

Report of the IFSW Representative to UN Vienna 2011/2012

The Vienna IFSW Team:

Main Representative:



Georg Dimitz

Representative: Silvia Franke (working field: drugs)

Christine Petioky (working field: elderly, woman)

The Main representative was re-elected as financial adviser for the CONGO board in Vienna. The Situation for CONGO the umbrella organisation of all worldwide working NGO's in relationship to the United Nations is still very chaotic. A paper worked out by the Vienna board defining the goals and functions of the organisation was not yet discussed or accepted. The financial situation of the organisation is not clarified.

We were present in three committees:

- 1) Narcotic Drugs (VNGOCND)**
- 2) CONGO Committee on Ageing**
- 3) CONGO Committee on the Status of Women**

Reports of the work of IFSW Representatives in the three committees:

1. Vienna NGO Committee on Narcotic Drugs (VNGOCND) (2011-2012)

The main focus of activities consisted in the participation of four regular meetings of the VNGOCND (27.6., 14.12. 2011, 12.3., 4.6. 2012) and the events along the 55th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND). For the informal Civil Society Hearing on 13.3. questions to the chairpersons of CND, NBC and UNDCP were prepared (a.o. on heroin assisted therapy projects and hidden migrant drug consumers). The IFSW proposed taking up effectiveness of working with hidden substance-users, namely among those who seek asylum. Further, a **NGO Briefing and Coordination Meeting and the Launch of the IDPC Drug Policy Guide** on 14.3.2011 **were attended.**

The VNGOC is now a registered legal entity in Austria ("Wiener Drogen Komitee"), which process was supported by the IFSW. A Committee Constitution as well as a Strategic Plan was worked out by the executive board of the VNGOC, discussed and adopted by the members.

2. 1. CONGO Committee on Ageing 2011

Issues treated and activities organized/performed

- Madrid +10 (10th anniversary of the Madrid World Assembly on Ageing - Ministerial Conference and related Civil Society Forum of the UNECE countries scheduled in Vienna on 19 and 20 September 2012)
- Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons (UN General Assembly): Second World Assembly on Ageing
- Side event organized by the CONGO Committee at the above-mentioned event, discussion on possible topics to be treated
- Human Rights of Older Persons (Convention of Ageing)¹ Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2011 on 17 June 2011 in London, organized by INPEA – the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse. (Issues treated: intelligent intervention, protection, prevention, evidence-based tools to facilitate detection, education and training of practitioners and researchers)
- The Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (= A multidisciplinary and cross-national panel database of micro data on health, socio-economic status and social and family networks of more than 55,000 individuals from 20 European countries aged 50 or over), title: Tackling Demographic Change'
- Policy brief published on the basis of an OECD report, with the title 'Help Wanted?' Providing and Paying for Long-Term Care'
- Accessibility as a key issue for active ageing (many aspects concerning persons with disabilities also concern older people).
- Ageing Committee's Event 3 October 2011, title: 'Language as a key to active participation and quality in later life at the occasion of the International Day of Older Persons'
- It was discussed to re-organize the committee and allocate tasks on the committee such as an Event and Conference Officer, a UN Reporting Officer, a Sub Committee on Convention of Ageing, an Ageing Committee Relations Officer etc. between committee members. (Unfortunately, the representative of IFSW could not take over a function due to lack of time. However, a special interest and willingness in working on the Human Rights issue was expressed)

¹ critical human rights issues: rights of older people in care, rights of older carers, rights of persons with dementia, rights of older detainees, rights to education, right to equality before the law, right to food, right to health, rights in humanitarian responses, rights to information, rights to access to justice, rights to life, liberty and security, elder abuse, abuse and violence in care settings, abuse and violence under guardianship, violence against women, harmful traditional practices, rights to property and inheritance, right to social security, rights to vote, rights to decent work

2. 2. CONGO Committee on Ageing 2012

Issues treated and activities organized/performed

- 11th Global Conference on Ageing organized by IFA (International Federation on Ageing) in Prague, involvement of the Vienna CONGO Committee, strengthening the co-operation between the three CONGO Committees on Ageing
- Involvement in the UNECE Ministerial Conference 18 – 20 September 2012 in Vienna: Organization of a side event on Human Rights of Older Persons by the Vienna CONGO Committee

3. 1. CONGO Committee on the Status of Women 2011

Issues treated and activities organized/performed

- Joint statement on 'Access and Participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work' for the 55th session of the CSW (E/CN.6/2011/NGO/66) .
- Support of a side-event 'Sharing Knowledge-Joining Forces-Gaining Power: Mentoring as a Tool to Empower NGO Women at the CSW' (organized by members of the Committee)
- Symposium on 10 March 2011, at the occasion of 100 years of International Women's Day, organized in co-operation with the United Nations Information Service Vienna (UNIS) '100 years International Women's Day, Time to celebrate? Achievements and Prospects'
- Support and promotion of the 2nd symposium on 'Global Health and Gender, gender sensitive medicine - better health for men and women'
- Joint statement on the 'Empowerment of Rural Women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication in development and current challenges' for the 56th session of the Commission on the Status of Women
- Joint statement on 'Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women' for the 56th session of the Commission on the Status of Women

Both above-mentioned statements were sent to UN Women, New York for further processing as well as to the relevant Austrian Ministries and the Permanent Mission of Austria in New York to be taken up in discussions within the EU and at the CSW.

3. 2. CONGO Committee on the Status of Women 2012

Issues treated and activities organized/performed

- Gender inequalities on the European Union. European Parliament Eurobarometer Flash Survey (at the occasion of the 8 May 2012)
- International Women's Day 'Empower Rural Women – End Hunger and Poverty' (invitation to the committee, attendance of members)
- Limited access of women to meeting facilities in the UN buildings at the 56th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, especially those from grassroots organizations – critical feedback to Michelle Bachelet, head of UN Women
- Comment on the announcement by the Secretary-General of the UN and the President of the General Assembly of holding a Global Conference on Women in 2015 in the above-mentioned letter to Michelle Bachelet – formulation of necessary prerequisites².
- Organization of a side event at the occasion of the 21st session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, title 'Violence Against Migrant Women and (their) Children in Containment'

² Beijing results as an irrevocable basis, NGOs involved in the preparatory process and the deliberations leading up to the conference, adequate funding, venue in a country demonstrably respecting human rights incl reproductive, sexual, economic and social rights, equality between men and women, accountable to NGO community, transparent, regionalized and accessible preparatory process, substantive consultation process between UN administration, member states and NGO community, experience of former UN world conferences taken into account.