



## **Preliminary report**

### **Seminar Money for Women Peacemakers**

#### **24 May 2008 - International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament**

Every day thousands of women in war areas worldwide work hard for peace. We don't know them, we don't hear about them through the media, but they continue their struggle. Even with the little financial support they receive, they achieve incredible results: What would the world look like if they were to receive more money?

Approximately 150 people came together in *Theater Concordia* in The Hague to discuss these topics; it was an interactive day with a plenary discussion in the morning and several workshops in the afternoon. Throughout the day, participants could meet with Gitta van Buuren and visit her exhibition on female photo journalists in Afghanistan ([www.gittavanbuuren.com](http://www.gittavanbuuren.com)). During the course of the day, guest speakers and a few women activists were interviewed by Fatusch Productions, who are working on a documentary on UNSCR 1325. Their educational film will incorporate experiences from various women leaders from all over the world and will provide a visual overview of UNSCR 1325 while sharing practical experiences at the same time (<http://www.fatusch.nl>). Other media present were *Wereldomroep* and *GPD Nieuws*. One of the guest speakers, Malalay Joya, was interviewed by the Dutch daily current affair show *EenVandaag*.

#### **Introductions**

After an opening of the day by chair person *Wilma Roozenboom*, *Mr R.G Dijksterhuis* of the *Ministry of Foreign Affairs* was invited to deliver his opening speech. Using the example of South Sudan, *Mr. Dijksterhuis* described the peace building skills women have, emphasizing that women should play a more central role at peace negotiation tables.

*Mr. Dijksterhuis* illustrated with several examples how women are disadvantaged in society, e.g. with regards to education, health care, and political participation. He emphasized that men have more to gain from conflict due to their roles and positions in society; and that women therefore have more reasons to look for common goals and peaceful solutions. That is why investing in women peacemakers is so important: In order to train and empower more women for peace, and to increase awareness on the need to involve women in peace efforts.

*Mr. John Schot*, IFOR's new Executive Director, opened the seminar on behalf of IFOR/WPP. He pointed out that warfare is often a man's business, leaving women and children vulnerable. However, women have an important role to play in peace building, which is why IFOR has established its Women Peacemakers Program (WPP) in 1997. He explained that the WPP currently celebrates its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and is expanding its work through the establishment of two regional desks in Africa and Asia.

## **Morning Session: Plenary Discussion**

*Wilma Roozenboom* introduced the guest speakers of the day: *Malalai Joya* (Afghan ex-Member of Parliament), *Asha Elmi Haji* (founder of Somalia's Sixth Clan Initiative) and *Elisabeth Porter* (Gender and Conflict Expert from Australia). *Etweda Cooper* from the Liberia Women's Initiative was unfortunately unable to come, due to illness. Ms. *Isabelle Geuskens*, Program Manager of IFOR/WPP, took her place in the panel. Below follows a short impression of the panel discussions.

### **“Men make war, so men need to solve war – women don't make war, so cannot solve war”**

Wilma introduced several statements to the guest speakers and asked them to respond. The first statement was *“Men make war, so men need to solve war – women don't make war, so cannot solve war.”*

*Ms Porter* responded by stating that women have a deep understanding of the atrocities of war as they are major victims of war, and therefore more likely to create conditions for peace. *Ms Haji* distinguished between war initiators and war supporters, and commented that women often belong to the last group, being caught up in “the trap of war”. *Isabelle* added that women increasingly take up active roles in war – both in military forces and in guerilla wars - and hence need to be actively involved in peace and reintegration processes. *Ms Joya* added that not all women are necessarily peacemakers, referring to her personal experiences in Afghanistan: When she spoke out against the warlords in the Afghan Parliament, she was also threatened with repercussions by some of her female colleagues.

### **“Women peace activists need to focus on empowering more women for peacebuilding; including men in their work would undermine that goal”**

The second discussion involved the question whether more women need to be empowered for peace than men. The panel agreed that both men and women need to be involved in peace building processes since *“sustainable peace can only be achieved, if men and women are working together”* and *“peace and political processes should be all inclusive”*.

However, women are clearly starting from a disadvantaged position in most societies: Their human rights are not respected; they have less access to good health care and education; and often cannot move around freely in society.

In this sense, it is important that women first can create a safe space for themselves, in order to define for themselves what empowerment they need, and analyze the obstacles they meet as women in their lives. Through sharing knowledge and experiences, and networking with other women activists, they will build not only their skills but also their confidence, and will be more able to work on an equal level with men. Solidarity amongst women is important in order to be able to deal with the challenges in political life.

It is also important that women work with male allies in order to get further in their goals. In this sense, it is important that women activists are strategic in their thinking.

Examples of Somalia and Guatemala were discussed to show the lack of women at negotiation tables in different countries and continents up to this day, eight years after United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.

### **“Why do women need to receive special consideration (including funds) in issues of war and peace?”**

The panelists were asked to comment on whether special funds need to be allocated to women's peace initiatives. *Ms Haji* explained - using Somalia as an example - that special funds should be given to women peace initiatives, since promoting and keeping peace is a very expensive activity. Governments worldwide are inclined to spend a lot of money on warfare, but comparatively very little on peace initiatives. War in itself is a very lucrative business – those who are benefiting make a lot of money and do not want to see an end to this

business. The meager funds that women receive to engage in ad hoc peace projects, makes it very difficult for them to make substantial impact. They are facing a huge, well-resourced opponent.

*Ms Geuskens* added that asking for special funds for women's peace initiatives should not be done based on sympathy arguments: Women are already having impact despite the current lack of financial support, so one can only imagine what would be possible if more support would be forthcoming! Also, it is about recognizing that investing in women's peace work is not about *extra* investments, but *better* investments: investments that serve the whole population, and not just 50 % (men). During war, those who are disadvantaged in society become even more vulnerable – not addressing the specific needs of those groups cannot lead to a just and sustainable peace.

*Ms Joya* emphasized that, in addition to money, international solidarity for peacemakers is also essential, especially in countries like Afghanistan where women are so oppressed, and it has become very dangerous to speak out. The international recognition and solidarity helps activists to become a louder voice.

## Discussion

The audience actively contributed by raising several interesting topics, such as:

- The under-utilized contributions that Diaspora women can make in terms of peace building, referred to the “triple burden of Diaspora women peacemakers’: As a woman, peacemaker, and migrant, it becomes very challenging to find funding for projects;
- The socialization processes (gender) that men and women go through, forcing both in set roles during war (the warrior and the victim), and the need to address this in peacemaking processes, for example, by realizing that men are also victims of war as they are expected to fight wars due to their gender, and the lack of support for conscientious objectors and traumatized war veterans;
- The need for women to be strategic in order to make a tangible impact at negotiation tables. *Ms Haji* expressed that something that works against you, can also work for you, if you think strategically. As an example, she described how the fact that the Sixth Clan Somali women were not being taken seriously by the other negotiation partners, also gave them the space to change important aspects of the resolutions that were being produced. As they were not considered a threat, people did not focus on them, so the women used this as an opportunity to make sure women were included in the major documents that came out of the negotiations. As these became official, Somali women had a powerful tool in their hands: They could refer to them to demand their inclusion.

Elisabeth Porter's hopeful statement that “*People never thought that slavery would become illegal one day; so maybe, one day, war will become illegal as well*” provided an inspiring conclusion of the morning discussion.

During the lunch session, participants could visit a funding market with interactive stands from Mama Cash, Global Fund for Women, Oxfam/Novib, Cordaid, ICCO, NCDO and Alert as well as an information market where several organizations presented their work, such as COS, WO=MEN, Gender Concerns, Women Ink and many others.

The afternoon session consisted of two workshop rounds. Below follows a short impression.

### Workshop 1: Case Somalia and Ethiopia

**Facilitator:** *Dorothe Appels* – Director of COS Netherlands

**Panel:** *Asha Elmi Haji* - Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC) and founder of the Sixth Clan Initiative, and *Meaza Ashenafi* - activist and founder of the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association.

The workshop addressed the need for international financial support for women's peace work, and the impact of this support. The panelists started by briefing participants on the situation of women in their countries, after which the audience was given an opportunity to ask questions.

#### *Ethiopia and increase in money*

The women's movement in Ethiopia is mainly dealing with issues of gender based violence, such as early marriages, abduction, female genital mutilation, etc. For the last seven years, women civil society organizations have been working on women-friendly laws e.g. the domestic relations law. The possible impact of more money for women peacemakers was discussed: It would enable women to address the root causes of conflicts, and to contribute to a culture of peace and tolerance, which can be mainstreamed into all sectors of society, e.g. education, CSO activities, and government policies.

#### *Somalia and increase in money*

Asha explained the origin of the Sixth Clan: *"The sixth clan initiative emerged from the strategic thinking that women should unite amidst a strongly patriarchal society, where women have no responsibility or right to represent a clan, at the negotiating table."* In Somali society, women could not be part of the national reconciliation initiatives, which were based on the five major clans in Somalia. The sixth clan gained recognition and enabled women to get a space at the negotiating table and the country's peace process. Asha suggests that more money for women peacemakers in Somalia should be spent on four issues (the four c's) in order to have impact: 1) Capacity building of women (in communication skills, negotiation skills, leadership skills, fundraising skills, and skills in community mobilization), 2) Confidence building of women (women are lacking confidence due to societal/ cultural upbringing and this needs to be addressed), 3) Constituency building (the majority of women who are aspiring to be in high positions are lacking the constituency, and 4) Coalition building (women need to build networks among themselves, and also alliances with men).

#### *Marketing*

After this discussion, participants were informed about the concept of marketing for peace: Peace initiatives need to be marketed by highlighting successes.

It is important to focus on the following four "P"s of marketing:

- *Price*: Without getting money, women peacemakers pay high (personal) prices, however in some cases money also causes conflict (e.g. competition between CSOs).
- *Place*: People need to know where to find the women activists.
- *Product*: Be clear about the product that you offer: e.g. sustainable peace, or the implementation of UN SC Resolution 1325.
- *Promotion*: Women's peace initiatives need to be made known, success stories need to be told.

#### *Recommendations*

Several recommendations were formulated as a result of discussions taking place amongst the audience and the guest speakers. Some of them include:

1. Women should spearhead campaigns to domesticate UN SC Resolution 1325;
2. Resolution 1325 should be amended in order to make it more relevant to the domestic contexts of women;
3. Resolution 1325 should be popularized, especially to the grassroots women, in order for them to benefit from it;
4. Women from other countries can draw from the experience of the Somali women's "Sixth Clan" initiative, in order to reach the negotiating tables in their own countries;
5. Women need to create strategic alliances with men, in order to gain wider recognition and push women's issues forward.

## **Workshop 2: Call for Action**

**Facilitator:** *Tamara van Vliet* – Women’s Global Network of Reproductive Rights (WGNRR)

**Panel:** *Corine Otte* - WGNRR and *Thresita de Bruijn* - Tey-illai-annai

In this workshop, the Women’s Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR) illustrated that the tool Call for Action and being part of a network organization can lead to money. WGNRR is a network of more than 1,000 autonomous organisations and individuals in 157 countries that since 1984 has aimed to achieve and support reproductive and sexual health and rights (RSHR) for women.

First the Call for Action 2008 ‘Stop conflict being waged upon women’s bodies!’ was presented and illustrated by different examples from members (e.g. Rwanda). The Call for Action hold local, national and international actors accountable for securing women’s reproductive and sexual health and rights! For more information, see [www.wgnrr.org](http://www.wgnrr.org).

Mrs. Thresita de Bruin of the foundation Tey-Illai Annai briefly introduced the conflict situation between the State and the Tamil Tigers<sup>1</sup> in Sri Lanka, which has been on-going since 1983. This ongoing conflict has had a great impact on the living conditions of the tea plantation workers. In particular, the women working at the plantations suffer the most as they are affected through three types of burden: 1) employment, 2) domestic work and 3) their reproductive role. These conditions were discussed. The organisation Tey-illai-annai ([www.tey-illai-annai.nl](http://www.tey-illai-annai.nl)) has projects to help these women get medical assistance but this help is still very limited and on a personal basis.

### *Recommendations*

Some concrete advices were formulated for Thresita, in terms of how her organization could grow, reach more people and get more funds. These included:

- start small, but think big (and be happy with every coin you get...it will create trust with donors and finally to more money)
- be specific; know your target
- be creative and think out of the box (example of make a CD with all the information and spread this among the embassies in Sri Lanka)
- use your network. WGNRR, for example, could be used to open useful doors that can help you in strengthen your organization or personal goals.

## **Workshop 3: Fundraising locally and internationally**

**Facilitator:** Marjan Sax – The Donor Academy

Marjan Sax explained that fundraising is about establishing relationships, and about finding out what your potential donor is interested in. It is about giving people the *opportunity* to support your organization.

She explained that people, organizations, or donors give money because:

- They are interested in the *particular* topic you work on (e.g.: they are interested in HIV/AIDS and malaria issues; and not interested in women and peace work);
- They in general like the work of your organization;

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<sup>1</sup> The Tamil Tigers are a separatist militant organization who fight for the creation of an independent state

- They know someone in the organization;
- They are *asked* – which means it is important that you don't forget to ask!

### *Elevator pitch*

Marjan introduced the concept “the elevator pitch”: This is a way to present yourself, your work, and your organization in a short period of time. Basically it means that you should picture yourself and someone else in an elevator going from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 60<sup>th</sup> floor, giving you limited time to present yourself and your organization. This is important to realize, since the funding organization often does not have much time for you. Therefore, a quick and effective way of presenting includes: *What is your organization about, what do you do, and what do you want to accomplish (what is the result?)*. It is important no to use big and complicated words, but to keep it simple, clear, and understandable, so that people can connect to what you stand for, and can become interested in a relatively short period of time.

Participants of the workshop then engaged in an exercise, practicing the elevator pitch in relation to their own activities.

### *Recommendations*

The workshop formulated several recommendations, including:

1. Fundraising is about relationships: about connecting people/organizations to people/organizations;
2. Use the elevator pitch and practice at home (in front of the mirror) in order to prepare yourself;
3. Don't forget to *ask* for funds;
4. Be open to the other party, as this helps in building relationships, and trust.

## **Workshop 4: Documentary Fighting the Silence**

"Fighting the Silence" tells the story of ordinary Congolese women and men that are struggling to change their society: One that prefers to blame victims rather than prosecute rapists. Rape survivors and their families speak out openly about the suffering they endured because their culture considers women second class citizens and rape a taboo. They give a voice to thousands of other survivors and their families who have chosen to hide their grief, and remain silent for fear of being rejected by their families and community.

Girls and women survivors tell of the brutality they experienced. Married couples openly talk about the pain they endure. Husbands talk of the pressures that led them to abandon their wives and why they agreed to take them back. A father explains why he has given up on his daughter's future and how he wishes he could afford to take her rapist to court. Soldiers and policemen share their (shocking) views about why rape continues to flourish despite the war having officially ended four years ago (source: [www.fightingthesilence.com](http://www.fightingthesilence.com)).

## **Workshop 5: Case Afghanistan**

**Facilitator:** *Wilma Roozenboom*

**Panelists:** *Malalai Joya and Harir Faqiri*, a representative from the Afghan organization Rabhe-i-Balkhi in the Netherlands.

The panelists started by briefing participants on the situation of Afghan women, after which there was a very interactive debate on *“the political choice to invest money in military missions, and less in civil society and women's groups in Afghanistan”*.

*Ms. Joya* identified several issues that need to be addressed in today's Afghanistan. The most pressing issue in Afghanistan is security: The Afghan government only has control over Kabul; other areas are controlled by the

warlords. Therefore, change in Afghanistan is not possible without solving this security problem first. However, Ms. Joya expressed that the Afghan people are against being occupied by foreign military forces, under the guise of democracy. A debate arose on whether military interventions should be combined with civil society initiatives and women's programs, as they are fundamentally different. It was stated that combining the two will compromise the neutrality and security of the CSO initiatives.

Ms Joya added that the countries that financially support the Afghan government should put conditions on their funds, in order to stimulate the establishment of a true democracy in the country. She touched upon the issue of corruption, stating that the funds currently being invested by the International Community are often being misused by the warlords that control the Afghan government.

### *Recommendations*

The workshop formulated several recommendations. Among others, these include:

1. Afghans in the Diaspora should get more involved in decision making on Afghanistan;
2. The International Community should channel its investments through Civil Society Organizations, instead of through an undemocratic Afghan government;
3. The security question in Afghanistan should be given priority, in order to create a conducive environment for other interventions e.g. on economic, health, and education level;
4. Afghan women need capacity building, so that they can get more involved in decision making and political processes.

## **Workshop 6: Measurement is knowledge**

**Facilitator:** Former IFOR/WPP Training of Trainers (ToT) participants

### *International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) Women Peacemakers Program (WPP)*

Vololona Razafindrainibe (former ToT participant from Madagascar) introduced IFOR's history, and the establishment of the IFOR Women Peacemakers Program (WPP) in 1997. The WPP has been developed to support and strengthen women's peacemaking initiatives. One of the ways of doing this is through WPP's Training of Trainers (ToT) program, which started in 2002. Each ToT cycle brought together about 14 women from different cultures for training and capacity building on peace building, active nonviolence, gender, and UN Security Council Resolution 1325, for a period of two years.

The week preceding the May 24 seminar, a selection of trainees had returned to the Netherlands to learn about impact measurement; and to look at the empowerment and impact that resulted from the ToT program.

### *Framework*

Suseela Mathew (former ToT participant from India) started by introducing the framework for measuring empowerment (i'AURA), which was developed by ATOL (Information and Knowledge Management Services in International Cooperation), based in Leuven, Belgium. This tool has been introduced to the ToT participants to assess the results and longer-term impact of the ToT program on themselves and the community they work in. The publication on the tool "*The women empowerment approach. A methodological guide*" published in June 2007 can be downloaded from:

[http://www.atol.be/docs/publ/gender/women\\_empowerment\\_approach\\_CVO.pdf](http://www.atol.be/docs/publ/gender/women_empowerment_approach_CVO.pdf)

In order to measure empowerment and impact of a program, there are four key areas to consider:

- **Assets**, e.g. access to basic services (water, health, education), but also time and availability of space (e.g. location), financial resources, access to production means (land, technology), access to markets and transport, etc;
- **Knowledge** (know-how), e.g. skills and capacities, experiences and competences, information: To have the knowledge required, and know how to use it;
- **Will**, e.g. self-esteem, self-confidence, commitment, internalized values;
- **Capacity**, e.g. to have the adequate relations/networks in order to work towards change, to be able to mobilize people, to have influence, to actively participate in decisions.

Indicators for measuring empowerment, quality of life, and successful change, should be “SPICED”, this means:

- **S**ubjective
- **P**articipatory
- **I**nterpretable or Communicable
- **C**ross checked
- **E**mpowering
- **D**esegregation

*Lisette Caubergs* (facilitator from ATOL) pointed out the importance of looking at results by reviewing the baseline situation and the particular input of the program - whether it was effective in terms of reaching the results that we expected.

*Akos Dzathor* (WPP Africa Regional Desk Coordinator, Ghana) explained that it is not easy to measure results and impact of peacebuilding and social empowerment work, making it quite challenging to communicate to donors. Therefore, the ATOL framework of measuring empowerment is very helpful to see the changes, as it measures on different levels and values qualitative input. Akos ended the workshop with a case presentation on Burundi to illustrate the framework of measuring empowerment.

#### *Recommendation*

The group emphasized that measuring empowerment is not just about showing results to donors and others. It was emphasized that measuring empowerment is about a process of learning, helping us to improve our work for social justice and gender justice. Also, finding out about the results your project has generated can be very inspiring and empowering for oneself/ one’s organization.

## **Workshop 7: Tips and Tricks for Fundraising for Women’s Organisations**

**Facilitator:** *Ingrid Verver* - Mama Cash

The facilitator started the workshop by providing background information on Mama Cash. The goal of Mama Cash is to raise funds to invest in women’s rights, including issues of violence against women, sexual and reproductive rights, labour rights, poverty, anti-racism, economic justice, education, and health care. The five themes Mama Cash focuses on are: bodily integrity; economic justice; peace and security; agency and participation; and art, culture and media. In any given year, Mama Cash receives about 1,500 requests for funding, with around 250 proposals being granted funds. Organizations usually receive between 500 and 20,000 Euros. The annual income of Mama Cash is 4.8 million Euros, with 3.6 million of that amount being granted to projects.

### *Recommendations*

During the workshop Ingrid provided ten “Do’s and Don’ts” for fundraising. She recommended taking these into account when asking for funds.

She recommended to:

- Describe briefly what you will do –what, how, and why – what is the current situation and what will you do about it?
- Research and focus on funds that fit with your vision, themes, and criteria;
- Use request sheets – fill out the donor’s forms in order to make sure you answer the questions that the fund needs to have an answer on – and if you have problems with the form, ask them for clarifications;
- Be concrete about challenges you expect to meet, solutions, and your target groups;
- Provide the wider context of the project – explain why the project is important, and how it contributes to structural changes;
- Give indicators – using the SMART criteria: They need to be **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ccurate, **R**ealistic and **T**ime-bound;
- Research the budget – be concrete about needs and activities, and adapt it into a work plan;
- Plan well – hand in your request on time, and be patient;
- Report back – if you got the funds, use the correct formatting for reporting, provide lessons learned, and indicate follow up work;
- Promote successes – try to get information about what you are doing published via newsletters, websites, press releases, etc. and provide these to the fund.

### **Workshop 8: Debate Documentary Fighting the Silence**

**Facilitator:** *Kim Brice* - consultant

**Panel:** *Ilse and Femke van Velzen* (IF Productions), *Seconde Nyanzobe* (Search for Common Ground Burundi), *Dorothy Attema* (IFOR/WPP), *Godelieve Mangangilive*

The facilitator began the debate by stating that this was not a formal session, but a discussion amongst people interested in issues of sexual violence in order to see what the group thought could be done about this problem. In the end, the group presented some ideas about whether enough funds are available to combat sexual violence, and how funds should be allocated.

### *Background documentary*

Ilse van Velzen explained a bit on the background of the documentary. Initially, Femke and Ilse wanted to work on the broader picture of rape as a weapon of war. After 1 year of research, they went to Congo in April 2006 to talk to women’s organizations. They noted that little was said about rape, and the rape cases that people did hear about involved groups of men raping a single woman and using a lot of violence. In addition to the suffering caused from these attacks, the women also had to face being abandoned by their community and their husbands. The documentary which resulted from their visit was a direct result of their own lessons learned throughout the project. They decided to change direction and focus on the many layers of the issue, as well as the change in mindset amongst some of the men. This is why they returned to Congo recently, using the film for awareness-raising in order to change the current situation.

The workshop discussion touched upon several points:

- *Incidences of rape*: Before the conflict, nobody spoke about rape, giving the impression as if rape was not taking place. During the conflict, there was such a high increase in rape cases, and in cruelty of the cases, that people could no longer be silent;
- *Rape is more than a weapon of war*; it is part of the culture - which is a culture of rape. You can find rape of women occurring in e.g. the dowry system. It was concluded that conflict escalates the incidence of rape, but culturally it has always been there, related to the way in which women are undervalued and dominated in patriarchal societies;
- Ingredients for sexual violence are embedded in *socialization processes*, including the concepts of masculinity that are attached to certain forms of behaviors such as aggression and violence (men learn to be tough, women to be submissive);
- *Access to high-level military officials in the documentary*: One of the main characters in the documentary organizes awareness-raising seminars with the authorities, because this is how she believes one starts to make a change: By engaging with the people who can make the difference. As the audience could see, from the men's reactions during the film, the woman still has a lot of work to do. It was also noted that when filming in Congo, nobody was against the filmmakers' work – they found everything that was being documented normal. There was openness from the Government who welcomed them - they troubled them for money but that was another issue, but no-one silenced them;
- *Mobile cinema project: Ilse and Femke van Velzen* have partnered with the NGO Search for Common Ground for their mobile cinema project. They will take the film to villages in Congo and will contact local organizations to announce that the movie is coming to get people to come and see it. Workshops with drawings - the same as were depicted in the film - will take place before the movie is shown. The movie will give people more opportunity to relate to the topic. Whether or not the discussions resulting from the movie will be positive or negative, the important matter is that people are talking about rape. The filmmakers will also make shorter films that will be part of an interactive DVD that will be given to local counterparts which want to inform women of local organizations that can help them;
- *Rape of young girls and imprisonment*: Girls aged 2 to 5 are being raped, but the sad thing is that these cases often can't be brought to court because of lack of proof. A medical report is compulsory, yet poor women can not obtain this because they often do not have access to healthcare; they do not have money to enter into bureaucratic procedures; and there are only a few medical specialists in the entire country trained to deal with these issues. An additional problem is that there is a lack of space and infrastructure in prisons to imprison the many men who have raped women and girls. Prisons are for example not able to feed this amount of men. Another obstacle is that many victims prefer not to bring cases to court because of stigmatization of their family, and the fact that those who do testify are often threatened;
- *Judicial system*: Formal judicial systems need to work hand in hand with restorative justice systems in order to help victims. Rape is not being adequately addressed through the formal system, since women's testimonies are severely questioned, trauma counseling is often lacking, making one wonder whether this form of "justice" really helps the rape victims at all. Many women are destroyed after the hearing process, feeling as if they are raped all over again;
- *Education and law enforcement*: Gender education is considered to be very important for both men and women. Women need to learn that they are not second class citizens and deserve respect. However, men should also be included because they are important actors to create change. It is men who are raping, and still men who make the law. In Congo, the laws are not adequately enforced and victims do not have security. The group stated that impunity needs to be addressed: For instance, there should be public prosecutions, since this sets the example to the community. Judicial reform and training future lawyers on rape cases is also essential. Of course, all these actions require money.

### ***Closure and concert***

The day was closed by a summary of Wilma Roozenboom. She highlighted that the day focused on women as peace negotiators and actors for peace and not solely on women as victims. Women should be supported in their peacework and therefore Resolution 1325 is so important. However, it is also important to be inclusive and not only focus on women; *“gender is not the central theme, it’s about the mind set of gender equity”*. Wilma briefly touched upon several recommendations formulated in the workshops and concluded that it is important for women peacemakers to stay focused and encouraged in spite of the challenges of their work, since “every long road starts with the first steps in the right direction”. And these steps are essential! A reviving concert by Lele Mam ([www.lelemam.nl](http://www.lelemam.nl)) after an inspiring day was highly appreciated by the audience.