



Women, A Priority at the United Nations

Report on UN Commission on the Status of Women for 2012: (CSW 56)

Pamela Tankersley, Presbyterian Women United Nations Convener.

For a second time, I have had the privilege of representing Presbyterian Women at the UN commission on the status of women. A full report can be read on the Presbyterian Women page on the Church's website: www.presbyterian.org.nz - and click on the Presbyterian women icon.

CSW 56 - *Ban Ki Moon*, the current UN Secretary General says "All of us, men and women, must take action. Only through women's full and equal participation, in all areas of public and private lives can we hope to achieve a sustainable, peaceful and just society." This is the call to CSW.

The Commission on the Status of Women is the primary global policy-making body of the UN devoted entirely to examining the state of progress for women in member states. We know that women still comprise the majority of the world's poor, and 43% of the world's food is produced by women. There are huge disparities in the status and power of women to manage their own lives and that of their families. These issues determining the rights of women are **human rights** issues and the CSW is calling all member states to implement a commitment to progress.

On the other hand, countries with greater gender equality have more competitive and faster growing economies, the presence of women in leadership in peace-making increases the possibility of harmonious outcomes and greater security and infant and maternal mortality is raised.

This year the theme for the CSW was "the empowerment of rural women

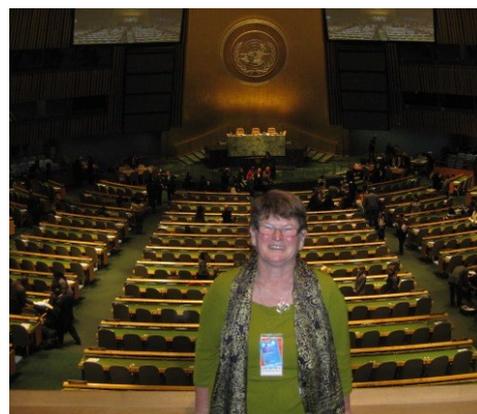
and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges." In the first of its proposed agreed conclusion, the Commission states:

The Commission recognises rural women as leaders, decision makers, producers, workers, entrepreneurs, and service providers who contribute to local and national economies, rural development, agriculture, and household livelihoods. Their contributions, which are not often fully acknowledged, are a pre-requisite for economic growth and development. It notes the potential of empowering rural women for poverty and hunger eradication, sustainable development, and accelerated progress towards achieving internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. The Commission acknowledges the heterogeneity of rural women and the need to address discrimination and inequalities they face in the basis of a range of factors.

In the first week of formal sessions, each member state made its statement reporting the condition in its state, a set of draft recommendations were proposed. I worked with Ecumenical Women's advocacy group to draft an amendment that encouraged member states to support better access to safe and reliable transportation to markets, to education and medical care, to food and water. I was particularly reflecting what happens in the Pacific. This amendment was circulated to several member states missions and we were pleased that the NZ Mission incorporated it into their submissions for change in the

agreed conclusions.

NZ Government Delegation - The NZ government delegation was led by Deb Moran, Policy Director, Ministry of Women's Affairs.



We were well served by our delegation: we had attended a meeting in Wellington prior to leaving for the UN, and in New York, their enthusiastic consultation with us as NGOs and the exchange of feedback between government and NGO delegations was significant as we met for debriefing at the end of each day. The presentation made by the NZ delegation was honest and reflected rural women's status in NZ well. This year's theme was a "development" one and as a highly developed nation we are comparatively advanced.

The points made were:

- Rural women in NZ are farm owners, farmers and farm managers in their own right, and contribute significantly to the success of NZ in the primary produce sector
- Women support the rural sector in its vital services and also do more unpaid work than either their urban or male rural counterparts,
- Rural women provide excellent advocacy and leadership in our society

- The settlement process for the Treaty of Waitangi has increased the asset base for Maori in the primary sector
- Access to services for rural women is an issue and ultra-fast broadband service will mitigate against this
- Rural women suffer as much violence as their urban counterparts, but geographical isolation and smaller communities of support exacerbates this.

The NZ Mission offered a panel discussion (in conjunction with Australia) at which Marilyn Waring spoke (somewhat provocatively) about the progress of women's issues in the Pacific,

Ecumenical Women - It was a joy to connect again with Ecumenical Women, an alliance of women of faith, coming together for the CSW. We had partici-



pated on-line before we reached NY and I appreciated the orientation day, the warm welcome from those I had met before, and the opportunity to work in a bigger group to formulate a programme of advocacy, from a faith perspective.

The talking points for advocacy for rural women (that we would discuss with our delegations) we agreed on together, covered:

- Climate Change, Farming and Food security
- Access to Education
- Transportation and Access to Resources
- Access to Medical Care
- Isolation and Exclusion from Decision Making

I joined the Ecumenical Women at the beginning of each day for worship and for briefing and explanation of what the day would bring. The US Presbyterian UN delegation welcomed me as well, and I found a home space in the UN Church Centre, across the road from the UN. I have agreed to work with the UN PCUSA team to present a parallel session, in conjunction with the World Communion of Reformed Churches, at the 2013 CSW.

Each day, NGO's from around the world (national and international groups, faith based groups, women's organizations, aid and development agencies) presented workshops, and we had a daily choice from about 20 events (in four slots). Mostly they were held in the UN Church Centre. These were an excellent opportunity to hear how progress is being made in other countries and to network with participants. They were in addition to the Sessions of CSW and the member state presentations over at the UN, so there were many choices

to be made! Frustratingly, obtaining passes to the UN Sessions was limited and had to be done daily; involving much planning. I chose to focus on workshops over a limited range of topics, specifically: Asia and Pacific regions, rural women in developing countries, climate change, women's spirituality.

We recognised that the Pacific is not well represented in international circles: as part of the UN region "Asia and Pacific," their stronger neighbours dominate and the Pacific countries are too poor to have big delegations of either government or NGO's. Asia Pacific Women's Watch (NZ) works hard to bring representatives from the Pacific and Presbyterian Women should support this, from our connections in mission. I recognised (again) that working for women's rights is not only for the sake of women but for all of society. We all benefit when women participate fully in the spheres of education, politics, science, in economics and business as well in their traditional roles. Women do hold up half the sky! But for many (most?) states, especially developing ones, the paradigm shift that allows men to share power is too big a threat.

Once again, thank you for this tremendous opportunity to be involved at a level where we can make a difference.

Final Special Project Reminder

How are you getting on with this year's project?

Remember that we have lined up the cut off date for the project with the financial year and we need your money to Ngaire by -

30 June

Some people are concerned about the money getting to the right place. We are working with creditable organisations – we can trust them.

Special Conference Edition Gleanings

The Editorial Team are producing an extra edition of Gleanings ... reports, happenings, photos ... if it happened at Conference, please send your report to

hazmic.ob@xtra.co.nz

no later than WEDNESDAY 9 MAY

As we move forward into 2013, please be aware our Gleanings Team are retiring, and so a new group will be needed

Alongside The Gleanings Team, we will be looking for a New Convenor, Secretary and Treasurer.

Please give all these positions prayerful and serious consideration

National Co-Ordinating Group

National Convenor

Mary McIntyre
18 Hall Road
Bannockburn
RD. 2. Cromwell 9384
03 445 4709
bbmacs@xtra.co.nz

Deputy Convenor

Jan Harland
Gracehill. 2 Byron Street
Mornington
Dunedin 9011
03 453 1253 Mobile 0273560215
harland-rusher@xtra.co.nz

Secretary

Presbyterian Women NZ
Valerie Anderson
P.O. Box 105
Alexandra 9320
03 448 8049
robval653@slingshot.co.nz

Pacific Island Representative

Faaolataga (Ola) Leasi
12 Driver Crescent
Cannons Creek
PORIRUA
Wellington
Manse: 04 237 6469
faaolataga.leasi@whitireia.ac.nz
Or home email: leasi@xtra.co.nz

Treasurer

Ngaire Pearce
102 Mountain View Road
Gleniti
Timaru 7910
03 686 1834
jim_ngaire@clear.net.nz

Missions Convenor

Rae Simpson
12 Kotanui Ave.
Army Bay,
Whangaparoa 0930
09 424 4274
lestrsimpson@xtra.co.nz

Resources Convenor

Lois Diaper
7 Wordsworth Place
Stoke, Nelson. 7011
03 547 1456
elljayd@slingshot.co.nz

United Nations Convenor

Pamela Tankersley
Home - 51 Roy Street
Palmerston North 4410
06 355 3908
tanks@paradise.net.nz
Contact in Wellington (3 days a week)
Global Mission Co-ordinator
Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand
P.O. Box 9049, Wellington 6141
Direct dial 04 381 829
Mobile 0274910677
pamela@presbyterian.org.nz

Communications Convenors (Joint)

Faatali Leiuia
146 Sievers Grove
Porirua
Wellington
04 890.0741
tali.leiuia@hotmail.co.nz

Fotu Lualua
47 Strathavon Road
Miramar
Wellington 6022
04 976.5422
0273235453
fortu.lualua@clear.net.nz

APW Website

www.presbyterian.org.nz
Click on 'National Ministries'
- Assoc. Presbyterian Women
- Gleanings newsletter

Editor - 'Braided River of Faith'

Rev. Judy Bedford
321 Kimbolton Road,
Feilding 4702
06 323.5849
judy.bedford@slingshot.co.nz

Snippets

- In NZ, we have mobile mainly music leaders who take mainly music into places where at risk families can access sessions. Our aim is to transition families from these centres into regular mainly music sessions when they move into their own accommodation.
- **News from Whakatane -**
On a sunny April Saturday, Knox Whakatane held a 'Family Festival and Expo' at the Church. With assistance from Presbyterian Support (Northern) and input from 15 local social service agencies we became a 'one stop shop' for information and advice.
Some 350 people turned up to this FREE event. While parents checked out the variety of stalls - C.Y.F.S, Citizens Advice Bureau, Women's Refuge, Kid's Friendly

and Grandparents raising Grandchildren, to name just a few, children were encouraged to take part in a Treasure Hunt which involved going to each stall for relevant clues.

Outside in the grounds, it was a hive of activity. Face painting, Bouncy castles, Tug of War, and a variety of interactive games kept the kids occupied. A Zumba demonstration, Kapa Haka group and a live band kept the atmosphere buzzing!

A highly successful (and exhausting) day as we reached out with our logo - "Have a Heart" for our local community.

- **Also from Whakatane**
Local knitters from the Anglican/Methodist knitter's group have been knitting & crocheting blankets for 'Operation Cover Up'. A public display takes place in August when the whole town's donated goods are col-

lected up and transported to Auckland to await passage to Northern Europe for their fast approaching winter.

- **Wellington Presbyterial** held a regional day recently. Discussion took place regarding remits for Conference. Beryl Anderson, Past President of the NCWNZ, spoke to us on the Green Paper for Vulnerable Children. Beryl had prepared the NCW submission and gave us a brief background to the Paper and the range of comments that had come in from the NCW Branches. Beryl explained how babies' brains develop and the importance of good nurturing in the first years of life. Reporting suspected child abuse could be a difficult issue in our communities but we must find a way to protect vulnerable children.

Turakina Maori Girls' College

It is some time since we wrote about the College, and it must seem that whenever we do we are looking for assistance of some sort!

At the beginning of last term a new Hostel Manager was appointed at the College. This is a position that has been essentially vacant for a long time, and Mrs Channings, Principal, is very thankful to now have someone to take over the day-to-day running of the hostel, leaving her free to attend to the running of the school and her duties as CEO hostel.

Mrs Nanette Pirikahu-Smith is an outgoing, friendly, efficient person who comes to the school with loads of administrative experience. This was demonstrated by her full and searching report in the February College newsletter and in the way she has brought to the notice of the Boards the maintenance needs of the hostel. Some of these needs go back a long way; some of them are legal requirements; and some of them are considered of high priority by Nan.

First on that list is the need for replacement bed linen for all beds. There are currently 92 beds in use, and not enough linen available to do complete bed changes. What is there is apparently in a very tatty, not very nice state. *Friends of Turakina* has committed \$1000 towards bed linen, and some research is at present being

done to find the best article at the best price – hopefully an even better price for a bulk order! We are aware that \$1000 will probably not cover the full price.

The second thing on Nan's list is shower curtains and non-slip mats for the showers. These are a special request from the girls. There are 30 showers, and an estimated cost for outfitting each shower is around \$30. So that is a considerable amount. We are making an appeal to the APW branches of the Manawatu/Wanganui Presbyterians, for assistance with these.

The third thing on the list is new crockery for the kitchen/dining room. Nan tells us that the existing crockery is very tatty, often badly chipped and therefore not terribly hygienic. She has recommended a product available at Briscoes – a sort of 'plastic/crock combination' and a set of dinner plate, b&b plate, pudding bowl and mug is going at almost \$100. As we need 100 sets.....! We will probably have to be looking at something not so expensive, though Nan is definitely wanting something more durable than straight china. Again, who knows what a bulk order might be able to provide.

It is this last that we are appealing, through *Gleanings*, for assistance with. Those of you who are mem-

bers of *Friends of Turakina* will have already read some of this in the latest *Friends* newsletter. Remembering that TMGC belongs to the whole Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, we would really appreciate whatever help can be given to make life at the College as much a home away from home as possible.

The other maintenance work required – most of it hostel related, including the kitchen and dining room – is major and very expensive. Some of it is a legal requirement so we are bound to have that attended to. Some, such as painting and more minor repair work, can be attended to by the school's maintenance man, but materials have to be bought, of course. A windfall of \$100,000 wouldn't go amiss!

We would be very grateful for any contributions, which could be sent to me as Secretary/Treasurer of Friends of Turakina, at 7 Logan Grove, Feilding 4702.

Thankyou very much.
Jan Thomson

