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#### III ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEDICAL WOMEN’S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
I. MEDICAL WOMEN’S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

1. PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Dr. Atsuko Heshiki, Japan

“Leadership, Achievement and Accomplishment”

The time goes by so quickly. I hope all of you have started your year of 2009 with new projects and plans.

The MWIA Executive has just passed the midway mark of the triennium. The second Skype conference was held and the executive is finding this a convenient way to meet. MWIA has adjusted rather quickly to the world decline of the economy. We are no longer able to expect funds and grants. You will see our financial status in the report of the treasurer and finance chair. So far, I am functioning without any budgetary support from MWIA.

Nevertheless, I plan to move on my project, which is listed in the title. I would like to develop a MWIA database of the status of women physicians, their achievements and accomplishments. This will be done by questionnaires this year. The data will be ready to be presented by the time of the 2010 general assembly.

The 23rd Japan–Arab Women’s Exchange program was held in Tokyo from January 23rd to February 4th sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Women’s Committee of UNNGOs. Japan Medical Women’s Association (JMWA) was responsible for organizing two of the seminars. I had the pleasure of organizing and chairing both seminars. Dr. Nawar Fariz of Jordan is a Diagnostic Radiologist and keen on breast cancer diagnosis. The story of her career path in becoming a physician and a leader in the country was very impressive and informative. There were stories from other non-physician participants as well, with interesting career paths and achievements. The participants of each seminar numbered 70 to 100 or more and the theme attracted many women in different professional fields. This gave good visibility to both MWIA and JMWA.

The Commission on the Status of Women just finished in New York. I would like to thank Drs. Shelley Ross, Satty Gill Keswani, Mini Murthy, Shirley Hovan and Eleanor Nwadinobi for their participation.

I also would like to thank Dr. Shelley Ross for her collaboration with WHO. I have just received a letter informing us that the Executive Board of WHO conducted its annual review of NGO’s in official relations with WHO and has recommended that our official status continue.

I look forward to participating in the Central European Meeting in Vienna in May, 2009.
2. REQUESTS FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Dr. Shelley Ross, Canada

Please come and join other MWIA members to celebrate our 90th anniversary year. In the list of meetings, you will find details of the three regional meetings being held this year to celebrate the past 90 years. I do hope you will join us in Vienna in May, Dar-Es-Salaam in July or onboard the Maasdam of the Holland America Line sailing from Boston to Montreal in September.

Thank you to Drs. Satty Gill Keswani and Mini Murthy for organizing the MWIA presentation for the 52nd Commission on the Status of Women in New York March 5th. The topic was Gender equity and male responsibility - come and learn from the women doctors of the world. MWIA members present included Drs. Keswani, Murthy, Shirley Hovan and Eleanor Nwadinobi as well as myself.

MWIA has been involved in osteoporosis surveys across four countries in Europe (France, Germany, Switzerland and the UK), Mexico and most recently Canada. MWIA has been working with the International Osteoporosis Foundation and Osteoporosis Canada along with Reader’s Digest with unrestricted educational funding from Novartis to survey attitudes of patients with osteoporosis and doctors treating these patients. Women with osteoporosis are no longer frail little old ladies but rather active independent women. Visit the website www.fortimelesswomen.com

International Women’s Day saw MWIA invited to send an article to Reuters UK on how women have done from a doctor’s perspective. To view the article, please visit http://blogs.reuters.com/great-debate-uk/2009/03/03/confronting-medical-issues-for-women/

The Executive Board of the World Health Organization has reaffirmed MWIA’s official status. It is time to register for the World Health Assembly in Geneva which will begin May 18th. Although MWIA cannot provide funding, please let me know if you plan to attend and I shall submit your name.

Please remember to send in your nominations for the 2010-2013 executive committee to the Secretariat by April 30th.

The contact information for the Secretariat is:

MWIA Secretariat
7555 Morley Drive
Burnaby, B.C., V5E 3Y2, CANADA
Phone +1 604 439-8993
FAX +1 604 439-8994
e-mail: secretariat@mwia.net
website: www.mwia.net
3. GREETINGS FROM THE TREASURER

Dr. Gail Beck, Canada

MWIA was pleased to participate in the 16 Days of Activism to End Violence Against Women. Many of you completed the following survey to allow MWIA to compile an inventory of the work being conducted in MWIA’s member organizations to end violence against women. MWIA continues to work with WHO in this area and in preparation for the World Health Assembly; it would be helpful if those of you who have not already indicated your country’s activities could do so by the end of April. Please send the information to the Secretariat.

The survey lists a number of areas that address violence against women. Please indicate which areas are active in your country.

1. Publicize underreported forms of violence against women.
2. Document successful approaches ending violence against women.
3. End tolerance for domestic violence.
4. Speak up for millions of missing girls and women.
5. Speak out against female genital mutilation.
6. Partner to stop sexual violence in armed conflict & disaster settings.
7. Support young women traumatized during brutal conflicts.
8. Train police to deal with family violence.
9. Treat & support survivors of extreme sexual violence.
10. Provide a safe haven for girls escaping coerced marriage.
11. Highlight the injustice of child marriage & too early pregnancy.
12. Offer alternatives to “survival sex”.
13. Call attention to “new forms of slavery”.
15. Address the needs of women in refugee camps.
16. Support efforts to end impurity for perpetrators.
17. Educate the population prior to abuse.
18. Prevention of intimate partner and sexual violence such as working with men and boys to change attitudes that condone violence, decreasing alcohol intake, empowering women
19. Capacity building—how much training have you had to deal with violence against women
20. Other activities

4. 2007-2010 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President Dr. Atsuko Heshiki from Japan
Secretary-General Dr. Shelley Ross from Canada
Immediate Past President  Dr. Gabrielle Casper, Australia
President-Elect   Dr. Afua Hesse from Ghana
Treasurer        Dr. Gail Beck from Canada
Finance Chair    Dr. Kyung Ah Park from Korea

Vice Presidents:
Northern Europe  Dr. Olof Sigurdardottir from Iceland
Central Europe   Dr. Waltraud Diekhaus from Germany
Southern Europe  Dr. Gwenaelle Vidal-Trecan from France
North America    Dr. Shirley Hovan from Canada
Latin America    Dr. Ruth Guillen de Maldonado from Bolivia
Central Asia     Dr. Manju Mataliya from India
Near East & Africa Dr. Frida Kazembe from Zambia
Western Pacific  Dr. Winnie Yang from Taiwan (ROC)

Chair of Finance  Dr. Kyung Ah Park from Korea
Chair Ethics and Resolutions Dr. Shirley Hovan from Canada
Chair Scientific and Research Dr. Olof Sigurdardottir from Iceland

MWIA’s Representatives at the UN and WHO
United Nations and Department of Public Information in New York
  Dr. Satty Gill Keswani
  Dr. Mini Murty

World Health Organization in Geneva
  Dr. Elizabeta Dulic
  Dr. Elisabeth Blocklinger
  Dr. Claudia Landerer
  Dr. Andrea Gilomen

United Nations in Vienna
  Dr. Iris Habitzel
5. NEWS FROM THE VPs AND THEIR REGIONS

Northern Europe
Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, The Netherlands, United Kingdom

Dr. Olof Sigurdardottir, Vice President for Northern Europe, Iceland

Denmark
A powerful and useful documentary film against Female Genital Mutilation, called The Secret Pain, has won the Amnesty International and Salaam DK’s Human Rights Award.

As you may remember, the film was shown at the MWIA Congress in Ghana in 2007 and had a huge impact on the participants. The film accompanies Kadiatu Suma/Kate Kendel back to her native Sierra Leone looking into the harmful practice of FGM, and features MWIA’s very own Dr. Koso Thomas. The film provides information on the physical and mental consequences of FGM and it makes you understand why FGM is still practiced and how to stop it.

Right now a brand new DVD of the film is being finished. This new DVD will include versions spoken in the following languages: 1) Creol voices (Creol is spoken in Sierra Leone), 2) Arab voices, 3) French-African voices, 4) Kiswahili voices. This means that you don’t have to possess reading abilities in order to understand the film. Furthermore the new DVD includes versions with subtitles in the following languages: English, French, Arab and Danish.

As soon as the DVD is ready, information on how to get hold of the film will be available on the web side of the film. Keep checking the web of the film in March-April 2009:

www.thesecretpain.com

United Kingdom
National Coordinator Dorothy Ward, Scotland
The Medical Women’s Federation continues to work on behalf of women doctors and their patients.

The officers have met with the Chief Medical Officer’s working group on Women in Medicine, having already attended four out of six meetings he has arranged. MWF is well in the forefront of addressing issues such as the availability of flexible training and mentoring women specialists and academic family physicians in their applications for Clinical Excellence Awards. Together with the Royal Colleges, MWF is a nominating body for such awards. It was recognized that it is now essential to address application problems at a local level and to help women to get a foot on the career ladder. Other issues discussed at these important meetings are the need for adequate maternity leave for salaried family physicians and partners without penalizing the practices. The need for the
re-instatement of the Returner Scheme for the doctors who have been out of UK medicine for two years was highlighted.

The MWF Spring Council Meeting, Annual General Meeting and Scientific Symposium will be held in Brighton, May 8-9, 2009. The topics for discussion will include the Night Club Culture (recreational drug use, women and binge drinking, violence, risky sexual behaviour and the fetal alcohol syndrome). A new feature will be a debate on the subject of Healthcare is Strengthened by Women Doctors? Group discussions on these and other topics will be held including health hazards associated with the recession, homeless, refugees, asylum seekers and other international issues. The winners of the Medical Student Essay Prize will present their views on How can doctors safeguard children better? And Are there too many women in medicine?

A flexible training away day was held in February, 2009, in Liverpool, where the promotion of less than fulltime training was considered and how better support for trainees could be improved. Helen Goodyear, MWF President, was the guest speaker.

The MWF report, “Making Part Time work” has been well received in the UK. This report was launched in June, 2008, and the MWF has now finalized its recommendations. The report recognizes the importance of working part-time in the medical profession. The report and its recommendations will be of interest and assistance to other national associations in taking part-time work forward in both training and career posts. The full report and its recommendations are available at www.medicalwomensfederation.org.uk.

For International Women’s Day, the Scottish Women’s Convention celebrated with a lunch, meeting in the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh and a reception and concert in the evening.

Central Europe
Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Switzerland

Dr. Waltraud Diekhaus, Vice President Central Europe, Germany

Austria
The Austrian Medical Women are well into planning the Central European Regional Meeting, which will be held in Vienna from May 15-16, 2009. The topics will include Gender and Oncology, Female Physicians and Politics, Migration and Medicine,
Medicine Meets Philosophy and Sociology and a Gender Workshop. Please visit www.aerztinnenbund.at for details.

**Germany**
Dr. Waltraud Diekhaus wrote to say that International Women’s Day in Dortmund was a very successful event. About 800 women from many different women’s organization met in the town hall. There were 13 different “Foren,” which are public presentations. Dr. Diekhaus’s presentation was Women “tick” differently, which was about Gender mainstreaming in medicine and took place in the main hall. There were 165 women in attendance, including the media. The presentation was well received, making gender mainstreaming and MWIA well represented in Dortmund.

In addition, some time ago, Dr. Diekhaus was involved in building a network called “Ladies Goal” in Dortmund where we deal with different women’s issues. All “members” are women in leading positions and we all try to make women more visible and better represented in deciding positions. Our next project is centered around the elections this summer for the future Lord Mayor. A meeting was organized with the title Dortmund’s Women Search for THEIR Lord Mayor. The three candidates were in attendance.

**Switzerland**
The Women’s World Summit Foundation has launched its White Ribbon – Campaign Switzerland to encourage men of all ages to commit to create a world without violence against women. A similar campaign exists already in 47 countries with Switzerland joining the list on this past St. Valentine’s Day.

**Southern Europe**
Belgium, France, Greece, Israel, Italy

**Dr. Gwenaëlle M Vidal-Trécan, Vice President Southern Europe, France**

**Belgium**
The Medical Women’s Association of Belgium (MWAB) is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. Dr. Christine Pouliart was instrumental in starting this national organization and remains its National Coordinator. To celebrate, MWAB President, Dr. Agnes Vermeulen will be organizing a congress, entitled "Does medicine treat men and women the same-- Symptoms, diagnosis, therapy, and research?" Presentations from several distinguished speakers will show that many diseases manifest themselves differently and operate differently in women than in men. It is know that women and men react differently to drugs and this contrary to what conventional medicine teaches. This congress will be held on November 14, 2009 at "Parliament Congress hall", Chausée de Louvain21, Brussels.
France
The Association Française des Femmes Médecins held a meeting on January 31, 2009, in the Palais de Luxembourg in Paris on the Health of the Child and Adolescent. The meeting was pleased to receive greetings from Senator Gisele Gautier, who is the President of the Senate Committee on the Rights of Women.

The Association of French Women Doctors publishes an excellent journal called Hygie. Dr. Cecile Renson, the current French president, and Dr. Marie-Dominique Ghnassia are two of the persons responsible for this excellent publication.

North America
Canada, United States of America

Dr. Shirley Hovan, Vice President North America, Canada

Canada
Please plan to attend the North American Regional meeting, being held onboard the Maasdam of Holland America line. The topic is “Caring for the Caregiver” which is relevant for all of us. I am very much looking forward to a cruise on the Eastern Seaboard in the fall, September 19 – 26, 2009, and I hope that if you can get away at that time you will consider attending. The topics will include Resilience, Nutrition and Exercise, Aesthetic Solutions, The Role of Gender in Care Giving, and Retirement Planning. Please check the website for more details! (http://www.mwia.net/)

The Federation of Medical Women plans to have its Annual Board and General meeting at the end of the cruise in Montreal.

I attended the Commission on the Status of Women in March in New York City. Thank you to Drs. Keswani and Murthy for organizing the MWIA event.

United States
The American Medical Women’s Association is held its annual meeting in March 27-29, 2009, in Williamsburg, Virginia. Dr. Roberta Ruben was recently honoured with the Dr. Bertha Van Heusen Award for her dedicated work for AMWA.

AMWA is developing a permanent exhibit in the lobby of Drexel University’s new building for the Institute for Women’s Health and Leadership (Philadelphia, PA). The institute is also the home for the Archives & Special Collections on Women in Medicine, the largest collection of material pertaining to the history of women in medicine, including AMWA’s historical documents and photos from the founding meeting in 1915 to the present day.

Latin America
According to Women’s ENews, San Luis Hospital in Otavalo, a town in the Andean highlands has developed a vertical maternity ward that connects indigenous birthing practices with access to modern medicine. Six horizontal bars covered in colorful rope hang on the back wall. Laboring women move down the rungs during delivery, transitioning from almost standing before contractions, to kneeling with their palms on the lowest rung, back curled like a cat, posterior high and ready for birth. The practitioners believe the downward abdominal pressure as a woman moves down the steps or switches from standing to squatting helps push the child out and speeds up dilation of her cervix. Vertical deliveries have helped reduce Caesarean sections from 18 to 8 percent at the hospital.

The United Nations Population Fund for Women supports Hospital San Luis de Otavalo’s center as a way to help meet the millennium development goal of reduced maternal mortality by making hospitals friendlier to rural communities that follow traditional customs.

Plans are underway for the Near East and Africa Regional Meeting in July, 2009, in Dar-Es-Salaam. Please see the website for details.

Four female senior medical students from UBC set out for an adventure of a lifetime in Uganda in January 2009. After a Christmas break spent stalking wild elephants, hippos, giraffes and lions while on safari in Uganda's magnificent national parks, we headed to the bustling capital, Kampala. We spent four weeks working at a large public tertiary referral hospital, Mulago. Our time spent on the high risk labour ward made the biggest impression. With over 80 admissions and 60 births per day, the sheer number of medically ill women who presented to the ward was overwhelming. Eclampsia, stillbirths, puerperal sepsis, ruptured uteri, multiple gestations, malaria in pregnancy and post-partum hemorrhage were everyday occurrences, with a maternal death every 1-2 days. The lack of basic supplies such as IV fluids, oxytocin and blood products was shocking, along with practically non-existent neonatal resuscitation. Despite the
challenging circumstances, we were struck by the warmth, generosity and resourcefulness of the physicians, midwives and nurses we encountered during our rotation. A week spent on the Infectious Disease ward also eye-opening, with patients presenting with diseases we had only read about in textbooks, such as Cryptococcus meningitis, miliary tuberculosis and tetanus. During our time in Kampala, we also volunteered with community-based organizations who work with street youth, doing outreach sessions in the slums focusing on wound care. We de-stressed during our time off with delicious Indian cuisine, rafting trips on the Nile and shopping for beautiful handicrafts, and getting to know the fun-loving Ugandan residents. During the elective, we learned about women's health in a global context, and the Medical Women's International Association helped to put us in contact with local physicians who could mentor us. Our elective in Africa was an unforgettable experience, one that will stay with us through residency and beyond.

**Zambia.** Velepi Mtonga the Secretary General of MWAZ is the new Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health in Zambia. A permanent Secretary is the technical and accounting head of a ministry.

Dr. Frida Kazembe was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General and is now Commandant of the Military Hospital in Lusaka. She is therefore the first woman general in the Zambia army as well as the first woman Commandant.

**Central Asia**

India, Thailand

**Dr. Manju Mataliya, Vice President Central Asia, India**

India

The Association of Medical Women in India is planning the Central Asian Regional meeting for early 2010. More information will be available in the next Update.

**Western Pacific**

Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, New Zealand, Philippines, Taiwan (ROC)

**Dr. Winnie Yang, Vice President Western Pacific, Taiwan (ROC)**

Australia

On March 8 AFMW Website Editor Dr Jill Tomlinson was announced the winner of the Centre for Leadership for Women’s 2009 national Leadership Achievement Award. The Award recognizes Dr Tomlinson’s pro bono work on the Bridging Leadership Barriers Project, a project she designed and implemented through the Australian Federation of Medical Women (AFMW) for the benefit of the medical and wider community.
In the course of a generation women have gone from comprising a small minority of medical graduates to making up over 50% of each graduating year. Despite this women remain under represented in senior leadership positions. Jill’s project aimed to foster communication, networking, leadership and opportunities among medical women. Successfully gaining major funding through the Office For Women Leadership and Development Programme Grants, the project awarded 22 Leadership Scholarships totaling $15,000 to assist medical women to attend the Medical Women’s International Association Western Pacific Regional Congress (MWIA WPRC) in Melbourne in October 2008.

The myriad initiatives developed from the project include:

- A negotiation skills workshop at the MWIA WPRC
- Creation of the AFMW leadership skills database to increase women’s voice in public policy and service delivery
- Redevelopment of the AFMW website using the open source content management system Joomla
- Creation of a Leadership Portal at the AFMW website to promote leadership discussions and assist women in developing their leadership skills
- Website skills training sessions in Melbourne and Sydney
- The development of tools that individuals can use to develop website management skills, including a practice website and an e-Book guide to uploading and editing website information
- A quarterly national e-newsletter
- The development of resources to support administrative and communication endeavours, including the publication and national promotion of e-Books.

In the coming months the project aims include

- Encouraging medical women to sign up for the free quarterly AFMW e-newsletter by visiting http://afmw.org.au
- Encouraging medical women to join the AFMW leadership database
- Providing resources that will assist each medical women’s society with their administrative and communication activities
- Developing resources that will assist medical women in South Australia, the Northern Territory, Tasmania and Western Australia to form a medical women’s organization in their own state.

Details of this and other AFMW activities can be found at http://afmw.org.au

Dr. Jane Hirst from Australia represented MWIA at the conjoint WHO/UNFPA/UNICEF meeting in Ho Chi Minh City. The topic of the meeting was progress in the Western Pacific Region on achieving Millennium Development Goal 5 which is the reduction in maternal mortality from the 1990 level by 75% by 2015. Dr. Hirst will now be presenting a paper on her findings at the 2009 AOCOG/RANZCOG meeting in Auckland.
Hong Kong

Meeting with guests from Australia

The Board Members of the Hong Kong Women Doctors Association (HKWDA) were delighted to meet Dr. Kate Duncan, committee member of the Australian Federation of Medical Women, during her visit to Hong Kong in December, 2008. We had fruitful discussion with exchange of ideas with regard to development of our association for the benefit of both women doctors and the whole community. In January, 2009, we were also pleased to meet Dr. Raie Goodwach, Vice President of the Victorian Medical Women's Society, and managed to have a tea reception followed by a dinner meeting hosted by our president, Dr. Cissy Yu and the rest of the board members.

Community Service in Hong Kong and Mainland China

1) Ripple Action 14 December 2008

“Ripple action” is a collaborative effort of several women professional groups including the Hong Kong Women Doctors Association (HKWDA), Hong Kong Federation of Women Lawyers, Association of Women Accountants (Hong Kong) Ltd and Hong Kong Nurses General Union; together with local NGO’s, aiming to provide community service to women in need such as new immigrants from China. The HKWDA organized free cervical screening for these women, most of whom have never had a cervical smear done before. In the three events of the Ripple Action in March, July and December 2008, 210 women had smears taken and 17 were referred to a specialist clinic for further follow-up including colposcopy examination. Apart from cervical cancer screening, seminars on female rights and financial management were conducted by co-organizers.

2) Guangdong Province Shaoguan Eyecare project [in collaboration with Guangdong Women Doctors Association and the Lions Club (Guangdong Lingnam)] 13-14 December, 2008.

Earlier in 2008, 5 members from our association visited a remote village in Ruyuan county in Shaoguan region in the northern part of Guangdong, China and provided eye examinations for local villagers. Over 300 villagers were examined, and nearly 150 were diagnosed to have cataract or other ophthalmological diseases. With the financial support of the Lions Club (Guangdong Lingnam), cataract surgeries were performed for free for the villagers on 13-14 December, 2008, by ophthalmologists.

Japan

First of all, we, JWMA, call for education and spread of cervical cancer screening and HPV vaccination on behalf of young women’s health.

The highlight of events during this term was The Japan-Arab Women Exchange program, which consisted of 2 parts. The first part was the mission to Jordan Syria, and Egypt which was reported by Dr Atsuko Heshiki, MWIA president, in the MWIA Update No. 36. The second part was a return visit by delegates from these three countries.
The delegates consisted of a Jordan woman doctor (specialist of Radiotherapy) and an Egypt lady (Senior advisor, Children’s Program Director, The National Council for children and Motherhood). They arrived in Tokyo on January 28, 2009. Our theme was “Leadership- Achievement and Accomplishment”. Their presentations were well received in two symposiums held in Tokyo and Kakegawa, Shizuoka. We arranged meetings with Congresswomen and one with the Royal Families and some sightseeing in Tokyo. They finished their visit on February 4 2009.

Regarding ongoing projects, here are the reports from the various sections.

1. Report from Academic section
   - JMWA decided to continue subsidizing three women’ doctors for the young outstanding investigators on February 28, 2009.
   - The 2008 meeting for advanced academic knowledge was the “Forum of The Japan-Arab Women Exchange Program” sponsored by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

2. Report from support to women doctors and students.
   - The Carrier up seminar for Carrier design making was held.

3. Report from child-raising committee
   - Child emergency issue and its infrastructure are discussed.
   - The seminars and the meetings were held 4 times from October, 2008 to Jan, 2009.
   - The 10th meeting of the training course on teen health, sex, and wellness was held in Tokyo 3 times from Oct, 2008, to Jan, 2009.

4. Reports of longevity and wellness committee
   - The lectures for education for safe sputum suctioning were held twice from October, 2008 to January, 2009.

**Philippines**
A bill in the Philippines would create family planning programs for the first time, but faces stiff opposition from religious leaders. It would attempt to reduce maternal deaths and curb population growth.

**Taiwan**
The last meeting of the members was held on 12th December, 2008, at Yang Ming Hospital in Taipei City. Twelve new board members were elected. Approximately NT $50000 was raised for the association by members.

On 20th December, 2008, one week follow the members’ meeting, the first meeting of the new board of directors was held and Happy Kuy-lok Tan was elected as the new president and Dr Iris Chih-Tsai Chen as the new Secretary-General.
6. INFORMATION ABOUT THE COMMITTEES AND PROJECTS

MWIA has three standing committees: Finance, Scientific and Research, and Ethics and Resolutions. Please email the Secretariat if you would like to serve on any of these committees.

The Chair of the Finance Committee is Dr. Kyung Ah Park. Vice Chairs are Dr. Eleanor Nwadinobi and Dr. Caroline Jehu-Appiah. The Chair of the Scientific & Research Committee is Dr. Olof Sigurdardottir. Vice chairs are Dr. Ruth Guillén de Maldonado, Dr. Gwenaelle Vidal-Trecan and Dr. Winnie Yang. The Chair of the Ethics & Resolutions Committee is Dr. Shirley Hovan. Vice chairs are Dr. Susanne Close and Dr. Deborah Colville.

PROJECTS

MWIA has decided on a number of projects in addition to the ongoing work with:
1. Gender and health to include the gender culture intersect
2. Adolescent sexuality
3. Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission in HIV AIDS Plus
4. Issues for Women Doctors including Leadership, Human Resource Planning, and the Pink Collar Profession

The new projects for the 2007-2010 triennium are:
1. Cervical Cancer including HPV and HPV vaccine
2. Gender based violence including trafficking and female genital mutilation
3. Primary Health Care
4. Gender perspective to Diabetes Mellitus

Please e-mail the Secretariat if you wish to serve on any of the committees or work on any of the projects. Please note that this is volunteer work and there is no financial compensation. A functioning e-mail address is necessary for successful communication for the committee work.
7. CALENDAR OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

MWIA AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS - CONGRESSES AND MEETINGS

2009

1. **April 24-25, 2009** – Vancouver, Canada
   11th Annual Conference of the Canadian Society of Physician Executives
   [www.cspexecs.com](http://www.cspexecs.com)

2. **April 27-May 1, 2009** Istanbul, Turkey
   12th World Congress on Public Health

5. **May, 15-16, 2009** – Vienna, Austria
   Central European Regional Meeting
   For further information visit [www.aerztinnenbund.at](http://www.aerztinnenbund.at)

6. **July 13-17, 2009** - Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania
   MWIA Near East & Africa Regional Meeting
   Developing World Towards Achieving Health Related MDG in 1025
   **Venue:** Dar Es Salaam Kunduchi Beach Hotel
   Further details can be found at [www.mewata.org](http://www.mewata.org)

7. **September 19-26, 2009** – Cruise from Boston to Montreal
   MWIA North American Regional Meeting
   Taking Care of the Caregiver: Physician Heal Thyself
   Bookings must be through SeaCourses at [www.seacourses.com](http://www.seacourses.com)

8. **September 26, 2009** Montreal, Canada
   Annual meeting of the Federation of Medical Women of Canada following the North American Cruise
   Further details can be found at [www.fmwc.ca](http://www.fmwc.ca)

9. **October 21-25, 2009** Washington, DC, USA
   Annual Global Meeting of the Bone and Joint Decade.
   Visit [www.usbjd.org](http://www.usbjd.org)

10. **November 14, 2009** Brussels, Belgium
    Does Medicine Treat Men and Women the Same?
    Parliament Congress Hall, Chaussee de Louvain 21, Brussels
2010

1. **February or March, 2010** – India
   Central Asia Regional Meeting
   More details to follow in next Update

2. **May 14, 15, 16, 2010** – Paris, France
   Southern European Regional Meeting
   [http://affm.affinitesante.com](http://affm.affinitesante.com)

3. **May 23-29, 2010**  Sophia, Bulgaria
   Sophia Women’s World Conference
   MDG#3 Gender Equality and Empowerment
   [www.sophia2010.org](http://www.sophia2010.org)

4. **July 28-31, 2010**  The Residence in Munster, Germany
   28th International Congress of MWIA
   Globalization in Medicine: Challenges and Opportunities
   [www.mwia2010.net](http://www.mwia2010.net)

8. **NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS**

With the relocation of the Secretariat, this is an excellent time for all the national associations and individual members to update their contact information. Please send to the Secretariat at [secretariat@mwia.net](mailto:secretariat@mwia.net) the following:

1. The name of your President and National Coordinator with mailing and email addresses, phone and fax numbers

2. The website of your national association. You will find below a list of websites for the national associations. Please update the information.

Websites of National Associations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aerztiinnenbund.at">www.aerztiinnenbund.at</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mwab.be">http://www.mwab.be</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fmwc.ca">http://www.fmwc.ca</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td><a href="http://www.quindoc.dk">http://www.quindoc.dk</a></td>
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<td>Finland</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aerztiinnenbund.de">http://www.aerztiinnenbund.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fkli.is">http://www.fkli.is</a></td>
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</table>
9. Formation of the Special Interest Group for Young Doctors and Medical Students

Please remember that MWIA has a Special Interest Group for Young Doctors and Medical Students. Please nominate a young woman under the age of 40 to represent your country.

The committee contacts are through the Secretariat and are:

Chairperson: Dr. Inke Doench, Germany
Vice chair: Dr. Adjoa Duker, USA
Secretary: Dr. Jane Mba, Nigeria.

Find the MWIA Young Doctors and Medical Students Group on Facebook by following this link: http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=38931816104&ref=ts

The Special Interest Group is asking for names and email addresses from your countries.

Inke Doench will be present at the meeting in Vienna and a good turn-out is planned for the meeting in Dar-Es-Salaam.

10. Donations and Bequests

In addition to paying your dues on time and in full, please consider MWIA at the time of year when you make charitable donations and when you are updating your will. We have had a number of such donations over the years and are happy to publicly acknowledge your contribution if you wish to make a bequest or donation.
11. 28th MWIA Congress in Munster, Germany
July 27 to 31, 2010. Theme is Networking in Changing Times/World

Please mark your calendar for the 28th MWIA International Congress in Munster, Germany from July 28-31, 2010. The website is www.mwia2010.net and further details will appear during 2009.

The theme is Globalization in Medicine: Challenges and Opportunities. The sub themes are:
nutrition (lifestyle diseases, over- and under- and mal-nutrition)
addiction (drugs, alcohol, etc., internet and gambling addiction, etc.)
epidemic plagues (both communicable eg. AIDS, Malaria, TB, HPV and non-communicable eg diabetes, heart disease)
gender strategies (leadership, gender mainstreaming, empowerment, gender based violence, adolescent sexuality)
primary health care

Some useful links while planning your trip to Germany are:
Muenster/Osnabrueck International Airport
Dortmund Airport
City of Muenster
Muenster City Map and Transport
Weather in Germany
About Germany
German Railway
General information tourism information Germany
General information concerning visa regulations for travelling to Germany

12. Names in the News

Dr. Gail Beck is the first woman physician to head the Negotiations Committee for the Ontario Medical Association.

Dr. Waltraud Diekhaus has been elected to the German Medical Association.

Dr. Carol Herbert has been appointed Board Chair of the Board of Directors of The Canadian Medical Hall of Fame. Dr. Herbert will lead a team of 16 prominent health and business professionals from across Canada who is dedicated to future medical excellence through the celebration of Canada’s medical heroes.
Dr. Frida Kazembe is the first woman in Zambia to be appointed to the rank of Brigadier General and is now Commandant of the Military Hospital in Lusaka, Zambia. This makes her the first woman general in the Zambian Army as well as the first woman Commandant.

Dr. Heidi Oetter is the first female registrar of college of physicians and surgeons of British Columbia, Canada.

Dr. Velepi Mtonga, the Secretary General of the Medical Women’s Association of Zambia is the new Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health in Zambia. A permanent Secretary is the technical and accounting head of a ministry.

Dr. Charmaine Roye, a past Vice President for North America, has been appointed as Chief of Medical Staff of the Brant Community Health Care System which includes the Brantford and Willett Hospitals. Charmaine took an on-call trip to Sault Sainte Marie and delivered the biggest baby the city has ever seen at 14 pounds 10 ounces.

Dr. Roberta Ruben was recently honoured with the Dr. Bertha Van Heusen award at the annual meeting of the American Medical Women’s Association (AMWA) for her dedicated work for AMWA.

13. Books
Dr. Eileen Cambon, a Past National coordinator for Canada, has recently written a book entitled: Uppity Women We Are! 100 Year History of Medical Women of British Columbia (1893 - 1993)

Dr. Jean Fourcroy, Past Vice President for North America, has edited a book entitled Pharmacology, Doping and Sports. It can be ordered from orders@taylorandfrancis.com.

Dr. Mamta Gautam wrote the ever-popular book, IronDoc, telling us how to take care of ourselves. She will be the keynote speaker on the North American cruise.

The World Health Organization recently published Closing the Gap in a Generation, which is the report from the Commission on the Social Determinants of Health and WHO has recently released their publication on the importance of primary care in the health care system, entitled, “Now More Than Ever.”

II. ORGANIZATIONS

1. WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)

The World Health Assembly will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, at the Palais de Nations beginning May 18th. Among the topics to be discussed at the Assembly are Primary health care, including health systems strengthening, the Commission on Social Determinants. The Millennium Development Goals, as well as number of other issues. Documents can be found at http://www.who.int/gb/e/e_wha62.html and documents from the Executive Board can be found at http://www.who.int/gb/e/_eb124.html. If you wish to attend as a delegate of MWIA, please advise the Secretariat of MWIA at secretariat@mwia.net.

Summary of WHO Media Mailings

1. Melamine milk crisis
   WHO recommends that all infants be exclusively breastfed for the first six months. Thereafter infants should receive adequate and safe complementary foods while breastfeeding continues up to two years of age and beyond. Melamine is commonly used in food contact materials such as containers labels etc and alone is of low toxicity but when melamine is present in combination with cyanuric acid, a potential impurity of melamine, kidney problems can occur.

2. The electronic cigarette is not legitimate therapy for smokers trying to quit.

3. The malaria report showed that access to malaria control interventions, especially bed nets increased sharply between 2004-2006, due to increase funding by the Global Fund. Some African countries have decreased the deaths by 50% by following the recommendations. The number of malaria cases in 2006 was 247 million.

4. Impact of the global financial and economic crisis on health. This often translates to cuts to official development assistance and cuts in social spending. There needs to be increasing investment in health and the social sector during this time for the following reasons:
   a. to protect the poor
b. to promote economic recovery

c. to promote social stability

d. to generate efficiency

e. to build security

5. WHO welcomes the decision of the UN General Assembly to ban smoking at UN Headquarters in New York.

2. UNITED NATIONS

Violence Against Women

The UN Secretary-General, has a website for violence against women at:
http://webapps01.un.org/vaw/about.action

INSTRAW (UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women)

INSTRAW held its first virtual dialogue on the topic of the “Current Situation in Gender Training”. The next formal activity is a Virtual Dialogue on Gender Training Methodologies, running from March 23rd to April 10th.

Commission on the Status of Women

The 53rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women was held in UN Headquarters in New York from March 2-13, 2009. The themes were:

Priority theme: "The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS"

Review theme: "Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels."

Thank you to Drs. Satty Gill Keswani and Mini Murthy for organizing MWIA’s side event entitled, “Gender equity and male responsibility - come and learn from the women doctors of the world.”

DPINGO (Department of Public Information NGO section)

While UN Headquarters in New York remain under renovation, for the second consecutive year, the DPINGO conference will be held outside UN Headquarters. Last year, it was held at UNESCO in Paris. MWIA was pleased to have three of our French members: Dr. Marie-Dominique Ghnassia, Dr. Simone Zerah and Dr. Cecile Renson represent us at the conference in Paris.

November 14th was the deadline for nominations for the Conference Chair for the 2009 conference. The 62nd Annual DPI/NGO Conference will be held in Mexico City September 9-11, 2009 on the general theme of disarmament and international peace.
Beijing + 15

The theme will be The Global World Through Women’s Eyes: A New World for All. The NGO CSW, NY in collaboration with the NGO CSW, Geneva and the NGO CSW, Vienna will review the history of the Beijing Conference as well as Beijing + 5, and +10. We will draw from those conferences (as well as Mexico City, Copenhagen, Nairobi) to follow their recommendations, complement their efforts and achievements. Our ultimate goal is implementation and gender parity. At the outcome of Beijing + 15, there will be a concise document produced with a clear message, one that is user-friendly, can be translated and used repetitively.

The homepage for NGO at CSW is http://www.ngocsw.org/en/main

ECOSOC

There were two e-discussions held in 2009 by ECOSOC. Phase I e-discussion was on strengthening health systems. (January 29 to February 11). The recommendations were twofold, namely a need to overcome health inequities to achieve universal coverage and renewal of primary health care, and overcoming the shortage of health care workers. Phase 2 e-discussion was on emerging and future health challenges (January 12 to February 26). The latter phase was coordinated by Dr. Ala Alwan, Assistant Director-General, Noncommunicable Diseases and Mr. Alex Ross, Director, Programme on Partnerships and UN Reform, both at WHO Headquarters in Geneva. The discussions around Phase 2 spoke of national strategies to address noncommunicable diseases and global partnerships and the financial crisis.

ECOSOC is holding a high level segment on the theme of implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health in Geneva from July 2-4, 2009.

3. GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION TO STOP CERVICAL CANCER

The Medical Women’s International Association (MWIA) took an active part in the formulation of the Global Call of Action to Stop Cervical Cancer through participation at the London meeting of partners held in December, 2006. Subsequently, MWIA in collaboration with other partners launched the Global call during the YWCA Global Conference in Nairobi on July 6, 2007, and at the MWIA International Congress in Accra in August 1, 2007. MWIA is one of the initial signatories and is proud to stand beside other organizations who believe that women should not die from cervical cancer.

4. PATH

PATH has been instrumental in developing two new online cervical cancer prevention resources, at www.rho.org. The first is evidence of support for improved cervical cancer prevention in developing countries and the second is shaping strategies to introduce HPV vaccines in India, Peru, Uganda and Vietnam.
5. EUROPEAN WOMEN’S LOBBY (EWL)

The European Women's Lobby is the biggest Coalition of Women's Organizations in Europe

Dr. Waltraud Diekhaus represents MWIA on the EWL.

New European Legislation Related to Equality between Women and Men

Three proposal for EU legislation (directives) are currently being negotiated by the Member States and the European institutions – one Directive proposes significant improvements in the right to maternity leave throughout the EU, the second should introduce improvements to the situation of self-employed workers and assisting spouses/lifepartners and another Directive will introduce an EU wide ban on discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation in media, education, social protection, and in access to goods and services. Another negotiation process between social partners aims at revising the existing European legislation on parental leave. The European Women’s Lobby is committed to follow these legislative processes to make sure their outcome will have a significant positive impact on the lives of women throughout Europe, in particular in relation to giving real opportunities to reconcile work and private life for both women and men.

For International Women’s Day, the EWL is calling for full recognition of women as actors for change in Europe—nothing less. There is still an opportunity to sign the petition at www.5050decomocracy.eu to join the campaign of “No modern European democracy without gender equality – 50/50, calling for more women in decision making at all levels.

The European Women’s lobby recently welcomed the decision of the European Commission to consult civil society at EU level on health inequalities. It is obvious that even though there is a growing recognition of gender as a key determinant of health, gender inequalities in health persist throughout Europe.

6. Women Deliver

Women Deliver is currently assembling an advisory group of UN agencies, donors, and civil society organizations that will serve to guide the Women Deliver agenda. Civil society representatives will be drawn from related fields including: maternal and newborn
health; sexual and reproductive health and rights; youth; women’s rights; HIV and AIDS; and human rights. Look out for more information on this group in the New Year.

Visit the website www.womendeliver.org to keep up with developments.

7. American Women’s Hospital Service
AMHS was founded in 1917 during World War I by a group of New York physicians and patients who wanted to send an ambulance staffed by women physicians to the front in France. Today, AMHW provides essential services to numerous underserved communities in the US and overseas, including the MWIA Mission Hospital in Calcutta. Should you wish to donate contact info@amwa-doc.org.

8. WONCA Women
There will be a meeting in UK in 2009 (28 June - 3 July 2009) to plan WONCA WOMEN’s preparations for Cancun and onwards into the next decade!

WONCA has organized a campaign called “15 by 2015” which calls on all major global health donors to allocate 15% of all their grants towards strengthening the primary health care system of the country in which they work. Currently, funding is vertically programmed towards specific diseases. In contrast, more funding needs to be horizontally programmed towards broad-based improvements in population health, including preventative measures, primary care services, and health workforce development. This 15 by 2015 campaign is aimed at security such funding.

To sign the petition, go to http://www.15by2015.org/index.php/petition/.

Dr. Amanda Howe of WONCA Women informs us that there is a good framework for leadership competencies in the UK at http://www.institute.nhs.uk/assessment_tool/general/medical_leadership_competency_framework_-_homepage.html

9. Sophia Women’s World Conference: Women and Wisdom

The purpose of the conference is to illuminate and implement vital UN Living Documents especially MDG#3 Gender Equality and Empowerment.

Of the 12 critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform of Action, those of most interest to MWIA are;
Women and Health
Violence Against Women
Women in Power and Decision-making
Human Rights of Women
Women and the Environment
The Girl Child

For more information, please visit the website: www.sophia2010.org
10. UNIFEM

There is a new Gender Observatory in Rwanda, aimed at ensuring that gender is mainstreamed at all levels.

11. International Federation of Medical Students (IFMSA)

Please visit the website at [www.ifmsa.org](http://www.ifmsa.org) for their activities.

12. HPV Vaccine Global Community of Practice

The HPV Vaccine Global Community is an online global network of people who share an interest in preventing cervical cancer and in the role of HPV vaccines in health programs. The purpose is to share and exchange knowledge, ideas and resources to explore the feasibility of introducing HPV vaccines within cervical cancer control programs and thereby ensure that people around the globe have equitable access to the best available health care. For more information and to join, visit [http://hpv-vaccines.net](http://hpv-vaccines.net)

13. Framework Convention Alliance on Tobacco Control

As an organization whose mandate includes women's health, MWIA wrote in support of the tobacco initiatives. Dr. Corinne Bretscher from MWIA worked on the initial work in Geneva. MWIA recently filled out a questionnaire from the Framework Convention.

14. Engender Health

Engender Health has received a three-year, $11 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to establish the Maternal Health Task Force project. The Task Force will support and bring together individuals and organizations to encourage dialogue, build consensus, and share information on the technical, scientific, and programmatic challenges to reducing maternal mortality and morbidity. Ann Blanc, Ph.D. will be the Director of the task force. The Task Force will serve as a broker of ideas for a wide range of approaches to improving maternal health, one of the most neglected areas in global health. Maternal morbidity and mortality rates remain unacceptably high across the developing world. Recognizing that real progress will require consensus, better coordination, and increased global attention, the Task Force offers a structure and process for catalyzing existing maternal health initiatives, deepening the involvement of developing country experts, engaging new organizations from allied fields, and making information more accessible to broader audiences. The Task Force will promote dialogue, elevate attention, and facilitate global coordination of the research and evidence, programming and evaluation, and policy and advocacy needed to sustain progress toward
improving the lives and health of women, families, and communities around the world.

15. UNICEF

The latest UNICEF report states that pregnancy is 300 times more deadly in the world’s poorest nations. A child born in a developing country is 14 times more likely to die during the first month of life than a child born in a developed country. Here is information on the latest UNICEF report:

The agency notes that both mothers and infants are vulnerable in the days and weeks after birth—a critical time for lifesaving interventions, such as post-natal visits, proper hygiene, and counseling about the danger signs of maternal and newborn health.

While many developing countries have made excellent progress improving their child survival rate in recent years, there has been less headway in reducing maternal mortality.

Launching the report in Johannesburg, UNICEF Executive Director Ann M. Veneman noted that more than half a million women die every year as a result of pregnancy or childbirth complications, including about 70,000 girls and young women aged 15 to 19.

To lower the risks for pregnant women and newborns, the report recommends the provision of essential services that include a continuum of care at critical points adolescence, pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, birth, post-natal and neonatal periods, infancy and childhood as well as at key locations where they can be readily accessed by women and children.

It adds that health services are most effective in an environment supportive of women’s empowerment, protection, and education.

“Saving the lives of mothers and their newborns requires more than just medical intervention,” noted Ms. Veneman. “Educating girls is pivotal to improving maternal and neonatal health and also benefits families and societies.”

16. International Conference on Population and Development

In 1994, the world came together at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) to achieve a consensus on what had previously been a deeply divisive issue: the relationship between population growth and other areas of development. This year marks the 15th anniversary of ICPD, and is a chance to advocate that governments fulfill their commitments that were made 15 years ago. To stay up-to-date on news and events, check the ICPD+15 dedicated sites at UNFPA and IPPF.

17. Women’s UN Report Network (WUNRN) http://www.wunrn.com
The USA Coalition for Battered Women at http://www.mcbw.org has produced a toolkit to calculate the cost of domestic violence.

Attached is the Toolkit: Calculating the Cost of Domestic Violence.

MCBW - USA Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women - http://www.mcbw.org

18. **Global Symposium on engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality**
This symposium was held in Rio de Janeiro March 30 to April 3 and challenged rigid gender norms and engaged men and boys in reducing violence against women and girls, promoting sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment and fatherhood and caregiving.

### III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next Update will be published in June, 2009.

Please send us your reports, comments or any other interesting information by May 31, 2009, at the latest. We are always interested to put your name and your accomplishments in the Update.

Letters to the editor are always welcome.