

# Stop Trafficking !

*Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter*



*Awareness*

*Advocacy*

*Action*

Co-Sponsored by:

- *Sisters of the Divine Savior*
- *Capacitar International, Inc.*

1 This issue highlights the advocacy work being done by religious NGOs within the United Nations, continuing the example of women religious of Italy and Nigeria. Vol. 2 No.3 March 15, 2004

## Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

In 1979 the *UN General Assembly* adopted the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*, which came into force in 1981. This *Convention* is the international human rights treaty with the second largest number of ratifications (175 states signatories). CEDAW spells out the basis for realizing *equality between men and women through ensuring women's equal access to, and equal opportunities in, political and public life -- including the right to vote and stand for election -- as well as in education and employment. States parties agree to take all appropriate measures, including legislative and temporary special measures, so that women can enjoy all their human rights and fundamental freedoms.*

Besides the U.S., most other non-signatories are Islamic states. Reportedly the Bush administration was ready to ratify the treaty when it was heavily lobbied by the religious far right, who charged that CEDAW supports and promotes abortion through its promotion of access to "family planning." CEDAW does not, in fact, address the matter of abortion and, according to the U.S. State Department, is "abortion neutral."

Many countries in which abortion is illegal – such as Ireland, Burkina Faso and Rwanda – have ratified the *Convention*.

The twenty-three experts of the *CEDAW Committee* (all are women,



but two) meet semi-annually to review reports that must be submitted at regular four-year intervals by every country signatory to the *Convention against Discrimination against Women*. In July 2003 the *Committee* reviewed the reports of *Brazil* and *Japan*, and in the January 2004 examined that of *Nigeria*. The country reports are public UN documents. See: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/30sess.htm>.

*CEDAW* invites and very much encourages NGOs to submit "shadow reports" to indicate areas where reporting governments need to

improve. These reports may be both written and oral. Written reports are posted to the *Committee* members before their meeting. NGOs may orally present statements on reports of specific countries at the opening of the *Committee's* session. The governments are then invited to formally present their reports and respond to *Committee* questioning. At the end of the Session, the *Committee* publishes its recommendations to the governments, on which they must report in their next periodic review. By this means, the *Committee* assists the states parties to be accountable and honor their treaty commitments.

The *Committee* met in January 2004 to consider the situation of women in Nigeria. The *Committee* studied Nigeria's combined 4th and 5th periodic reports, submitted in compliance with *CEDAW*, which Nigeria ratified in 1985.

The *CEDAW* experts invited representatives of NGOs to formally present their own assessment of the situation of women in Nigeria and how well the government is honoring the *Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women*. One report represented a collaborative effort of 61 NGOs working in Nigeria.



## Awareness

# Conclusions: The Role of Men and Boys in Achieving Gender Equality Outcome Document of the Commission on the Status of Women Bureau to the United Nations, February 20, 2004

(Last month we carried a statement, drafted by NGOs actively working against human trafficking and submitted to the 48th Session of UN Commission on the Status of Women, regarding the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality. This article presents what the Commission on the Status of Women reported. Ref.: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/48sess.htm>)

1. The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) recalls and reiterates that the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* encouraged men to participate fully in all actions towards equality and urged the establishment of the principle of shared power and responsibility between women and men at home, in the workplace and in the wider national and international communities. The CSW also recalls and reiterates the outcome document adopted at the 23rd special session of the General Assembly entitled “*Gender Equality, Development and Peace in the 21st Century*,” which emphasized that men must take joint responsibility with women for the promotion of gender equality.
2. The CSW recognizes the important role of men and boys in bringing about change in attitudes, relationships and access to resources and decision making, which are critical for the promotion of gender equality and women’s human rights. The CSW acknowledges the positive initiatives of men and boys to eliminate gender stereotypes and promote gender equality, including combating violence against women, through networks, peer programs, information campaigns, and training programs. The CSW calls for increased involvement of men and boys in developing and implementing legislation and policies to foster gender equality, and in providing positive role models to promote gender equality, in particular where men are key decision makers and holders of economic and organizational power and public resources.
3. The CSW urges Governments and, as appropriate, the relevant funds and programs, organizations and specialized agencies of the UN system, the international financial institutions, civil society, including the private sector and non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders, to take the following actions:
  - a) Include in parent education programs information on ways and means to raise children in a gender sensitive manner;
  - b) Develop programs for schools, community centers, sport clubs and other groups dealing with children and youth, including training for teachers, to foster positive attitudes and behaviors on gender equality;
  - c) Carry out critical reviews of school curricula, textbooks and other educational materials at all levels, to eliminate gender stereotypes and strengthen ways of promoting gender equality that engage boys as well as girls;
  - d) Develop training programs for media professionals on the importance of non-stereotypical portrayal of women and girls and men and boys;
  - e) Adopt and implement legislation and policies to close the gap between women’s and men’s pay in order to ensure opportunities for equal sharing of family responsibilities;
  - f) Develop programs for training and recruitment of men in early childhood education and care-giving occupations;
  - g) Put in place, and encourage men to take advantage of, family-friendly employment policies, such as parental leave, part-time work and flexible work hours to promote reconciliation of work and family life and encourage men to share equally with women household and child-care responsibilities;
  - h) Create education programs that develop awareness, knowledge and skills among men, including young men, on their roles as parents and the importance of sharing family responsibilities;
  - i) Build confidence and skills of men and boys, including through training and education, to enable them to fully participate in the care and support of children, and older persons, persons with disabilities and sick persons;
  - j) Encourage active involvement of men and boys through, *inter alia*, HIV/AIDS education projects and peer-based programs, in challenging gender stereotypes as well as gender inequalities in relation to HIV/AIDS, as well as their full participation in prevention, care, treatment, support and impact evaluation programs;
  - k) Ensure men’s access to and utilization of reproductive and sexual health services, including



## Awareness

### Gender Equality *cont. from p. 2*

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HIV/AIDS-related programs and services, and encourage men to participate with women in programs designed to prevent mother-to-child transmission;

- l) Encourage the design and implementation of programs to sensitize and enable men and adolescent boys to adopt safe and responsible sexual and reproductive behavior and to effectively use methods to prevent unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS;
- m) Encourage and support men and boys to take an active part in the prevention of violence against women and girls, including in the context of HIV/AIDS, and increase awareness of men's and boys' responsibility in ending the cycle of violence, *inter alia*, through education and rehabilitation of perpetrators;
- n) Encourage and support men in leadership positions, including political leaders, community and faith leaders, musicians and athletes, to show leadership and provide positive role models on gender equality;
- o) Develop and utilize a variety of methods in public information campaigns on the role of men and boys in promoting gender equality, including through approaches specifically targeting boys and young men;
- p) Identify and fully utilize contexts in which a large number of men can be reached, *inter alia*, in the police and armed forces, prisons, industries and sports associations, to sensitize men on their roles and responsibilities



SDS Photo

in the promotion of gender equality and women's human rights, including in relation to HIV/AIDS and violence against women;

- q) Carry out research and impact assessments on efforts undertaken to engage men and boys in promoting gender equality and identify and widely disseminate good practice.
- 4. The CSW urges the *World Health Organization*, the *International Labor Conference and Governing Body of the International Labor Office*, as well as the *Program Coordinating Board of the UN Agency for International Development (UNAID)*, to take into account the recommendations contained in the agreed conclusions.

**Are our  
educational  
institutions  
and  
parish  
communities  
educating  
for gender  
equality?**

## New Slave Trade Challenges Religious Life in Italy

by S. Eugenia Bonetti, MC

*(The entire article by Eugenia Bonetti, MC appeared in the SEDOS Bulletin Vol. 35, No. 11/12, Nov/Dec 2003. The parts on pgs. 3-4, 6 are used with permission.)*

### The Slave-Trade: women and minors for sale

Maria's story (pg. 4) shows us the coerced prostitution of countless women, who daily sacrifice their youth on our streets. This problem, challenging society and Church, is all the more a challenge for men and women religious, whose charisms call them to defend the rights of poor, voiceless, vulnerable people, especially women and children.

Surveys show that annually 500,000 women are "imported" into, or made to cross, Europe by criminal organizations in order to be sold as commodities. In Italy, there are between 50-70,000 women from Eastern Europe, or the developing countries, who are forced to work as prostitutes. They are easily recognizable on our streets. Of these 40% range from 14 to 18 years of age. Despite the influx of young people from Albania and Eastern Europe, a still greater number come from Africa (more than 50%) but, being illegal, it is difficult to give an exact figure.

Most of these women, reduced to slaves for the use of millions of Italian clients (90% Catholics), come from countries that were formally evangelized by missionaries, who had struggled and suffered to spread the Gospel among these peoples. Their evangelizing message had offered Christian faith as a proclamation of hope, freedom, dignity, justice, solidarity and emancipation.



## Advocacy

### 4 Where is Your Sister? Meeting a Woman Prostitute

by S. Eugenia Bonetti MC, Turin, Italy

It was a cold, rainy evening on November 2, 1993. I was just leaving the Caritas Centre in Turin, Italy where I had been working for several months on my return from Africa, to go to Mass, when an African woman came in with a doctor's certificate. The woman appeared to be shy and embarrassed. From her behavior and dress I knew that she might be one of the many women who, day or night, sell their body on our streets. I felt awkward. I read the letter and asked her some questions to which she gave monosyllabic answers. She was ill, in need of an operation, but as she had no papers, she could not be admitted to a public hospital and so had been directed to our Centre.

Maria was a little over 30 years old and the mother of three children, left behind in Nigeria. Maria had come to Italy, where she had hoped to find work to help her family. Instead she was on the street, a victim of the new slave trade. She could not speak Italian, so we spoke in English. Telling her story brought tears to her eyes and she began to cry saying, "Sister, please, help me, help me". I was upset, not knowing what to do or say. I was worried about being late for Mass — at that moment Mass was more important to me than Maria's problems! I asked her to return the next day.

However, Maria wanted to accompany me to church. On the way I noticed people were surprised to see a Consolata Missionary walking beside a "prostitute"! In church Maria knelt in the last pew and I heard her sobbing. I moved away, but I could

not pray. The parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector (Lk 18:9-14) came to mind and I remembered the numerous occasions on which I had acted like the Pharisee. How often had I thought that, being a religious and a missionary, I was better than many other women forced to street-walk!

Besides, I recalled my resistive attitude when I was asked to leave Kenya after 24 years in mission, to do new work in Italy. I was so happily inserted into the African context, where I was involved in socio-educational-pastoral activities, mainly with women and youth groups! The African women I knew had a deep sense of joy, festivity, hospitality, solidarity and sharing. They faced life with courage, perseverance and determination, proud of their role in life. They had dignity despite living in poverty and under subjection to men. I shared in these women's struggles to improve their standard of living, by promoting education and emancipation, self-awareness and self-determination. That proclamation of hope and freedom brought by Christ had been the ideals that had attracted me as a young girl in search of my



Art by S. Julieta Egui Sánchez FMA  
and Mr. Alain Damiani  
JPIC Kit on Trafficking, Rome.

vocation and had guided me to choose missionary work in Africa.

Now however, all my projects, certainties, dreams, and nostalgia for what I had left behind faded. Once again I was in the dark, like Paul on the road to Damascus. "Lord, what do you want me to do?" (Cf. Acts 9:3-9), Lord where are you leading me?

I spent a sleepless night. I measured myself against "my" Paschal Mystery, knowing I had to die to my personal interests, to rediscover the new life of Easter, a new way of being a Consolata Missionary, for Jesus and his people. This situation was a challenge to me. Maria was putting me to the test and calling into question my life, my vocation, my convictions, my motivation and my values.

These questions re-echoed within me: "Eugenia, where is your sister? (Cf. Gn 4:9) Where is Maria? Tonight where are all the 'Marias' of the streets?" My meeting with Maria obliged me to be more radical in my following of Christ. I felt that the Lord, who had previously called me to go to Africa, was now calling me to be a prophetic sign of hope, of compassion and comfort, an instrument of his mercy and of his love for other African women, who were being exploited and marginalized, no longer in Africa, but in my own country. He was pointing out a new and unknown frontier to me.

So I gave in. From then on my new missionary service would be Turin's historical city center among immigrant women. With this conviction I was prepared to accept the new challenge and to pay the price, if necessary, and risk my own life.

Maria got better, but not only physically. With courage and determination she left the street, entered a welcome community, attended a language school, did a training course, found a job and started a new life. She became my discreet guide as she helped me to enter and understand the "nocturnal world".

(S. Bonetti's original article appeared in Italian. For a copy of the entire English article, write: [sedos@pcn.net](mailto:sedos@pcn.net))



## Advocacy

*The National Catholic Reporter of Feb. 27, 2004 also carried an article by Patricia Lefevere entitled, "Religious Orders Speak for the Voiceless at the U.N."*

## The Contribution of Religious NGOs to the UN Mission by Joan Burke SND

The United Nations (UN) at present recognizes 3500 *Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)*, which includes many religious congregations or federations. Of these, 25-30 have members working full-time at the UN, 13 with consultative status with the UN's *Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)*. This status allows them to be advisers to the UN for humanitarian work. NGOs may send five delegates to UN Conferences. They have observer status at UN Commissions, where they may petition to present oral and written interventions.

Those NGOs affiliated to the UN's *Department of Public Information* may share in the information resources of the UN and its agencies.

NGOs generally have *'hands-on'* experience and work from a humanitarian focus, in contrast to member-States (i.e., governments). States welcome the expertise of NGOs in the social-economic domains, although States can be uncomfortable with challenges from NGOs in the political domain (e.g., human rights).

Last year *Franciscans International*, an NGO representing 1.2 million vowed or secular Franciscans worldwide, submitted a statement to ECOSOC on the social responsibility of the private sector. They submitted another statement (along with NGOs representing Presentations, Good Shepherds, Maryknolls, Medical Missionaries and School Sisters of Notre Dame, as well as the Elizabeth Seton Federation) to the *Commission on the Status of Women* regarding

women's human rights and the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls. Many of these women religious had had direct contact with thousands of victims of abuse.

*Joan Burke SNDdeN (Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur)* directs and coordinates activities that fulfill SNDdeN's affiliation as an NGO with consultative status with ECOSOC. Collaborating within the NGO community, Joan works on UN concerns that involve HIV/AIDS issues, poverty eradication, social (human) development, especially for poor women and children. By addressing these issues Joan brings to the appropriate ECOSOC bodies (e.g., UN agencies and Commissions) written and oral statements on issues that are of concern to SNDdeN.

In explaining her official job description, Joan said, "I attend NGO briefings, annual conferences, and special UN events. I participate in several NGO committees and working groups. When required, I prepare the quadrennial report to ECOSOC. At the same time I am in constant communication and collaboration with my own Notre Dame leadership and send bi-weekly news briefs to our members and associates."

In her role as an NGO Joan believes, "We SNDdeNs gain a *global perspective* and a better understanding of how SNDdeN can *advocate* respective governments to be more responsible and cooperative in the community of nations. It brings SNDdeN into *solidarity with*

*a diverse population of people*, who share similar concerns regarding a more equitable distribution of the world's resources, an end to sexual exploitation of women and of children, more responsible governance and respect for the rule of law (e.g., the African continent), and protection and nurturance of the eco-system upon which we all depend."

"It also helps us better discern what *'signs of the times'* are calling for a global, as well as local, response. It also places us in a *networking position* with other individuals and groups.

In the process of building bridges, we also find *resources through NGO partnerships*.

These many dimensions are really a concretization of the United Nations' goal of bringing together and building up the entire human family." Joan stated.

"But, even more exciting is the realization that we not only gain much through our NGO status. We SNDdeNs, and all religious, have much to offer to the work of the UN. For example, we know that *educating women significantly improves the quality of life for their families and societies*. Our international membership gives us ample experience in *the need to sustain mutual dialogue in order to build ongoing multicultural trust*. Our experience of community life and service in cross-cultural contexts taught us *how to create genuine environments of equality for all*. We know first hand the *challenges involved in working toward a just distribution of resources*. We are learning over the years *how to overcome mentalities of being givers/receivers, have's/have-not's*, which only creates resentment and debilitating dependencies. *We have credibility for our professional service to impoverished peoples*.

Thus, I can proudly state that SNDdeNs have much to give to the UN community. It's a real commitment, since my congregation also subsidizes my health care, living and operational expenses. But it's mutual, since we reap much for the global mission of our members."



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### Italy

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Today, these evangelized populations are no longer geographically distant, beyond the ocean, but are among us. They are being exploited by our life style and market system.

*Can we continue to send evangelizers to distant lands, if we do not first discover the presence of thousands of foreign women, enslaved and exploited in our own country, if we do not concern ourselves with breaking their chains?*

Tricked, enslaved and thrown onto the pavement, the “prostitute” is the living consequence of the discrimination and injustice imposed by our consumer society.

In the competitive sex market, African women are considered second class. Because they are “black” and do not speak Italian, because they are less youthful and slim, they are obliged to ask for a lower price for their sexual favors. For a routine affair in a car they agree to € 10-15, whereas the Eastern Europeans will earn € 25. To pay back their debt to those who recruited and brought them to Italy, they are obliged to have at least 4,000 sexual encounters. In addition to their initial debt they must meet monthly expenses: € 100 for food, € 250 for lodging, € 250 for the work-site, and more for clothing, transport and personal needs. To repay their debt, they work every day, or night, seven days a week.

### Chains and slavery

To be a slave is to “be chained.” That chain robs one of freedom and forces one to live under the will of another. Modern day slavery is made up of many links. These links have names: the *victims* with their poverty, the *exploiters* with their huge earnings, the *clients* with their need to escape frustration and responsibility, their search for pleasure, *society* with its empty values and permissiveness, the *government* with its corrupt system and complicity, the *Church* and *every Christian*, including *religious*, with their silence and indifference. Our passive attitude toward oppressed women shows a lack of responsibility.

There is a well-managed organization of *unscrupulous traffickers, men and women*, who lure these victims in their home countries, where poverty is extreme, families large, and young people without hope for the future. Exploiting this socio-economic situation, modern slave-traders mislead these women and their families using promises of remunerative dignified work. These women are brought into Italy through illegal means, due also to the complicity of *corrupt employees and functionaries in embassies, airports, customs offices, immigration offices, by travel agents, landlords of apartments, hotel proprietors and taxi drivers*. With huge earnings and relatively low risk, many people benefit in the process of destroying these women’s lives.

The women are taken through other countries of Europe, such as *Greece, Russia, Bulgaria, Holland, Germany, Spain and France*, travelling for weeks or months over land, by air, or sea. In the case of Nigerian women, they are taken across the *Sahara Desert*. On reaching Italy these women are immediately deprived of their documents, which were often counterfeit. Thus, they lose name, identity and freedom. They gradually lose a sense of who they are. This experience makes it very difficult to restore these women’s true identity!

For the girls from the East, the network often tricks them into bogus engagements and promises of marriage. This preys off their emotions. The Nigerian victims are entrusted to the *maman*. These are Nigerian women, who turn from being exploited into being exploiters. They teach recruits how to work on the streets, control them, parcel out the stretch of pavement where they are to work, collect the earnings, punish them in case of resistance, and above all subject them to *voodoo* (black magic rituals), a true form of psychological torture.

### The risks of the streets

The “prostitute” must live in absolute secrecy and strict obedience to their traffickers and their *maman*. In addition, these women are liable to the dangers of the street — maltreatment, abuse, road accidents, or death. Annually, hundreds of girls experience *martyrdom* on our streets — from clients, from maniacs, and from the traffickers. Many die in the course of their exhausting journey, or disappear. Many families wait for news of them, which never comes!

There is also the risk of contracting AIDS — 10-15% of street women register HIV+. They face unwanted pregnancies, followed by forced abortions. Women from the East have an average of three abortions each. For the African woman, who holds maternity as the highest value, abortion represents not only the destruction of a new life, but also of her culture. Among African women cases of mental illness are frequent, since they are obsessed by *voodoo rites* and by threats of reprisal against their families back home.

On the street the “prostitute” completely loses her psycho-physical identity, her personal dignity, her freedom of choice. She experiences herself to be an object, a thing, a piece of merchandise. She must live as an illegal, social and cultural outcast, with only one option open to her — to demand payment for sexual encounters — yet keep *none of her earnings*.



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## Trafficking in Women and Minors from Nigeria to Other Parts of the World

Observations by the Committee for the Support of the Dignity of Women *by S. Florence Nwaomuna SSH, Chairperson*

*In this excerpted report Nigerian women religious describe what they do, as well as critique their government's efforts to prevent and control trafficking in Nigeria.*

### Background

The Nigeria Conference of Major Superiors felt a strong need to put up a fight to liberate the daughters of Africa from the shackles of their slave masters. In 1999 they established the *Committee for the Support of the Dignity of Women (CSDW)* with an office in Benin City from where most of the Nigerian trafficked victims come. The CSDW fights women trafficking and rehabilitates, and reintegrates victim returnees. It also investigates cases of threat to families of victims, who have decided to abandon this ugly trade for a more decent way of living.

### CSDW Objectives

The objectives of the Committee are:

1. To educate families and young people on the hazards of being lured to other parts of the world for greener pastures.
2. To educate families and young people on the hazards involved in traveling around the home country and other parts of the world for prostitution.
3. To resettle and Rehabilitate those young women who may be repatriated or who wish to pull out of prostitution.

4. To have a "Welcoming Home" where these young women will be accommodated and helped to regain themselves through counseling and spiritual direction.
5. To provide security for these young women and their families after they have opted out of prostitution.
6. To find ways of giving them marketable skills and help them to set up ventures that will give them some self support
7. To address other social issues that affect women and children.
8. To work in collaboration with Governmental Agencies and non-governmental Agencies those working for these purposes.

### CSDW Achievements

The Committee creates public awareness of the problem of trafficking through seminars and workshops both in the urban and rural areas. It is actively involved with women and youth groups and regularly attends their activities to continue to create awareness of trafficking in women and minors. Sensitization programs are carried out in the rural areas through the use of town criers, market squares and churches.

CSDW has been running radio jingles against trafficking in women and minors since 2001. The committee help shape the law on trafficking in Nigeria, which was signed into law

July 2003 and is one of the NGO coalitions implementing a program of action against trafficking in women and minors from Nigeria to Italy.

### Areas of Concern

CSDW reviewed the January 2004 report of CEDAW on trafficking in Nigeria. The report did not adequately address the causes of trafficking according to CSDW. These causes include:

#### 1. Poverty and Lack of Resources

The poverty level in Nigeria has assumed an embarrassing dimension. We are very much in touch with the grassroots. The traffickers have known that awareness of their activities has been created in the cities and have moved to the rural areas to continue their recruitments.

The Committee has carried its campaign programs to these rural areas in Edo State. In the course of these programs, we have had the opportunity of seeing and feeling the poverty of our people, the women being the worst hit. Women tell CSDW members, "*Sister, we are hungry! We need food, work, clothing, health care and other basic necessities. We have no water, no electricity, no roads and, worst still, no fuel to transport our agricultural products to places where there are markets for them. The cost of transportation is so high that by the time we sell our products, we make no gain.*"

Women tell CSDW members that life outside Nigeria is better and, if not for being sexually exploited, they would like to remain in those countries and have nothing to do with Nigeria. Women prefer a place where they can turn on a tap to get water, rather than walk several kilometers on foot to fetch water from streams for their entire households. The victims admit that if they had resources in Nigeria, they would not travel overseas for prostitution.

To honestly stop trafficking in women and minors, the international community must

Nigeria cont. pg. 8



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### 8 Nigeria *cont. from p. 7*

see to it that the Nigerian government is truly committed to poverty alleviation.

#### 2. Unemployment

The rate of unemployment in Nigeria is very high, with a growing population of unemployed graduates. These youths roam our streets daily in search of jobs. Jobs are usually reserved for those who are already in power, who pass them to their children, family members and friends. Some graduates, who sought jobs in the Ministry of Education in Edo State, were required to pay huge sums of money as bribes. Since they did not have that kind of money, they were excluded from jobs.

Young women, who have finished their studies or have acquired skills, cannot find work. Out of that frustration women opt for prostitution. More jobs need to be created and people employed according to their qualifications.

#### 3. Lack of Rehabilitation

The Italian government deports Nigerian girls, who worked as prostitutes. Some of them return to Nigeria HIV+ or with AIDS and spread it within the country. The Nigerian government has no rehabilitation program in place to receive and counsel these trafficked victims before releasing them to their families and into the Nigerian society. Therefore the traffickers find and re-traffic them. *CSDW* calls on the Nigerian government to urgently provide a rehabilitation center for returning victims of human trafficking.

#### 4. Illiteracy

Teachers in rural schools are not paid adequately. These teachers generally are not motivated to work, abandon their teaching

jobs, or use the class time doing something more lucrative for their own income. Students suffer under this situation.

#### 5. Lack of Rural Replication of Urban Programs

Urban programs, activities, seminars and workshops must be adapted to different cultural settings, including in the rural areas. When *CSDW* took information about human trafficking to the rural dwellers, who do not have electricity to watch television or listen to the radio, and explained to them the techniques the traffickers use in their recruitment, some women broke down in tears, realizing they may have unknowingly handed their daughters over to traffickers. All Nigerian women need to know their rights and need liberation.

#### 6. Lack of Hotlines

Victims of human trafficking need telephone numbers in Nigeria that they could call, in case of danger or any other aggression. It is the responsibility of the government and of NGOs to do this for victims. In this way, girls could receive help and assistance from experts knowledgeable about trafficking.

*NGOs submitted the report to CEDAW on behalf of Nigerian religious.*

## Nigerian Government Report to CEDAW Committee

Rita Akpan, *Minister for Women's Affairs of Nigeria*, who headed the seventeen-member government delegation, presented the government's report to the *Committee*. The report highlighted developments in the advancement of Nigerian women during the period 1994 to 2002. There followed a lengthy exchange of questions and answers between the *Committee* and the government representatives.

## CEDAW

### Committee Experts Call Nigerian Government to Account

There was ample evidence of Nigeria's commitment to implementing its obligations under the *Women's Convention*. There was the 2003 passage of the *Trafficking in Persons Law Enforcement and Administration Act* (outlawing trafficking), and the *Child Rights Act* (with special consideration given to the girl-child). The *National Assembly* is currently considering passage of a National Bill on *Violence Against Women*.

Nigeria established the *Ministry of Women's Affairs*. There is an increase in school attendance rates for girls and higher literacy rates for women, an increase in the number of women in decision-making positions, and the provision of social resources and infrastructure for rural women.

Most of Nigeria's 36 states and Federal Capital Territory (FCT) judiciaries now have women as *High Court Judges*, (about 30% of the total number of judges in the country). Yet, no woman has been named to the *Federal Supreme Court*.

Yet, contradictions and inconsistencies created by the application of Nigeria's three legal systems — namely, *Islamic Sharia, customary law and common law* — in its six geopolitical zones has slowed the pace towards gender equality in Africa's largest and most populous nation. Given the country's size, complex political system, and rich cultural heritage, the experts stressed the need for Nigeria to set the example for neighboring African nations by fully implementing its obligations under the *Convention*, and not perpetuate customary and religious practices that negatively affect the situation of Nigerian women.

The *Committee Chair, Ms. Acar, Expert from Turkey* concluded the *Committee's* report stating that,





## Action

## Capacitar Training in Healing and Transformation: A Program for People Who Serve People in Need

*Training in Healing and Transformation* is a hands-on program of holistic wellness practices for people whose professional and/or volunteer work is in service to others in need of healing because of poverty, physical or mental illness, stress, abuse, trauma or violence.

This unique program consists of four sessions spaced throughout a year. Patricia Mathes Cane, Ph.D., founder and co-director of *Capacitar International* and/or other *Capacitar International* trainers facilitate the sessions.

- The Program teaches wellness modalities including Tai Chi, meditation, breathing practices, simple massage, visualization, emotional freedom technique, acupressure, Chakra and other energy practices.

- Participants learn the theories underlying healing and energy work, the new cosmology, the holographic universe, and team and leadership development.

- One learns to manage stress more effectively as one uses the energy practices in one's own life.

- Each participant applies what is learned between sessions through an internship with a group(s) of his/her choice.



Capacitar program participants giving the drum massage during one session.



Capacitar's logo is a pre-Columbian lotus, symbolizing creativity and empowerment of people coming to life —

- rooted to the energy of the earth,
- arms raised to the energy of the heavens,
- hands joined in solidarity around the world,
- the seed of life nurtured and growing within.

The *Training in Healing and Transformation Program* is offered in three geographical areas of the U.S. during 2004-2005.

1. **Milwaukee, WI** in collaboration with the **Center-to-Be**. For more information, email: Marjorie Wilbur (mwctobe@execpc.com) or visit the *Center-to-Be* web page: [www.centertobe.org](http://www.centertobe.org)  
Overnight accommodations available through the *Center-to-Be*.
2. **Santa Barbara, CA** in collaboration with **La Casa de Maria**. For more information, email: monique@lcmdm.org or visit the *La Casa de Maria* web page: [www.lacasademaria.org](http://www.lacasademaria.org)  
Overnight accommodations available at *La Casa de Maria*.
3. **San Jose, CA** in collaboration with **Catholic Charities** and **Presentation Center** in Los Gatos, CA. For more information, email: [capacitar@igc.org](mailto:capacitar@igc.org) or visit the *Capacitar* web page: [www.capacitar.org](http://www.capacitar.org)  
*San Jose* participants must arrange their own overnight accommodations or contact Alana or Theresa at *Presentation Center* (408) 354-2346).

**CAPACITAR INTERNATIONAL** is a nonprofit organization based in Santa Cruz, CA. Founded in 1988 by Patricia Mathes Cane, it has offered *Healing and Transformation Programs* in 16 U.S. states and 20 countries, including Ireland/Northern Ireland, East Timor, South Africa, Guatemala and Colombia.



## Action



UN Women's  
Watch Logo

### Informative Web Sites:

(Each contains information  
related to human trafficking)



#### **United Nations**

<http://www.un.org/>

#### **UN Economic and Social Development (ECOSOC)**

<http://www.un.org/esa/>

#### **UN Women Watch**

*(Information and Resources on Gender  
Equality and*

*Empowerment of Women)*

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/>

#### **Commission on the Status of Women**

[http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/  
csw/48sess.htm](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/48sess.htm)

#### **NGOs**

#### **National Catholic Reporter**

*(Feb. 27, 2004 issue)*

<http://ncronline.org/>

#### **SEDOS**

<http://www.sedos.org>

#### **UNANIMA**

*(correction for issue Vol.2 No.2)*

<http://www.unanima-international.org>

## The United Nations' Millennium Development Goals

All the world's heads of state agreed to the common global agenda in 2000.

- Create a global partnership for development, with targets for aid, trade and debt relief.

The goals, to be achieved by 2015, are:

- Halve extreme poverty and hunger.
- Achieve universal primary education.
- Empower women and promote equality between women and men.
- Reduce under-5 mortality by two-thirds
- Reduce maternal mortality by three quarters.
- Reverse the spread of diseases, especially HIV/AIDS and malaria.
- Ensure environmental sustainability.

Economists estimate that \$50 billion will be needed to meet these goals. Compare that to the cost of the Iraq war (<http://www.costofwar.com>).

Progress toward the goals is slow. Industrialized nations pledged to work toward committing the equivalent of 0.7% of their gross national product to development assistance so as to realize the millennium goals. To date only the Netherlands and the Scandinavian states have complied. The official development assistance from Belgium is 0.42%, France 0.36%, Japan 0.23%, the United Kingdom 0.3%, Italy 0.2%, and the United States 0.12%.

### **Nigeria** *cont. from p. 8*

"While cultural, ethnic and religious diversity should be celebrated as a source of richness, diversity could not be allowed to function as an impediment to the recognition and enjoyment of the human rights of women. Diversity should not function as a "cover" for human rights violations. There is need for a timetable to repeal discriminatory Nigerian laws and embark on a *national judicial training program* to familiarize the legal community with the provisions and principles of CEDAW, so that a "legal culture of women's equality and non-discrimination takes root in Nigeria."

*Materials for articles on pg. 1, 8, 10  
taken from:*

*UN Press Release WOM/1427*

#### *Stop Trafficking!*

is dedicated exclusively to fostering an exchange of information among religious congregations, their friends and collaborating organizations, working to eliminate all forms of trafficking of human beings.

Use the following web address  
to access back issues of

#### *Stop Trafficking!*

[http://homepage.mac.com/  
srjeanschafersds/stoptraffic/index.html](http://homepage.mac.com/srjeanschafersds/stoptraffic/index.html)

To contribute information, or make  
requests to be on the mailing list,  
please use this e-mail address:

[jeansds2000@yahoo.com](mailto:jeansds2000@yahoo.com)

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