



Secretary-General Kofi Annan and CARICOM Secretary-General Edwin Carrington on the occasion

Bindley-Taylor Sainte

Focal Point for Women

for Women Panel Discussion

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ound the UN ...

Violence against women

Around the world

Did you know that...

In your interest

Women's health

Work/life

Recommended reading and websites

In April 2002, Ms. Bindley-Taylor Sainte was assigned to the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea [UNMEE] where she served for almost four years, first as the Deputy Chief of Public Information of the Mission based in Ethiopia and shortly thereafter as the Chief of Public Information and Spokeswoman for the Mission based in Eritrea. Ms. Bindley-Taylor Sainte played a pivotal role in guiding the information efforts of this Mission during a critical phase in its development. On her return from Mission, she was reassigned to the UN Radio Service as the Senior Radio Producer for the Caribbean, and during that period was assigned to work as the Spokeswoman for the 61st President of the General Assembly, H.E. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, becoming only the third woman to serve in that capacity in the history of the United Nations.

Ms. Bindley-Taylor Sainte is a graduate of the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, where she received her Bachelor of Arts degree. She also holds a graduate diploma in Mass Communications from the University of the West Indies at Mona, Jamaica.

Letter from the Focal Point for Women

It is with great pleasure that we present to you the first issue of Network for the year 2010 as well as our very best wishes for a fruitful and satisfying year. We bring to you an interview with one of our Departmental Focal Points for Women, Ms. Gail Bindley-Taylor Sainte, who will inspire you in her quest to bring forth the value of gender awareness in her department by mentoring other female staff and assisting them in their career progression. She also encourages women to adopt a holistic approach towards their lives—not only working on their careers, but also on nurturing a personal and spiritual life.

As in previous years, this first quarter issue features inter alia the panel discussion hosted by the Focal Point for Women of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues on the occasion of the International Women's Day on 3 March 2010. This year, the discussion evolved around "Beijing + 15: The Representation of Women: A fifteen year retrospect and hopes for the future". The panellists came from three different sectors and discussed the developments made in female representation since the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action; identified persistent challenges; and made recommendations in order to foster women's empowerment.

We also draw your attention to a synopsis of a panel discussion on "United to End Violence against Women" as well as a short summary of The Shriver Report. The panel focused on progress achieved and future actions to improve the elimination of abuses against women. The Shriver Report analyses the shift in women's roles in American society and draws attention to the need for management to adopt work/life policies. It also calls on men to support the empowerment of women.

We hope that this issue adds to your awareness of different gender-related events and issues. We rely on your support, every little step counts.

In solidarity,



Aparna Mehrotra

INTERVIEW WITH GAIL BINDLEY-TAYLOR SAINTE *(continued from p. 2)*



working mothers at all levels; lack of recognition for consistently good performance; and poor evaluations for which there is little recourse.

How do we address the needs of working mothers? How do we ensure that we are not just talking the talk but walking the walk? How do we ensure that we are not just talking the talk but walking the walk?

The best publicity is by staff beginning to see visible signs of diversity, whether in posters the Organization puts out for the public or information promoting diversity through the Intranet. Videos can also be

woman who is unable to relocate if we lack policies to support her in going on mission assignments? Perhaps she could be offered a shorter assignment?

I try to encourage the women I work with to take advantage of all the Organization has to offer including classes, training opportunities, mission assignments—but we should now do a little more to support spousal employment and look at some of the remaining obstacles that prevent women from going on mission.

What are some of the obstacles that prevent women from going on mission assignments? Perhaps she could be offered a shorter assignment?

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FOCAL POINT FOR WOMEN PANEL DISCUSSION

To commemorate International Women's Day, the

The distinguished panellists, Ms. Heisoo Shin, former member of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Ms. Bani Dugal, Principal Representative to the United Nations of Baha'i International, and Ms. Emma Sabin, Vice-President of Partnerships at Catalyst Incorporated discussed past progress and future requirements in women's representation in the public and private spheres. They assessed the progress that has been made since the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action and identified areas where improvement was needed, such as in: the visibility of CEDAW; the political participation of women; the percentage of women reaching higher levels of management positions; the Organization's commitment to change; and work satisfaction amongst employees. Nonetheless, all three panellists noted that some countries had progressed more swiftly than others, but that the final goal of equal representation had not been met.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Mehrotra, the moderator, briefly summarized the UN's response to the Beijing Platform's call for increased representation of women at all levels including in the United Nations system. She noted that in 1997, the Secretary-General created the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), placing the Office of the Focal Point for Women (OFPW) within it. The role of the OFPW is to assist the Secretary-General in increasing the representation of women in the United Nations system, prepare the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations, advise on gender-related issues, formulate gender relevant policies and undertake the requested advocacy and outreach programmes to ensure its effective implementation.

The discussion revolved around three central themes:

The since the 1995 adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action in the implementation of the improvement of the status of women;

The , remaining;

The

only as a ladder, but as a lattice where one moves on and off, upwards, downwards, and sidewise, so that one's career can match one's current life stage.

traditional roles lies in the area of the burden of care, responsibilities shouldered largely by women worldwide. Most societies still find it difficult to support women in their dual care and workforce

The current trend is not just about advancement and representation. Rather, employees increase work satisfaction because of what leading edge companies do in the workplace. In the early '90s, IBM underwent workforce challenges, leading them to conduct a global survey on work/life and flexibility needs. The survey findings reflected employee dissatisfaction in the area of diversity, inclusion, and flexibility amongst others. The company then embraced work/life balance, inclusion and diversity through various programmes, targeting increasing employee satisfaction. Follow-up surveys indicated a renewed and invigorated work environment benefiting IBM's productivity and effectiveness.

II. CHALLENGES

Each panellist assessed remaining , to be faced. Challenges identified included: persisting gender roles and stereotyping; restrictions on women's representation in government; poor economic climate; violence against women; and outdated and regressive management styles and attitudes.

Ms. Shin mentioned that implementation of CEDAW suffered several challenges. Two in particular included:

Gender-role stereotyping constitutes one of the greatest challenges to the advancement of women globally. Many societies continue to dictate what men should do and what women should not do, raising the younger generations according to those expectations. Women, for example are not expected to occupy high positions in politics, public positions, or the corporate world. That basic mindset remains also at the international level and the challenge lies in how to overcome it.

Yet, another area where the workforce either reinforces or does not approve/support women's

representation of women in its Parliament increased to 56.3 per cent, thanks to the implementation of special measures. If temporary special measures are adopted in other fields such as the judiciary, education and administration sectors, target

policies. These, however, do not always translate into realities that benefit staff members' lives because policy has not been accompanied by strong implementation. As such, while "a balanced world is a better world", even in the workplace, much work remains, in order to achieve an organizational culture that routinely and easily embraces flexibility in work methodology.

Goals in UN Gender Parity have only been reached at the P-2 level in the United Nations. At the 10th year of UN employees' careers, ratios stagnate at approximately 35 per cent for females. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, a strong advocate of the advancement of women, has placed women at the most senior levels in the Organization. This increase in representation at the highest level does not, however, automatically translate into increases at the lower levels or into improved implementation of gender-related policy.

Ms. Mehrotra mentioned areas which present challenges with respect to the advancement of female employees in the Organization: affirmative action; flexibility; a culture of implementation; and monitoring.

- Affirmative action. Affirmative action is needed to catalyze progress. In the United Nations, despite the availability of qualified women at the mid-management (P-4) level, their representation remained below 30 per cent. Women at the P-4 level are not advancing. At other levels, such as at the P-5 or D-1 levels, the representation of women is lower than it was several years ago. The Office of the Focal Point for Women prepared a gender strategy which includes effective implementation of affirmative action. The proof, however, will lie in effective implementation.
- Flexibility. The issue of flexibility is essential. Responses to several staff surveys recently conducted by the OFPW reveal that job satisfaction, production and retention in the workplace increase with flexibility. Further, a modern workforce increasingly demands it.
- A culture of accountability and implementation. A genuine culture of accountability and

implementation of policy is fundamental to improving the representation of women and encouraging flexible work arrangements. Many managers still equate productivity with control in face time. To encourage implementation therefore, flexible work arrangements are now part of each department's management compact to be reviewed by the Management Performance Board.

- Monitoring. Monitoring policy implementation is fundamental because what is not monitored is not measured and what is not measured remains invisible.

In conclusion, Ms Mehrotra said: "We have seen that we need improved affirmative action, flexible work arrangements, affirmative action, improved accountability and monitoring for both the men and women. This is about justice as much as it is about attitude. We all have a sphere of influence and we all control our attitude. Use both to keep the fire burning and to influence on change one person at a time. One seed planted at a time, eventually creates a forest".

- Kits for post-rape care and treatment of complicated



- Expand multi-stakeholder engagement in the UN Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign;
- Provide a platform for all actors involved in the work of ECOSOC to increase awareness among the philanthropic community on the progress made

rights using the media as a tool to make perpetrators



AROUND THE WORLD

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IN YOUR INTEREST

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WORK/LIFE

gender parity and in other leadership-training programmes;

- Noted that women's roles are still restricted to their image as mothers and caregivers which in turn limit their opportunities to move up the corporate ladder.

Getting to 50/50 in your work an

In conclusion, the authors stressed that " the survey sends a strong message: . . .

" With more women in leadership positions, the talent pool of the workforce has the potential to double, guaranteeing greater, dynamic organizations. ■

WOMEN'S HEALTH

UNAIDS, the International AIDS Society (IAS) and 14 public and private organizations released a new report, " Asking the Right Questions: Advancing an HIV Research Agenda for Women and Children" ,

.. The report highlights the responses to HIV-related challenges facing women and children worldwide and recommends a four-fold plan to eliminate obstacles to access HIV prevention and treatment.

The four areas addressed include:

1. Clinical research to prevent mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) and paediatric treatment;
2. Clinical research on women's treatment issues;
3. Operations research for women and;
4. Implementation research related to stopping mother-to-child transmission. ■

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RECOMMENDED READING AND WEBSITES

The new global mindset

[http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/
Estudo_New_Global_Mindset_2010/\\$FILE/
New_Global_Mindset.pdf](http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/Estudo_New_Global_Mindset_2010/$FILE/New_Global_Mindset.pdf)

Driving innovation through diverse perspectives

Ernst & Young, an assurance, tax, transaction and advisory services company undertook a recent survey of

