

Letter from the Focal Point for Women  
Congratulations to ...  
Around the UN ...  
Violence against women  
Around the world ...

Women and health  
In your interest ...  
Work/life  
Recommended reading  
Websites



AROUND THE

- The film "Sisters in Law" showing how female lawyers and judges from Cameroon apply the Convention in local courts to defend women subjected to domestic violence and in cases of gender inequality. High Courts spearhead decisions on these issues.

The Convention has been signed and ratified by 186 countries; 8 have not. Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement for Women, remarked that many challenges prevail in various regions of the world with regards to violence against women. The issue takes many forms and each conflict has to be dealt with accordingly. Furthermore, it is not enough to have laws. The Secretary-General emphasized the need for the United Nations to "support CEDAW's full implementation".

## DECLARATION

- The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women was held on 24 November 2009 with the Secretary-General launching the Network of Men Leaders as part of his campaign to end violence against women. The Network of Men leaders consists of current and former politicians, activists, religious figures and community male advocates who are committed to

combat the global scourge of all forms of violence against women. A list of the names and backgrounds of the members of the new Network can be found at: [http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/11/091124\\_09.htm](http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/11/091124_09.htm).

The Secretary-General noted that new grants amounting to \$10.5 million for 13 projects in 18 countries and territories will be awarded this year. He noted that his campaign **UNITE to End Violence against Women** will be implemented through: (1) a series of events and activities in various countries; (2) a series of activities in various countries; (3) a series of activities in various countries; (4) a series of activities in various countries; (5) a series of activities in various countries. The campaign will run from 2009-2010.





due to its inactivity. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women issued a report calling for Japan to intensify its efforts to promote gender equality. The causes of the country's shortcomings in gender affairs consist of the lack of female leadership, the economic recession and the country's lack of involvement in its conventional politics. Some of Japan's current gender inequalities include the following:<sup>4</sup>

- Women earn only 60 to 70 per cent of men's wages;
- Women are legally required to wait six months before they can remarry;
- Children born out of wedlock are widely discriminated against;
- The legal age of marriage for women is 16 years of age;
- Married couples are not allowed to have separate surnames;
- There is a lack of clear definitions for incest and marital rape;
- The penalty for rape is minor;
- There is only one rape crisis centre in the entire country;
- The age of consensual sex in Japan is 13 years, as opposed to 16 years in many countries; and
- Pornographic video games and cartoons portraying rape and sexual violence against women are widespread and accepted in the country.

CEDAW member Yoko Hayashi hopes the Government will eventually provide more support to women, will identify more female advocates who will fight for women's rights and will cooperate with male champions of gender equality in the country.

## **M**

- Mexican women have been increasingly gaining control over rural production in the country, since men have left to seek better job opportunities in the cities or in the United States. Although rural women are highly involved in agricultural work, they are employed without





consciously tried to enjoy it. My ballroom dance teacher, Andrei, says dancing is just as good and maybe better than high impact aerobic exercise. It also actively stimulates the mind through the coordination of feet, body and arms and builds up self-esteem” .

Change your dance styles. In addition to ballroom dancing, take lessons in Middle Eastern dance, zumba or hip-hop, as I have done. Consequently, I am happier, less stressed and possess higher self-esteem. I am always thrilled to go to my dance sessions like a little girl eager to go to her ballet class!

- **Practice yoga.**

Equally valuable to dance are my yoga classes. Marlene, my yoga teacher for 3 years, confirms that “yoga helps to bring our body, mind and spirit into balance. Through yoga, and specifically through the conscious awareness of our breath, we become 'present' to the sensations we are experiencing on a moment-by-moment basis. We learn how to listen to our body and curb the flow of unproductive thoughts through our minds” .

- **Try strength training.**

Weight resistance training develops lean muscle mass, which in turn burns more calories. It will not necessarily give women bulky muscles; instead, it im

- (c) Climb the stairs at work or at home.
- (d) Jump rope for 10 minutes at a time, building up the number of repetitions to increase endurance.
- (e) Turn on your favorite dance music such as Gloria Gaynor's "I Will Survive" and dance your heart out?! Again, dancing burns off calories and can be so much fun.

The fifties can be your best years. Exercising releases serotonin, "the feel-good hormone". This gives you a post-exercise "high" which results in profound and positive effects—physically, mentally and emotionally. Nurture and develop a charmed and healthy life, regardless of your age!

early childhood is central to reproductive health of future years. In addition, the report highlights the need for a supportive environment free from gender-based health inequities to assist girls to develop physically, socially and emotionally and prevent the onset of substance abuse, mental disorders and disease later in life. Furthermore, the health of older women, which is often neglected, warrants greater consideration, particularly in poor countries.

First, strong leadership, including women's involvement in all areas of decision-making including their health. Second, accessible, comprehensive and responsive health systems

## IN YOUR INTEREST ...

### HO' ...

The World Health Organization presented a report entitled " ...". It states that despite the progress achieved, women's health is still an urgent priority since societies and health systems fall far short. The report reviews various health issues affecting girls and women throughout childhood, adolescence and adulthood and notes that ... While women may live longer than men, they are not necessarily healthier. The greatest gap lies in the area of maternal mortality. The report also highlights the problems of sexuality and reproductive health in young girls and women in developing countries. Poor women often suffer from the hazards of HIV/AIDS and early childbirth merely due to a lack of information and contraception. Other health challenges include road traffic injuries in adolescent girls, suicides of women between the ages of 20 and 59, and cardiovascular disease and stroke in women over 60 years. In sum, women and girls face major health challenges throughout their lives and must be provided with quality healthcare.

Good nutrition in

- The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) published a new report entitled [Population and Climate Change: The 2009 Challenge](#). It examines the issue of climates, which are

