

Celebrating

UN Women The Way Forward



FEBRUARY 26, 2011 | 9:30 am - 5:00 pm

WLP in partnership with The Center for Public Scholarship & Gender Studies Program at The New School

We begin the second decade of the 21st century facing grave challenges around the world. At the heart of these challenges— from environmental degradation, to extremist ideologies, poverty, and income disparity, violence, crises in government, the dilemmas and potentials of globalization, and expansion of information technology—we find gender inequality as the issue cross-cutting race, ethnicity, religion, and class, among others. February 2011 will witness the launch of UN Women, the most significant structure yet devised by the community of nations to address the challenges and strategies for bringing about fundamental and all-encompassing change in gender relations.

On February 26, 2011, we will celebrate the establishment of UN Women. Women leaders from across the globe will provide insight into the challenges women face on the ground and offer visions, hopes, and strategies for the new entity.

“Women’s strength, women’s industry, women’s wisdom are humankind’s greatest untapped resource.”

Michelle Bachelet,
Executive Director, UN Women

*“I have rights,
I will claim these
rights and time
will prove it.”*

Fatima,
WLP Leadership Workshop
Participant, Lebanon

REGISTRATION

Seats are limited. Register online. www.learningpartnership.org

A light lunch will be available

SPEAKERS:

KEYNOTE:

Michelle Bachelet (Chile), *Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations; Executive Director, UN Women*

- **Lina Abou-Habib** (Lebanon) – *Executive Director, Collective for Research and Training on Development-Action*
- **Mahnaz Afkhami** (Iran/USA) – *Founder & President, Women’s Learning Partnership*
- **Leila Ahmed** (Egypt/USA) – *Victor S. Thomas Professor, Harvard Divinity School*
- **Wajeeha Al Baharna** (Bahrain) – *Executive Director, Bahrain Women Association*
- **Karima Bennoune** (Algeria/USA) – *Professor of Law, Rutgers School of Law*
- **Charlotte Bunch** (USA) – *Founder & Former Director, Center for Women’s Global Leadership, Rutgers University*
- **Radhika Coomaraswamy** (Sri Lanka) – *Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations; Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict*
- **Mallika Dutt** (India/USA) – *President & CEO, Breakthrough*
- **Yakin Ertürk** (Turkey) – *Professor of Sociology, Middle East Technical University*
- **Farah Karimi** (Iran/Netherlands) – *Executive Director, Oxfam Novib*
- **Asma Khader** (Jordan) – *General Coordinator, Sisterhood Is Global Institute/Jordan*
- **Francis Kissling** (USA) – *Visiting Scholar, Center for Bioethics, University of Pennsylvania*
- **Arien Mack** (USA) – *Editor, Social Research Journal*
- **Sindi Medar-Gould** (Nigeria) – *Executive Director, BAOBAB for Women’s Human Rights*
- **Thoraya Obaid** (Saudi Arabia) – *Former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations & Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund*
- **Ann Snitow** (USA) – *Professor of Literature and Gender Studies, Director of the Gender Studies Program, The New School*
- **Sakena Yacoobi** (Afghanistan) – *Executive Director, Afghan Institute of Learning*
- **June Zeitlin** (USA) – *Director, CEDAW Education Project at the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights Education Fund*

John Tishman Auditorium at The New School • 66 West 12th Street, New York, NY

For more information: +1-301-654-2774 • wlp@learningpartnership.org • www.learningpartnership.org



WOMEN'S
LEARNING
PARTNERSHIP

FOR RIGHTS, DEVELOPMENT, AND PEACE

THE NEW SCHOOL
A UNIVERSITY

Celebrating UN Women: The Way Forward

February 26, 2011, 9:30 am - 5:00 pm

John Tishman Auditorium at The New School
66 West 12th Street, New York, NY

9:30 am - 9:45 am

Welcome: Arien Mack (USA), Editor, *Social Research Journal*

Introductory remarks: Mahnaz Afkhami (Iran/USA), Founder & President, Women's Learning Partnership

9:45 am - 10:15 am

Keynote: Michelle Bachelet (Chile), Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations; Director, UN Women

10:15 am - 12:15 pm

Our Vision for UN Women: Views from the Field

Speakers, followed by Q&A:

Wajeeha Al Baharna (Bahrain) – Executive Director, Bahrain Women Association

Sindi Medar-Gould (Nigeria) – Executive Director, BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights

Asma Khader (Jordan) – General Coordinator, Sisterhood Is Global Institute/Jordan

Mallika Dutt (India/USA) – President & CEO, Breakthrough

Sakena Yacoobi (Afghanistan) – Executive Director, Afghan Institute of Learning

Moderator:

Lina Abou-Habib (Lebanon) – Executive Director, Collective for Research & Training on Development-Action

12:15 pm - 12:45 pm

Reflections on Regional and Global Work with the UN

Thoraya Obaid (Saudi Arabia) – Former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations;
Former Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

12:45 pm - 2:00 pm

Lunch break

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Culture, Religion, and Human Rights: Applying What We Have Learned

Speakers, followed by Q&A:

Leila Ahmed (Egypt/USA) – Professor, Harvard Divinity School

Karima Bennoune (Algeria/USA) – Professor of Law and Arthur L. Dickson Scholar, Rutgers School of Law

Radhika Coomaraswamy (Sri Lanka) – Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations; Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict

Francis Kissling (USA) – Visiting Scholar, Center for Bioethics, University of Pennsylvania

Moderator:

June Zeitlin (USA) – Director, CEDAW Education Project at the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights Education Fund

3:30 pm - 4:45 pm

Where Do We Go from Here?

Speakers, followed by Q&A:

Yakin Ertürk (Turkey) – Professor of Middle East Technical University in Ankara; Member, the European Committee on the Prevention of Torture (CPT)

Charlotte Bunch (USA) – Founder & Former Director, Center for Women's Global Leadership, Rutgers University

Farah Karimi (Iran/Netherlands) – Executive Director, Oxfam Novib

Mahnaz Afkhami (Iran/USA) – Founder & President, Women's Learning Partnership

Moderator:

Ann Snitow (USA) – Professor of Literature and Gender Studies, Director of the Gender Studies Program, The New School

4:45 pm - 5:00 pm

Concluding Remarks



**UN Women:
The Way Forward**

February 26, 2011, 9:30am - 4:30pm

John Tishman Auditorium at the New School for Social Research
66 West 12th Street, New York, NY

Speaker Bios

Lina Abou-Habib (Lebanon) is Executive Director of the Collective for Research and Training on Development–Action (CRTD-A), an organization that works in Lebanon and the MENA region on gender and citizenship, gender and economic rights, and women's leadership and public participation. Ms. Abou-Habib is a co-founder and coordinator of the Machreq/Maghreb Gender Linking and Information Project. She has collaborated with a number of regional and international agencies, as well as public institutions, in mainstreaming gender in development policies and practices and in building capacities for gender mainstreaming. Ms. Abou-Habib serves on the boards of the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) and Gender and Development, is a MENA advisor for the Global Fund for Women, and is on the editorial board of Oxfam's journal, *Gender and Development*.

Leila Ahmed (Egypt) holds the Victor S. Thomas Chair at Harvard Divinity School. Prior to this appointment, she was professor of Women's Studies and Near Eastern Studies at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, where she also served as director of the Women's Studies Program from 1992 to 1995 and as director of the Near Eastern Studies Program from 1991 to 1992. She was a distinguished visiting professor in 1992 at the American University in Cairo and was elected to a life membership at Clare Hall at the University of Cambridge in England. Dr. Ahmed has been a member of the Women's Studies in Religion Program (WSRP) Advisory Committee since 1992. Her publications include *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate* and *A Border Passage: From Cairo to America - A Woman's Journey*, a memoir of her coming of age in Egypt during and after the collapse of European imperialism. Dr. Ahmed received her B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Cambridge.

Mahnaz Afkhami (Iran/USA) is the founder and President of Women's Learning Partnership, Executive Director of the Foundation for Iranian Studies, and former Minister for Women's Affairs in Iran. She serves on advisory boards for Ethical Globalization Initiative, International Museum of Women, World Movement for Democracy, and the Women's Division of Human Rights Watch, among a number of other national and international organizations. Ms. Afkhami has been a leading advocate of women's rights internationally for more than three decades. Her publications include *Muslim Women and the Politics of Participation*, *Faith and Freedom: Women's Human Rights in the Muslim World*, *Women in Exile*, and *Women and the Law in Iran*. Among the training manuals she has co-authored are *Claiming Our Rights: A Manual for Women's Human Rights Education in Muslim Societies*, *Safe and Secure: Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls in Muslim Societies*, and *Leading to Choices: A Leadership Training Handbook for Women*.

Wajeeha Al-Baharna (Bahrain) is a founding member and vice-president of Bahrain Women Association. She serves on the boards of the Arab Thought Forum, Innovation Cultural Society (Al-Tajdeed), the Arab Network for Non-Governmental Organizations, World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations, and Network of Democrats in the Arab World (NDAW) and is an advisor for Global Fund for Women. She leads the "Nationality Campaign" and is a member of the family law committee in Bahrain, and appears frequently on Bahrain TV, Al Jazeera, and Al Manar, speaking to women's issues in the Middle East and Gulf countries. Dr. Al-Baharna holds a PhD in Environmental Management from Madison University and worked as a Marine Biologist in the Public Commission for Protection of Marine Resources and Environment and Wild Life in Bahrain.

Charlotte Bunch (USA) is the founder and former Director of the Center for Women's Global Leadership, Rutgers University. Ms. Bunch has been an activist, author and organizer in the women's, civil, and human rights movements for four decades. Ms. Bunch was previously a Fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, a founder of Washington D.C. Women's Liberation and *Quest: A Feminist Quarterly*. She is the author of numerous essays and books, including *Passionate Politics: Feminist Theory in Action* and *Demanding Accountability: The Global Campaign and Vienna Tribunal for Women's Human Rights*. Ms. Bunch's contributions to the women's rights movement have been recognized by many and include her induction into the National Women's Hall of Fame and receipt of the Eleanor Roosevelt Award for Human Rights. She currently serves on the Advisory Committee of the Women's Rights Division for Human Rights Watch, on the boards of the Global Fund for Women and the International Council on Human Rights Policy, and recently served on the Advisory Committee for the Secretary General's 2006 Report to the General Assembly on Violence against Women.

Radhika Coomaraswamy (Sri Lanka) is an Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict. Ms. Coomaraswamy, the former Chairperson of the Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission, is an internationally known human rights advocate and former United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women (1994-2003). She has written on violence in the family, violence in the community, violence against women during armed conflict and the problem of international trafficking. Ms. Coomaraswamy has won many awards including the International Award of the American Bar Association, the Human Rights Award from the International Human Rights Law Group, the Bruno Kreisky Award of 2000, the University of Oslo's Leo Ettinger Human Rights Prize, and the Robert S. Litvack Award from McGill University. Ms. Coomaraswamy received her B.A. from Yale University, her J.D. from Columbia University, an LL.M. from Harvard University and honorary PhDs from Amherst College, the University of Edinburgh, the University of Essex and the University of Leuven.

Yakin Ertürk (Turkey) is professor of Sociology and Chair of the Gender and Women's Studies Program at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara. During her tenure at the United Nations, she served as director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) from 1997-1999, then as director of The Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) from 1999-2001, and most recently as the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women from 2003-2009. She also taught at the Centre for Girls, at King Saud University in Riyadh (1979-1982) and from 1979 to 1981 served as its Chair. She was recently elected by the ministers of the Council of Europe to serve a four-year term in the European Committee on the Prevention of Torture (CPT). She has worked for various national and international agencies on rural development and women in development projects, and has written and lectured extensively on identity politics, conflict and violence against women. She holds a PhD in Development Sociology from Cornell University.

Asma Khader (Jordan), a lawyer and human rights activist, is General Coordinator of Sisterhood Is Global Institute/Jordan (SIGI/J) and Secretary General of the Jordanian National Commission for Women. She is former Minister of Culture and Government Spokesperson for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and former President of the Jordanian Women's Union. Elected to the Permanent Arab Court as Counsel on violence against women in 1996, she has served as a judge and chairperson of many judicial bodies specializing in fields related to human rights. A member of the Arab Lawyer's Union, the Arab Organization for Human Rights, the Executive Committee of the International Commission of Jurists, and the Advisory Committee of the Women's Division of Human Rights Watch, she has received numerous awards and honors for her work. She was instrumental in creating a Legal Literacy/Legal Assistance program for Jordanian women, as well as establishing the Jordanian Children's Parliament. Ms. Khader has written and spoken widely on the topics of women, children's rights, and human rights.

Frances Kissling (USA) is former president of Catholics for a Free Choice and a visiting scholar at the Center for Bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania where she is doing research for a series of essays on current controversies on abortion. She is a weekly columnist covering religion, reproduction, and politics for Salon.com, blogs for religiondispatches.org, and is co-author of *Rosie: The Investigation of a Wrongful Death*. She serves on the advisory boards of the *Journal of Feminist Ethics* and the Women's Bioethics Project. As a consultant to International Planned Parenthood Federation, she conducts values clarification workshops for health professionals working on reproductive health in Latin America. She has published in the *New York Times*, *LA Times*, *Boston Globe*, *SF Chronicle*, *The Nation*, *American Prospect*, *New Republic online*, *Irish Independent*, *The Guardian*, *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, *OGlobo* (Brazil), *Gazeta Wyborza* (Poland) and numerous other journals and publications.

Arien Mack is the Alfred and Monette Marrow Professor of Psychology at The New School for Social Research, where she has edited *Social Research: An International Quarterly* since 1970. In 1988 she established the *Social Research* conference series, which she continues to direct and now includes twenty-one conferences. Professor Mack is also the founder and director of the Journal Donation Project, which assists in rebuilding major research and teaching libraries in countries that have fallen victim to political or economic deprivation. In 2007 she started the Endangered Scholars Worldwide initiative, which is dedicated to raising public awareness of the plight of researchers, teachers, and writers who have been threatened, silenced or imprisoned. As a research psychologist, Professor Mack's current interests focus on perception, cognition, and attention. She teaches graduate-level psychology courses and oversees a research lab at the New School for Social Research. Her publications include more than 60 articles, and the coauthored volume *Inattentional Blindness*.

Sindi Médar-Gould (Nigeria) is Executive Director of BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights, a non-profit organization working for women's human rights and legal rights under customary and religious law in Africa. BAOBAB also coordinates programs for Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML) in Africa and the Middle East. Previously, she was the Executive Director of WISSEA, Kano and the Coordinator of the Women and Law Program for Kano State. Ms. Médar-Gould is a life long activist and feminist with a record of 30 years standing in women's human rights work. She is an experienced trainer in gender, leadership, feminism, conflict resolution, gender budget analysis, human rights, and ethics. Ms. Médar-Gould serves as Chairperson of the Nigeria Coalition on the International Criminal Court.

Malena de Montis (Nicaragua) is the founder of the Center for Democratic Participation and Development (Cenzontle) and the Women's Development Fund (FODEM/Cenzontle), both non-governmental organizations that seek to support the economic and political empowerment of women with scarce resources through financial, business, and citizenship components that have earned the Central American award for Best Practice from INTERCAMBIO. She was the Director of Cenzontle for 13 years and is currently on the Board of Directors of both organizations. She was a pioneer in the Autonomous Women's Movement and founder of the Women's Coalition in Nicaragua. She has been a participant and speaker in numerous meetings and conferences around the world and is the author of various publications on issues of women and development. Dr. de Montis has her doctoral degree in Education from the University of Massachusetts

Thoraya Ahmed Obaid (Saudi Arabia) is a former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). As UNFPA Executive Director, she introduced a focus on culture to the Fund's development work, linking gender, universal values of human rights and values of the human worth promoted by all religions and found in all cultures. She also served as chair of the High-level Committee on Management of the UN System, the principal inter-agency body for coordinating management matters. She was previously director of UNFPA's Division for Arab States and Europe and deputy executive secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. A recipient of numerous awards, in 2004 Forbes named her among the world's 50 most powerful Arab women. She is also profiled as one of 100 Muslim Builders of World Civilization and Culture in *Notable Muslims*. She has a doctorate degree in English Literature and Cultural Anthropology from Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.

Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (Nigeria) is presently Managing Director of the World Bank, and is the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nigeria. From July 2003 to June 2006 she served as Minister of Finance and Economy of Nigeria and Head of Nigeria's much acclaimed Presidential Economic Team. Her achievements as Finance Minister garnered international recognition for improving Nigeria's financial stability and fostering greater fiscal transparency to combat corruption. Previously, she pursued a 21-year career as a development economist at the World Bank, where she held the post of Vice President and Corporate Secretary, among others. Dr. Okonjo-Iweala has received numerous awards, including an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from Brown University, European Time Magazine Hero of the Year Award in 2004, and Euromoney Magazine Global Finance Minister of the Year Award in 2005. Dr. Okonjo-Iweala was educated at Harvard and has a PhD in Regional Economics and Development from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Ann Snitow (USA) is a feminist activist, writer, and Director of the Gender Studies Program at The New School, where she is also a professor of literature and gender studies. Among other affiliations, Dr. Snitow is a co-founder and Board Member of the Network of East-West Women (NEWW), co-founder of Take Back the Future and serves on the Editorial Board of *Dissent* magazine. She is co-editor of *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*, a central text in U.S. debates about the historicity of sexual experience, and *The Feminist Memoir Project: Voices from Women's Liberation*, a collection of intimate accounts written by prominent women from the women's liberation movement in the late 1960's. Dr. Snitow received her doctorate in Literature from the University of London and holds a BA from Cornell University.

Sakena Yacoobi (Afghanistan) is the Founder and President of the Afghan Institute of Learning (AIL), an Afghan NGO established to provide teacher training to Afghan women, to support education for boys and girls, and to provide health education to women and children, and co-Founder and Vice-President of Creating Hope International, a Michigan-based non-profit organization. AIL supported 80 underground home schools for 3000 girls in Afghanistan after the Taliban closed girls' schools in the 1990s. Ms. Yacoobi is a recipient of the National Endowment for Democracy's 2005 Democracy Award, the 2006 Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship, and the 2007 Gleitsman International Activist Award. She was inducted as a Senior Ashoka fellow in 2006, making her the first Ashoka fellow from Afghanistan. Ms. Yacoobi holds a Bachelor's Degree in Biological Sciences from the University of the Pacific and a Master's Degree in Public Health from Loma Linda University. In May 2007, Ms. Yacoobi was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Law for her work in human rights from the University of the Pacific.

June Zeitlin (USA) is the Director of the CEDAW Education Project at the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights Education Fund. Most recently she served as the Executive Director for the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) from 1999 to 2008. She has extensive experience as a women's rights lawyer, social policy advocate and in intergovernmental relations. Ms. Zeitlin worked at the Ford Foundation for over a decade as the Director of the Governance and Civil Society Program, Director of the Gender and Institutional Change Project, Deputy Director of the Rights and Social Justice Program and Program Officer for Women's Rights. Ms. Zeitlin's past positions also include working with New York City's Office of Management and Budget and the Human Resources Administration, and at the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare serving as the director of the newly created Office on Domestic Violence. She has a JD from New York University School of Law and a BA from the University of Rochester.