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- European Gender Summit "Aligning Agendas for Excellence"

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- Report on discrimination against women in nationality-related matters, including the impact on children

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Dear KARAT News Readers !

I would like to draw your attention to an up-to-date problem concerning reconciliation of children and elderly care, and paid work. You can read about so-called "sandwich generation" in an account from the conference in Prague. I encourage you to read about the recent initiatives to stop bride kidnapping in Kyrgyzstan and empower women in order to take active part in conflict resolution in Azerbaijan.

I am always looking forward to receiving your news, so do not hesitate to write to me at: [agnieszka.mazurek@karat.org.pl](mailto:agnieszka.mazurek@karat.org.pl)

Have a nice reading !

Agnieszka Walko-Mazurek, KARAT Networking Officer

## What's new in KARAT

### Activists from Israel in KARAT

On 23 October 2012 KARAT met with the group of twelve youth activists from Israel as part of their study tour in Warsaw, Poland. During the meeting KARAT representatives discussed with young people the international standards of women's human rights, the dynamics of global feminist movement, as well as the backlash in terms of progressive language related to women's rights in recent years. The participants of the study tour wanted to learn about KARAT's strategies and projects related to advancing the status of women in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. They were also interested in the process of coalition building. KARAT highlighted the role of carrying out joint projects with its member organizations and investing in networking. The meeting was a mutually enriching experience as regrettably there are not many initiatives aimed at exchanging ideas between Poland and Israel.

The study tour of young activists from Israel was organized as part of the "Leadership Program", which implemented by Israeli NGO – Sparkpro. It is supported, among others, by the Polish Chancellery of the Prime Minister and the Polish Embassy in Tel-Aviv.

For more information please contact Magda Pocheć at: [magda.pochec@karat.org.pl](mailto:magda.pochec@karat.org.pl)

### WearFair ethical fashion trade show

On 13-14 October 2012 KARAT's representatives took part in the WearFair ethical fashion trade show that for the first time was held in Poland. The event gathered hundreds of people who had an opportunity to buy clothes made in an eco-friendly way and with respect for human rights. They took part in recycling, eco-design and sewing workshops, exchanged no-longer needed garments at the clothing swap, watched movies about the global garment industry and listened to the lectures. Those who were interested in the issue of corporate social responsibility had a chance to listen to foreign experts discussing global interrelations in the textile and clothing industry, and various solutions that textile and clothing companies may adopt to eliminate abuses in their supply chain. During the debate "Ethical fashion – successes and challenges" the guests shared their experiences in working towards raising environmental standards and improving working conditions in the textile and clothing industry, and presented actions taken by companies as well as broader multistakeholder initiatives including manufacturers, trade unions and non-governmental organizations. The representative of KARAT, Joanna Szabuńko, was a facilitator of this international debate.



KARAT Coalition has been involved in campaigns and events related to production of goods in conditions that are fair for workers and environmentally responsible for a number of years. KARAT coordinates the actions of Polish Platform of [Clean Clothes Campaign](#).

For more information please contact Joanna Szabuńko at: [joanna.szabunko@karat.org.pl](mailto:joanna.szabunko@karat.org.pl)

## Members' News

### Azerbaijan: Women's role in conflict resolution

The Center "Women and Modern World", a KARAT member, organized a series of trainings for women leaders and NGOs' representatives, internally displaced persons and refugees. The trainings, held in four Azeri cities, aimed at increasing the knowledge and skills of the participants to play active role in a process of peace-building in the conflict between Armenians and Azerbaijani in Nagorno-Karabakh region. The trainings' participants learnt about theoretical and practical innovations in the process of peace building and conflict resolution, how to build strong relationships with relevant international organizations to obtain advices on strengthening peace and stability, and how to prevent the escalation of hostility and military violence in the region. According to the Center "Women and Modern World" the women who took part in the trainings may play a great role in formation of public opinion in a conflict resolution as all of them actively participate in socio-political life of the country.



The trainings were based on the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 which calls for increasing the participation of women at decision making levels in conflict resolution and peace process. They were a part of a wider project called "Strengthening the role of civil society in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict resolution and involvement of communities to the process."

For more information please contact Sudaba Shiraliyeva at: [womenmw@yahoo.com](mailto:womenmw@yahoo.com)

### Czech Republic: Work – life balance is still a problem

On 18 October 2012 the sociologists and representatives of non-government organizations, companies and public administration from Czech Republic, and the experts from Germany, Poland and Slovakia discussed the problem of reconciliation of work and care at the conference organized by Gender Studies, a KARAT member, in Prague, Czech Republic. The speakers talked about a work–life balance in case of parents of young children and adults who look after their elderly parents. They gave a special focus to the issues of age and gender aspects of work and care, and the so-called sandwich generation - a generation of people who care for their aging parents while supporting their own children.



They stressed that a problem of sandwich generation is growing since there is a tendency for women to give birth to a first child after 30. A continuing fall in the birth rates and increasing life expectancy results in a quick ageing of population in all four countries. These changes in society call for re-organization of life and work so that they meet needs of contemporary families. Thus, it is very important for the states to undertake special measures such as for example adopting labour legislation which offers flexible form of employment.

The speakers presented the changes in work-life balance policies, including relevant legislation in their countries. All of them stressed the fact that it is mainly women who try to combine being an effective carer and a reliable

employee. What they need in order to reconcile these two roles are a flexible working conditions, employers' understanding of their situation and in some cases a financial help of the state.

The conference was crowned by awarding the winners of the *Company of the Year: Equal Opportunities*. This is a prestigious award for companies that advance gender equality in their inner structures and processes. This year the winner in a big companies category was T-mobile Czech Republic, a.s., and in small and mid-size companies category - mamacoffee, s.r.o.

For more information please contact Jitka Kolářová at: [jitka.kolarova@genderstudies.cz](mailto:jitka.kolarova@genderstudies.cz)

Author of the photo: Anna Solcova, Gender Studies

### **Kyrgyzstan: Severe punishment for bride kidnapping**

The Kyrgyz women organization "Open Line" conducted an action called "A present for MP" to draw the MPs' attention to tragic results of bride kidnapping phenomenon and convince them to change the law.

The present is an envelope with a letter written by a victim of bride kidnapping who attempted to commit suicide to free herself from unwanted marriage. Along with the letter there is an appeal of Kyrgyz women organization to toughen the law on criminal responsibility of a kidnapper. The action was accompanied by press conferences to publicize the problem.



The project on making stricter penalty for bride kidnapping was already debated by the Kyrgyz Parliament last year. At that time, most of the MPs rejected it. This year, however, the project has been supported by 66 MPs with only 12 of them being against it. There is a good chance that in its third reading the MPs will vote for it and pass the law that toughen the penalty for bride kidnapping.

For more information please contact Munara Beknazarova at: [munarabeknazarova@gmail.com](mailto:munarabeknazarova@gmail.com)

### **Poland: Girl wins abortion case in Strasburg**

On 30 October 2012 the European Court of Human Rights announced that a teenage girl who was raped should have been given unhindered access to abortion, and that Poland violated three articles of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Court determined the violations of the right to respect for private and family life (article 8) as regards the determination of access to lawful abortion and the disclosure of the applicants' personal data, right to liberty and security (article 5), and prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment (article 3). Thus, it awarded 30,000 EUR to the girl, and 15,000 EUR to her mother in respect of non-pecuniary damage as well as 16,000 EUR to both applicants in respect of costs and expenses.

The case started in 2008 when then a 14-year-old girl was raped and became pregnant. Although, she had a right to legal abortion according to Polish abortion law, she was denied it by a number of public hospitals. Moreover, her right to confidentiality was breached what resulted in a severe harassment by pro-life and Catholic activists. The culmination of the girl's drama was separating her from her mother and placing in a juvenile shelter without proper justification. Eventually, she had an abortion in a hospital located 500 kilometers away from her hometown.



KARAT is very pleased with the Court's verdict. It showed that the law without adequate mechanisms and procedures is defunct and that Polish state has lots to do to ensure women an access to legal abortion. The verdict also stressed that the reproductive rights are human rights what is unfortunately often forgotten by Polish state institutions. This is the second time Poland lost in the European Court of Human Rights in a case related to an access to legal abortion.

Read the judgment in full [here](#)

## European Union

### Women do not decide about monetary issues

The EU Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee has raised its concerns on lack of gender balance on the European Central Bank (ECB) Board and Governing council. The highest level of European monetary decision-making is 100% male. There is now not even a single woman sitting on the main board of what is one of the most powerful and essential institutions in the EU. Now, as a place on the ECB's Executive Board stands open, no single female candidate has been considered for the post.

Noticing this evident lack of gender balance the hearing of ECB executive board male candidate has been postponed and the Committee is waiting for at least one candidate of each gender. Sharon Bowles, MEP (UK), Chair of the European Parliament's Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee, issued a critical [statement](#) on the lack of gender balance and encouraged to implement a medium-term plan to facilitate advancement of women to influential positions in the ECB and national central banks, as well as within finance ministries. According to him there is a systemic cultural problem to address.

The 2012 edition of [the Central Bank Directory](#), lists just 12 female governors out of a total of 160 central banks and currently none of the 17 Eurozone governors on the ECB governing council are women.

The source: [EWL](#)

### Controversial decision of European Parliament

KARAT Coalition is shocked and upset that European Citizen's Prize 2012 went to the Polish Federation of Pro-Life Movements. The European Citizen's Prize has been awarded by European Parliament since 2008 in recognition of exceptional achievements of Europeans who reflect the values set in the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights. This year, however, the Members of European Parliament decided to give this important prize to the organization which is known for its uncompromising fight for a total ban on abortion in Poland, including cases when a woman's health or life is in danger. The Federation is also against modern forms of contraception, and sexual education of children and youth. It disseminates fundamentalist and false information about reproductive rights and health through its publications, website and actions such as displaying shocking pictures related to abortion in public places. Moreover, the Federation's views on women's role in society are contrary to the women's human right standards and gender equality. All of these contradict the values set in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

Therefore, KARAT Coalition believes that the Polish Federation of Pro-Life Movements does not meet the criteria for the European Citizen's Prize. We are very disappointed that such a harmful for women decision was taken by European Parliament. Giving the European Citizen's Prize to the organization which denies a pregnant woman a right to protect her health and life devalues the prize itself and casts an unfavourable light on work of European Parliament which takes decisions undermining the values it itself promotes.

For more information please contact Agnieszka Walko-Mazurek at: [agnieszka.mazurek@karat.org.pl](mailto:agnieszka.mazurek@karat.org.pl)

## World

### It is time to invest more in rural women

On 15 October 2012 the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in his message marking the International Day of Rural Women, said that eliminating discrimination that prevents rural women from realizing their full potential is crucial to ending global hunger and poverty. He stressed the role of women in producing much of the world's food and caring for the environment and the fact that the daily reality for many rural women is one in which they do not own the land they farm and are denied the financial services that could lift them out of poverty. The UN chief said that it is time to invest more in rural women, protect their rights, and improve their status. He reminded that the UN launched a five-year initiative "Accelerating Progress Toward the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women" which aims at women's empowerment through economic integration and food security initiatives. It will be implemented initially in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda.

The International Day of Rural Women was established by the General Assembly in December 2007 in recognition of the role and contribution of rural women, including indigenous women, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty.

The source: [UN News](#)

### HRC adopted resolution on traditional values and human rights

The Human Rights Council (the Council) adopted on 27 September 2012 a controversial [resolution on traditional values and human rights](#). The resolution was adopted by 25 votes in favour, 15 against, and 7 abstentions. The debate drew attention to the distinction between universal human rights and traditional values, with the EU and European countries expressing concerns over the potential risk of misusing the notion of human rights and traditional values.

This resolution's approval is even more [controversial](#) because formal procedures were not fully respected: the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee ([the Committee](#)) raised a number of concerns and was not allowed to complete its own study on the resolution. The submission of such report has been delayed until the 22nd Council Session in March 2013. As pointed out by some countries, since the report had not yet been presented, the human Rights Council was in violation of its own procedures.

Prior to the vote, NGOs from across the globe called upon their respective governments to take a strong stand against this resolution, citing that it would set a particularly destructive precedent affirming a concept often used to legitimize human rights abuses.

The source: [EuroNGOs](#)

## Resources

### ICRW: Bridging the Gender Divide: How Technology Can Advance Women Economically

Intention and innovation can generate real economic benefits to women in the developing world. In a groundbreaking study, ICRW examines technology initiatives that have enabled women to develop their economic potential, become stronger leaders and more effective contributors to their families, communities and domestic economies. Specifically,

these efforts helped women increase their productivity, create new entrepreneurial ventures and launch income-generating pursuits. The report also offers innovators practical recommendations on how to design and deploy technologies that women can't afford not to use.

You can download this publication [HERE](#)

### **Oxfam: Busan in a nutshell**

"Busan in a Nutshell" documents the commitments made at Busan, and recommends how to ensure aid effectiveness commitments are implemented.

You can download this publication [HERE](#)

### **UN Women: Papers from UN CSW Expert group meeting on the prevention of violence against women & girls**

The next UN 2013 Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will focus on "Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls" as its priority theme during its fifty-seventh session. An expert meeting was recently held that discussed several critical areas, such as needed legal and policy reforms, changing the culture, work environment and practices of private and public sectors, awareness-raising and mobilization.

Papers from the meeting are available [HERE](#)

### **UN reviews follow up to Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**

This report reviews the follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the 23<sup>rd</sup> special session of the General Assembly. In particular, the report focuses on the extent to which gender perspectives are reflected in selected intergovernmental processes of the UN. The report concludes with recommendations for further measures to enhance the implementation of gender equality mandates.

UN Secretary-General's report is available [HERE](#)

## **Upcoming events**

### **Trust Women Conference "Putting the rule of law behind women's rights"**

Thomson Reuters Foundation and the International Herald Tribune will co-host a high-level women's rights conference in London on December 4-5, 2012. The conference will bring together women and men from the legal, financial, government, corporate and non-profit sectors to drive pragmatic action to fight violence against women and other injustices including trafficking, domestic slavery and discrimination. The objective is to stimulate new, positive action and solutions to those issues which most threaten the ability of women to support themselves and their communities.

Time: 4-5 December 2012

Venue: UK, London

More information at: [www.trustwomenconf.com](http://www.trustwomenconf.com)

### **European Gender Summit "Aligning Agendas for Excellence"**

The European Gender Summit 2012 brings together top-level researchers, science leaders, and policy makers to examine gender issues that impact on the implementation of the EU science programmes. Distinguished scientists and leading science institutions will discuss opportunities for advancing excellence through greater awareness of the role of gender as a dimension of research content, and as an important driver to promote innovation and mobility of talent and knowledge.

Time: 29-30 November 2012

Venue: Belgium, Brussels

More information at: <http://www.gender-summit.eu/>

## Call for submissions

### Report on discrimination against women in nationality-related matters, including the impact on children

OHCHR calls for submission of any relevant information, by 30 November 2012, for the preparation of the Report on discrimination against women in nationality-related matters, including the impact on children, in accordance with the Human Rights Council Resolution 20/4.

More Information [HERE](#)

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### THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

KARAT Secretariat would like to sincerely thank the following for their contributions to the News (forwarding information and providing us with 'original' information): The Center "Women and Modern World" (Azerbaijan), Gender Studies (Czech Republic), Open Line (Kyrgyzstan), Polish Federation for Women and Family Planning, UN News, EuroNGOs, EWL, AWID.

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