

Violence against Women

War and Women

**Expert Meeting
December 16-18, 2003
Sakai City, Japan**

Asian Women's Fund

All rights reserved.

Asian Women's Fund (AWF)

Sogo Kudan Minami Bldg., 2-7-6 Kudan Minami, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0074, JAPAN
TEL. +(81-3) 3514-4071 FAX. +(81-3) 3514-4072
e-mail: dignity@awf.or.jp
website: <http://www.awf.or.jp>

CONTENTS

International Expert Meeting on “War and Women”

Reports and Presentations

Afghanistan

- 1) Afghan Women’s Education Centre ----- 1
- 2) Noor Education Centre ----- 9

Australia ----- 14

East Timor

- 1) Joint Paper by the Members of East Timorese Association ----- 24
- 2) Literacy and Social Training, GFFTL ----- 30

Philippines ----- 31

Sri Lanka

- 1) Women’s Alliance for Peace and Democracy ----- 35
- 2) Justice of Peace ----- 40

Japan ----- 42

Appendix

Voices of Women in East Timor ----- 47

Voices of Women from Sri Lanka ----- 50

Conflict and Development, Prof. Hisashi Nakamura, Ryukoku University ----- 51

List of the Participants ----- 56

Shinkai K. Zahine
Afghan Women's Education Centre

I am here representing a portion of the Afghan civil society and within it I am an Afghan woman activist. I am the Acting Director of AWEC, the Afghan Women's Educational Center. Thousands of people, mainly women and children benefit directly from the education, health and welfare services AWEC provides in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Background

Afghanistan is an Asian country of 650,000 Sq. Km having 20 M inhabitants and being locked by land with six neighbors; China, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Iran and Pakistan.

War and uncertainty has been part of our life since the 1978 communist coup. Afghanistan has experienced over two decades of continuous war. The majority of the victims of this war have been women and children despite being the war being the product of a very male-dominated society.

Soviet Occupation

The 10 year-Soviet occupation left Afghanistan with:

- 1.5 M dead
- 6 M refugees in Iran & Pakistan
- 300,000 disabled
- More than 70% of the infrastructures destroyed, one example: more than 2700 out of the total 4200 schools were destroyed.
- More than 50% of the agricultural land changed to barren land

This was a small list of the destruction, however less obvious but equally frightening effects of war include:

- The loss of the solid and stable family structure
- The loss of most customs and traditions
- The changes of our way of living
- Huge number of children raised out of our land and without roots

- Huge number of traumatized children, youth and adults

It's easy to list the effects of war on women. I believe these are the same no matter which country or war you are discussing. But here are some of the experiences of women in Afghanistan:

This list also could become longer, but as a woman I have to express what the women suffered from the occupation:

- We lost our dignity and the place we were having within the close and the large family circle
- We lost the small parts of freedom we had earned with difficulties during the 6 decades following our independent in 1919
- Inside Afghanistan, we get confined in our houses due to presence armed groups all over the country
- In the refugee camp, we get confined in our tent due to alien environment

We suddenly returned to another age, as women:

- If we were not directly subject of military operations that were destroying our houses, we were suffering from the loss of our cherish ones:
- As wives we losing our husbands
- As daughter we were losing our father and brothers
- As mother we were losing our children/sons

The afghan women equally shared the trauma of war with the afghan men.

Civil War

Once the Soviets left Afghanistan; the country found itself in the civil war, as a woman I could not allow myself to fall into the ideological trap and say who was right or who was wrong;

The civil war in our country meaning Afghans were killing other Afghans and this lasted from the departure of the Soviets in February 1989 to September 1996 the arrival of Taliban to power in Kabul.

The outcome of the civil war was:

- Near 100,000 afghans killed
- More then 2 million afghans displaced, inside our borders or outside the borders

- Kabul the Capital the only City saved from damage under the Soviets was half destroyed.

Again women were suffering, but this time another lot of brutality was added to the previous list: We were tortured, raped, kidnapped by one or another warring faction.

At that time very few places could claim to be secure for women.

The arrival of Taliban to power brings one crucial change: women get security, but they lost freedom of movement, we lost the right to education and many other rights, we became prisoners of a barbarian system.

I am not going to put together again the long list of women suffering under the Taliban that we have presented in each conference since the arrival of Mr. Karzai to power but a frightening statistic tells the story of 23 years of war well enough: More than two million women are war widows and still face intensified prejudice, social and economic exclusion of which 400,000 are living in Kabul. The Afghan women who were left to deal with physical and psychological hardship as sole heads of households constitute one of the most vulnerable social groups in the country.

Afghan women under war

When I think of the effects of war on women, the story of one of our beneficiaries in Kabul comes to mind: This woman's husband had been with the Afghan secret service during and after the Soviet occupation. After losing his job he married an educated women working as literacy teacher in Afghanistan and had four children the eldest is 12 years and the youngest is nine months old. Now that the war is finished, the husband's mental health has suffered and he treats his wife and children as he treated prisoners in the past. Most of the time, he stops his wife feeding the nine months old baby when he is begging for milk. He wakes up his children and his wife in mid night and keep them wake till morning and in the day time the poor family has to turn their face at the wall not to look at each other .He beats his wife and children very badly and forces strange punishments on them. He does not recognize that they are his family and not political prisoners.

Women in refugee camp

For families who have experience displacement away from their homes, there are also different effects according to gender. Men are able to be more mobile in society but women are confined to the home and the immediate sphere of the family and therefore even less

able to operate in the external life outside of the family. Many women when fleeing from fighting and dangerous situations have been separated from their children and lose contact with them possibly forever. For example, many refugee women in Pakistan experience harassment and abuse by authorities and people in power wanting sexual favours in exchange for papers, aid etc. Some families experiencing poverty force female family members into prostitution. Widows and young girls are especially vulnerable to this.

As young women and children, girls have been abducted from families and or for social or financial reason sold and forced to marry. Girls of a very young age are married to men most often much older, after they are married; some are not even able to see their families. Another effect of war is the increase in poverty and destruction of services such as hospitals etc to women which lead to the increase in unnecessary deaths of women due to lack of services and education in areas such as childbirth....

With all of these things I have mentioned there is the implicit damage to psychological and emotional health of women who often bear these burdens silently and heavily.

Let me tell you the story of one of our beneficiaries from the Center for Street Children and Women that we run in Peshawar for Afghan refugees:

Mukash is eighteen years old refugee girl who lives in one of the refugee camps in a suburb of Peshawar, a city in Pakistan. While she was thirteen, her father sold her to a drug addicted man and after having a baby boy to him; her husband again sold her to a Pakistani man. This time she had a baby girl but due to a lack of facilities and food, the baby died. Poor Mukash also suffered a lot and was not accepted by the second family .Due to a lack of food and attention, she became weaker and weaker day by day and finally she walked by the help of a stick. When the man realized that she was no more use to him for sexual affairs, he took her back to her family to get rid of his burden.

Every one thought that she might be suffering from T.B. But actually she was not. It was just a matter of hunger or malnutrition. After the proper treatment by the AWEC clinic, she recovered day by day and became active. When the second man realized that Mukash recovered again he wanted her back. But this time he could not keep her because he is married but he wanted to get again benefits from Mukash so he went to her father and made a deal with him that she is his property because he bought her from her first man and has the right to sell her to gain his money back. The father also thinks the same and promises to return her after complete recovery.

Now Mukash has wait to for her third time destiny to deal with her future.

War effects on women

However, when I sat down to think about what I would say when discussing the effects of war on women in Afghanistan, I became frustrated. The problem when discussing this topic is that many of the abuses perpetrated on women during war exist in Afghan culture anyway. War perhaps exacerbates or increases the frequency of these abuses but women in Afghanistan suffer even in times of peace.

Sometimes the experience of women is not so different during peace or war times if the dominant culture accepts abuse of women as normal. So instead I would like to discuss some negative cultural practices for Afghan women.

Because of the very traditional, conservative nature of Afghan society, women become particularly vulnerable. The country is backward with some of the lowest rates of literacy in the world, the legal system does not assist women in a way that is fair or accessible and women are often at the mercy of men who wish to dominate and subjugate them for their own political and personal reasons. Problems such as forced marriage, the practice of baad, which sees the women of the perpetrators family given in marriage to the family of the victim in order to appease and make up for murders or crimes committed by men all impinge on women's basic human rights. Women also lose many rights when they lose the dominant male in their family and can become controlled by other distant male relatives.

The treatment of women in Afghanistan is not a function of the religion. It may come as a surprise to many of you (and possibly many Muslims themselves that Islam has a long tradition of democracy and enshrining women's rights however the culture exists alongside the religion and many atrocities and abuses are committed in the name of religion which have nothing to do with it but are just excuses for bad behaviour.

As I mentioned earlier, post war, women's place in society is affected. War slows down the efforts to work for basic human rights for women. I am not talking about just the obvious things like women not being involved in politics but basics such as education and healthcare. The effect of war is that when other countries are working toward educating their children, we are still emerging from war and the issue of educating girls is almost seen as secondary to general security and stability of the country. The effects of war and insecurity on women is to stop their gradual acquisition of knowledge of their rights and detracts women of the need to work for all women's rights not just their own family, tribe, ethnicity etc...

War is used as an excuse for all sorts of women's rights abuses. For example, the Taliban's excuse for not providing education for girls was that it was not safe. In more recent times,

schools for girls are destroyed as part of the destabilization of the reconstruction efforts for the country. Another example is the discouraging of efforts to provide social and health services to some ethnic groups in the country by those in power of rival groups.

There have certainly been changes since the fall of the Taliban, but what has really been achieved since then?

We have not achieved a lot; we have a Ministry for Women Affairs, which is mainly a political gesture toward the international public opinion at the Bonn agreement.

Women are again feeling insecure for obvious reasons, but one important one: Those who were responsible for the suffering of Afghan women in the years of civil war and who were kicked out by the Taliban are back in power. They are not only in power but also having again high hand in the destiny of Afghan people and Afghanistan.

While some efforts have been made to make the government representative of different ethnic groups, there has been little attempt to ensure adequate representation of women as women. Unfortunately, however ethnicity dominates the agenda and this comes first with ministries being given to militant factions representing ethnic groups rather than fair representation of ethnic groups per ministry.

Increasingly, the NGO community has been active in Afghanistan. The activities of women and men in the non-governmental sector, which is a fairly new field, have been contributing to peace building and the re-emergence of civil society.

Peace projects

In spite of all difficulties AWEC are taking initiatives of peace building at the grassroots level. The intention is not only to create better understanding between the women who have been divided by ethnic distances from each other but among women at their community and home level, by the stimulation and creation of dialogue on peace and gender based issues at home level.

Women are invited in these village level discussions to talk about issues like peace and conflict resolution and how women can support other women, their daughter and sister and neighbors in their joint struggle they have in patriarchal society. Perhaps this is the first time they are questioning some of the most intimidating problems of women emerging from the man dominated custom and culture they live in. The second and third step of the project is to

further facilitate trips of these women to meet women of different ethnic groups from other part of the country in order to see differences and commonalities.

So far the success of the project is that it's completely handled by women, it is not the usual, project and women are experiencing altogether a new experience of discovering women's interest and power in the issue which are other than cliché type of projects. One of the facilitators told us how the community attitude softened after they had initial problems of misunderstanding. Community men who thought that a woman discussing political issues was associated with communistic politics initially opposed them. As the workshop progressed, the women has confessed that they are very much inspired and thought that women in Kabul had brought messages which were better then a Mullah's. Another women was very proud to speak with more tolerance with her daughter where in past she used to punish her in case of any wrongs went in her home chores duties. She proudly told the facilitator that she is already thinking of attitudinal change towards her daughter treatment. I want to tell you a story of one of the women who participated in our peace tour project.

Her name is Aijan from the north of Afghanistan who of Turkmen background. Aijan was born to a middle class background and her brothers were educated. However their distant cousins were involved in armed groups. During the Russian times and the communist regime's control of Afghanistan, her four cousins were resentful and envious of the position of her brother who was teaching in schools. They always asked him to stop teaching in the government school because they were fighting against the government. The brother refused. Later, the family celebrated a wedding for just the inner circle of the family. The resentful cousins planted a bomb at the wedding. This blast killed 21 members of the family. Aijan's 8 brothers were killed at this time. At this time, Aijan just happened to go home to feed her children. When Aijan returned to her father's house she found the pieces of her family strewn around the building. She now one uncle left who had lost both legs during the explosion. When Aijan found out what had happened, she was devastated. Not only did she lose all members of her family, her husband left her because she could not overcome her grief. He described her as crazy and finally left her for another woman and started his life again leaving her with one son. She survived as a carpet weaver, raising her son alone. When her son was old enough, her son went to Iran.

After this incident, everyone in her tribe was ready to take revenge on her behalf for the death of her family. However Aijan refused to take revenge because for her this is not the solution to the problem. She said "what can I gain in taking revenge from these people? This will not bring back my dead family. It will only create more animosity and revenge." This is a great example of women being strong enough to break the cycle of violence. Women can bring tolerance and understanding to bear on a situation. They can help educate their children in peace and away from war.

We need to build upon this and encourage women to be strong and participate in the process of peace in their country. In all areas of life, from speaking up against the forced marriage of girl children, to selling female members of the family, to refusing to remain silent about the abuse of human rights of women in the country. Forming and working for NGOs or other agencies that work for women and speaking up and participating in all areas of governance and civil society of the country. These things are what women need to do in order to repair the damage of war and the abuses perpetrated against them.

Conclusion

The important issue for women in Afghanistan post-conflict is security. Security issues include: protection from armed elements; abuse by local police; trafficking; domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence. In addition, the activities of local Afghan women's groups in promoting women's rights can make them vulnerable to security risks and limit the range of their activities.



Afghan Women in War and in Post War Era

Jamila Afghani
Director, Noor Educational Center

“If one kills one innocent body means he has killed all human being and if one save ones innocent life means to save all humanity.” These are the words of God.

It is a savage paddock that as mankind has become more civilized the homicidal skills of soldiers, legitimized on the battle field, have become increasingly ruthless, protracted & indifferent to the plight of innocent civilians, including women and children who in ages were regard as primitive, were spared in the name of century.

Does this signify a decline in moral values? Not at all, still today wars are launched for high causes. Actually the character of combat and the outcome of battles, has always been largely determined by the weapons available to soldier at the time .In the beginning they were limited to rocks and clubs & later knives and spears. The duration of medieval battles could have been measured in hours & minutes and today just we count seconds therefore we in this area have more heavy loses than ever. During Napoleon only in 3 days the number of killed in the opposing army was about 48000 men .At the end of first world war around five million deaths have been recorded where Linton Churchill wrote, “war which was cruel and glorious has become cruel and squalid.” The World War 1 was the first conflict which cased death of thousands civilians through head bombardiers between 1939 –1945, 13,000,000 civilians were killed and 67,200 of them were in Japan

For the first time and hopefully the last time nuclear bomb was dropped on Japan and it brought a new turn to the human life in the prospective of war. In this time of nuclear war altered the balance between the sexes. The image of man as protector and defender of the home had been destroyed and the thought that let women to re examine their own role in the society. As modern weapons do not understand any principle but heavy destructions so it cases great wounds for mothers.

Meantime the post world Wars and post Cold war gifted the world an endless succession of guerilla wars. Now great powers no longer mobilize to invade one another but nowadays the terrorist has become our nightmares. Terrorism is not new in it's like a warfare and it has taken uglier face. Due to technological revolutions in communications .The wizards of technology have made life in developed nations more comfort table more exciting and more entertaining but they have also made the world a dangerous place to live in.

The twentieth century justifiably can be called the “century of war” where history witnessed two World Wars and many of civil wars and the invention of nuclear and chemical weapon caused the great human loses in civilian and the worst victim of wars are in women. In this age of high technology machinery civilization still we are facing wars. Where Universal humanitarian treaties Geneva and Hague Conventions are the attempts to preserve humanity from wars but still wars are going on ruthlessly.

After second World War International community took initiative to mopes restriction on the use of violence by adapting the charter of United Nations Which virtually banned wars through humanitarian laws and by organization of different NGOs and ICRC but the result was not satisfactory therefore in 1949 it was reformed through support of the International Community for the Geneva Convention as well as other International Treaties to impose limits on warfare, and afford protection to war victims.

In apparent paradox certainly illustrates the agony of human kind torn between its resolve to put a stop to war and the apparent inimitability of harmed conflict. Today with all unprecedented efforts in the areas of mediation, conflict resolution, peace making and peacekeeping have still not achieved Universal Peace .War has become even crueler in its ethics and effects. Traditional distinction and patterns have become blurred since the end of the cold war it is harder to distinguish between humanitarian & military action, humanitarian affairs and foreign affairs combatants and civilians and even between war and peace with the resurgence of sub conflict in conflicts that in value new players and destabilized the established patterns of humanitarian action.

Fortunately, the humanitarian community is having to operate in an increasingly and Complex and fluid environment which is calling into question many accepted terms of reference and shattering any kind of illusion at same time the community of state is talking a close interest in humanitarian action conducted in situation of conflict. A sense of global responsibility is emerging, potentially pausing the way for a major shift in the direction of humanitarian affairs, for instance, today’s and many other activities are getting into force for the sake of peace. Our gathering today signifies the commitment of us (women) and much other social and non-political organization to bring peace in our beautiful globe and to protect women and children.

As a social worker and as Afghan women working for women and children from Afghanistan the country of war devastated. I want to share my experiences with today’s gathering.

Afghanistan a worn torn country where like many other parts of the world women remained severe war victims. Women lost their homes, their families, their near and dear ones their hopes and their future the future of their children.

This dilemma has drawn many angles that even today in post war area still we are under shadows of war still we are victims. Lets tell you Afghan women's story of in war which I want to divided in to two parts; those women who remained inside the battle fires, lost all they had and got severe injuries in their souls and in their hearts. And those women who remained in exile life in refugee camps they could survive with great difficulties that today in their own home town they are homeless and there is no light for the future now they are living in their own country in the camps that is worse than the hosting countries camps. They have lost their every thing plus their psyche and their means of life.

During refugee life what we experienced and how the consequences are still going on. For the first time in the history of Afghan nation a large number of women raised their hands for bagging on the streets. The bagging was not end of the story but a start for long-term dilemma most of these women remained victims of sexual abuses or some other were forced to unwilling prostitution to find means of life for their dependent in families who had lost their dear ones in wars. Even today in our country after political changes and great slogans for women's right still we have large number of prostitution that are doing the business for having no job opportunities. This shame was not limited only for women but children are also included.

The evils of our civil wars cannot be milted from the history pages by passages many centuries sunrise rather it would remain dark and sold forever. Afghan nation are very sensitive in the issue of their waves, sisters and mother's honor therefore mass sexual abuse mass rape was a toll of civil wars. We lost a large number of our sisters after being sexually abused by mass murders in the order ground wholes. Hazarabs, Tajiks and Pashtoons, each one in their turn did with their sisters and mothers. We have still many families searching for their daughters, if they find them out what will be the use due to disgracement keeps silent. Women and children are used for drug trafficking and they were also was smuggled into foreign countries. This action was also based on the mutual conflicts among the sections. Some of the women were addicted in drugs because of cultivation of drugs in their fields and its marketing. AIDS & HIV disease are another dilemma which is due to sexual abuse. Health condition in the camps, in war, and even today it's very poor and wars ruined the hospitals and facilities for health. The death records of women are increasing day by day especially maternity health care has very bad condition.

The rights of education

The right for education the entire world is witnessed that how much suffered during wars that today literacy rate of women is not falling under percentage even. Still, by all works are going on we have deficiency in this regard. During refugee life in Pakistan and some European countries education possibility for women was better but inside Afghanistan the

chances was zero now we have big confrontations among returnees and resident inside Afghanistan as the former improved and the latter has suffered and the job opportunities for farmer is wider but for the latter nothing due to not understanding of English & computers. I wish the International NGOs was more focusing on women's education and capacity building programs rather than wasting money on the researches and researching.

Insecurity is just like nightmare follows us not only yesterday but also today. The bitter experience of insecurity in the camps, in the local areas and today so called tourism follow us we are not sure if we are going out side for work we come back safely home or not??? No body knows a foreigner any Afghan.

Disability of women and children is another burden on the weak shoulders of Afghanistan where we have no facility or support for them. And in our society girls are getting married by the amount of job she can dose or their health and beauty would could but for a girl who is uneducated and disable the future darker than any body else. According to my personal experience for Afghan women disability is double being a woman and being disabled. The land mine contribution for our disability is unforgettable.

Today we have a large number of widows and orphans. We are making 60% of our population. Most of these women are uneducated and jobless but still we have very limited resources. These are the tragedies or the black spots that wars have gifted to us especially civil wars. Usually, all the political gain is going to be achieved by the name of Islam as a cover shield to protect their wrong deeds. Islam being a word derived from the root "SLM" meaning salvation and peace as well as submission, is the expression of God's grace flowing in the arteries of the universe. Islam is the universal order, the integral religion of harmony and the unique system, which is able to harmonize the martial with spiritual life. All dimensions of man's earthly life have particular places of their own within the matrix of Islam in such a way that each can perform its own function and enable men to be at peace with himself, his community and ultimately gain happiness in the both world. Islam being the true religion revealed by God, the Lord of the universe, the All just and All Compassionate, never approves any injustice in any part of the world.

"If one kills one innocent body means he has killed all human being and if one save ones innocent life means to save all humanity." These are the words of God. "All human being are God's family, the best among you is the one who has the best attitude towards his fellow men." And this is the saying of Holy Prophet (PBUH)

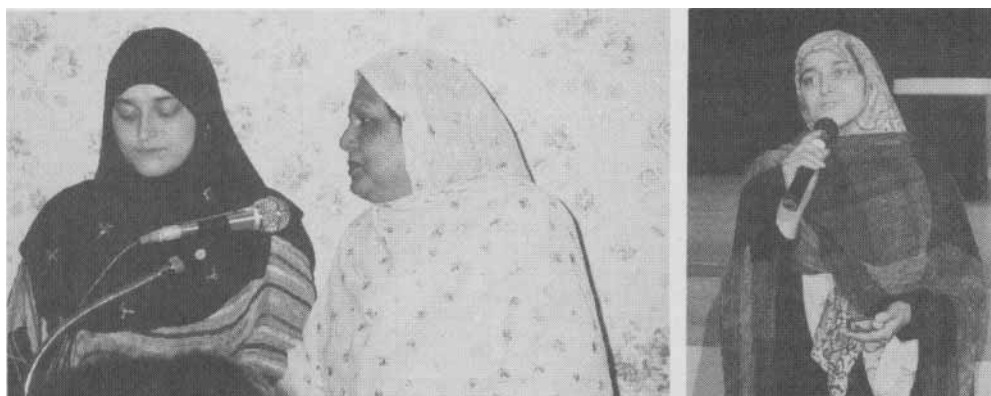
A true believer cannot transgress the limits established by God and the limits on the warfare are as restrict was implied by the holy prophet and his followers. Jihad is not equivalent of war, it has wider connotation and embraces any kind of restriction that striving Muslims

practicing God's ordinance. The first order in this regard in the terms of holy Quran is such "Fight in the way of God against who fight against you, but do not transgress. God does not love transgressors." (Al baqara-1,190)

So, Jihad is only lunched when the true faith is in danger of not being practicing or if and aggressor stop them to practice their faith. In the case of war still we have certain other rules that the wars should not be lunched in the residential areas of the civilians, through the period of Mohammad (PBHU) all wars were lunched out side Madina. The public properties and public shrine places are also is not going to be destroyed even the churches and temples are considered the safe guard places. It was only dear Islam put certain rules for the prisoners of war and they were let free only by educating other few men how to write and how to read and they were not supposed to be salves.

The act of cutting or disrespect to the death body of enemy is prohibited, or the women and children should not be taken as the prisoner of war or sexually abuses. Its great sin, Islam is a universal religion with clean and clear guidance according to the nature of human beings. Islam is a universal religion for all humanity unfortunately most of the people cannot understand the true meanings of Islam. Islam has been misunderstood by the deeds of Muslim leadership who just utilized the name of Islam as a shield or protections for their political gains. In our society, customs and culture rules not religion. Therefore, the name of Islam was a political toll.

So in summation, I would like to say on the bases of Afghan Women experiences that wars by any name or cause may reach to an end in a time but the consequences will remain for a very long time. If there is destruction of a mosque a temple or a church, if there is destruction of hospitals, schools and public halls, if there is destruction of houses and residential areas, or if there is human losses, if there if loss of soldiers in the opposition group or there is any other visible or invisible losses I will say with confirmation that is the lose of a women the lose of mother. The lose of a community as whole is the mothers' lose because she is a gardener who works with great difficulties to bring up the family and to establish a society, its mother a women who is the victim and the severe victim of wars.



**Elizabeth Biok
Solicitor**

Introduction

Australia has a proud military history of involvement in wars aimed at ending oppressive regimes. National days of remembrance still reflect community respect for the role of the Australian armed forces in World War One and World War Two. Since 1999, the Australian government has sent forces to participate in military coalitions to establish democratic governments in Timor Leste, Afghanistan, Bougainville and Iraq.

In response to public demands for action against Indonesian violence in East Timor during and after the independence ballot in September 1999, Australian troops were deployed as part of INTERFET, multinational forces serving under the United Nations mandate to establish order in East Timor. Almost 5000 troops were sent in 1999 and further numbers have been sent on rotation to secure the border, and train the Timorese defense forces.

On 17 October 2001, the Australian government responded to a request from the United States of America to participate in the war against terror and agreed to send 1550 troops and naval forces to Afghanistan¹. Australian soldiers are still in Afghanistan attempting to eradicate Taliban forces and increase security in rural areas.

Australian troops were sent in April 2003 to serve in Iraq as part of the US-led coalition against Saddam Hussein and large numbers remain on active service.

Women have served on active duty in overseas Australian deployments. All military personnel are educated in appropriate means of assisting women and children in conflict situations, with all troops equipped to provide emergency medical assistance. However most Australian support for women victims of war occurs in periods of post-war reconstruction and is facilitated through humanitarian assistance programmes.

AusAID assistance and women

Women's needs are reflected in reconstruction programmes established by the Australian

¹ Transcript of the Prime Minister the Hon John Howard MP, Press Conference, Melbourne, page 1, <<http://www.pm.gov.au/news/interviews/2001/interview1390.htm>> (2/12/2003)

aid agency AusAid, for post-conflict situations in the Asia-Pacific region. Usually there are projects funded to assist with health, education and anti-discrimination strategies. For example in Timor Leste all area health workers have been equipped with immunization kits for vaccinating babies and pregnant women. A torture and trauma support service has been established with counselors trained to assist women victims of Indonesian violence². Similarly in Afghanistan, Australia has assisted UNICEF in a specific maternal health programme in the remote western region.³

However, I consider that these programmes do not provide immediate assistance to women victims of war as they occur after conflict has diminished and during periods of foreign military presence. Also such assistance is limited in effectiveness given the restricted financial resources and the huge need. Similarly programmes such as counseling or HIV Aids treatment require long-term education and gender-sensitivity training before they can encourage women to attend services.

A more immediate form of assistance from developed countries to women and children war survivors is through international protection, granting residence to asylum seekers who have fled from war zones. Such protection allows women and children to resettle away from violent situations, find long term stability and use the opportunity to re-build their lives. Should the situation in their home country become peaceful, they can return and contribute to the reconstruction process through utilizing skills which they gained through positive education programmes in countries of refuge.

The Refugee Convention and War Survivors

The impetus for the codification of international protection was the mass civilian displacement caused by war and systematic violations of human rights in Germany and Russia. With the formation of the United Nations organization there was increased commitment to human rights.⁴

The fundamental rights of individuals and the obligations of states under the UN Charter are set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which is 'the common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations'.⁵ Article 13(2) provides that

² AusAID, Hot Topics, Australian Aid Achievements in East Timor, 30 April 2001, at 2. <<http://www.aisaid.gov.au.hottopics/easttimor/archive.cfm>> (4/12/2003)

³ AusAID, Media releases, Australian Support for Humanitarian and Recovery Needs in Afghanistan, 27 June 2003. <http://www.aisaid.gov.au/media/release.cfm?BC> (03/12/2003)

⁴ The Charter of the United Nations stresses in the Preamble the determination of member states to 'save succeeding generations from the scourge of war ...and reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights and the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women...'

⁵ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Proclamation

‘Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and return to the country’ while Article 14 (1) recognizes asylum seekers under international law:

‘Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.’

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established in 1950 with the function of providing international protection to refugees and assisting governments to facilitate ‘...their assimilation within new national communities.’⁶

The Convention relating to the Status of Refugees entered into force on 22 April 1954, defining a refugee as a person who is outside his country of nationality and has a “well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion” as a result of events occurring before January 1951. Though Eurocentric, the Convention created a regime of international protection by resettlement for victims of human rights violations and long term displacement.

Australia’s Open Door to Eastern Europeans

Australia was an active participant in the first 25 years of the Convention’s operation, with major resettlement programs including

1947-1954: 170,000 displaced persons from Eastern Europe

1947 –1985: 14,000 White Russians from Eastern USSR and China

After the 1956 revolt–14,000 Hungarians, and

After the 1968 Prague uprising – 6,000 Czechs.⁷

All were granted permanent residence and most became citizens, with many making important contributions in business and the arts.

The Acceptance of Non-European Refugees

International refugee law was broadened with the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, which removed the time limit of January 1951, and any geographical limitation. The right of all persons to seek international protection was enshrined, with the universal test of a well-founded fear of persecution for one of the five Convention grounds. Australia quickly became a party to the 1967 Protocol and changed the focus of its refugee intake to reflect the conflict in Indochina.

⁶ Art. 1 Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

⁷ Australian Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs: Refugee and Humanitarian Issues, October 2001, page 11

During the mass exodus by boat and land from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, Australia and Indonesia actively participated in the Comprehensive Plan of Action. While Malaysia was forcing boats back to sea, other Asian governments took a more humane approach agreeing to establish regional processing centres in Indonesia, Hong Kong and the Philippines. UNHCR was responsible for the infrastructure and refugee processing, and Australia was committed to resettling many refugees. The Asian authorities were involved through provision of security and overseeing the determination and appeal processes.

Since the 1980s, Australian refugee policy and law has developed into the two streams of

- Off-shore refugee and humanitarian visas for persons in transit countries, often in UNHCR camps, and are assessed as benefiting from resettlement in Australia, and
- On-shore protection visas for persons who arrive in Australia and are accepted as refugees under domestic and international law.

During the 1980s and 1990s the Australian government recognized that there were specific non-European ethnic and religious groups who had been forced to flee their nation states because of on-going human rights violations. Special visa were available for Vietnamese remaining in camps in Hong Kong, Burmese in the Thai border camps, Cambodians and Sudanese.

It may be posited that these groups facilitated Australia's strategic, political and economic aims in the final decades of the Cold War along with the emerging push for regional and global markets.

Permanent and durable solutions.

The refugee often flees from a war-torn situation into a neighbouring state (transit state) where UNHCR or other international agencies establish refugee shelters and provide minimal assistance. Often women refugees are reluctant to live in refugee camps because of their vulnerability to assault and lack of suitable conditions, therefore many women flee to towns in nearby countries and attempt to support their families through work or financial assets.

At present there are approximately 12million refugees and asylum seekers with the majority women and children. Almost 6 million are in Asia, including the Middle East. The greatest concentrations are in Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and states bordering Iraq. UNHCR indicates that the number of refugees in the Asia region has increased by 30% in 2001-

2002, probably as a result of huge civilian dislocation in Iraq and Afghanistan⁸.

A further 3 million refugees are in Africa, in Kenya and the states of the Great Lakes region. The refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya are generally from Somalia and are still too fearful of clan violence to return. In the central African regions, people have been displaced by ethnic violence or warlordism, especially in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Once out of her country of origin with no prospect of return an asylum seeker has two options

- She may reside in a neighbouring state temporarily, register with UNHCR for a determination of her status as a refugee and apply for resettlement to a third country⁹. As this may involve waiting for many years, women often ask family members in industrialized countries to assist with financial assistance.
- She may try to move to a state which has a national system of refugee determination and seek to gain residence. It is very difficult for women fleeing from war-situations to legally enter a western state and seek asylum. They rarely have passports and can not formally apply for an entry permit as a tourist or student. Therefore many women refugees who fear for their lives in transit countries approach “people-smugglers” for assistance to arrive in a state where they can seek asylum.

Many asylum seekers choose to leave the transit countries as they need permanence and security in their lives; they often have no legal residence in the transit country and UNHCR is unable to protect them from the threat of return to their home country¹⁰. There can be fears of fighting spreading from the war-zone or national militia infiltrating the refugee camps. I consider that women asylum seekers are in need of permanent, not temporary residence rights as they often have to consider the needs of children or elderly dependents, and are threatened in mass refugee situations by fear of sexual assault.

Unfortunately the Australian government has diverted from the long-term humanitarian aims of international human rights law and the Refugee Convention by only providing temporary refuge for people escaping from persecution and war.

Safe Haven visas

In 1999 the Australian government introduced Safe Haven visas to provide emergency

⁸ UNHCR, 2002 Population Statistics (Provisional), Table 2 Refugee population and major changes by country of asylum 2002.

⁹ In Asia at present, transit refugee populations are found in Thailand (Burmese), India (Afghans and Tibetans) and Pakistan (Afghans and Kashmiris), Malaysia (Acehnese and Burmese), Indonesia (east Timorese) and Papua New Guinea (West Papuans)

¹⁰ This situation occurred with the Acehnese asylum seekers in Malaysia this year.

evacuation and temporary stay in Australia. In March the international community was shocked by the brutal military campaign of the Yugoslav army against the Kosovar Albanians, with thousands of civilians fleeing into Albania and Macedonia. In response to requests for help from UNHCR, a Safe Haven visa scheme was introduced to bring 4000 displaced Kosovars to Australia and provide accommodation and care in military centres.¹¹ Families received medical assistance and children attended local schools.

A similar visa was introduced for East Timorese during the militia violence in September 1999. Approximately 1500 East Timorese were evacuated from Dili to Australia and transferred to accommodation centres. As with the Kosovars the Australian community was supportive of these arrivals and many people went to assist as volunteers at the camps. However the visas were restrictive because of their short periods of residence¹² and many Kosovars and Timorese were regularly traumatised by the repeated threats of return. Visa holders could only receive medical and limited support if they remained in the camps, so many who had friends and family permanently in Australia were unable to reside with them.

A Safe Haven visa holder is not permitted by s.91K *Migration Act* to apply for any other type of visa in Australia without the personal intervention of the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs. (MIMIA). Camp life and the uncertainty of their stay in Australia were difficult for many women as they wanted to find stability after their war trauma and displacement.

By early 2000, most Kosovars and East Timorese were being encouraged to return even though there were no appropriate facilities on return. Health experts were concerned that the rapid return would lead to long-term trauma responses¹³.

Quota system

In contrast to the generous acceptance of refugees in the 1950s to 1980s, Australia now has strict refugee and humanitarian visa quotas. There were 12,000 visa places, in 2002-3, with

- 4,000 for refugees who have been recognized by UNHCR as meeting the refugee definition and being in need of resettlement,
- 7,000 for people who have fled their home country because of major human rights violations, and who will be supported by community organizations in Australia, and

¹¹ Australian Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, Media Centre, 'Kosovars to be given Temporary Safe Haven in Australia', 1 May 1999, http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media_releases/ruddock_media99/r99067.htm (8/12/2003)

¹² The initial visas permitted stay for six months and this was extended for three months on each expiry.

¹³ Greta McMahon, 'Aliens sent home', *The Australian*, 8 November 1999, <http://www.etan.org/et99c/november/7-13/8austr.htm> (8/12/2003)

- 1,000 places for asylum seekers who arrive in Australia and ask to be granted refugee status¹⁴.

In comparison the quota for non-humanitarian migration is 106,500, with 40,600 places for family visas and 63,300 for skilled migration. There are more than 6,000 places for business migrants¹⁵. The quota for refugee and humanitarian visas is approximately 10% of Australia's current migrant intake, yet international research and community experience indicates that refugees tend to make the most committed long-term migrants.

There is one gender specific visa class, 'Women at Risk'; this is for a woman who 'does not have the protection of a male relative and is in danger of victimization, harassment or serious abuse because of her sex.' She must also have some connection with Australia, such as relatives or a community group to support her and her children¹⁶. The quota for these visas is only 300 places, yet because the criteria are so difficult to meet, the quota is rarely filled. Often applications are refused because the woman has a teenage son, so is considered to have sufficient protection.

The problem for many displaced people is that applying for an Australian refugee visa overseas means waiting for long periods without any education, health care or financial assistance. Processing of such applications and health test requirements can be very time consuming and there is little feedback from Immigration officers. Only 17 overseas immigration posts process humanitarian visa applications, out of a total of 51 immigration offices world wide. For example average times are:

Bangkok – 2 years,
Colombo- 2 years,
Islamabad -1 year
Cairo – 1 year,
Nairobi – 1 year.

These delays are the result of the priority structure of allocating Australia's refugee quota. Each year the Australian government decides which regions are granted preference for refugee places. From 1998 to 2002, Australia's preferred refugee and humanitarian entrants came from Europe, the victims of conflict in Former Yugoslavia and the USSR. Only this year the priority has moved to the Middle East and South Asia, an acknowledgement of the huge refugee migrations from Afghanistan and Iraq.

¹⁴ Australian Immigration Fact Sheet, Australia's Refugee and Humanitarian Programme, 30 October 2002, <http://www.immi.gov.au/facts/60refugee.htm>

¹⁵ Australian Immigration Fact Sheet, Australia's Migration (Non-Humanitarian) Program 2002-03 http://www.immi.gov.au/facts/20planning_a.htm

¹⁶ *Migration Regulations*, Reg. 204.222 and 204.224.

The Australian government needs to change its policies and criteria for overseas refugee and humanitarian visa assessment. The key is the allocation of more staff to process applications and interview applicants. Australian immigration officials should undertake assessments of whether a displaced family or person meets the Refugee Convention, rather than depending on prior determination by UNHCR who are understaffed in all countries of refugee concentration. Any asylum seekers in transit countries who have family members in Australia who have been accepted as refugees could be processed quickly under the principle of family unity.¹⁷

In addition there needs to be recognition of the special danger and disadvantage faced by women who have fled their home countries and are unable to advocate for themselves in complex immigration processing. There needs to be gender awareness training of officers and lodgment assistance for women with children.

‘Queue jumping’

Many refugee applications are refused because the cases are not advanced by UNHCR or the applicants appear to be living ‘comfortably’ in the transit country. Women are disadvantaged because they are often illiterate or frightened of Australian bureaucracy. Displaced people can apply 3-5 times and still be refused. Therefore many are prepared to risk the long journey to Australia to apply for asylum after they reach Australia. They can arrive on visas as tourists or students, use false passports or travel by boat from Indonesia. All these methods need money to pay for documents and agents (people smugglers) to assist with organizing the travel.

The Australian government has created a division in public perception between the ‘good refugee’ who is prepared to wait in a UNHCR camp until a visa is granted, and the ‘bad asylum seeker’ who arrives onshore and requests protections because she fears persecution. Immigration ministers refer to such arrivals as ‘queue-jumpers’, and suggest that they are trying to ‘steal’ the places of camp refugees.

Everytime someone who has the resources to pay people smugglers arrives unlawfully in Australia and is granted refugee status, a place is denied to someone else languishing in the most undesirable circumstances.¹⁸

¹⁷ The UNHCR Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status states that if the head of a family is found to be a refugee, there is a presumption that his dependents should be granted refugee status. (Page 43)

¹⁸ Philip Ruddock, Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs: World Refugee Day Statement , 20 June 2000.

They are portrayed as wealthy economic migrants who have the resources to pay people smugglers and rarely have valid refugee claims.

There is no public discussion of the impact of the slow processing of immigration applications or the reasons why some many women feel at risk remaining in either their home country or in a transit camp. Displaced women regularly explain that their families sold all remaining assets to pay people smugglers because there was a real fear of sexual assault and torture. There needs to be public education to counter the government's stereotyping and to explain why people will risk their lives to arrive in Australia to seek protection.

Temporary Protection

The Refugee Convention does not stipulate that refugee status is a permanent situation, however most asylum countries grant some form of permanent residence to refugees which can easily lead to citizenship rights. In 1999, Australia's protection for people fleeing from war or persecution became temporary. Along with the limited residence for Safe Haven visa holders, people who arrived 'illegally' and were found to be refugees are only given a three year temporary protection visa (TPV). This means that a woman who arrives on a boat or using a false passport is only permitted to stay for three years after which her case is reassessed. There are approximately 8000 such visa holders, mostly from Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran and 4000 cases are being reviewed in 2002-4. Some TPV holders are children who were born in detention centres.

The TPV system has created structural discrimination in Australia as these refugees are not entitled to many rights enjoyed by citizens and migrants in Australia. They are not permitted to attend free English classes or to get government assistance in seeking employment. They mostly obtain casual unskilled employment, even though many are highly qualified professionals. They are only able to get limited government financial assistance and become dependent on charity assistance. When their cases are reconsidered after three years, there is no coordinated programme of legal assistance. In fact the Immigration department can delay processing their applications until there are suitable reasons to refuse their applications. To date no Iraqi cases have been reassessed even though many visas expired early in 2003.

The cruelest aspect of the TPV regime is the inability for a TPV holder to be re-united with her family. Some asylum seekers left their older children in the care of relatives while they fled to Australia or their husbands were in jail at the time of departure. They can not sponsor

their family members to Australia, nor depart Australia to visit their children in a transit country. This results in families being separated for 3-4 years with no hope of re-unification.

The temporary nature of their stay in Australia adds to the trauma and mental illness suffered by refugees. After persecution, fearful journeys and detention in Australia, they remain in an uncertain state worrying that they will be returned to a continuing violent situation in their home countries.

'The psychological losses combine, resulting in a chronic state of depression...many describe themselves as being reduced to a subhuman/animal life-form'.¹⁹

Conclusion

The trend to temporary protection for asylum seekers indicates that the Australian government has no empathy for the emotional and physical distress faced by women fleeing from situations of war and civil conflict. Women are at particular risk in violent situations and need physical and mental recuperation when they reach safety, this can not be achieved as long as they feel that their resettlement is tenuous and temporary.



¹⁹ Pearl Fernandes, 'Trauma strikes the soul: an attempt to explore and understand the impact of the temporary protection visa on clients in New South Wales, *Mots Pluriels* No 21 May 2002, page 10

Background

Timor-Leste or East Timor is the newest nation that just became sovereign country in the 20th of May 2002. She became independent after Portuguese colonization during 450 years, Japanese occupation during the Second World War and Indonesian invasion in 1975 until 1999. From 25th of October 1999 until 20th of May 2002 Timor-Leste was under the Transitional Administration of the United Nations to prepare the country to become a sovereign nation.

Timor-Leste is a nation with the predominant majority of the population depending on agriculture, and 76% of the people live in the mountains (villages and rural areas). As a new nation, Timor is engaged in the process of the development of the country. In this development process Timor is facing enormous difficulties including the problems faced by women, as for example, the women are still living in a subjected situation within the society. Their participation in politics is very small and their political and social status is very low. It has been very difficult for women to have access to basic services such as access to health services and medical assistance during pregnancy and after. They face many other problems too, namely, they are often victims of domestic violence. The law protects the rights of the women; even so, the reality is that, it is very difficult to implement the law. Because the existing law is not all in place yet, and also we don't have yet the adequate means to implement it. Therefore, the Timorese women continue living with difficulty, facing all sorts of discrimination against and injustice on human rights, mostly the rights of the women that became the direct or indirect victims from the Japanese and the Indonesian occupation. About the Japanese occupation, an International Women's Tribunal was held in Tokyo–Japan in 2000 and concluded that nothing has been done to change the suffering of the victims. No real actions have been taken by the Governments to protect the rights of the surviving women, and until now there is no real recognition given to them as an encouragement for the life of the survivors and as prevention to that kind of attitude for the future. Also, the Indonesian invasion left many victims that until now did not have justice for their struggle and sacrifice during that time, losing their son, their husband, their father and some of them have been abused, losing their dignity as human beings. Even with the Justice system in place, however, still no real assurance for the possibility to take the people who committed those crimes to respond in Timor Leste, in the Court of Timor-Leste. It is because there are lots of impediments to achieve proper justice (internal impediments and external impediments).

Besides these difficulties there is another obstacle as well, the so call cultural system. All together forms a vicious circle and the women are facing all these problems on their daily life, with difficulties to stay away from it. Until they can be free from this situation, women and men have to work very hard for it. This is a national and international matter, therefore, all the Asian countries and other countries as well, have the obligation to contribute for the elimination of this existing problem. This is an obstacle for people's life. The people who wants to be able to establish peace and democracy in the country that could contribute to create peace and democracy in the entire world.

I. Cultural factors

As we all know, in Timor-Leste we have Matriarchal family system and Patriarchal family system. However, the Patriarchal system is predominant with up to 98%, it is not new in Timor, and the Patriarchal system is a deeply rooted system that holds strongly discrimination against women. As an example, according to the Timorese culture, when a child is born they will check first if the child is a boy or a girl. If the child is a boy, then they call him the house holder (inheritor), but if the child is a girl, then they call her the guest. These denomination terms already show differentiation for the newborn child under the Patriarchal culture which means that the son, the house holder (inheritor), as he is the one who will hold and link the generation (Sacred House) of his father. And the daughter, the guest, because she will leave home, assuming that she will marry a man and will live with her husband, meaning that she will be taken into a different Sacred House/a different Clan (her husband's Clan).

This concept creates already family discrimination against women, because based on this concept, it is evident that at home, the own father and mother will treat with discrimination their daughters and sons. Very frequently, in a family where there are boys and girls, of course, priority will be given to the boys in every aspect, namely, in education, in house work distribution. And the girls' duty is to do the house work while the boys are allowed to play, to wander around or to do any other activities. Also when the time arrives for the distribution of possessions/wealth, the sons are the ones entitled to, and the daughters won't get anything from the parents as they are not entitled to the wealth of their grandparents. An example is the entitlement to land and other things. From this example we can see that this is not new for the Timorese people. It happens often, when a girl gets married, she goes and live with her husband, and when her husband dies she will be living by herself alone and will be entitled to her husband's possessions but not for many things. Examining closely, at the end, the women will not get anything for themselves.

We will address slightly on the educational factors that can be considered as the key to change women's way of life.

II. Educational factors

Boys can go to school and study until they reach the highest education possible, while the girls, they go to school just to learn enough to be able to write their names only. This is a fact, and that's why it is not a surprise when we hear that in Timor, the highest percentages of people who are not able to write and read are women. And, consequently, we shall not be astonished that, talking about development, there are many women who know very little about it, and the majority can only work as domestics because their capacities are not enough to be able to compete in other areas, namely, in the public sector. There are some women with capacity, but in most cases their husbands don't give them the opportunity claiming that, as the head of the family, only the man must go out looking for job and the woman as housewife should only do the house work and look after the children. Therefore, it's true that many women are still dependant from the men, and we can verify that they depend from their husbands, their brothers or their uncles. In this situation, economically, women cannot stand for themselves in most cases. These are facts that cause other forms of discrimination against women, as facing very often domestic violence from the husband, boyfriend, brother, uncle, etc. In most cases of domestic violence, is the husband that beats up the wife, and it happens in some cases when the man murder his married wife. Many times, the women that are victims do not have the courage to take the case forward due to financial problems, Culture and Religion.

Because of all this, we are really thinking on how to find ways and means to provide opportunities to the Timorese women in order for them to get education and good knowledge as a key for their development, to change their lives and to give them the capacity to stand for themselves, to be good mothers contributing for the education of their children. This is a way to stop discrimination against women in the family environment, and a way to change women's family life in the society and in the whole nation. However, education must be provided to the entire population from the grass roots to the towns about human rights, gender awareness to women and men in order to change their very conservative mentalities as we all know.

This is the way to be able to reduce or to eliminate the mentality that believes in the practice of discrimination against women as a normal practice. We suppose this kind of discrimination exists in other Asian countries and we can say all over the world, but, in Timor Leste, we notice that the level of discrimination is still very high until now.

III. The impact of the colonization and occupation and the process of Justice

About this topic and in general terms, we want to make reference to the colonization of

Timor-Leste and the impact on the Timorese people in general, especially on the Timorese women.

During the Portuguese colonization

Regarding women's involvement in the area of development, there was none at all. According to the real facts, as we observed during the Portuguese time, there were only some Timorese people who could go to school and most of them were the children of Liurai (the Traditional Chiefs) and were the sons. There were only a few girls that went to school, but just up to an elementary level. This is the reason why their knowledge was very low and they found themselves marginalized, discriminated against or subjugated. And we can say that Timorese culture is mix with the Portuguese, so strongly make discrimination against women.

Afterwards, during the Second World War in 1942-1945

During the Japanese occupation of Timor, many people became victims, mainly the women. This was proved with the participation of Timorese women (Jurists, Women's Organization –NGO–and witnesses) during the declaratory judgment in Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery held in 2000 in Tokyo-Japan. They also participated in The Hague International Tribunal in Holland in 2000, for the Court's decision on this matter. On the Court's final decision the judges sentenced Emperor Hirohito guilty and responsible for sexual violation and sexual slavery as crime against humanity. The content of that decision is as the following:

- The Government of Japan must be responsible for all the actions committed at that time
- The Government of Japan must admit all the atrocities committed and must apologize the victims.
- The Government of Japan must immediately compensate the victims because the victims are getting too old now, and for the victims that have died shall compensate their families.
- The Panel of Judges will send that decision to the United Nations Security Council for its contribution in pushing forward this process, meaning that, to ask the Japanese Government to make the decision in reasonable time as the victims are ageing.

We think this Court decision is a way for the victim to get the Justice, even the model of Court is not like other Court in the World, the Court in our country, our Judicial System. As a Jurist, we think this Court decision even no legal binding but morally is every constructive and positive for prevent this kind of attitude, the violation and discrimination against women in the future. So it is important as a lesson for the new generation for not make discrimination and violence against women in the world. So important from this fact to protect the human rights, the women's rights and to recognize the wrong attitude so can

become courage to the victim. However, in fact, nothing positive has been done for the victims, even after the Court's decision.

During the Indonesian Occupation 1975 – 1999

Besides all the obstacles the Timorese women had to face, however, during the time of national liberation, women contributed greatly becoming as; combatants, fighters, underground network, and as result of their participation many woman became victims. Many of them still suffering until today, for losing their son, their husband, their father, their brother and they have been also abused. Unfortunately, no one took care of their ordeal yet. Timor-Leste was totally destroyed by the Indonesians in the period before and after the Popular Consultation, and when the result of the Popular Consultation was announced in 4th of September 1999, when there was no law or order at that time. Timor was reduced into ashes as the remaining of everything that has been burnt. The whole population of Timor, women, men, young and old, all became victims. For this reason the International Community still have to assist in protecting against human rights violation in this country for many years to come.

Timor Leste is seeking for justice. The process to achieve justice in Timor for the Timorese people, women and men that became victims is starting again. In the 25th of October 1999, UNTAET (United Nations Transitional Administration in Timor-Leste) started to set up the administration in Timor-Leste establishing Law and Order, including the establishment of the Justice System from the ashes. In the year 2000 UNTAET created a law with Regulation 11/2000 establishing the organization of the Court in Timor-Leste, and Regulation 15/2000 that establishes the Court Jurisdiction and it's composition, with local and international personnel, to make possible the judgment of cases from the events of January 1999 to 25th October 1999, and other cases of crime against humanity occurred in Timor. These processes still continue in Timor based on the article 163 CRDL. This Court has the competence to judge cases of human rights violation in Timor, including cases of violation of the right of women, as stipulated in Regulation 15/2000.

Besides this Court, exists also CAVR (Commission of Reception the Truth and Reconciliation), that has the competence to find out the truth and help the reconciliation process in Timor-Leste, for the cases occurred since 1974 up to 1999 (article 162 of the Constitution of RDTL, UNTAET Regulation No.10/2001).

Even so there are still many Timorese women in similar circumstances, victims from the Indonesians actions, from the Japanese and the Portuguese actions, but now who is going to fight for justice for their suffering, and how to avoid this kind of violence to repeat in the future.

IV. Timorese women's position during UNTAET Transition period and after the Transition period.

During the transition period UNTAET adopted a policy to involve Timorese women in different development programs in Timor-Leste, and effort was made for capacity building of Timorese women in several areas, as for example, in politics, etc.. The result from the effort was positive, succeeding with 27 percent of women in the parliament, involving women in other areas of public institutions, government, Justice System, etc.

It was in the United Nations Mission where practices **Gender Main Stream** in all areas of the structure and of the program, ensured women's involvement on the development and reconstruction process of Timor-Leste in all areas. The positive success of this process was the big effort carried out, to enable the Timorese women to earn a position within the Timorese society. Therefore, it contributes to eliminate discrimination against women in Timor-Leste.

This process will be continued by the Government of Timor-Leste, with the certainty to include in the RDTL Constitution an article on equal rights for women and men (article 17 CRDTL). And in the Government of Timor-Leste there is an Adviser for Promotion of Equality working with the Prime Minister, functioning in a separate Cabinet responsible for Gender issues and to monitor within the Government ensuring the involvement of women in the development process of Timor-Leste in all areas. We expect that since East Timor still depend on the donors, we hope the donors also can make an important role to ensure the involvement of the East Timorese women in development of Timor Leste in all areas.

In Timor-Leste the right of women is protected by the Constitution, therefore, is necessary an effort to establish laws and regulations to protect properly these rights avoiding discrimination in the future and to reduce violence against women. Including violence based on culture and tradition.

References:

1. Constitution of the Republic Democratic of Timor Leste.
2. Regulation No. 11/2000 of UNTAET amended by Regulation 25/2001 on Organization of Courts in East Timor.
3. Regulation 15/2000 on The Establishment of Panels with exclusive Jurisdiction over Serious Criminal Offences.
4. Regulation 10/2001 on the establishment of Commission for Reception, truth and reconciliation in East Timor.
5. Report of the Government on the development of the country Timor-Leste in 2002.
6. Report of the delegation of Timor-Leste for Women International War Crimes Tribunal in Tokyo.

Background

Maria Rosa Xavier
Literacy and Social Training, GFFTL

Portugal Period:

East Timor occupied by Portugal for 450 years, Portugal left from East Timor in 1975. With this opportunity East Timorese started to establish political parties. There were 5 parties, FRETILIN, Apodeti, UDT, Kota and Trahalista. Between these political parties, there are different ideological backgrounds. FRETILIN wants to independent Timor, UDT wants federation with Portugal, Apodeti wants federation with Indonesia with some period of time, Kota and Trahalista were small parties. And based on these different political backgrounds, FRETILIN declared East Timor independence on 28 November 1975. After FRETILIN declared independence, the unhappy parties went to West Timor asking for protection from Indonesian Government.

Indonesian Period:

After one-week FRETILIN independent declaration, Indonesian Army invaded East Timor on 7 December 1975. Three days later on 10 December 1975, Indonesian Army started bombing and shooting in the capital city of Dili. Because of bombing, people evacuated to mountains and forests. FRETILIN continue struggled to defend the independence in the forests to fight against Indonesian army. Since purported annexation of East Timor by Indonesia was never recognized by the majority of the international community, it is questionable what role Indonesia was played in the transition period. In practice, however, East Timor's independence only became possible by Indonesia's political change, Suharto to Habbibe.

UN Period:

On 5 May 1999, a "Popular Consultation" to be held on East Timor's future agreed between Indonesia and Portugal. On 11 June, the Security Council established the UN Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) and conducts the consultation. A month later, the consultation postponed until the end of August. Secretary-General of UN made a report to the Council noting that the situation in East Timor was rather delicate. Despite threats of violence, 98% of East Timorese voted in the referendum, with 78.5% choosing independence. Finally, Security Council on 15 September authorized an Australian-led multinational force to restore peace and security to East Timor. In October UN Transitional Administration in East Timor started.

**Vony Reyneta Doloksaribu
Legal Aid Association
Indonesia Women for Justice**

A. Kingdom and Dutch Colonial Period

Indonesia is a nation which has multi ethnic and multi cultural and the religion of 90% of the population is Islam. The multi ethnic and multi cultural has a local patriarchal tradition where in the men dominates all aspects of life. The coming of Islam during the 13th century and the Dutch colonialism at the start of the 19th century are the 2 (two) main external powers that influenced the strengthening and institutionalization of the patriarchal culture, primarily in the legal system. The Dutch colonial government even applied a racial and discriminative legal system against women.¹ Nevertheless, in several areas, for example, Aceh or Maluku, the women possessed very huge political and economic powers by becoming queens/sultanah, commanders, and war soldiers. However, the writing of history that abandoned the experience of women has contributed to the disappearance of the records concerning the social facts that are different from that applied by law and the culture of the society.

B. Japanese Occupation Period

In 1941, the official Japanese war strategy was to invade and occupy Indonesia. The Japanese forces landed in Java on March 8, 1942, overthrew Dutch sovereignty and divided the military occupation. War requires not only soldiers but also many laborers because it needs defense construction. And for that the task as the source of labor was assigned from Java to other occupied territories. In order to fill that policy, males and females from ages 16 to 26 were forcedly as a source of labor. And from ages 13 to 17, the females were made to become "comfort women".

¹ During the Dutch colonial government, the population was divided into 3 groups (European, Chinese/Arab and Indigenous). In every group, a different law was also applied, namely, for the European group, the law applied are the laws applied in the Netherlands, for the Chinese/Arab the Dutch law is applied with adjustments to their customary laws, and for the Indigenous group the Islam law is applied (for those who follow the Islam religion) and the customary law (for those who are non Islam). The Indigenous who are Christians or those who are compared with the European group can declare their submission to the Dutch law. Meanwhile, according to the Dutch law, women are not considered as a subject of law.

There are three ways to forced Indonesian women to be “comfort women” (based on the testimonies of the victims)

1. Forced conscription conducted with physical violence.
2. Forced conscription conducted with deceit
3. Forced conscription conducted with provocation of fear.

Besides that, in that period many Dutch women were then removed from detention and placed in “comfort stations” to serve The Japanese officers. Taiwanese and Korea women were enslaved and sent to “comfort stations” in Indonesia, while Indonesian women were sent abroad to “comfort stations” in Burma, Singapore and the Philippines.

The suffering of the “comfort women” can be classified as a below:

** As military “comfort women”*

- a. Forced abortion
- b. Being born in racist discrimination...the children from “comfort women” were discriminated from Indonesian society as a ”children of Japanese”.
- c. Rape by military doctors
- d. Torture by beating
- e. Intimidation with weapon
- f. No security for health and medical care
- g. Limited food and clothing conditions

**Post military “comfort women”*

- a. Pain in the uterus
- b. Constant bleeding
- c. Trauma due to the rape and aversion to men
- d. Losing the chance of bearing a child
- e. Losing members of family
- f. Negative stigma by the people because they considered her as a “leftover” of Japanese soldiers
- g. Rejected by men, nobody wanted to marry her because she is a “leftover” of the Japanese soldiers
- h. Cannot work because of health.

Even though Japanese was given compensation to some “comfort women” victims, some of them still to struggle to get justice with the Tribunal held in Tokyo.

C. Independence Period (The Old Order)

In 1945, the principle of equality in law and government for every citizen was guaranteed by the constitution. Nevertheless, in particular, the family law of the government of Indonesia still applied the law that is different for the groups in the population based on religion and customs. As a consequence, a collision of law that is very detrimental to women occurred, primarily because the interpretation of religion that is characterized as patriarchal² was used. Although Indonesia politically states it is a secular State, the struggle of Islam groups to apply the law of religion never ceases up to now. This situation produced its own dynamics in the struggle for the rights of women since the various interpretations that are characterized as patriarchal are still very strong.

D. The New Order Period

In 1965, The Old Order of Soekarno was replaced by the New Order of Soeharto that governed in an authoritative and militaristic manner. Up to now, as to who was behind this coup is not yet clear, however, General Soeharto claimed that the communist party was behind this incident. A women mass organization called Gerwani that was known to be progressive and close to the communist party was accused of castrating these generals while dancing naked. This women party and organization was declared as illegal in 1966. This prohibition and accusation was very effective in suppressing the women's movement and the other progressive mass organizations. This is in spite of the fact that according to Wieringa (2002), the said accusation "is merely a defamation and there is no truth in the matter".³ Up to now, fear towards communism and women organizations with a mass movement orientation is still persistent. As such, the New Order regime of Soeharto formulated various policies to control the women and reinforce its power.

In Soeharto's regime, military power is the highest. The military power as a representatives state often use violent methods to stop a movements who want to criticize the government or especially for the determination issued such as in Aceh, Timor Leste and Papua. As a name of "enemies of government", the military can conduct arrests and detentions (often without the legal process), kidnappings, murders, rapes and sexual harassments.

E. The Reformation Period

² An example is the stipulation concerning the basic provisions for ex-wives for Islam women are given for 100 days, for non-Islam women, wives of civil servants, and ex-wives who remarries. Many stipulations on employment also adopt religious teachings that state that husbands are the breadwinners and the head of the family while the wives are the housekeepers, as such, women has no access on credit without the approval of their husbands.

³ For further elaborations, see Saskia E. Wieringa, *Sexual Politics in Indonesia*, Palgrave, 2003

The political change took place in 1998 after the downfall of the New Order government of Soeharto. Nevertheless, when the government applied the decentralization policy and regional autonomy, a different flow occurred in several areas. Many provinces wanted to apply regulations that are more sectarian and are based on customs and religion, particularly the Islam religion with interpretations that are patriarchal and fundamentalist.⁴ This situation is rather difficult, primarily because, often, these groups use threats and violence in conducting their actions.⁵ There are conflict in Sampit, Middle Kalimantan (Dayak ethnic versus Madura ethnic), in Poso (1998-until now), in Sambas (1999), Mataram (2000), Maluku (1999-2002), Palangkaraya and Papua (2000). The horizontal conflicts have left many suffering for the people especially for women and children. Forced conscription conducted with physical, psychological violence, losing jobs, limited security, health, and education.

For women who have a role for social reproductive dealing with the conflict situation make moreover burden because there are no institution in society to responsible the “peace making” role. Besides that, condition the “refugee” camps are very bad and it will be the place where violence against women such as domestic violence, sexual harassment shown.

Meanwhile, the economic crisis in 1997 that is not yet restored up to now as well the various armed conflicts in several places has placed the women in a condition that is very vulnerable to violence and women trafficking.



⁴ In general, the objective of these regional regulations is to limit the mobility of women (by prohibiting women to go out at night without the company of a muslim/male relative), prohibit the wearing of tight fitting clothes, require the use of a headgear (jilbab), as well as exclude the women in decision-making processes by only providing the right to vote to the head of the family in the election of government institutions at the local level). Di Aceh, the women who are not wearing a headgear experience a hair cut. In Tasikmalaya, a woman experienced sexual harassment because she went out at night with the company of a male relative. In Jakarta and other big cities, a group of people destroyed a café/hotel and conduct violent actions against the visitors. In Solo and Yogyakarta, a discussion on gays and lesbians was attacked by masses.

Addressing Women's Plight During Wars and Armed Conflicts

Lana Linaban
Deputy Secretary General
GABRIELA

It is an honor for me to speak today in front of all of you. I would like to thank our sponsor for inviting GABRIELA, an alliance of women's organizations that has been in the forefront of women's struggles for the past twenty years in the Philippines. We certainly hope that this gathering will just be one of the many efforts wherein we shall be working together in order to bring forward and concretely address the plight of women especially in times of war and armed conflict.

Let me begin my presentation today by sharing with you the story of Susan Harabac-Aringo that happened just a few days ago.

Susan Harabac-Aringo

Susan Harabac-Aringo was a 38 year-old woman. She was a widow who struggles to give her five daughters three meals a day and send them to school. Susan was also a community leader. She was an active member and even the municipal coordinator of GABRIELA Women's Party in her town.

On the morning of December 7, on the way to her farm, she crossed paths with elements of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. They accused her of being a member of the New People's Army, the armed group of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and shot her four times in the back. She was still alive and profusely bleeding when two of her daughters found her surrounded by the military, two hours after the incident. Her daughters begged for the military to immediately bring her to the hospital but they refused. Another hour had already passed before the military finally brought her to the hospital. Susan Aringo died.

Susan Aringo and her daughters' story is one that illustrates the situation of women during wars and in areas where armed conflicts exist. It is one story that a growing number of women share with the intensification of military operations in rural areas in the Philippines and the growing presence of US armed forces and their intervention in domestic affairs under the Gloria Macapagal Arroyo government. It is the harrowing experience of Filipino women in our country to be direct victims of the armed conflict, or to bear the heaviest brunt of its direct and indirect effects on our families, our children and our communities.

We are all familiar with the long drawn struggle of comfort women. Testimonies of their horrible ordeal as military sex slaves during World War II are evidence enough to indict the Japanese government of a war crime. Moreover, their struggle for justice continues to provide inconvertible evidence on the policy of several governments during war, where women are regarded as spoils of war.

Unfortunately and worse, a practice so savage and barbaric such as the use of rape and abuse of women as a weapon to subjugate peoples continue. In the past decade we have seen this in Indonesia, in Kuwait and Afghanistan. In the Philippines this is manifested in the rape of Moro women during the height of the all-out war in Mindanao in Southern Philippines and the abuse of women and girls in the highly militarized island of Mindoro. Likewise, GABRIELA in the province of Negros Oriental, has documented and handled the case of five women raped by members of the military and paramilitary units of the Armed Forces. To date, despite the filing of complaints, perpetrators remain in active military service.

These cases of violence and abuse, along with the deaths of Susan Aringo, human rights leaders Eden Marcellana and Benjaline Hernandez, GABRIELA members and community leaders, Manuela Albarillo and Milagros Belga are a clear demonstration of how wars and armed conflicts make widows of our women and orphans of our children. But the victimization of women and children in times of war and armed conflicts does not end there.

Armed conflicts in the Philippines

Since the Arroyo government has declared war in Mindanao, at least 400,000 individuals have been displaced. Continued military offensives and bombings in communities have forced families to leave their homes and their livelihood. Majority of those who crammed in evacuation centers are women and children, some of them now suffering from trauma and stress disorders, many dying from hunger and common illnesses due to the poor conditions in these evacuation centers.

And while aids and donations from both the government and private institutions provide temporary relief, the government persists with pursuing the military solution to the armed struggle being waged by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in Mindanao. Thus, many have yet to return to their farms and their homes, all destroyed by war.

Since the Arroyo government's eager support to the US government's declaration of war against terrorism and its invasion of Iraq, the Philippines have been witness to the influx of US troops for military training as well as rest and recreation. Something that both the US and the Philippine governments continue to deny, however, facts show otherwise. The arrival of US

troops in the country has resulted to a boom in the flesh trade. The number of prostituted women in key cities in Mindanao, the site of joint military exercises between US and Philippine troops, has increased by 262%. From an estimated count of 1,657 in 1995, registered and unregistered prostituted women in the cities of Zamboanga, Cagayan de Oro and General Santos City now reach over 6,000, excluding children and minors. Davao City alone now also has over 6,000 prostituted women as well.

The poverty that has beset Mindanao with the war has forced women and children into the flesh trade and countless have fallen prey to sex traffickers.

It is a most unfortunate fact that despite the obvious attack on the safety, security, welfare and lives of women and children in the midst of war and armed conflicts, the Philippine government has done just about everything to make things worse.

The recent passage of the Anti-Trafficking of Persons Act of 2003 may have provided light of hope in addressing one of the worst forms of violence that befalls women and children in times of war. However is quickly overshadowed as conditions that breed sex trafficking and prostitution became worsen. No serious attention has been given to end the corrupt practices of officials in government agencies conniving with syndicates that traffic women and children. Migration and labor export policies remain despite being major channels of trafficking and the economy is fast going down the drain, making women and children all the more vulnerable for sex trafficking.

Budgetary priorities

Funds best spent for the rehabilitation of communities in the past years have been allocated to the war coffers. The modernization of the Armed Forces comes hand in hand with debt servicing in the Arroyo government's budgetary priorities. Meanwhile, allocations for social services, health and education continue to fall short of what the people actually need.

In the proposed P865-billion budget for 2004, Malacañang seeks to allot P4.92 billion for the AFP next year, roughly P200 million more than the present allocation. Top 3 in terms of budget allocation is the Department of National Defense with P45.2 billion. Next to it is the Department of Interior and Local Government with P43.9 billion. A big chunk of this – a whopping P35.2 billion – is to be allotted for the Philippine National Police (PNP). Recently Congress passed a special budget to ensure the allocation of P3.5 billion for the full implementation of the salary adjustment of officers and members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

Meanwhile, the budget for health is only P9.75 billion, P154 million lower than the present one. While the United Nations Development Program standard for health spending is five percent of a country's gross national product, the Philippines spends only 0.4 percent for health services. With an 83-million population, the government will spend P117.47 for every Filipino for the whole year or 32 cents per day.

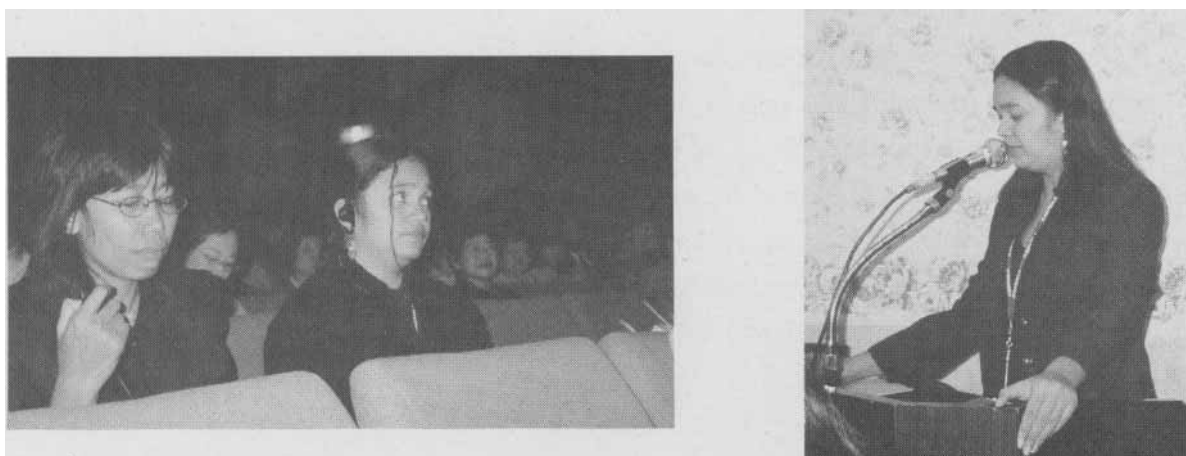
The education department, meanwhile, gets P107.5 billion, a meager 12.43 percent of the national budget. Malacañang also proposes a P30.19-million cut in the budget of state universities and colleges which would affect 680,000 students. While the UN standard for education spending is six percent of a country's gross domestic product, the Philippines allots only 2.2 percent for education.

Meanwhile, the domestic armed conflict continues to escalate with the breakdown of peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front. Negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front have yet to resume. The adamant refusal of the government to recognize previous agreements and treaties and its failure to concretely address the roots of conflict do not help at all.

That women and children continue to suffer only magnifies the Arroyo government's culpability in the worsening plight of Filipino women and children.

Putting an end to the violence that women and children suffer in the face of war and armed conflict requires the implementation of genuine and thorough reforms economically, politically, culturally. It lies not in the hands of a few government officials, agencies and organizations. It lies in each of our hands.

The expedition of justice to victims, their rehabilitation and the reconstruction of their lives and individuals and as a community is a struggle that will not be won by a few women alone. It is a struggle that all of us as well as the broadest number of women, men and children must relentlessly undertake.



Nimalka Fernando
Lawyer, Women's Alliance for Peace & Democracy

Background

In today's conflicts, 85% of victims are civilians of which a majority is women. Our experience in Sri Lanka illustrates this fact in a very glaring manner. Further studies also reveal that 80% of refugees and internally displaced persons are also women. Women, in unstable, disruptive conflict and post-conflict environment are at risk from multiple forms of violence, and share a set of common vulnerabilities; they are killed, wounded, tortured, imprisoned, separated from families and driven into exile. Women are increasingly deliberate targets of violence, with belligerents using traditional gender relations to inform their strategies of war. In conflicts worldwide, rape, sexual assaults, military slavery, enforced prostitution and forced impregnation are being used as deliberate military tactics. Armed conflict situations create destitution and deprivation as women are driven to become the sole breadwinner and are forced to earn a livelihood in unfamiliar environments. Women suffer economic misplacement, intense insecurity, the unraveling of social and cultural structures and an increased risk of domestic violence.

Economic conditions in times of war also affect men and women differently. In the absence of men, women bear the burden of maintaining their families under situations of physical, insecurity, and are vulnerable to looting and asset seizure. Women also face problems with respect to their land and property rights, as was the prevalent situation in post-conflict Rwanda, where hundreds of widows were forced off their lands with no claims for return or repossession because of their limited property rights. (Byrne, 1996)

The economic conditions that arise in conflict and post-conflict situations are not wholly negative. Studies indicate that in assuming their roles as primary caretakers of households and as leaders in post-conflict communities, women are also building empowerment and acquiring new skills. The women-led informal sectors in Somalia, Guatemala and Rwanda show marked improvements in their respective conflict and post-conflict phases. Women are also finding empowerment through their development work with other women in grassroots organizations and associations. For example, post-conflict Rwanda has seen women organizing themselves to demand for equal property rights as well as others who "...have now begun to form groups along the lines of pre-war associations, to help one another – with agricultural production, to build houses, and to start up savings and credit schemes to finance income-generating activities" (Byne and Baden, 1995)

The Impact on Women

The situation of women within the context of an ongoing conflict is always fraught with a variety of dangers and hazards. While conflict affects every singled woman who lives on the island in very material ways, a woman's membership in one particular group or community or the other has a tremendous impact on the way she experiences the conflict and its consequences. Thus, Sinhala, Tamil, and Muslim women would experience the conflict differently, and an urban Muslim woman from Colombo would perhaps be in some ways less affected than a rural Sinhala woman in Polonnaruwa. Yet, the patriarchal norms and attitudes about the subordinate status of women that are to be found in every community in Sri Lanka operate in a variety of ways to ensure that women as a category are more deeply affected by conflict than men.

Over the yeas the conflict, there have been several waves of displacement and migration out of the northern and eastern parts of the island which have been historically Tamil dominated areas. The expulsion of Muslims from the northern peninsula in 1990 added a further dimension to this issue. Hundreds of thousands of Sri Lankans, most of them Tamil have fled the island to take refuge in other countries, and many of them live inn exile.

There has been some research done into lives and situations of Tamil women in the Diaspora which shows that they face many problems in adjusting to life in an alien country and culture. In addition to this, women in exile are often confronted with demands from their families and communities that they maintain adherence to all forms of tradition and superstition as a way of 'preserving the culture'.

All women who live in areas directly affected y the conflict in the north and east of the island share the common experiences of losing their rights to life and livelihood. Most of the women in these impoverished communities traditionally work outside their homes, in their own fields and in the fields of others, to supplement the family income. In the east, for example, women are no longer able to follow their traditional occupation of weaving mats and baskets out of cane and out of reed that grows along the edges of bodies of freshwater, due to the inaccessibility of raw material. Incomes have dropped drastically as a result, creating difficulties of eking out even a marginal existence. Poor economic conditions lead to frustration and often results in male violence against women and children at home.

The conflict has widowed a large number of women throughout the island. Wives of security forces personnel, killed or missing in action, wives of civilians who are killed as a result of the conflict, all of them face the same kind of legal, economic and social problems. Obtaining redress for grievances, compensation and sometimes even acknowledgement of death can present a tremendous problem. Loss of a bread-winner, and sometimes the only

bread-winner, creates a host of economic problems and hardships. Widowhood also lead to marginalization within society and within the community because of the belief that widows are 'inauspicious' beings. In an essentially patriarchal culture, being left without a male 'protector' also exposes women to exploitation at all levels, including sexual.

In situations when communities are displaced due to the conflict, the displaced people are temporarily moved into Welfare Centres set up by the state in schools, places of worship and other public buildings. In such situations, you find that women become especially vulnerable to all forms of exploitation and violence. In many cases, the condition of displacement placed more burdens on women in terms of their having to expend a great deal of energy just to keep the family fed. In addition, the high level of frustration and alcoholism among displaced men exposes the women in these 'camps' to violence at the hands of the men folk of their families. In addition, women are also sometimes forced to submit to the will of other men in the camp who wield some authority there.

Sexual Violence against Women

Violence against women in armed conflict situation is as old as war itself. Women are targeted specifically during a conflict situation as tools for subjugating the so called enemy. In our experience by targeting women in the community the armed forces use a psychological pressure. By raping female family members of militants the forces expect the others not to get involved in such acts or to obtain information from the community to crush the belligerency.

The women's movements in Asia have also drawn attention of the international community to the experiences of 'comfort women'. We have listened to stories of women who have shared with us how young women were abducted to provide sexual services to the Japanese soldiers during the Second World War. Today the United States naval bases in the Pacific islands and in the Philippines provide overt and covert support of brothels operating for the service of US naval personnel.

Economic conditions in times of war also affect men and women differently. In the absence of men, women bear the burden of maintaining their families under situations of physical insecurity, and are vulnerable to looting and asset seizure. Women also face problems with respect to their land and property rights.

Economic conditions in times of war also affect men and women differently. In the absence of men, women bear the burden of maintaining their families under situations of physical, insecurity, and are vulnerable to looting and asset seizure. Women also face problems with

respect to their land and property rights, as was the prevalent situation in post-conflict Rwanda, where hundreds of widows were forced off their lands with no claims for return or repossession because of their limited property rights. (Byrne, 1996)

The economic conditions that arise in conflict and post-conflict situations are not wholly negative. Studies indicate that in assuming their roles as primary caretakers of households and as leaders in post-conflict communities, women are also building empowerment and acquiring new skills. The women-led informal sectors in Somalia, Guatemala and Rwanda show marked improvements in their respective conflict and post-conflict phases. Women are also finding empowerment through their development work with other women in grassroots organizations and associations. For example, post-conflict Rwanda has seen women organizing themselves to demand for equal property rights as well as others who "...have now begun to form groups along the lines of pre-war associations, to help one another – with agricultural production, to build houses, and to start up savings and credit schemes to finance income-generating activities" (Byne and Baden, 1995)

Lately feminists have been calling for a more holistic understanding of women's motivations to fight for peace. They have also advocated for a deeper understanding of peace itself in relation to women. A holistic definition of peace is found in the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies, which states that: "Peace includes not only the absence of war, violence and hostilities....but also the enjoyment of economic and social justice, equality and the entire range of human rights and fundamental freedoms within society" (United Nations, 1993)

The work of women at the grassroots is often invisible at the national and international level, and is often discounted by academics. Many of those working at the grassroots are neither experts nor intellectuals, and documentation of their work is limited. The work of women as peace builders at the grassroots have the most developed understanding of the conflict, having most often experienced it first-hand. They also possess knowledge of the local know-how to conflict resolution, and often draw on the traditions and beliefs of their respective communities in their peace building work.

Women wish to be included in their peace negotiation process is more than a simple demand for numeric representation proportional to women's presence in a particular society. It is a demand based on the belief that if the process is governed by men it is unlikely to reflect the specific interests and the views of the female population. In fact, these processes could instead reproduce and even reinforce the marginalized position of women in society. Second, it is a demand reflecting women's increasing awareness of the potential for transformation and reform in periods immediately following conflict. One cannot however, rest on the laurels of having increased the number of women participants at official peace negotiations. The presence of women will undoubtedly place women's needs

and concerns on the agenda. Their presence in and of itself however will not guarantee an engendered discussion. This is especially so, if those participating at high-level negotiations are of a different political and socio-economic strata to those women directly affected, and are not rooted in the grassroots peace movement of their communities. Increasing and enhancing the participation of women around the peace table, as well as ensuring an engendered discussion at the peace table, stands to secure a more inclusive settlement to the conflict, as well as lay the groundwork for rebuilding a just and equitable post-conflict society.



**Saroja Sivachandran
Justice and Peace**

Background

War can have effects not only women but also on their family, community and wider society. Currently there are more than 132 countries where situations of wars and armed conflicts prevail and where violence against women is being perpetrated. The International organizations are struggling to create positive mechanisms to end the cycle of violence during war situations and in peace time. We should remember that war is mainly a contract between men in power – they decide when and how to wage it, the rules by which it is governed, when it should cease, and what it is supposed to achieve.

Women, however, do take part in war as militants and combatants, they have received international attention too. Their entry into the armed force hardly bring them equality or emancipation as expected. Women have the knowledge of the connected forms of domestic, communal and political violence that stretches from the home to the street and into the battlefield. But in conflict areas women have started to highlight the military atrocities and the violations of human rights.

Particular reference to Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, the mothers of disappeared persons take their sorrow to make it public. There are so many atrocities made to women but they remain silent. How do we assess the situation? Do women totally oppose violence? Or do they think it in different form? The peace activities are also looked as agents either of each party, when they raise voices against violence.

Violence against Women during War

War is an inherently patriarchal activity and rape is the most extreme crime on it. Violence against women in armed conflict situations is one of the most violations of human rights. War crimes against women are hardly addressed and in many cases their occurrence has been denied. At the same time, however, there are so many violent activities take place in the war time and women were not particularly targeted by these acts of war. Men and young boys were also affected by the war and as a result, in turn women suffer the burden

of this.

As a result of the internal conflict in Sri Lanka, 60,000 people have lost their life and nearly 583,000 people have been displaced. The long period of the war (20 years) has created immense problems among the civilian population. Displacement due to the war and having to stay in refugee camps has created problems for women. There were 186 camps and at present it was reduced to 86. There are still 2,015 families staying as they cannot go back to their homes because of the military occupation in the so called high security zones. These forced evictions have created an impact on the lives of women. They have lost their homes, neighbourhood, in addition to the loss of personal possessions. Furthermore, there is trauma of witnessing the physical destruction of their homes and loss of their beloved ones.

Many women and young girls subjected to sexual violence during the armed conflict are being neglected by the society and they live without any hopes in the future. Due to the continued presence of the forces, women have fled to other countries for fear of their lives of their families. There is no support system established to make them adjust this process.

The occupation of military in Jaffna has a devastating impact on the lives of local community and in particular on the lives of women. As long as women remain in a subordinate position, violation of their rights will continue and they will not have access to any effective redress. Those in charge as well as those committing the violations should be punished. Sexual violence must be seen as an assault on the fundamental human dignity of women.

The organizations concerned about these issues should document these cases and proper reporting and monitoring arrangements have to arrange. There is a need to establish a network among activists, researchers and human rights activists who are working on the issue in all its form. The state should take the responsibility for the protection of women in war situations and enhance the effectiveness of the human rights system at both national and international level.



**Noriko Yamaguchi
Sakai City Councilor**

Background

First of all, I would like to extend my gratitude and welcome to the participants coming all the way from Asian countries to Sakai City. Sakai City is located in the south of Osaka Prefecture. In the 16 century, Sakai flourished as a free city run by the merchants, uncontrolled by the central power. We have inherited the tradition. One of the representative citizens is the poet by the name of Akiko Yosano. She is a very famous poet and feminist. She raised 12 children while writing fifty thousand beautiful poems and foresightful critics. We are very proud that Sakai city produced the poet who wrote for peace and women's rights. She wished no valuable lives should be lost in wars. We have listened to your valuable messages since yesterday. Though I cannot replace Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi, we feel sorry for what Japanese military forces did in the past. As a Japanese, we have responsibility to consider what we can do in the future, reflecting the past. I am very happy to know that you are so cheerful and strong despite the fact that you are facing such difficulties after the conflicts. I am very happy that you share your internal power with us. Today I would like to give you a brief overview of the history of Sakai City Women's Organization. And then I want to discuss how important it is for women to be involved in the policy making based on my experience as a member of the city assembly.

Sakai City Women's Organization

The Second World War ended 58 years ago. As you know, two atomic bombs were detonated over the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by US forces, leading Japan to defeat. Since Japan does not have any military forces under the Japanese Constitution, we will not send forces to other countries even for their post-war rehabilitation. Recently, however, we have had controversial debate whether to dispatch the Self Defense Forces to Iraq or not. It is very significant and timely that we have this "Women and War" Conference at this time in history. During the World War II, the city was air-raided by US B28 fighters over ten times and was burnt down to barren ashes. Sakai City Women's Organizations were also born 58 years ago. Since many of the men went to war, the women who were left behind started to rebuild the city by removing rubbles and providing cooked meals to those who did not have any. In any country, women were deeply involved in rehabilitation of the war devastated societies. Those days, our grandmothers and mothers realized the importance of community rehabilitation, women and children's education and welfare service

development. They also saw the necessity to have a place to get together to study and learn. That's how our seniors came up with the idea of building a Women's Center 55 years ago. These women worked hard for 27 years to collect money to build a center. Finally the donation and money earned amounted to 77 million yen and the money was donated to Sakai City so that Sakai City Women's Center could be built. It was 24 years ago.

Programms of Life Time Education

Then they found that it was not only the building they needed but also programs, educational programs for women. In Japan, such service is called life time education. Those days it was said that women did not have to go to universities, and they were deprived of opportunities to receive higher education and of the right to be employed. So Sakai City Women's Organization asked the city to provide free life long education to the citizens. Now Sakai City has an annual budget of 54 million yen for that purpose. This is one of the largest budgets allocated by the local governments. The program is two-tiered. One tier is composed of 63 cultural courses, including foreign languages, music, cooking, women's studies and human rights studies. If students are citizens of Sakai, they can take the courses free of charge. The second tier is the lectures and workshops on human rights and other social issues. There are 127 lectures a year. You may wonder if the program should be free when Japan seems to be economically stable and developed in terms of its welfare. It is true that many other local governments introduce the benefit principle. We, however, respect the fact that women were deprived of the rights of education and employment in the past. We also take the fact into consideration that many widows who lost their husbands are living on a very small amount of government pension, which makes it desperately difficult for them to spare some money to attend such educational programs. It is desirable that we provide free programs. Because of this, the program is very popular and 3000 enthusiastic women enjoy and support the program as students each year.

Activities of Sakai City Women's Organization

The membership of Sakai City Women's Organization is 33,000. The total population of the city is 793,000, out of which 420,000 are women. Most of the activities of Sakai City Women's Organization are now organized around such themes of peace, women's rights, education, environment, welfare and health care. They are essential elements of our life in the society. Regarding peace, we have attended and organized international conferences, workshops and seminars. As a specific program, we have provided supports by sending blankets and clothing to women and children in Africa. We have also given stationeries to

South African children so that they can study. This is a constant activity developed over many years. When there are any natural disasters such as earthquakes in Japan and abroad, we raise money from the citizens to support people in trouble. We would now like to know what kind of specific support you need in the countries represented in this conference. We want to identify your needs so that we can be of some help.

In addition to these activities, we are also a member of UNIFEM Japan. We have been involved in many activities to support women in the developing countries through the channel of UNIFEM. Our organization celebrates its 55th Anniversary this year. We have been the advocates of human rights of women for the last 55 years. We have witnessed violation of women's rights, including violence to women. We have domestic violence in Japan as well as sexual harassment. Child abuse has become more overt and serious in recent years. We are tackling these issues as well. We provide counseling/consultation services free of charge where we receive more than 2000 inquiries a year. The number of victims of domestic violence and abuse has been strikingly increasing over the years.

We have many national laws to protect human rights of women and children in Japan. We have laws to promote gender equal society and to prohibit child prostitution and child pornography. We have laws to regulate stalkers, to prevent child abuse and to prevent violence by spouses and to protect victims. These laws have been drafted and enacted recently, partly because there are increasing numbers of female politicians in the National Diet. They have strongly voiced the necessity to establish such laws to protect human rights of women and children. We can also find some excellent female administrators in the national and local governments, private sectors and NGOs. They are sensitive to the issues and playing a key role in putting the laws and regulations into practice.

As a City Councilor, I thought it critical for the city to have an ordinance to promote gender equal society, so that women's rights can be legally endorsed. It was successfully enacted. By the way, I do not belong to any political parties. The reasons are: First, Sakai City Women's Organization has many members supporting different political parties. Secondly, I might be deprived of any opportunity to talk about human rights when I belong to a political party. Anyway, when proposing the ordinance to promote gender equal society, we coincidentally had the election of Mayor of Sakai City. We had to decide, as the organization, which candidate to support. The mayor you are going to see tomorrow was one of the candidates. During the election campaign, I asked him if he was going to support the ordinance for gender equal society when he became the mayor. He answered "Yes." He emphasized, "Yes, of course." We then decided to support him and he was successfully elected. It did not take a long time before we enacted the city bylaw. I proposed it as a City Councilor, and the mayor took the leadership in the local administration. Sakai City is the first city in Osaka prefecture to implement this ordinance.

It has several unique progressive features in that it highlights importance of “reproductive health and rights” of women. It clearly states autonomy of women in sexuality and reproductive issues. It is also very valuable that it respects the rights of those citizens who do not belong to any male or female sexes. The bylaw stipulates that the rights of those inter-sex and those with sexual identity disorders shall be respected. Many Japanese local governments have experienced backlash when establishing this type of bylaw. Opponents have tried hard not to pass an ordinance and not to have any progressive ideas incorporated. We fortunately have no such backlash here in Sakai City.

Since it is very important for women to be involved in drafting, proposing and making policies, I would like to describe what other policies I have put forward. I have also been making an endeavor to promote maternal and child health policies. I am now 44 years old with children of 1, 3 and 9 years old. I happened to have a chat with Maria-san during the break. I learned that she is pregnant for her fifth child. We agreed that it is very hard for mothers to raise children and work in the society at the same time wherever we are. In Japan, care of healthy pregnancy and delivery is not reimbursed in the health insurance scheme. We have to pay from our pockets. Last year I delivered the third child and I paid 400,000 yen for delivery alone. I had my baby born in a very large, well-equipped hospital. But it was only one nurse who was with me at that time. I felt very uneasy and worried. Since I was 43, I belonged to late child-bearing category. I wanted to have much safer environment for the delivery. Now I was involved in making a policy so that health care insurance should cover pregnancy and delivery. Other health care services I have been working on include pediatric emergency care as well as secondary emergency care systems and introduction of mammography in the mass screening in Sakai City so that breast cancer is detected early enough. The male politicians have their wives and noticed issues in child care, maternal care and others. But they are not sensitive enough to make the issues into policies and programs.

Women’s Perspectives

There are some other issues which men often overlook. Care for the disabled and the aged is one of them. Care for the elderly is very critical in Japan where the society is rapidly aging. I have actively proposed plans for the super-aging society since I am a care manager as well as a politician. In the field of school education, Sakai City has introduced CAP program. CAP stands for Child Abuse Prevention. All public schools of compulsory education, elementary schools and junior high schools, now have CAP program in place. This is a very progressive program. This is the issue I found very urgent through my activities in the women’s organizations and in the city assembly. I made a proposal at the City Council and the Board of Education of Sakai City saw the point, the program being

successfully made into the curriculum.

Our Women's Organization has been seriously tackling with the issues of pornography. Japan has recently been criticized by the international community for mass production of child pornography. I wanted you to see the reality if time allowed. Pornography including child pornography is available in such media as DVD, video and computer games. There is even a computer rape game sold in the ordinary electric appliance stores. It is the game where a player compete raping women. I brought actual samples of pornography videos and games to the city assembly the other day. I thought male members knew them but all 51 members were really shocked to see those horrible products. Fortunately we have had no armed conflicts in Japan for the last 58 years unlike your countries. We are, however, surrounded by many violent videos, movies and games and accustomed to see the violent scenes. More than two thirds of the Japanese populations, 120 million, no longer have any experience of wars. But some computer games available in the market are war games. Children and young adults are fighting wars through videos and simulation games. They are killing people in the virtual reality world. We sometimes hear that their experience in the computer resulted in actual murders or injuries. This is the reality in Japan. I think it urgent to have some practical solutions and policies to strengthen human rights education and sex education. We, however, still face difficulties in the city council and in the society. For example, there are no Japanese words equivalent to or synonymous with "gender". It is difficult for many Japanese people to understand what gender is even if we describe it. And it takes more time before the word and the concept are universally comprehended. Though we face some difficulties and obstacles as I mentioned today, we do not want to give up. We would like to collaborate with many women and understanding men so that we can put policies required in the society into practice. We dare not create unnecessary enemies. We try to be amicable so that we can obtain results we want.

Lastly but not least, you may think that Japanese are literate. But there are some illiterate people in Japan. Some of them were born in the discriminated community of Japanese and were deprived of rights to receive education. Others lost opportunities to go to school in the chaotic post-war confusions as well as Koreans and other foreigners living in Japan. We run literacy classes in Sakai to improve their literacy rate. Although I have more to say, I would like to stop here now. I am honored to see and listen to you and happy to be able to talk about activities of our women in Sakai and I are involved. I am determined to work with you to make this world more peaceful.



Appendix (1)

1) Statement from the First Congress of Women of Timor (June 17, 2000)

We the delegates of the First Congress of Women of Timor Loro Sae, gathered in Dili on the 17 of June 2000 are determined and committed to the establishment of peace, reconciliation, democracy, justice and development, in our country;

Acknowledge and honor all the women and men who have contributed to the struggle for freedom in Timor Loro Sae;

Conscious of the great challenge and responsibility that faces us in the reconstruction of our country and in the transition to independence;

Deeply concerned about the extreme poverty, illiteracy, inequality and the continued culture of violence present in Timor Loro Sae today;

Value the diversity of women and men's experience in our society;

Committed to establishing a culture of human rights, tolerance, freedom of speech and reaffirm our commitment to upholding the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

Urge the United Nations Transition Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) to fulfill the United Nations commitment to gender equality and the international conventions referred to in Regulation Number 1 and the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT) to develop policies appropriate to the principles enunciated in the Magna Carta of Freedoms and Responsibilities;

Immediate Needs

- 1) Adequate Resources must be made available by UNTAET and the post transition government for the advancement and empowerment of women
- 2) Justice for women victims of the violence experienced in the last 24 years of Indonesian military occupation. Laws and legal mechanisms, which protect women, must be enacted
- 3) Literacy programs
- 4) Commitment to gender equality and implementation of policy pertaining to all aspects of

socio economic and political life must be ensured

- 5) A specific body/mechanism at government level which addresses and guarantees gender equality is needed
- 6) The debate on East Timor's constitution must be inclusive and a consultative process with clear time line and plan, which allows for women's input must be established.
- 7) Mechanisms must be developed by UNTAET and the CNRT to ensure transparency and accountability and an end to corruption.

2) Hear the Voices of Timorese Women (April 28-29, 2003, Dili)

For the two days this Public Hearing on Women and Conflict is in session, we have an opportunity to hear the witness of women who have suffered violence as the consequence of political conflict in Timor Leste from 1974-1999. This event is one small step in the effort to recognize and respect the sacrifice women have made, both on behalf of their families and on behalf of their political convictions.

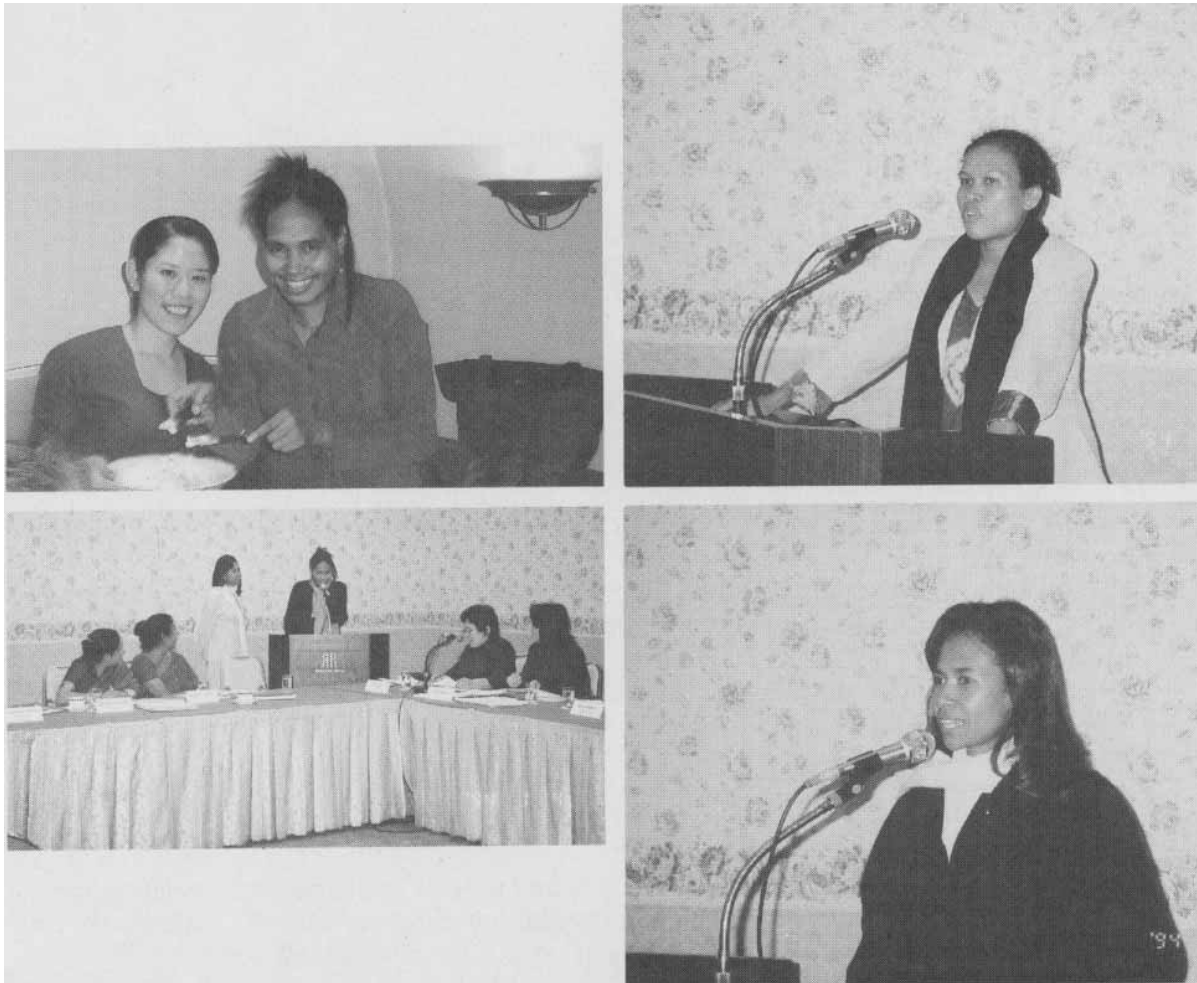
As will be heard through their witness, Timor Leste women were the target of violence because they themselves or members of their families were thought to be members of an opposition. Whether the perpetrator was the member of a certain political party or a member of the Indonesian security apparatus, the essence of violence against women is men's effort to have power over them and over the men to whom they are related. In a context of political conflict, what is being contested through such violence is not just women's bodies or their personal possessions, but also inherent in this violence is the effort to subjugate political opposition and fulfill one's greed for political power.

Through the witness of these women, we are again reminded that the violence women experience is always layered. When women live in the forest, are tortured, raped, detained, or forced to use birth control, they experience violence directly. But they also experience violence indirectly when they witness murder, when their husbands are disappeared and they themselves must guarantee a living for their children, or when they are denigrated for having once been detained or forced to marry members of the Indonesian military.

Political situations can change more quickly than cultural norms. In other words, Timor Leste is now independent, but many women still suffer discrimination as the result of patriarchal culture. Considering this, it is only proper that we take these two days to recognize women who are willing to appear in public and open up about all the crimes they have experienced. To speak in public about sexual violence demands exceptional courage because the risk is not small. The number of women who were not willing to bring their

stories to this Public Hearing was not small. The reasons they refused were because they (or their families) felt embarrassed or felt scared – “Heaven forbid I will be harassed, laughed at, or humiliated all over again. Heaven forbid there is a negative reaction from certain political supporters.” Therefore, this is also the moment for us to express sincere gratitude, both to the women who are willing to appear in our midst to speak about matters that are highly intimate and personal in their lives, as well as gratitude to their families, their communities, and to others who have given them strength and support over the years.

Let us respect the contribution of these women to the truth-seeking process. Let us learn from them about building reconciliation – learn about the price they have paid as targets of violence, but also learn the value discovered in their ability to withstand conflict. Together may we struggle to discover an appropriate vehicle or organization so that in the future, crimes and violence against women will not be continued in the name of politics, in the name of culture, in the name of anything or anyone.



Sri Lankan Women's Concerns and the Peace Process

Women's Alliance for Peace and Democracy

We recognize that women in particular have been victimized by war and conflict in Sri Lanka, that they have been subject to the worst forms of violence, been displaced and made into refugees, compelled to live as war widows. Women have seen family members disappear and/or join fighting forces. They have suffered physical disabilities and psychosocial trauma because of war. Therefore, women's experiences and women's voices must be an essential part of the peace process in Sri Lanka.

The full participation of women in decision making in all phases of the reconstruction, rehabilitation and transformation process is absolutely essential. We strongly urge the Government, the LTTE, Humanitarian and Aid agencies to fully include women in the economic recovery that results from the peace process.

Women

The number of female headed households has increased as a result of the conflict. These women are the sole providers for their families. Problems faced by women upon return include inadequate assistance and security concerns. Women face practical challenges such as clearing land, rebuilding houses, competing for limited employment opportunities, access to primary health care. Mothers heading households cannot find employment unless facilities for child care are available.

- We recommend that all relevant actors design assistance programmes to meet the special needs of women, such as skills training.
- We recommend that the Government give priority to providing child care facilities as well as health and reproductive health care services.
- We recommend that financial assistance for resettlement be increased and made more flexible so that women can hire labour where necessary to clear land and rebuild houses.
- We recommend that credit schemes be made more accessible to women and that credit schemes at low interest rates be introduced especially designed to meet women's needs.
- We recommend that special efforts should be made to inform and educate women of available services and assistance.

Children

Many children have been orphaned or abandoned as a result of the conflict. Such children constitute a peculiarly vulnerable group and may be left destitute without a safety net. In addition, their custodians may have property to which such children are entitled.

- We recommend that efforts be made to trace parents and relatives of unaccompanied children in order to identify and secure their inheritance rights.
- We recommend that the welfare of orphans or abandoned children be ensured by granting them a financial package, identifying carers and monitoring their welfare.

Conflict and Development in Sri Lanka; Roles of Local SME Enterprises

Nakamura Hisashi

Transplanted Economy Aloof from the Domestic Socio-cultural Base

- Division of economic activities between the English sector and the vernacular is a chief feature of contemporary Sri Lankan economy as seen from the Japanese economic experiences.
- The foreign and transplanted economy aloof from the domestic socio-cultural base has been the major factors of both conflicts in the North and the South of the island.

Important sectors (1)

- 1). Plantation sector
- 2). Free Trade Zones
- 3). Colombo harbour expansion
- 4). Mahaveli Development Scheme

Important sectors (2)

- 5). Labour-power export
- 6). Foreign aid projects
- 7). Tourist industry
- 8). Economy of the North & East

From an Isolated Monoculture to Integrated Diversification

East Asian economies like China, Korea, Taiwan and Japan which did not follow the advice of international lending agencies have been able to achieve higher economic growth than the home countries of free market.

English vs. Swabhasha

- Unusual dependency on the use of a foreign language has limited the capability of non-English speaking youth in rural Sri Lanka.
- Socio-economic ranking has been formed according to the acquired English ability which humiliates vernacular entrepreneurship.

Circularity and Diversity

- Recycling processes were a salient feature of the pre-colonial economy in Sri Lanka.
- People not only in the ancient period, widely practiced forms of common grazing land, chena cultivation, village tanks, attam, kaiya, ganudenu, ceetu and so forth in the present day.

Urban vs Rural

- Swabhasha people from rural Sri Lanka should be accommodated both in public and private sectors in place of the products international schools.
- The suppression of the potential capabilities of the younger generation in rural areas will result in the violent expression of their dissatisfaction intermittently in the course of Anglicized development efforts.

Language and development

The participation of swabhasha Sri Lankans in the development process will be the major key factor to determine the future of the nation.

- 50 members from Local Chambers of Commerce and Industry will come to the Kansai Area to find partners for the economic reconstruction in February 2004.

Language and development

The participation of swabhasha Sri Lankans in the development process will be the major key factor to determine the future of the nation.

- 50 members from Local Chambers of Commerce and Industry will come to the Kansai Area to find partners for the economic reconstruction in February 2004.

List of Participants on “War and Women”

- Afghanistan Asfa Kakar, Judge, Supreme Court
Jamila Afghani, Noor Education Centre
Shinkai K. Zahine, Afghan Women’s Education Centre (AWEC)
- Australia Elizabeth Biok, Solicitor
- East Timor Jacinta Correia da Costa, Judge
Maria Natercia Gusmao Pereira, Judge, Special Panel Dili District
Vice President of High Council of
Magistrate in Timor Leste
Maria Rosa Xavier, Literacy & Social Training Officer, GFFTL
- Indonesia Vony Reyneta Doloksaribu, Director, Legal Aid Association
Indonesia Women for Justice
- Philippines Lana Linaban, Deputy Secretary, GABRIELA
- Sri Lanka Nimalka Fernando, Women’s Alliance for Peace and Democracy
Saroja Sivachandran, Centre for Women’s Development-Jaffna
Mohamed Majee d Jensila, Community Trust Fund – Puttlam
Muslim Refugee
Nanda Malini, Artist for Peace
Dammika Nandini Edirimanne, Peace Unit, Ministry of
Constitutional Affairs
- Japan Makiko Arima, Member of the Board, Asian Women’s Fund,
Journalist
Makako Kamiya, Professor, Faculty of Law, Gakushuin University
Hisashi Nakamura, Professor, Ryukoku University
Atsuko Nakajo, Director, Gender Equality Promotion Dept., Sakai City
Tazuko Shiromoto, Director, Sakai City Women’s Center
Hiroko Miyamoto, Director, School Education Dept., Sakai City Board
Akihiko Yubisui, Director General, Office of the Mayor, Sakai City
Noriko Yamaguchi, Chairperson, Sakai City Women’s Organization
Murako Omachi, Vice Chairperson, Sakai City Women’s Organization
Yoko Kubo, Secretary General, Sakai City Women’s Organization
- Organized by Mizuho Matsuda, Program Director, Asian Women’s Fund (AWF)
Tomoko Manaka, Staff, General Affairs Section, AWF
Toshihiro Kano, Public Relation’s Director, AWF
Eiko Sato, Staff, General Affairs Section, AWF

Atonement Projects for Former “Comfort Women” of The Asian Women’s Fund

*Implemented for 285 Women in the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan
and 79 Women in the Netherlands.*

In 1995, the Japanese Government decided to implement projects aimed at providing atonement to former World War II “comfort women.” The projects involved sending each of them a signed letter of apology from the Prime Minister of Japan, making atonement payments financed by donations from the Japanese people, and providing medical and welfare services financed by the Japanese Government. The Asian Women’s Fund (AWF) was organized to manage the projects. A donation campaign collected over ¥565 million (US\$4,700,000) for dispersal among former comfort women in the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan. In light of the need to implement the projects as quickly as possible due to the women’s advanced age, an application period of five years was established. The application dead-lines, which varied depending on the starting date, were set at August 2001 for the Philippines and May 2002 for the Republic of Korea and Taiwan. These atonement projects were concluded in September 2002, following conclusion of a medical and welfare services project in the Netherlands in July 2001. Some recipients expressed sentiments as, “I never expected to receive an apology from the Prime Minister or atonement money,” and, “I feel sure these represent the goodwill of the Japanese people.”

Why is the Cooperative Project Promoted Jointly by Japanese Government and People of Japan?

The term “comfort women” refers to women who were forced to provide sexual services at “comfort stations” visited by officers and men of the former Japanese military during World War II. The honor and dignity of these women were violated, and many suffered irreversible physical and psychological trauma. In August 1993, Japan’s Chief Cabinet Secretary expressed the sincere apologies and deep remorse of the Japanese Government for these wrongs. The AWF was founded in July 1995 to implement atonement projects on behalf of the Japanese through cooperative efforts by the government and people of Japan. The AWF seeks atonement on behalf of the Japanese Government and people for the distress suffered by the former comfort women and solutions to problems threatening the honor and dignity of women today. It is working to heighten awareness in Japan and other countries of the importance of protecting the honor and dignity of women and of preventing conduct that threatens their honor and dignity with the aim of constructing an international society in which such conduct can never be repeated.

