



47 (01) 2010. Warsaw, 19/01/2010

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Dear KARAT NEWS Readers,

On behalf of KARAT Secretariat I would like to wish you a lot of good energy and strength to work for gender equity and equality in 2010 ! Good luck and ... have fun ☺

Kasia Staszewska, Networking Officer & Project Coordinator

What's new in KARAT ?

New Members in KARAT



KARAT Secretariat is very happy to announce that we have 2 new Member Organizations in our network!

Two applications recommended by Members of KARAT were positively reviewed by the Board on November 20, 2009. Thus, The Legal Center for Women's Initiatives „Sana Zezim” (Kazakhstan) and Center „Women and Modern World” (Azerbaijan) were accepted as new organizational members of KARAT Coalition. Welcome!

This way KARAT Coalition has expanded to 59 organizations in 25 countries and significantly strengthened its representation in the Central Asia region.

Check the full list of KARAT members on: http://www.karat.org/karat_news/Membership/Members,en.html

KARAT Board Meeting

KARAT Board Members met in Warsaw on 19-20 November 2009 to discuss the most important issues concerning the organization governance. This time the priority was given to strategizing about the possible KARAT General Assembly to be organized next to WIDE 2010 Annual Conference hosted in Bucharest, Romania in June 2010. Board defined the objectives, drafted the scenario and discussed about the next steps to be taken to successfully organize the event. If the strategy works, this will be the first General Assembly in KARAT Coalition since 2003.

Minutes from the meeting are available on the KARAT's extranet section of the website:

http://www.karat.org/karat_news/Membership/Internal+documents,en.html

For more info write to Kasia at: kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl

OP CEDAW: Project has finished, other has started



With the end of 2009 the activities of the two-year project focused on the Optional Protocol to CEDAW implemented by KARAT Coalition in cooperation with organizations in 9 Eastern European and Central Asian countries were accomplished. During the project final meeting, which took place on December 3-4 in Warsaw, the project strategy as well as its

outcomes were evaluated. The project was implemented at 2 levels – regional and national. The regional meetings, which included trainings on OP CEDAW organized in cooperation with International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific, provided women's NGOs with knowledge and skills allowing them to organize several follow-up activities in their countries. The strategies taken by the project partner organizations at national level depended on the situation in their countries. In the states where the political atmosphere has been conducive to advance gender equality, women's NGOs either organized trainings for governmental officials in cooperation with relevant ministries (Ukraine, Moldova) or, as in Tajikistan, worked together with an aim of getting the Optional Protocol ratified as soon as possible. In this second case the coalition of 90 women's NGOs sent the letter to the President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon and to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasizing the need of ratification. In other project countries women's NGOs focused more on capacity building activities, including training lawyers and activists to use the procedures provided by OP CEDAW.

Although KARAT's project for OP CEDAW has finished, our actions for CEDAW in the Central Asia context are going to be continued. With the beginning of 2010 KARAT has started the three-year project aimed at improving women's capacity to use CEDAW to advance women's rights. The project, supported by OXFAM Novib, builds on the experience gained by KARAT during 2008-2009 activities. It will be implemented in Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and will include actions oriented at increasing the effectiveness of using the concluding comments of CEDAW Committee, utilizing the potential of the Optional Protocol and at promoting CEDAW and its women's rights standards. One of the project objectives is also to gain practical knowledge about women's access to justice in their countries and - through that - about the barriers they face or might face when trying to exhaust

domestic legal remedies and thus meet the admissibility requirement for submitting complaint under OP CEDAW and other international human rights mechanisms. For more information please write to Ola at: aleksandra.solik@karat.org.pl

Through Our Eyes: Start of the data gathering tours



Through Our Eyes,,, is the second phase of the KARAT's project aimed at raising public awareness about development problems faced by women from developing countries in the EU Eastern Neighbourhood, Balkans and Central Asia. With the results of the data gathering tools we have just launched we aim to show how the women from the EU NMS picture the socio-economic situation of women from the Balkans and Caucasus. From January to March 2010 six young women will travel to the developing countries of these regions in order to collect materials and create innovative and attractive awareness raising tools to be used for gender sensitive development education actions.

Barbara Vodopivec from Slovenia, Katarina Medlova from Slovakia and Elizabeth Dimitrova from Bulgaria will go to Balkans. Paulina Jędrzejewska from Poland, Ilze Millere from Latvia and Mila Lukasova from Czech Republic will go to Caucasus. Barbara and Katarina will produce blogs with photographs, Elizabeth and Paulina will produce YouTube films, Ilze will publish articles in women's magazine and Mila will develop a tool kit with workshop scenario on the socio-economic challenges faced by women from developing countries from the EU Eastern Neighbourhood, Balkans and Central Asia.

The results of the tours will be published and disseminated during KARAT events. KARAT Coalition carry out data gathering tours in cooperation with Gender Media Caucasus Association (Georgia) and Permaculture and Peacebuilding Center Shtip (Macedonia).

To know more please write to Ewa at: ewa.pintera@karat.org.pl

Through Our Eyes: PHOTO BANK tool for you !

KARAT Coalition team is going to create a Photo Bank with photos showing women from developing countries of Central Asia and Eastern Europe in the socio-economic context and in non-stereotypical way. The idea is based on the fact that access to this kind of pictures is quite difficult. KARAT is going to collect the photos on the on-going basis and make it available for different institutions (NGOs, media) interested in using them for the awareness raising actions, knowledge sharing, promotion of human rights and gender responsive development policies.

We would like to encourage you to share your photos with us. We will place information about the author, place and short description of the pictures in our Photo Bank. For more information please contact Ewa Pintera ewa.pintera@karat.org.pl

Gender and Development in NMS: Lobbying in the EP

On 17 November 2009 KARAT together with One World Action (UK) - its partner organization in *Connect! South, East, West Women for Development !* project – took part in the mass lobby of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). The aim of lobby was to highlight our concerns regarding the mainstreaming of women's rights into development cooperation and practices of UE NMS. Within this framework we have managed to meet with the Polish MEPs from: Committee on Budgets (Sidonia Elżbieta Jędrzejewska), Committee on Development (Filip Kaczmarek), Committee on Regional Development (Danuta Maria Hubner) and Committee on Foreign Affairs (Krzysztof Lisek). Anna Zoborska, Slovakian, from Committee on Development and Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality unfortunately refused the meeting. During this short time we had with each of the MEPs we have managed to introduce the objectives of the project and raised the issue of women's rights in development cooperation of NMS. All the MEPs agreed, that although the subject is new and difficult, it needs further strategizing to be properly addressed in the NMS development cooperation systems that are currently being shaped.

The mass lobby, was organised by the pan-European confederation of development NGOs [CONCORD](#), consisting of NGOs and civil society representatives from all over the EU meeting with a large number of MEPs from as many

EU countries and political groups as possible to highlight the most important concerns in the EU development cooperation from the civil society perspective. It also marked the start of the close dialogue that European civil society will have with the MEPs over the coming five year parliamentary period.

To know more please write to Kasia at: kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl

Gender and Development in NMS: Training in Poland

KARAT Social Watch and *Connect! South, East, West Women for Development* ! project teams came together on November 24th and organized a 1 day-training for Polish women's rights, and development NGOs entitled: *Women's rights in development cooperation. Why ? Where ? How ?*

Gender and development is quite a new topic for Poland, as it is for the other NMS. With this initiative KARAT aimed to fill the gap and link women's rights perspective into the development context. The training caught a very big interest in the Polish NGO community. Participants had a chance to learn about urgent gender challenges in developing countries, international regulations, and specific actions women's groups in the South take to foster their own development. The training concluded with the strategizing session how the topic can be taken on board and followed-up in the organizations' daily work. KARAT's project staff was supported by the One World Action that brought their experience to the training' sessions.

Event built up the basis for the KARAT's activities with the framework of the *Connect!* project planned for 2010-2011.

The project is one of the pioneering initiatives in the Region aiming to contribute NMS women's voice to development cooperation debates. The primary objective is to build the capacities of women's rights NGOs to advocate for the full implementation of the EU gender equality policy in the government's development assistance and initiation of the South- East -North cooperation on women's rights in development. Interested to know more? Write to Kasia at:

kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl

Fair Play: Project conclusion with Clean Clothes Poland launch



Fair Play in the sporting goods industry" - the three-year project concerning working conditions and consumers' awareness - has come to the end. However, KARAT is going to continue its work on the working conditions of women in the garment industry, within the framework of the Clean Clothes Polska.

Clean Clothes Polska (CCP) – the coalition for the ethical fashion – was established by KARAT Coalition, Polish Humanitarian Organization, Polish Green Network and Grupa eFTe Warszawa. It represents Polish organizations on the international platform of Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC). CCC's objective is to ensure that the fundamental rights of workers are respected. It educates and mobilizes consumers, lobbies companies and governments, and offers direct solidarity support to workers as they fight for their rights and demand better working conditions. CCP will implement the international activities of CCC in Poland. It will also realize its own projects related to the education of consumers and to the dialogue with Polish garment companies.

Currently CCP is hosted by KARAT. It was agreed that the function of coordination organization will be rotary.

CCP is the first coalition of Clean Clothes Campaign in Eastern Europe. CCP would like to collaborate with KARAT's members which are involved in cooperation with CCC.

For more information on Clean Clothes Polska, please visit <http://cleanclothes.pl> or contact Joanna at: joanna.szabunko@karat.org.pl

MAKE ITfair: Project conclusion



After 3 years of joint activities KARAT Coalition has concluded its cooperation in makeITfair project and campaign. As a partner KARAT was responsible for mainstreaming gender issues to the campaign for fair working conditions in the electronic supply chain and represented CEE regional point of view. Project included awareness raising actions, research and policy lobbying. It

was a great opportunity for KARAT to work with international partners like: SOMO from Nederland, Germanwatch and Verbraucher Initiative from Germany, FinnWatch and Finnish Association for Nature Conservation from Finland, Swedwatch and Fair Trade Center from Sweden, Civedep from India and SACOM from Hong Kong.

The project was concluded with 2 important actions. First, a briefing paper *On the move. The electronics industry in Central and Eastern Europe* summarizing the research findings in Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary was published. Second, the report *Mobile phone production in China* was updated with information about improvements in working conditions (e.g. provision of adequate protection gear, health and safety trainings) that have been introduced to the mobile phone production sector. However better, it's important to emphasize that unfair working conditions are still a challenge. Employees continue to work excessive hours and are not subjected to medical tests before hiring. Update indicates that recruitment process is not free from age, gender and social background discrimination.

The good news is that makeITfair campaign will be continued by SOMO and its partners for the next 3 years.

To know more please contact Marta at: marta.gontarska@karat.org.pl

Members' News

Gender Studies o.p.s (Czech Republic): GE and labor market



Gender Studies, KARAT Member Organization in Czech Republic, is currently involved in the *Equality Training for Trainers (EQ-Train)* international project focused on addressing new angles and emphases of the gender-sensitive vocational orientation. The Project is implemented in Czech Republic, Italy, Austria, Spain, and Slovakia. Gender Studies focus in on equal pay.

Fairness in income between women and men is one of the central issues of equality politics today. Inequality on the labour market has one of its roots in the choice of profession. The reasons why people choose a certain profession or type of education or training have a lot to do with traditional gender roles: Professions in the technical sector are still seen as "the man's domain", whereas "supporting" professions in the area of education or health care are still "the woman's domain". Professions normally exercised by men are considerably better paid. For this reason, one of the concerns of EQ-Train is to contribute to raising awareness on a broad scale and to connect all the main actors in the areas of education and training, labour market and equal treatment, and cooperation fostering.

In the *EQ-Train* newsletter project partners are describing 5 main obstacles on the way to equal pay. You can download the newsletter on: http://www.genderstudies.cz/download/Newsletter_EQ_Train2_english.pdf.

To know more contact Linda at: linda.sokacova@genderstudies.cz

Gender Center (Moldova): 16 Days Campaign



16 Days of Action Against Gender Based Violence Campaign in Moldova was coordinated by Gender Center and took place from November 25th till January 10th. *Healthy family is a family without violence* was a Campaign motto. Campaign partners included Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, OSCE Mission to Moldova, UNFPA, IOM, UNDP Moldova, UNICEF, UNIFEM

and other national NGOs, which guaranteed the big resonance for the Campaign's objectives.

The organizers aimed to raise awareness about gender-based violence and its consequences, as well as about Law on Preventing and Combating Family Violence, particularly new protection measures. One of the campaign's action was a round table on the Optional Protocol to CEDAW organized with a primary objective to build the capacities of experts on the international standards to implement legal provisions on violence prevention.

Campaign's organizers built on the special momentum of the 30th anniversary of CEDAW and 15th anniversary of the Cairo Action Platform. As Gender Center explained: "We consider these anniversaries to be one more occasion for the Government to consider its obligations under the international documents, and for the civil society to support the government in their full implementation".

To know more please write to Valentina at: valbodrug@mail.ru

SCCD (Slovakia): Exhibition in Bratislava on Kyrgyz in Afghanistan



On December 21st Slovak Centre for Communication and Development (SCCD) opened an exhibition entitled "You Come and Never Return" headed to the ethnic Kyrgyz who live hundreds of miles from their homeland in the high valleys of the Afghan Pamir. Exhibition consists of photographs taken by 2 Kyrgyz authors: Mambet Kalpajev and Akyl Atabajev taken during their humanitarian expeditions to Afghanistan.

The pictures show Kyrgyz of Afghanistan who are descendants of 2 waves of refugees (from the beginning of last century. Today they live in the incredibly challenging conditions, gripped by so-called Small and Large Pamir, at altitudes from 4100 to 5200 meters above the sea level. High infants and mothers mortality, increasing literacy, average age only about 50 years, and extreme living conditions are only few of the challenges.

The exhibition was open to the public of Bratislava till January 15th 2010. It was one of the SCCD initiatives to raise public awareness about one of the most unknown regions of the world – Central Asia.

To know more about the exhibition please refer to info@sccd-sk.org or visit www.sccd-sk.org

Pangea (Kyrgyzstan): Information on UN report on VAW



Rashida Manjoo, the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, has recently (9 – 16 November 2009) conducted a visit to Kyrgyzstan. Coming at the request of Kyrgyz government Ms. Manjoo visited UN agencies, government officials, and women's and children organizations.

In the official statement following up her visit Ms. Manjoo recognized that the prevalent forms of violence identified during her visit include: "domestic violence, bride-kidnapping, under-age marriages, unregistered marriages, trafficking, polygamy, violence and discrimination against women based on their sexual orientation and gender identity, and violence committed by law enforcement agents. The causes identified include amongst others: the lack of effective implementation of legislative and policy measures, poverty, unemployment, traditional and religious practices, internal and external migration, and the lack of accountability in relation to state agents who violate the human rights of citizens. The consequences of such trends include amongst others an increase in the following areas: the prevalence levels of violence against women and girl-children, homelessness, migration, the numbers of women being incarcerated for drug-related offences and also for the killing of family members, rates of HIV/AIDS infections, maternal mortality rates, levels and forms of corruption, and impunity for acts of violence against women by both state and non-state actors" ([UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights](http://www.unhcr.org/refugees/rashida-manjoo-statement-2009-11-16.html))

In her official statement, Ms. Manjoo noted that the government has taken measures to help end violence against women by ratifying international treaties and is working to integrate these international standards into the Kyrgyz national legal system through legislation and public policy.

Pangea, KARAT Member Organization in Kyrgyzstan, supports all the findings and recommendations that Ms. Manjoo has already drafted, however, stresses that lack of communication and/or cooperation between governments and civil society, as well as NGOs themselves is another very big challenge for the country. " It seems like everybody is doing same things in different ways. Women NGOs don't have any mutual support" say Saltanat and Aktuigun from KARAT network.

Full report from the UN Special Rapporteur visit to Kyrgyzstan will be released soon. In the meantime Ms. Manjoo full statement can be accessed in Russian at:

<http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=9628&LangID=r>

and /or in English at: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=9628&LangID=e>

World

Beijing +15: CSW 54 in new York, March 2010



From 1st-12th March 2010 government delegations will review implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA) during the 54th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Just before the CSW

thousands of women will come to New York to celebrate the 15th anniversary of BPFA and attend Global Beijing +15 NGO Forum for Women.

BPFA is considered as the most comprehensive road map for the women empowerment. It contains strategic action on 12 urgent areas of gender concern (e. g: women and poverty, education and training of women, women and health, violence against women, women and armed conflict, women and the economy, women in power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights of women, women and the media, women and the environment, and the girl-child). On the 54th CSW Session emphasis will be placed on experience sharing and good practices in order to overcome remaining obstacles and new challenges, including those related to the Millennium Development Goals.

To prepare for Beijing + 15 governments and NGOs around the world are engaged in preparatory activities to assess progress made at both national and regional level and to identify gaps and challenges to act on in the coming years. To check the preparations at stake you can access governmental national questionnaires and regional reports at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing15/index.html> For information on NGO participation in the CSW please go to: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/NGO.html>

UN's ECOSOC: Call for applications

The consultative relationship with ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council of the United Nations) is regulated by ECOSOC resolution 1996/31, which outlines the eligibility requirements, rights and obligations of NGOs with consultative status. International and local NGOs can apply for the consultative status by demonstrating that their work is directly relevant to the aims and purposes of the United Nations. Deadline for applications is June 1, 2010.

More details are available at: <http://esango.un.org/paperless/Web?page=static&content=intro>

Special

Uzbekistan: UMIDA AHMEDOVA is under pressure



We are expressing our protest because of the prosecution of Umida Ahmedova, a photographer and film-maker from Uzbekistan.

During the last month Uzbek Agency of Media and Information has been investigating Gender Program of Swiss Embassy in Tashkent – set of humanitarian, educational and elucidative projects. Umida Ahmedova is one of the authors who has been collaborating with

the program for the several years. Umida is charged with slander (law article #139) and insult (law article #140) with possible punishment of correctional work from 2 to 3 years or detention up to 6 months. The critical concern is her photography book *Women and Men: From Dawn to Dusk* published in 2007 and her documentaries. The book containing 110 photos reflecting life and traditions of Uzbeks has been announced as “ an insult and slander” by

Uzbekistan Agency of Media and Information experts. However it is unknown who authorized the Agency to go on with the accusations.

Swiss Embassy Program has been conducted within a framework of Uzbekistan state politics for gender equality. The book of photographs, which suddenly became so scandalous, was positively reviewed in the most powerful cabinets. It took 2 years for the Agency of Media and Information experts to discovering slander and defamation in it. Accusations have generated a huge pressure on Umida and her family. We – *GenderMediaCaucasus*, *CaucAsia*, *C@ucAsia*, *Women's Dialogue* – friends and colleagues of Umida are initiating international campaign for signatures. We are asking everyone to stand up for a woman, an artist and her free expression right.

You can read the full story and join the signature campaign at: http://caucasiasatua/news/umida_ahmedova_is_under_pressure/2009-12-18-110

Funding

Advocacy Flexi Fund: Support for MDG5b

The Advocacy Flexi Fund (AFF) provides small grants to support civil society organizations working with young people to advocate for MDG5b to ensure sexual and reproductive health and rights. It will provide grants from USD \$3,000 to USD \$10,000 to cover up to 90% of the cost of the activity, with a minimum 10% contribution from the grantee. Deadline for applications: 15 February 2010. Check more details at: <http://www.ippf.org/en/What-we-do/Advocacy/Advocacy+flexi+fund.htm>

Xenophilia Fund: Scholarships in Brussels

The Xenophilia Fund supports studies at the Université Libre de Bruxelles for the Young people from developing countries and from Central and Eastern Europe. The deadline for applying is 1st March 2010. The details are available at: <http://www.kbs-frb.be/call.aspx?id=209878&LangType=1033>

We can Change... : Youth Essay contest

CEDAW promises women of the world their human rights and fundamental freedoms. Yet in many countries this remains an elusive dream. [Young Women's Learning Partnership \(YWLP\)](#) invites young people around the world, especially in developing countries, to share their ideas. What is the most important issue affecting women's lives in your country, and what solutions do you propose? Submit your short, original essay for the chance to win valuable prizes and to get published on the WLP website!

Deadline for submitting an essay is January 31st 2010. For more details check: <http://www.learningpartnership.org/en/programs/ywlp/cedaw-contest>

Resources

KARAT: Russian version of the OP CEDAW Toolkit



The Russian site of the e-toolkit providing the basic information on the Optional Protocol to CEDAW is already available at www.karat.org/op_cedaw. Please note that the bookmark 'useful links' ('Полезные линки') refers the visitors to several other language version to the toolkit: Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgian, Romanian, Tajik, Ukrainian and Uzbek. The printable Russian versions can also be found there.

KARAT: Development cooperation and women's rights



This is the title of the new resource guide published in Polish by the KARAT Coalition within the framework of the projects: Social Watch and Connect! East South West Women for Development. This is one of the first of its kind publication issued in Poland. Publication is divided to 3 sections: 1. Why gender perspective is essential in development cooperation? 2. How does the development practise looks like? 3. Women's as agents for change. Publication, so far only in Polish is available on: <http://www.karat.org/karat,7,What+is+new%3F,en.html>

We plan to translate it to English any time soon. KARAT Secretariat wish to thank One World Action for their support and sharing their photos to be used in publication.

Social Watch: European report on Migration



The first European Social Watch report '*Migrants in Europe, Actors of Development, between Hope and Vulnerability*' was successfully launched in the European Parliament in Brussels on 8 December.

The report focuses on the links between migration and development and the role that migrants play – both as contributors to the European society, and to the development of their countries of origin. However, in Europe, migration generally bears a negative connotation, often reflected in the European security-centred immigration policies. The report can be downloaded from: <http://socialwatch.org/node/11333>

UNDP: New issue of Development & Transition

The December issue of *Development and Transition* is devoted to 'Twenty years of transition and human development', marking the 20th anniversary of the end of communism and of UNDP's first Human Development Report. Articles consider both the human development and transition paradigms, as well as country experiences during the past 2 decades. You can download it at:

<http://www.developmentandtransition.net/uploads/issuesAttachments/26/DEVTRANSeng%2014.pdf>

OSI: Women, Harm Reduction, and HIV

A new report by the Open Society Institute examines women's access to harm reduction, reproductive health, and HIV and AIDS services in in 5 countries: Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Ukraine. You can download the report at:

http://www.soros.org/initiatives/health/focus/ihrd/articles_publications/publications/wmhardred20091001?utm_source=Open+Society+Institute&utm_campaign=5e4c881406-OSI_News_20091109&utm_medium=email

Soros Foundation: April 2009 Post election violence in Moldova

This report from the Soros Foundation–Moldova documents extensive human rights violations by Moldovan Police that occurred in April 2009 after the parliamentary elections. Moldovan police beat and otherwise ill-treated at least 300 peaceful protesters of the nearly 700 they detained. documents personal accounts of people who suffered beatings, sleep deprivation and verbal abuse at the hands of police after the April demonstrations. This report is the most extensive collection of information available to date on the number of individuals police apprehended during the April events. To download the report please visit:

http://www.soros.org/resources/articles_publications/publications/moldova_20091013?utm_source=Open+Society+Institute&utm_campaign=5e4c881406-OSI_News_20091109&utm_medium=email

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

KARAT Secretariat would like to sincerely thank the following for their contributions to the News: Linda Sokacova (Gender Studies o.p.s), Zuzanna Jerska (SCCD), Valentina Bodrug-Lungu, Sultanat and Aktuigun (Pangea), Galina Petriashvili (Gender Media Caucasus), WIDE, AWID, WUNRN, TRIALOG, ASTRA, VAW Monitor, EC/UN, BSCDN, EWL, OSI, UNDP.

Edited by Kasia Staszewska

KARAT Coalition

ul. Rakowiecka 39A/14

02-521 Warsaw, Poland

www.karat.org www.womenslabour.org/fairplay

phone: +48 22 8491647

fax: +48 22 628 20 03

Subscriptions and news contributions are welcomed at: kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl

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