

Suggestions for Actions and Solidarity in 2006

by Shelley Anderson

- Issue a statement, press release or letter to the media, and to the editor of your favorite newspaper or magazine, to mark May 24, International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament. Call for more attention to what women are doing for peace, and for more measures to fight the trafficking in women.
- Help women who have been trafficked by contacting anti-trafficking groups within your own country, or by making contact with migrant or foreign women's groups within your country.
- Support legislation for emergency housing and services for women fleeing violent situations. Make sure there are Russian-speakers among service providers, and information on emergency shelters for women in Russian.
- Volunteer exchanges help everyone. If you are working on trafficking issues and violence against women in your area, consider inviting someone from an East/Central European group, or from the former USSR, to come and intern with your project for six months. Look for a small grant to provide them with a stipend and housing. Consider sending someone from your group to live and work with an East/ Central European group, or from the former USSR (for example: the Angel Coalition: angel@moscom.ru or the Center Against Violence and Human Trafficking, P.O. Box 7015, Glavpochtamp, Perm, Russia. Email: noviolence@narod.ru)
- Educate yourself about the war in Chechnya—Human Rights Watch regularly issues reports on the situation there (see www.hrw.org/campaign/rusia/chechnya). Join a support group against the war, or invite a speaker to talk to your school, religious or professional group about the human costs of the war in Chechnya.
- Organize a special worship service for women peacemakers; take a collection and send it to a women's peace group in Eastern or Central Europe, or in the former USSR.
- Hold a gathering to write legislators on topics like ratifying the nuclear test ban treaty; or the transfer of military funds to meet human needs; or whatever is necessary for your community.
- Invite local women's organizations together to speak on how women can contribute towards a culture of peace. Invite a speaker from Eastern or Central Europe or from a NIS country.

- Organize a celebration for peace on May 24; invite speakers from local peace groups.
- Educate women peacemakers on UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Distribute copies of the Resolution (which can be downloaded from www.peacewomen.org) during meetings and public events.
- Issue a press release rating your legislators on their efforts to implement UN Resolution 1325.
- Hold a fundraiser to jointly benefit a local peace organization and a peace group in Eastern or Central Europe or from the former USSR.
- Make a special effort to reach girls: talk with Girl Scouts/Guides or other girls' groups about how war and peace affect girls. Share an action with them like writing a letter to a government official or to women and girls in one of the groups listed in this pack. Sponsor an essay contest for girls to express their ideas about creating peace.
- Invite women veterans with a peace perspective to speak about their experiences at local schools.
- Educate yourself and the groups you belong to about military recruitment of girls and boys. Order the leaflet *Make Our Schools Military-Free Zones* from American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), Youth and Militarism Program, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102, USA.
- Picket schools and hand out leaflets (such as *Do You Know Enough to Enlist?* from AFSC's Youth and Militarism Program at www.afsc.org/youthmil; email youthmil@afsc.org) when military recruiters visit. Insist that school officials always include a speaker on peace whenever military recruiters visit schools, so students can get an objective and fair perspective on the reality of military life.
- Translate and reprint articles from this pack (please credit the pack and don't forget to send us a copy!) to educate others about the issues.
- Encourage groups to include ending violence in their agendas and events, and to increase their support for women in that part of the world working for peace.
- Inform your networks (your women's organization, place of worship, school, labor union or work place) about May 24 and possible solidarity actions for women peace activists.
- Encourage your school and community libraries to display on May 24 books by and about women peacemakers (for example, set aside a table near the entrance), violence against women, or about women as decision makers.