in the First world

The Effects of Globalization: Talking with Women in the ERIS factory in Poland

Ewa Charkiewicz of the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, Netherlands, spoke on her investigation of how the social and gender orders have changed with the political, economic, social, and cultural changes since the fall of Communism in Poland in 1989. She visited ERIS, a Polish cosmetics company founded by a woman in 1983, which over the years, Charkiewicz said, has done its best to be socially responsible. By talking with workers, Charkiewicz realized that despite the image of the company, that of the successful female owner, women working for the company are not doing very well.

Factory workers have laws protecting how many hours they work and how much they get paid, but female managers, shop owners, and immigrants work endless hours and still make less than males, who are more likely to have the well-paying IT positions.

Charkiewicz described this phenomenon as “squeezing time out of people’s bodies.” Despite all this, most workers still do not make enough money to be independent.

Many workers must be supported through marriage and help from inter-generational family, such as parents.

This resource, she says, is now exhausted, and for the 21st century we need to “find alternative governance frameworks so companies can really make profits without jeopardizing people’s livelihoods.” In the future, Charkiewicz concluded, instead of just “putting out fires,” we

need to find alternatives and create preventative policies.

Investing in Girls: Meeting the Challenges of Globalization

The panel concluded with a presentation of Judith Bruce’s path-breaking research on adolescent girls for the Population Council.

Today, adolescent policy is mainly absent on a global scale. From the end of an infant girl’s vaccinations until she is pregnant, governments offer almost nothing to support a girl. It is during this part of her life that a girl needs support most in terms of schooling, life skills, financial literacy and livelihoods, and civic participation. The adolescent programs that do exist are either poorly targeted or not targeted at all.

Programs need to differentiate strategies according to age, gender, marital and schooling status, and living arrangements. Married adolescents, girls not in school, socially isolated, and economically vulnerable girls are all in very dangerous positions and are virtually ignored in terms of targeted programs. Married girls under the age of 18 are much more likely to contract HIV than unmarried girls since they are much more likely to have unprotected sex. In the next 10 years, over 100 million girls will be married under the age of 18. In Ethiopia, 99% of unprotected sex amongst adolescent girls occurs within marriage.

“Unless we intervene, their bodies are their resources, whether inside or outside marriage.” Bruce suggested some key policy and program directions for creating livelihoods for adolescent girls:

- Create age and gender-based peer groups
- Teach basic age and gender specific financial and economic skills
- Adapt programs for adult livelihoods, income generation, micro finance and savings models to the specific needs of age and gender subsets

- Use a staged model for micro finance and poverty alleviation programs
- Create formal savings opportunities for working girls

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Throughout the conference, many recommendations for action were offered up in the individual panels. These recommendations were summarized at the end of the day in a wrap up session moderated by Ms. Heyzer. Based on the many ideas and conclusions of panelists, she outlined strategies for moving from victimization to agency, solutions and strength; from words to action.

Ms. Heyzer’s strategies are organized under the acronym, “ACT.” She expressed the sentiment of conference participants that Beijing Plus 10 must be focused on action, and outlined 6 ingredients needed to move forward.

- A. Advocacy**-for new and emerging ideas and issues
Accountability-We need to ask, Where are the mechanisms for implementation and for accelerating the process? Who are the power stakeholders? and how do we ensure in the implementation process that there is a sharing of core values?
- C. Constituency**-we need to invest in action and organizing so that we can move forward.
Commitment-we have enough of words and political will. We need resources and commitment to groups that are forgotten, such as girl soldiers and early married girls.
- T. Transformation**-we must bring in the partnership of men, media, cultures and histories
Transcendence-if we want to build a world that is free from violence and poverty, we need to break out of cycles of violence and poverty and hatred. We must transcend what divides us to get to the point of humanity and commonality.

Kristen Timothy, who served as Coordinator of the Beijing Conference on women in 1995, focused on **looking toward Beijing Plus 10**. She reflected that we have learned a great deal since the first conference, and now we need to use the knowledge and the opportunity to move forward. She offered three areas to focus on.

A focus on girls. This issue came up late at Beijing, but the time is right now to look at the women of the future.

Mobilize and reinvigorate the grassroots. Amongst women’s organizations, there has been a lot of discussion about the negative effects of the professionalization of NGO’s. While some of the old mobilization (women in the street) is returning, we need to strategize about how we can go back and re-invigorate the grassroots; to raise up the voices of women in all their diversity.

Have Beijing Plus 10 be a pledging conference for getting more resources committed.
In preparation for the Beijing Plus 10, we should be studying how resources have been used and where the gaps are in order to say to governments and organizations, “We need your commitment of real resources to build on our successes and move forward.”

Erica Sanger (Executive Summary), Alison Spindler and Sarah Roma (Panel Discussions) wrote this Report.
For information, contact UNA-GB, One Milk Street, Boston, MA 02109, Tel: 617-482-4587, email: info@unagb.org.

- When:** Tuesday, May 4, 2004
- Where:** Kennedy School of Government, Taubman Building, 5th Floor
79 JFK Street, Cambridge, MA
- Organizers:** United Nations Association of Greater Boston and the Women and Public Policy Program at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government
- Registration:** By invitation only.

Presentations and Panel Discussions:

- **Keynote Address:** Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director, UNIFEM
- **Women in Government and Politics**
- **Globalization and its Impact on the Status of Women**
- **Women and Islam**
- **Women, Violence and Human Rights**
- **Women's Leadership in Securing Peace and Security**

Women comprise 70 percent of the world's poor and two thirds of its illiterates.

Women occupy 14 percent of the world's management and administrative positions and 10 percent of its parliamentary seats.

facts found at www.unifem.org

Women and girls are among those most affected by the violence and economic instability associated with armed conflict. Whether at home, in flight or in camps for displaced people, women are threatened by rape, domestic violence, sexual exploitation, trafficking, sexual humiliation and mutilation.

Conference Background:

The UN-sponsored Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China in 1995 endorsed a broad agenda of follow up actions to promote women's equality and basic human rights. Despite progress, much remains to be done to achieve internationally agreed upon norms regarding gender. In many Islamic societies, religion is used as a tool of repression of women by men, keeping them from acquiring education and training. In many regions of the world, illicit trafficking of women across borders is increasingly common. Working women are also commonly exploited by relatively low wages, long hours and limited benefits. Domestic violence remains problematic in all countries of the world.

Conference Objectives:

The conference drew on foreign and local experts from UN organizations, the US Government, universities and non-governmental organizations. Speakers explored findings in the conference topic areas, and made recommendations for corrective actions contained in this Conference Report.

Conference Schedule

- 8:00-8:30 am Registration
- 8:30-8:45 am Introduction
Arthur Holcombe, *President, United Nations Association of Greater Boston*
Swanee Hunt, *Director, Women and Public Policy Program*
- 8:45-9:30 am Keynote Address: "Globalization and its Impacts on the Status of Women"
Noeleen Heyzer, *Director, UNIFEM*
- 9:30-9:50 am Coffee/Break
- 9:50-11:15 am Panel Discussion: Women, Violence and Human Rights
Moderator: Brenda McSweeney, *Boston University Women's Studies Program*
Charlotte Bunch, *Rutgers University Women's Leadership Center*, "Violence Against Women as a Human Rights Issue"
Jacqueline Berman, *Tulane University*, "Trafficking of Women Across Borders"
Nira Yuval-Davis, *University of East London*, "Intersectional Approach to Violence against Women"
- 11:15-12:30 am Panel Discussion: Women and Islam
Moderator: Noeleen Heyzer, *Executive Director, UNIFEM*
Mahnaz Afkhami, *President, Women's Learning Partnership for Rights, Development and Peace*
"Women, Culture, and Human Rights in Muslim Societies."
Isobel Coleman, *Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations*, "Women's Political and other Human Rights in Saudi Arabia"
Shahla Haeri, *Director, Women's Studies, Boston University*, "Legacy of Injustice: Gender Justice, Governance and Citizenship"
Ayesha Imam, 'Women and the Muslim Religious Right in Nigeria'
- 12:30-1:30 pm Lunch/Break
- 1:30-1:45 pm UNA-GB Leadership Awards Presented to:
Noeleen Heyzer, *Executive Director, UNIFEM*
Mahnaz Afkhami, *President, Women's Learning Partnership for Rights, Development and Peace*
- 1:45-3:00 pm Panel Discussion: Women's Leadership in Securing Peace and Security
Moderator: Swanee Hunt, *Director, Women and Public Policy Program*, "Why Women?"
Nathalie Gahunga, *Boston Consortium for Gender Security and Human Rights*, "Women and Peace: Building in Africa's Great Lakes Region"
Luz Mendez, *President of the Advisory Council, National Union of Guatemala Women*, "Injecting Gender Equity into the Guatemalan Peace Accords"
- 3:00-3:20 pm Coffee/Break
- 3:20-5:00 pm Panel Discussion: Women, Girls and the Global Economy
Moderator: Kristen Timothy, *National Council for Research on Women*
Kate Cloud, "Globalization and the Employment of Women"
Ewa Charkiewicz, *Institute of Social Studies, the Hague, Netherlands*, "The Effects of Globalization: Talking with Women in the ERIS Factory in Poland"
Judith Bruce, *Population Council*, "Investing in Girls: Meeting the Challenges of Globalization"
- 5:00-5:15 pm Summary Thoughts
Noeleen Heyzer
- 5:15 pm Closing Remarks

Mahnaz Afkhami

Mahnaz Afkhami is Founder and President of Women's Learning Partnership (WLP), Executive Director of Foundation for Iranian Studies and former Minister of State for Women's Affairs in Iran. Born in Kerman, Iran, she founded the Association of Iranian University Women and served as secretary general of the Women's Organization of Iran prior to the Islamic revolution.

In exile in the United States, Ms. Afkhami is a leading advocate of women's rights for more than three decades, having founded and headed several international non-governmental organizations focused on advancing the status of women. She created the concept and mobilized support for the establishment of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Women and Development and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. She served as a member of Iran's High Council of Family Planning and Welfare, the board of trustees of Kerman University, and the board of trustees of Farah University for Women. Additionally, Ms. Afkhami has led numerous task forces on democratization, leadership, and women's human rights in the Global South, including multinational delegations to the UN Human Rights Conference in Vienna (1993) and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995).

Ms. Afkhami has lectured and published extensively on the international women's movement, women's human rights, women in leadership, women and technology, and women, civil society and democracy. Her numerous publications have been widely translated and distributed internationally. They include *Faith and Freedom: Women's Human Rights In the Muslim World* (Syracuse University Press, 1995) and *Leading to Choices: A Leadership Training Handbook for Women* (WLP, 2001).

Jacqueline Berman

Jacqueline Berman is a visiting professor of International Relations and Women's Studies at Tulane University. She received her BA from Brown University and her MA and Ph.D. from Arizona State University and has studied at the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Poland and the Goethe Institute in Berlin, Germany. She has served as a visiting Fellow at the Institute for European Ethnology at Humboldt University, Berlin, and the Institute of Applied Social Sciences at the University of Warsaw. Selected honors include an SSRC-MacArthur Foundation Post-doctoral Fellowship for International Peace and Security, Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship for Human Security, Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst Fellowship, two International Research and Exchange Commission Grants, and a Fulbright Research Fellowship.

Her recent publications include: "The Body Politic or an Embodied Politics: Toward a (En)Gendered Analysis of Security Studies" in *Toward Supradisciplinarity in the Study of Security*, J. Marshall Beier and Samantha Arnold, eds. and "(Un)Popular Strangers:" The European Political Community, Discourses of Sex Trafficking and the Panicked State of the Modern Nation" in *European Journal of International Relations* vol. 9 no. 1, March, 2003. She has also worked as a consultant for the US Department of State, private consulting firms, a trafficking in women expert group for the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, the Payson Center for International Development, and with the La Strada Foundation Against Trafficking in Women, Warsaw, Poland.

Judith Bruce

Judith Bruce is a Senior Associate at the Population Council. Since joining the Council in 1977, she has coordinated a program of policy-oriented research on issues related to women's and adolescent girls' social and economic development. Ms. Bruce is currently the Director of the Council's Gender, Family and Development program, which, enlarging upon previous work on women's roles and status, includes a focus on intrafamily dynamics, investments in children, and adolescence. She has been a member of the Council on Foreign Relations since 1977, and in 1993 received the Association for Women in Development's bi-annual award for outstanding contributions to the field.

A 1968 graduate of Harvard University, Ms. Bruce has written and lectured extensively on population policy, the quality of reproductive health services, adolescent girls' status in the developing world, family and partnership dynamics, and women's access to and control of resources inside and outside the household. Some of her most recent publications include a 1997 edition of SEEDS, a series documenting successful income-generating programs for women, entitled *Empowering the Next Generation: Girls of the Maqattam Garbage Settlement*, a 1998 monograph entitled *The Uncharted Passage: Girls' Adolescence in the Developing World*, and a 2003 article for the *Economic and Political Weekly* journal, "Married Adolescent Girls: Human Rights, Health, and Developmental Needs of a Neglected Majority". Most recently, she co-wrote a paper with Shelley Clark, entitled "Including Married Adolescents in Adolescent Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS Policy". It is currently under review for publication.

Charlotte Bunch

Charlotte Bunch, Founder and Executive Director of the Center for Women's Global Leadership, has been an activist, author and organizer in women's and human rights movements for over three decades. Before her work at the Global Center, Bunch was a Fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, and a founder of D.C. Women's Liberation and of *Quest: A Feminist Quarterly*. She has written numerous articles, edited or co-edited nine anthologies including the Center's reports on the UN Beijing Plus 5 Review process in 2000 and the World Conference Against Racism in 2001. She has authored one collection of her work, *Passionate Politics: Feminist Theory in Action*, and co-authored *Demanding Accountability: The Global Campaign and Vienna Tribunal for Women's Human Rights*. Bunch's contributions to conceptualizing and organizing for women's human rights have been recognized by many and include her induction into the National Women's Hall of Fame in October 1996; President Clinton's selection of Bunch as a recipient of the Eleanor Roosevelt Award for Human Rights in December 1999; her receipt of the "Women Who Make a Difference Award" from the National Council for Research on Women in 2000; and being honored as one of the "21 Leaders for the 21st Century" by Women's Enews in 2002.

Bunch is a Distinguished Professor in the Women's and Gender Studies Department at Rutgers University.

Ewa Charkiewicz

Ewa Charkiewicz has been engaged academically and politically with globalisation from the perspectives of ecology and feminism as social movement and social critiques. She taught at the Institute of Social Studies in the Hague, and worked with several transnational networks, such as ANPED - Northern Alliance for Sustainability, and Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era. She is now in New York, with the Globalisation, Gender and Human Security program of the National Council for Research on Women and CUNY Graduate Centre Women and Society Program. She is a partner in Tools for Transition, a policy think tank on gender and sustainable development in the Netherlands. Her publications include *Women, the Environment and Sustainable Development* (with Rosi Braidotti, Sabine Hausler and Saskia Wieringa, and *Transitions to Sustainable Consumption and Production: Concepts, Policies and Actions*.

Kathleen Cloud

Kathleen Cloud is an Associate Professor of Human Development and Director of the Office of Women in International Development at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She holds an Ed.D. from Harvard University's Graduate School of Education Administration in Planning and Social Policy; and a M.Ed. from University of Arizona in Education Psychology. Her current research focuses on the interaction between mothering and increases in the quantity of human capital, utilizing the United Nations international data set on women. She is examining national level data on women's education, fertility rates, infant mortality rates and life expectancy and their relationship to social and economic development. She is also working with a group researching the types of gender training now being done by international development agencies.

Isobel Coleman

Isobel Coleman directs a two-year project at the Council on Foreign Relations on women and foreign policy. The project looks at the effectiveness of existing international and local programs that encourage the economic and civic participation of women within their local cultures, particularly Middle Eastern and Southwest Asian societies.

Before joining the Council as a senior fellow, Coleman served as the chairperson of Nursing Hands, Inc., a health care services company she founded in 2000. She has also been a partner at McKinsey & Company, a research fellow at the Brookings Institution, and an adjunct professor at American University focusing on U.S.-Japan relations. Coleman holds a D. Phil and M. Phil in International Relations from Oxford University, and an A.B. in Public Policy and East Asian Studies from Princeton University.

Nathalie Gahunga

Nathalie Gahunga is one of five 2003-2004 fellows at the Boston Consortium for Gender, Peace, Security, and Human Rights, which pools the resources of five leading academic centers and programs in Boston that focus on gender and security, human rights, and conflict prevention and resolution. She is currently drafting a working paper on gender and peace building in Africa's Great Lakes region, which is afflicted by multi-dimensional conflicts both within and across national borders. She has been a program officer at the Canadian Centre for International Studies and Cooperation, where she conducted programs on peace building in Rwanda, Burundi, and the North and South Kivu regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In 2000, Ms. Gahunga was a member of the steering committee for the American Embassy program "Women as Partners for Peace." She is a founding member of the regional network *Initiative de Genève pour la Paix dans la Région des Grands Lacs*.

Ms. Gahunga has published papers on the impact of regional conflicts on women in the Great Lakes region as well as on regional approaches to conflict and peacebuilding among women's organizations, including a position paper outlining a regional vision for the Great Lakes Women's Regional Network (*Concertation des Collectifs d'Associations Feminines de la Region des Grands Lacs — Cocafem*).

Shahla Haeri

Shahla Haeri is the Director of the Women's Studies Program at Boston University and teaches Cultural Anthropology. She has conducted research in Iran, Pakistan, and India, and has written extensively on religion, law and gender dynamics in the Muslim world. She is the author of *No Shame for the Sun: Lives of Professional Pakistani Women* (Syracuse University Press in the US, and Oxford University Press in Pakistan, 2004) and *Law of Desire: Temporary Marriage, Mut'a, in Iran* (1989, 1993). She was involved in the University of Chicago's multi-year program on global fundamentalism, *Fundamentalism Project*, which was funded by a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur grant, and contributed an article to the second volume: "Obedience versus Autonomy: Women and Fundamentalism in Iran & Pakistan" (1993) She has been awarded several postdoctoral fellowships, including one at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University (1985-86); Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women, Brown University (1986-87); Social Science Research Council (1987-88); St. Anthony's College, Oxford University (1996); and Fulbright (1999-2000, 2002-2003).

In 2002, Dr. Haeri made a short video documentary entitled, "Mrs. President: Women and Political Leadership in Iran," focusing on six women presidential contenders in Iran in (Films for the Humanities and Sciences, www.films.com).

Noeleen Heyzer

Noeleen Heyzer is the first Executive Director from the South to head the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). Under Ms. Heyzer's leadership, UNIFEM has doubled its resources, vastly expanded its field presence, and successfully advocated to put gender equality high on the agenda of the UN system.

Before joining UNIFEM, Noeleen Heyzer was policy adviser to Asian governments and played a key role in the formulation of national development policies, strategies and programmes. She worked as a textile worker in a free trade zone, organizing women and assisting trade unions to address issues affecting women workers. She was a founding member of key regional and international networks such as Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), the Asia Pacific Women in Law and Development (APWLD) and Isis International. She was responsible for initiating and coordinating the first NGO Plan of Action for the 1995 FWCW, involving over 1000 organizations from the village level, to regional networks.

She has received several awards, including from the University of Singapore, the Ford Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, Friends of the United Nations, Soroptomist International, the International Leadership Institute, and the International Council of Women. Ms. Heyzer received her education at the University of Singapore and holds a Ph.D in Social Sciences from Cambridge University in the United Kingdom.

Arthur N. Holcombe

Arthur N. Holcombe is President of the United Nations Association of Greater Boston. He is founder and president of the Tibet Poverty Alleviation Fund, which finances and implements community-based poverty alleviation projects in Tibet. He served with the UN Development Programme for many years and was Resident Representative of UNDP in China and Coordinator of Operational Activities from 1992-98. He has also served with the UNDP in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Fiji, and the Sudan.

Swanee Hunt

Since 1997, Swanee Hunt has served as Director of the Women and Public Policy Program of the Kennedy School of Government, where she teaches Inclusive Security. The program supports research, enhances teaching, publishes materials, mentors students, trains executives, and organizes conferences advancing women's leadership in the public arena. Specific projects and activities have included supporting a worldwide database on trafficking of women and children; examining policies related to women working in the "informal sector" of the developing world; elucidating gender aspects of the AIDS epidemic in Africa; analyzing the interaction of gender and information technology; studying the impact of the gender gap in electoral politics; examining women in American foreign policy; establishing a link between policymakers and women working to avert and stop war; and exploring the nexus of women, religion, and public policy. Prior to coming to the Kennedy School, Swanee Hunt served as American Ambassador to Austria (1993-1997). While in Vienna, Ambassador Hunt extended her energies to neighboring Balkan states, hosting negotiations and several international symposia to focus efforts on securing the peace. Moreover, she reached out to women across Eastern Europe, becoming a specialist in the role of women in post-communist states. Her publications include *This Was Not Our War: Bosnian Women Reclaiming the Peace* (to be published by Duke, spring 2004) and *Vital Voices: Women in Democracy* (Foreign Affairs, July 1997). In addition to her role at the Kennedy School, Swanee is President of her own private foundation, Hunt Alternatives. She is highly involved in national politics and is a syndicated columnist for Scripps Howard News Service.

Ayesha Imam

Dr. Ayesha Imam is a Nigerian theorist, teacher, and activist. From 1980-1993, she was a lecturer in the Sociology Department at Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria, Nigeria. Between 1992-2001, she was the Coordinator of the International Solidarity Network of Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML) for Africa and Middle East. As part of WLUML's core group, she collaboratively developed programmes and comparative frameworks for the multi-country Women and Law Programme, which resulted in "Knowing Our Rights: Women, family, laws and customs in the Muslim World" (WLUML 2003).

In 1994, she directed the first Gender Institute in Africa with the Council for the Development of Social Science in Africa (CODESRIA), which is now an annual intensive two-month post-graduate course on gender analysis, methodologies and research for African social scientists. Working with CODESRIA she also co-edited "Engendering African Social Sciences" (CODESRIA 1997). In 1995, she was an advisor for the Strengthening Gender in Development Capacity in Africa Project, United Nations African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), Dakar, Senegal. In 1996, she became the founding Executive Director of BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights in Nigeria, which defends and develops women's human rights in secular, customary and religious laws. BAOBAB and Imam jointly received the John Humphrey Freedom Award 2002, for their work in defending women's human rights under discriminatory constructions and implementation of the new Sharia Acts and Penal Codes in some states of Nigeria. Since 2001, she has been coordinating the Africa Democracy Forum, a network of democracy activists. She is currently Chief of the Culture, Gender and Human Rights Branch of the United Nations Fund for Population (UNFPA).

Brenda Gael McSweeney

Dr. Brenda Gael McSweeney, who has spent 30 years working for the United Nations, joined Boston University as the first Women's Studies Program Visiting Scholar in September 2003, where she teaches a Seminar on Gender and International Development. She began her UN career in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, living in a West African courtyard and managing the project portfolio of the UN Development Program. Three years as a Senior Policy Analysis Officer at UNDP Headquarters in New York were followed by her appointment in 1982 as the Kingston-based Resident Representative of UNDP, and Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System's operational activities for development in Jamaica, The Bahamas, the Turks & Caicos Islands, the Cayman Islands and Bermuda. Dr. McSweeney led the global UN Volunteers Programme for a decade, and completed a 5-year posting in India last August, heading UNDP's largest program worldwide.

Dr McSweeney holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Smith College and a Doctorate from The Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy. A Fulbright Grantee in Paris for two years, Dr. McSweeney has also been awarded the Prime Minister's Medal of Appreciation (Jamaica), the '*Médaille de Chevalier de l'Ordre National*' from the Government of Burkina Faso, and a Doctorate of Humane Letters Honoris Causa from the Monterey Institute of International Studies. She served as a Founding Trustee of the Educational Trust Fund, and Women's World Banking – Jamaica, Patron of the Global Cooperation Council/North-South Forum, and as a Founding Member and Co-chairperson of the Governing Board of the India Partnership Forum launched by the Confederation of Indian Industry and UNDP.

Luz Méndez

Luz Méndez is president of the Advisory Council to the National Union of Guatemalan Women. She was formerly General Coordinator of the Union, which promotes women's rights and gender-equitable political participation. Between 1991 and 1996, Ms. Méndez participated in the peace negotiations as the only female member of the delegation of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (*Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca*), contributing to the incorporation of women-specific commitments for gender equity into the accords. Until recently, she was a member of the Follow-up Commission for the Implementation of the Peace Accords. In the international sphere, she has been working for women's inclusion and the incorporation of a gender perspective in conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction. She has been a member of the advisory group of the Independent Experts' Assessment on Women, War, and Peace, a study supported by the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). Ms. Méndez is also a member of the advisory council of the Global Fund for Women. Currently pursuing a master's degree in public administration as a Mason fellow at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, her university education also includes gender studies and business administration.

Kristen Timothy

Kristen Timothy, Senior Research Scholar at the National Council for Research on Women (NCRW) completed her 30-year career at the United Nations in 1999 as Deputy Director of the UN's Division for the Advancement of Women having also served as Coordinator for the 1995 UN women's conference held in Beijing, China and supervisor of the human rights and outreach activities of the Division. Kristen's work at NCRW focuses on expanding the Council's global activities and she is co-director of the Rockefeller-funded humanities program on human security, globalization and gender. Kristen holds an MPA in Public Administration from Harvard's Kennedy School and an MA in African Studies from Makerere University in Uganda. She has been a leader in the field of "women in development" and was President of the Board of AWID (the Association for Women in Development).

Nira Yuval-Davis

Professor Nira Yuval-Davis is the graduate course director of the Gender, Sexualities and Ethnic Studies at the University of East London. She is currently the President of the Research Committee 05 (on Ethnic, Race and Minority Relations) of the International Sociological Association. She has written extensively on issues of nationalisms, racisms, fundamentalisms, ethnicities, citizenships and their intersections with gender relations theoretically and in relation to Britain and Europe as well as Israel and other settler societies.

Among her books and edited volumes are *Woman - Nation - State* (MacMillan, 1989); *Racialised Boundaries* (Routledge, 1992); *Refusing Holy Orders: Women and Fundamentalism in Britain*, (Virago Press, 1992); *Unsettling Settler Societies: Articulations of Gender, Ethnicity, Race and Class*, (Sage, 1995); *Women, Citizenship and Difference*, (Z Books, 1999). Her book *Gender and Nation* (Sage, 1997; 2nd edition forthcoming) has been translated into seven languages. Her forthcoming book is on *Securing Gendered Belonging/s: Human Security, Human Rights and Contemporary Politics of Belonging* (contract under negotiations).