



United Nations  
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la science et la culture

## International Round Table

# “GENDER EQUALITY: MAKE IT YOUR BUSINESS!”



**International Women's Day**  
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UNESCO Headquarters, Paris

*Organized by:  
Division for Gender Equality,  
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# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MESSAGE

KOÏICHIRO MATSUURA, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, UNESCO

On International Women's Day 2008, the United Nations calls on national governments and development partners to "invest in women and girls" by stepping up their financial contributions and commitments to promote gender equality at all levels – globally, regionally and nationally.

This call is both urgent and of critical importance. Over past decades, the promotion of gender equality in developing countries has attracted only a very small proportion of Official Development Assistance (ODA). This is the case despite evidence that the global fight against poverty cannot be won without gender equality.



Even after the inclusion of gender equality and women's empowerment as one of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDG3), funding has remained inadequate, and even declined in recent years. Indeed, according to a UN report, "to realize MDG3 by 2015 would require external resources... in the range of US\$25-28 billion annually in the low-income countries."\*

The first step to increase investment is to ensure that traditional funding sources such as ODA commit regular and identifiable resources to the promotion of gender equality. But this alone is not enough. National governments and international organizations also need to adopt gender-responsive budget initiatives. National government budget allocations and public sector expenditures must systematically address gender equality concerns and channel resources where they can achieve the most effective results. International organizations must likewise review their own financial commitments to ensure that gender equality receives the priority it deserves. Together, we must also look towards new and innovative sources of funding, such as private sector partnerships and foundations. Gender equality must become everyone's business – that is, a common priority among all partners in the development field.

UNESCO's commitment is firm. Gender equality has been designated as one of the Organization's two global priorities in the Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013, and this priority is already being translated into action under the Programme and Budget for 2008-2009. UNESCO has moved forward in this direction because we are convinced that gender equality is "smart economics, smart management, and smart partnership".

Gender equality is smart and just economics for many compelling reasons. It can act as a force for economic development and for improving the quality of life of society as a whole. However, we should also recognize that economic decisions impact women and men differently. Cut-backs on social expenditures hit women, especially poor women, harder than men: girls are taken out of schools, young women are exposed to higher risks of HIV infection, and women of all ages are subject to extreme forms of violence. Investing in women's educational, social, economic and professional opportunities in the pursuit of gender equality is not an "extra" handout. It is a matter of justice and human rights, and a development imperative of the highest order.

Gender equality is also smart management. At UNESCO, the introduction of mandatory capacity-building and training in gender mainstreaming has enhanced the impact of our action across all our fields of competence. This is because integrating gender equality considerations into programming means taking a different perspective – or, "putting on 'gender lenses'" – and thinking critically about the results and beneficiaries of programmes and activities, which leads to better planning and more effective development initiatives.

Gender equality is likewise smart management on an internal level. UNESCO is proud to be one of the few UN agencies to have already achieved gender parity among professional staff. At the senior decision-making level, we have set the ambitious target of increasing the representation of women to 50% by 2015. I am confident that this new policy objective can be attained and will lead to a stronger and more diverse human resource base.

Finally, gender equality is an especially smart foundation for partnerships – be it with national governments, bilateral or multilateral institutions, NGOs or the private sector. Gender equality lends itself particularly well to partnership because it is an issue of concern to everybody. It is best approached from a holistic point of view and necessitates multi-sectoral responses. In addition, partnerships provide an excellent opportunity to pool our resources for greater impact and efficiency.

UNESCO's unique global partnership with the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour is built on this basis. It seeks to promote women's leadership and gender equality through the engagement of top female tennis stars, and will soon begin funding projects globally, starting with activities in Liberia, Cameroon, the Dominican Republic and China. Similarly, the L'OREAL-UNESCO partnership "For Women in Science" awards outstanding female scientists around the world with fellowships and prize money to pursue their careers and thus recognizes their critical and often ground-breaking role and accomplishments.

Achieving gender equality requires more and better targeted financial resources. This investment is essential, not only to ensuring the rights of women, but also to achieving internationally agreed development objectives, including the MDGs. Let us not forget that progress for women is progress for all. The costs of working towards gender equality are far outweighed by the tremendous human, social and economic rewards.



*From left to right: Paola Gianturco, Sigrid Rausing, Hans d'Orville, Gülser Corat, and Sandra Reichel*

\* "Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women", Report of the Expert Group Meeting organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women, 4-7 September 2007, paragraph 33.

## INTERNATIONAL ROUND TABLE WELCOME REMARKS

HANS D'ORVILLE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

We are here today to celebrate International Women's Day. This year, this day is all the more significant for us at UNESCO as gender equality (and women's empowerment) is recently designated as one of two global priorities for the Organization in its Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4), and this priority has been translated into the Programme and Budget for 2008-2009. The Medium-Term Strategy commits UNESCO to prepare a results-based Gender Equality Action Plan for 2008-2013, which will identify the actions envisaged by UNESCO in its fields of competence with concrete results, timelines and budget allocations. We are currently in the process of developing this Action Plan.



As you may know, each year UNESCO takes the UN system-wide theme for International Women's Day and chooses a variant on that theme, always focusing on positive achievements, for its annual International Round Table – the flagship event of UNESCO's celebrations of International Women's Day. This year, the UN system-wide theme is "Investing in Women and Girls." Of course, there are a wide array of important and pertinent variants that we could have chosen to focus on. But it was clear and unanimous that this year UNESCO's International Round Table would seek to highlight and honour philanthropic and fundraising initiatives in the pursuit of women's rights, women's empowerment, and gender equality.

Why did we make this choice? In part, because the recently published Report of the Expert Group on Financing for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (September 2007), commissioned by the Division for the Advancement of Women, pointed to the fact that across the board public funding for women and gender equality has been diminishing. Given that funding for women has *never* reached the levels it needs, the fact that it is now diminishing is doubly worrisome – to give you an idea, the Expert Group Report highlighted that an estimated 25-28 billion dollars would be needed to achieve Millennium Development Goal 3, to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, with the specific target of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2015. Of course, figures such as these seem daunting. But the report provided one glimmer of hope: private philanthropy. The report shows that while governments, large foundations, and other sources have been withdrawing or reducing their support for gender equality and women's empowerment, "there has been an upward trend with other actors in private philanthropy, which includes smaller private foundations, family foundations, individual philanthropists and corporate funding." They furthermore pointed to the fact that this is true both in developing countries and in middle-income and highly-developed countries.

Thus, as we do every year for our celebrations of International Women's Day, we have decided not to dwell on the discouraging news that financing for women's empowerment and gender equality has been on the decline, despite the fact that it is a fundamental human right, a widely shared value, and a precondition for the realization of all internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs. We can focus on this during the other 364 days of the year. Today, for International Women's Day we would like to celebrate that one glimmer of hope – the philanthropists and fundraisers who have chosen to support women's rights, women's empowerment, and gender equality. We would also like to find out first-hand some of the reasons behind this important trend in private philanthropy. And so, we have gathered here today a group of distinguished individuals who have chosen to go above and beyond the call – either through their activities as the founders of private trusts, at the head of women's funds, or through their personal philanthropic engagements – by dedicating themselves to this important cause.

But before introducing our distinguished panellists, I would like to say a brief word about those who were not able to join us today – namely, philanthropists and fundraisers supporting women's rights, women's empowerment, and gender equality in Africa, Asia and the Arab States. As you know, every year for the International Round Table, UNESCO makes every effort to ensure representation from all regions. In this respect, this year we again made every effort to

reach out and contact some of the outstanding individuals working throughout these various regions. Many of them were unable to attend precisely because there is such a great and urgent need for the work that they undertake, that it is impossible for them to absent themselves even a short time.

Take, for example, Kaari Betty Murungi, the Executive Director of the African branch of the Urgent Action Fund for Women's Rights, based in Nairobi Kenya. The Urgent Action Fund provides "rapid-response grants" in order to finance actions for women's rights in the wake of unexpected events – positive or negative. Ms Murungi contacted UNESCO's Division for Gender Equality, of the Bureau of Strategic Planning, to express her regrets at not being able to attend today's International Round Table to which she was invited as a panellist because she was busy setting up emergency rape crisis centres in the aftermath of the recent, tragic violence in Kenya.

I must also point to the fact that it was far more difficult to find philanthropists and fundraisers working for women's rights, women's empowerment, and gender equality in the African, Asian, and Arab states region. And here I must underscore the fact that it is *not* because they do not exist. It is because their important work and dedication goes unrecognized. So today, we at UNESCO wish to dedicate a part of this ceremony to those anonymous women and men around the world who work to ensure that women's rights, women's empowerment and gender equality receive the funding they so urgently need in order to be realized.

Now, allow me to briefly introduce to you some of our panellists. We are very honoured to have Sigrid Rausing here with us today. Ms Rausing established her charitable trust – the Sigrid Rausing Trust – in 1995, and since then, has made hundreds of significant and critical grants to support women's rights around the world totalling millions of dollars. In recognition of her outstanding philanthropic activities, Ms Rausing has won numerous awards including the "Changing the face of Philanthropy" award, given by the Women's Funding Network.

Next on our panel is Sandra Reichel. Ms Reichel is the Director of the Generali Ladies Linz women's tennis tournament in Austria, and her support for women's empowerment and gender equality is particularly meaningful to us here at UNESCO, as it is directed through our very own UNESCO – Sony Ericsson WTA Tour Global Partnership for Gender Equality, which works to support women's leadership and gender equality around the world and in all spheres of life. This partnership which was launched in November 2006 benefits from the involvement of top tennis players such as Venus Williams, Tatiana Golovin and Jheng Zie who act as Promoters of Gender Equality to raise awareness and to mobilize funds for projects supporting women's leadership in all UNESCO domains and in sports-related areas.

We are also very pleased to have Paola Gianturco here with us today. Ms Gianturco has had an exciting and varied career, throughout which she has been able to combine career and convictions – supporting women's empowerment and gender equality, whether it be as the Senior Vice President of the first women-owned advertising agency in the United States, or in her current reincarnation as a photojournalist and philanthropist. Ms Gianturco travels the world documenting the lives and stories of women, and the books she produces from this work are all philanthropic projects for which she donates her royalties to carefully-selected nonprofit women's organizations.

I would like to express special thanks to the team of the Division for Gender Equality of the Bureau of Strategic Planning led by Gülser Corat which organized this important and exciting Round Table today along with a series of cultural and social events I hope you will take the time to enjoy. It is through the hard work, dedication and tireless efforts of this small, but extremely efficient and resourceful team that UNESCO is able to put together very rich and diversified programmes to celebrate International Women's Day every year for the last 4 years.

Finally, thank you all for being here today and for your continued commitment and tireless efforts to promote women's rights, women's empowerment and gender equality around the world.

## INTRODUCTION, SANIYE GÜLSER CORAT

*DIRECTOR, DIVISION FOR GENDER EQUALITY, BUREAU OF STRATEGIC PLANNING*

Another year has passed and here we are again — on the 10<sup>th</sup> of March this year, because the 8<sup>th</sup> of March was a Saturday — to take stock and to see what we have achieved and how far we still have to go. But more importantly, we are here to acknowledge and celebrate commitment.

For the road ahead, and 33 years after the 1<sup>st</sup> World Conference on Women, we still need to address several serious issues. On International Women's Day, we don't dwell on the negative, we focus on the positive and celebrate commitment. But allow me just for one minute to remind you of a few issues that still need to be addressed — and addressed very urgently.

The first is violence against women, which is still the major cause of death and disability of women. As you may know, the Secretary-General of the United Nations launched a multi-year campaign a few weeks ago to combat violence against women and to put an end to it within the next six years. The next is that today 980 million people live on less than 1 dollar a day, and the majority of the absolute poor are still women. Worldwide women still earn on average 50% of what men earn. Young women are 1.6 times more likely to be living with HIV than young men. In fact, young women make up over 60% of 15-24 year-olds living with HIV. Every minute, a woman dies in childbirth.

Now, let's put these aside and look at the achievements in the 33 years since the 1<sup>st</sup> World Conference on Women. As we all know, especially at UNESCO, we have made gains in education; we have made gains in women's participation in public affairs; we have made a lot of gains in women's participation in the labour market. Women's voices are given space and they are expressly encouraged in many fora at different levels: international, regional, national and local. Although we still lack evidence and statistics in some areas, we are able to count gender discrepancies in many areas and, more importantly, we are reporting on them. Leadership in different fields has been obliged to take into account women's concerns as they constitute an important constituency.

As mentioned before, at UNESCO we have put gender equality as one of two global priorities for the next six years. Discussion on work-life balance has become a part of parlance and it has become a policy. Mentoring and leadership training programmes for women are being considered, are being implemented and planned. Representation for gender in most if not all entities, both in the selection and promotion of bodies and in the justice systems, is being taken into account.



To summarize, there is much to celebrate and from which to draw inspiration and courage. The road may yet be long, but allow me to quote a few words from the famous anthropologist Margaret Mead: "It takes only a few committed individuals to change the world, indeed it's the only way the world has ever really changed." In that context, at UNESCO we feel privileged to have here with us three such women who have decided to make change by giving their money, their time, their commitment to women's rights, women's empowerment and gender equality.



## SIGRID RAUSING



Sigrid Rausing is a publisher, anthropologist and philanthropist, who founded her charitable trust (the Sigrid Rausing Trust) in 1995. The Trust has five main areas of interest; Human Rights, Women's Rights and Advocacy, Minority Rights, Environmental Justice, and Social and Economic Rights. Last year, she co-founded Portobello Books, a publishing company. Portobello Books already has an impressive list of authors, and will focus on activist non-fiction, fiction, and fiction in translation. In December of 2005 Sigrid Rausing also bought Granta magazine and publishing house. In 1993-4 she spent a year living on a remote collective farm in Estonia doing fieldwork for a PhD in Social Anthropology at University College London, followed by a two-year honorary fellowship in the same department. Her book, entitled: History, Memory and Identity in Post Soviet Estonia: the end of a collective farm, was published in 2004 by Oxford University Press, and was preceded by a range of articles in a variety of academic journals. In 2004 she was the joint winner of the International Service Human Rights Award, in the Global Human Rights Defender category. In 2005 she won a Beacon Special Award for philanthropy. This year Sigrid Rausing has been awarded the Women's Funding Network, Changing Face of Philanthropy Award. She is on the board of Human Rights Watch in New York and of the publishing company Atlantic UK.

**Question from Saniye Gülser Corat, Moderator: Ms Rausing, when there are so many issues you could fund, what made you choose women's rights as an area of funding through your trust?**

First of all I must say that I am absolutely delighted to be here, and I want to thank UNESCO for this initiative, and for inviting me to this platform. **[The Sigrid Rausing Trust] is a human rights orientated trust, funding projects and organisations in the fields of civil and political rights, women's rights, minority rights, and social and environmental justice. Our women's rights portfolio currently stands at just over £3.6 million, within an overall annual budget of £17.5 million.**

You ask why I fund the things that I do? I grew up in Sweden in the 1970s. I remember vividly the Chilean refugees coming to Sweden. I remember the debates about Vietnam. I remember the civil rights movements. In the 1980s, I became involved in feminism in Britain, and the kind of women's rights funding that I do comes directly from these two aspects of my life.

Just a few words about the type of funding that we do. We like to do core funding. Research has shown that conservative funding in America tends to be more successful than progressive funding because funds stay with their projects for many years and they do core grants. Progressive funding organizations tend to do project funding only, and they tend to do three-year or five-year grants. So we decided to apply this research to our foundation and it is working quite well.

The other aspect of our funding is that we fund advocacy, rather than service provision. The reason, of course, is the huge need — particularly in the area of women's rights. **[It was] mentioned that we are going to need 25 to 28 billion dollars in order to cover, I think, just the needs of girls' education. That obviously can't be met by private philanthropy. On the other hand, advocacy organizations can help to encourage governments to implement and to fund their own programmes.**

As you know, the right to equality for women is enshrined in international law, most notably in the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which 185 countries have now ratified. A new international convention has also been signed by 43 countries and ratified by 23 countries in Africa. This Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol) takes CEDAW a step further in having a provision relating to the elimination of certain 'harmful traditional practices', particularly female genital mutilation (FGM), and other provisions for protecting women in armed conflict and for recognising widows' inheritance and remarriage rights....

Yet in many contexts these obligations are not complied with. For example, women may have profoundly unequal access to basic education. Equally, they may lack information about the very fact that they have rights, as women, and about how to assert those rights; and they may lack information and guidance about how to enter into positions of leadership, both in the political and in the commercial sphere. **Women can therefore find themselves ill-placed to compete for positions, or to have their voices heard in national and local polities.... The Trust responds vigorously to these [and other women's rights] situations.**

## SANDRA REICHEL



Sandra Reichel is the Director of the annual international Women's Tennis Tournaments in Linz and Bad Gastein (Austria). She began her career as a tennis player, playing first in the Juniors at the Grand Slams US Open and Wimbledon, and moving on to become a professional tennis player with the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) Tour. While completing her studies in International Economics, she began working with the sports consulting and management company Matchmaker Communication. In 2000 she became the youngest ever tournament director in the world. She later went on to become the tournament director of an international men's tournament (ATP Tour) in Kitzbühel (Austria) in 2005 and 2006, making her one of only two women worldwide running ATP and WTA tournaments simultaneously. After hearing about the UNESCO – Sony Ericsson WTA Tour Global Partnership for Gender Equality in Miami, March 2007, she looked for a way to get more involved. In 2007, Ms Reichel organized an event titled "deuce" for the UNESCO – Sony Ericsson WTA Tour Global Partnership for Gender Equality held during the Generali Ladies Linz Tournament in Austria. Convinced by the partnership's goal to promote women's leadership in all spheres, the Tournament decided to commit an initial US\$100,000 to the partnership between 2007-2009.

**Question from Saniye Gülser Corat, Moderator: Ms Reichel, can you tell us what made you decide to become involved in the UNESCO — Sony Ericsson WTA Tour Partnership for Gender Equality, and what your plans are in terms of continuing with the partnership and helping us raise much needed funds in the coming years?**

"Make it your business" is a very good expression for what I experienced last year when my father and I founded "Project Deuce" for the WTA tournament in Linz [Austria]. My father came home from [the 2007 Sony Ericsson Open in] Miami and said: "I saw a film about UNESCO [and their work promoting gender equality] and I was really very affected." So I saw the film, too, and I realized that we had to do something for this cause during our women's tennis tournament.

**Within the framework of the UNESCO — Sony Ericsson WTA Tour Partnership for Gender Equality, we have the possibility to work as a committed partner to promote women's leadership and gender equality.** It was not only the fact that I wanted to support the global partnership between UNESCO and the WTA tour that convinced me to support gender equality, but also my experience as a woman in the tennis business throughout my whole life. As you know, sports are very male dominated. I was one of only two female tournament directors in the world, and it was not easy for me in the beginning: in meetings there were only men sitting around me and, to be honest, they did not take me very seriously.

[Today,] women's tennis is the world's leading sport for women and the Women's Tennis Association Tour holds sixty tournaments worldwide in thirty four countries. Our tournament is one of the biggest in Europe, and its slogan is "*the woman's touch*" which I implemented six years ago when I became tournament Director.

Gender equality doesn't mean fighting against men. **Gender equality means supporting human rights — everyone should have the same chances and opportunities, independent of gender.... Having top athletes and tennis players promote gender equality helps to raise awareness, and to make this very important issue known.** Female tennis players can stand forth as proof that there can be a positive change for the condition of women. For example, last year the WTA tour succeeded in instituting equal prize money for women and men, which was really a big success. People, businesses and governments need to see that there is a success story behind both women and men, and that it is important to focus on an individual's performance, not his or her gender.

Let me conclude with three personal statements. First, since 1950, more and more women have entered the "man's world" of sports, and although this has not abolished male dominance in the field, it shows that it *is* possible to change gender roles and create a less discriminatory system, with more of a "woman's touch." Second, women must be involved in decision-making, so that the entire society is spoken for, not just half of it. And lastly, **women should not feel that they must copy men's behavior to achieve success — we must be authentic if we are to be truly equal.** Thank you.



## PAOLA GIANTURCO



For the past twelve years, Paola Gianturco has worked as a photojournalist, documenting women's lives in forty countries. Her new book, *Women Who Light the Dark* (September 2007) will be her fourth published by powerHouse Books. Her other books include *Celebrating Women* (2004), *In Her Hands: Craftswomen Changing the World* (paperback, 2004; hardcover, 2000; coauthor Toby Tuttle), and *¡Viva Colores! A Salute to the Indomitable People of Guatemala* (2006; coauthor David Hill). All of Gianturco's books are philanthropic projects, for which she donates her royalties to carefully-selected nonprofit organizations that relate to each book's content. For *Women Who Light the Dark*, Gianturco is giving 100% of her author royalties to the Global Fund for Women, which advocates for and defends women's human rights by making grants to support women's groups around the world. Paola Gianturco's involvement with women's issues is long-standing. She was senior vice president of the first women-owned advertising agency in the United States; co-taught executive institutes about women and leadership at Stanford University and Mills College; served on the Board of Directors of The Association for Women's Rights in Development (1999-2000). Her board work in the international arena also includes serving as Chair (2000-2001) of the Board of the Crafts Center in Washington DC, which works with low-income artisans in 79 countries. Prior to 1995, Gianturco worked for 34 years in advertising, public relations and marketing.

**Question by Saniye Gülser Corat, Moderator:**  
**Prior to 1995, Ms Gianturco, you worked for 32 years in advertising, public relations and marketing. 1995 was a turning point for you, and from our prior discussion I know that it had to do with your involvement in the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women in Beijing. So, what happened Ms Gianturco?**

A Nepalese mother wrote this poem and it was read at the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing: "My girl child must have a voice louder and clearer than mine. She must be able to move with certainty with shoes on her feet and dreams at her side. The present I have given her is not enough, her arms are different; they will reach for the sky where freedom lives".

**News from the 4th World Conference on Women inspired my books. News that in the global South women — even though they were living below the income poverty line — were sending their children to school. I thought they were heroic. I wanted to document that work.** It seemed to me that if they were effective in educating the next generation over time, they could change things not just for their families and for their communities, but over time for their countries and for all of us. *In Her Hands: Craftswomen Changing the World*, was published in the year 2000 and featured 90 women artisans in 12 countries on 4 continents who were living in material poverty, and yet they were giving their time and skills, and their creativity and in fact, giving their very lives to feed and educate their children with the money they earn from making handicrafts.

These women became my friends and teachers, from them I learned that the world is smaller and women's spirits are larger than I had ever imagined. From them I learned about creating an economic and artistic and social legacy. I spent two years photographing and interviewing women, I was sitting with them for hours on the earthen floor of their huts, listening to their stories, marveling at their energy and ingenuity and commitment that make it possible for them to send their children to school. These women inspired me to use my own creativity to help women and their families. I made an inventory of my own assets: I could take pictures, I could write, I knew about marketing, I had time and energy, I had lots of frequent flyer miles from working with clients all over the United States, and I had some money....

I decided to try to create books to enhance readers' awareness and understanding of women and issues that face them around the world, and to inspire them to take action on the difficult problems that beleaguer women and their families everywhere. powerHouse books, New York, has now published 4 of my books, and **each one is a philanthropic project which creates a revenue stream for a specific organization that I select very carefully to receive 100% of my author royalties....**

*Women Who Light the Dark* features local women's groups that are helping with issues that make life dark. **The women who lead these groups may have almost nothing by way of material resources. But even if you have nothing by way of material resources you can sing, you can dance, you can tell stories, and so these women are using the creative arts and creative strategies, and they are succeeding. It is their imaginations that light the dark.**

## Division for Gender Equality Bureau of Strategic Planning



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