

Place your Club Logo Here

*UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE
ZONTA CLUB OF _____*

2009-2010 Committee Members:

List committee members

Zonta International and the United Nations

Zonta International service has been closely linked with the United Nations since Zonta expressed support for the fledgling UN in 1946. As an international non-governmental organization (NGO), Zonta brings women's concerns to the UN, suggests solutions, draws public attention to issues and encourages its members to participate at the local level.

Zonta maintains representatives of its United Nations Committee at UN sites in Geneva, New York, Paris and Vienna. Committee members attend UN conferences, and UN agency, committee and commission sessions.

Accredited NGOs, like Zonta, participate in these sessions by providing written statements and oral presentations on issues being considered. NGOs also may organize panels relating to the general debate.

UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Since 1985, Zonta has had general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), one of six principal bodies carrying out UN work.

ECOSOC is responsible for two-thirds of UN programs, in particular, those concerned with economic issues such as trade, industrialization and development, as well as social issues such as women's rights, children and social welfare. ECOSOC makes recommendations on how to improve education and health conditions and to promote respect for and observance of the human rights and freedoms of people everywhere.

Commission on the Status of Women

One of nine functional ECOSOC committees, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the leading policymaking body concerned with women's rights and the equal status of women. Since 1946, the CSW has convened an annual conference, now attended by thousands of women worldwide, to discuss issues of paramount concern for women.

Department of Public Information

Zonta is one of many NGOs associated with the [United Nations Department of Public Information](#) because of its strong programs on issues of concern to women. The UN provides NGOs access to information and materials and the NGOs agree to disseminate information to their membership.

Zonta International also has consultative status with:

- * International Labour Organization (ILO)



ZI UN Committee Members

Jackie Shapiro, Chairman
Zonta Club of New York, USA

Geneva

> **Simone Ovard-Bruno**
Zonta Club of Pinerolo Area, Italy

New York

> **Karen Siegel**
Zonta Club of Greater Queens, USA
> **Mary Ann Tarantula**
Zonta Club of Northern Valley, NJ, USA
> **Elizabeth Kofler Shuman** Zonta club of New York, NY, USA

Paris

> **Jacqueline Besnard**
Zonta Club of D'Orleans Et Region, France
> **Jannine N'Diaye**
Zonta Club of Paris Port Royal-Concorde, France
> **Monique Vernet**
Zonta Club of Paris III, France

Vienna

> **Eveline Hejlek**
Zonta Club of Vienna City, Austria
> **Monika Klenovec**
Zonta Club of Vienna, Austria
> **Eva-Maria Kodek-Werba**
Zonta Club of Vienna City, Austria

DUTIES and RESPONSIBILITIES of the UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE

UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE

The United Nations Committee provides information to club members on Zonta International's work with the United Nations and its agencies. This information will enhance member awareness of Zonta International's efforts in advancing the status of women and providing global service.

Responsibilities

- Provide up-to-date information on the UN, its affiliates and its initiatives as pertinent to the fulfillment of Zonta International's objects.
- Disseminate information on the important activities of Zonta International and district United Nations committees.
- Create programs and events within the club and community that will engage members in support of Zonta's association with UN activities relevant to women.
- Publicize within the community (with the PR&C committee) the work of Zonta in UN initiatives.
- Inform District United Nations Chairman Marianne Mussett (Zonta Club of Toledo I – mcmusett@hotmail.com) and District Governor Amy Grubbe (Zonta Club of Sandusky Area – amygrubbe@yahoo.com) of club activities that highlight our UN partnerships.
- Collaborate with District UN Committee on activities that require cooperation and support.
 - Pursuant to the Resolution adopted by the 55th International Convention in July 2000, support ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and of the optional Protocol to the Convention.
 - Pursuant to the Resolution adopted by the 56th International Convention in July 2002, support ratification of the UN Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children.
 - Pursuant to the Resolutions adopted by the 57th International Convention in July 2004, support the efforts of the United Nations to halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, and raise awareness about the issue of the use of the umbilical cord blood and stem cells.

Resources

- ZI/ZIF Web site (www.zonta.org)
- Publications of the United Nations and its agencies
- Web sites of UN organizations and Zonta International
- The International and district United Nations committees
- *The Zontian Magazine*

- UN agencies and local chapters of UN affiliates and United Nations Associations



In no country in the world are women safe from gender violence.

Domestic violence is the major cause of death and disability for European women ages 16 to 44, and accounts for more death and ill-health than cancer or traffic accidents.	In the US , a woman is raped every 6 minutes; a woman is battered every 15 seconds. 700,000 women are sexually assaulted annually; 14.8 percent of them are raped before the age of 17.
In South Africa , more women are shot at home in acts of domestic violence than are shot by strangers on the streets or by intruders.	The Russian government estimates 14,000 women were killed by relatives in 1999, yet the country still has no law specifically addressing domestic violence.
In India , more than 7,000 women will be murdered by their families and in-laws in disputes over dowries.	In Peru , a study of 12- to 16-year-old girls giving birth found that 90 percent of them were pregnant from rape, often incest.
In Bangladesh , 200 women this year will be horribly disfigured when their spurned husbands or suitors burn them with acid.	This year, more than 15,000 women will be sold into sexual slavery in China .



■ **Project: Ending Violence Against Women in through Community Action (EVAWCA) in Cambodia**

Funding: US\$100,000 to UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women, Administered by UNIFEM

Cambodia is a country still struggling with the legacy of the Khmer Rouge and the culture of violence left in its wake. Women are considered by most to be inferior to men, with the saying "men are gold, women are cloth" describing their relative worth. Women are expected to be subservient to men in all situations, while many ideals of masculinity include aggressive and dominating behavior that all too often leads to violence. Women victims of violence are often blamed both by society and by themselves or are too ashamed to complain, and domestic violence is largely seen as a family problem not to be interfered in by outsiders. In 2005 Cambodia passed the Law on the Protection of Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims, but until traditional attitudes towards women and gender-based violence are changed, the law is largely not enforced and ineffective.



RESPONSE:

Gender and Development for Cambodia (GAD/C) will work to change attitudes of society and to modify harmful behaviors through education and counseling. A research study will be undertaken to better understand current masculine ideals, specifically looking at the relationship between violence and masculinity in the rapidly changing Cambodian society. With a better understanding of how the ideals of masculinity lead to violence, Men's Community Groups will be established to work directly with perpetrators and potential perpetrators. These groups will provide counseling and education in order to change harmful ideas and behaviors, changing the participants from perpetrators or potential perpetrators to non-violent male role models.

Women's Community Groups will also be established to teach women that they have a right to live a life free from violence. Participants will be taught about their rights under the law and trained to advocate for them. The Groups will monitor the enforcement of laws against gender-based violence and work with their local authorities to ensure that laws are enforced as soon as violence against women occurs.

In addition to working to prevent violence, GAD/C will work with survivors, providing legal counseling and social services to help them come to terms with their experiences, to seek justice and to reintegrate themselves into society.

■ **Project: Combating Physical Violence Against Women and Supporting the Implementation of Protective and Anti-Discriminatory Laws and Policies in Egypt**

Funding: US\$200,000 to UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women, Administered by UNIFEM

While the Egyptian constitution states that women are equal to men and cannot be discriminated against, Egypt is still a country in which attitudes, laws and policies treat women as inferior. Fifty six percent (56%) of Egyptian women are illiterate, compared to only 33% of Egyptian men. Women account for only 21% of the labor force. Many women are forced into early marriage by family members, often their fathers, decreasing the chance of attaining an education and increasing the chance of early pregnancy and domestic violence.



These inequalities perpetuate a culture in which violence against women is considered common and acceptable. A 1995 survey among the most recent available due to a traditional lack of interest on the effects of domestic violence showed that 33% of women between the ages of 15 and 49 who have ever been married have been beaten by their husbands, a figure that increases to 40% for women between 15 and 19. Historically, religious and social ideals in Egypt have valued an obedient wife, and it is generally accepted that a man has the right to discipline his wife as and when he sees fit. This idea is so much a part of everyday life that 70% of women surveyed believe that a man is justified in beating his wife if she talks back to him or refuses sex; 65% believed that talking with another man justified being beaten, while 26% felt the same about burning dinner.

RESPONSE:

In order to successfully combat violence against women in Egypt, traditional attitudes regarding the role in society and the relative worth of women must be changed at every level. The Al Shehab Foundation for Comprehensive Development will begin working with legislators and legal professionals to raise awareness of women's rights and the obstacles that stand in the way of equality. Special attention will be paid to the legal system and the ways in which a domestic violence survivor's right to pursue justice is blocked.

Because so many women have been taught to believe that violence is an inevitable part of life, awareness raising campaigns will target vulnerable women with the message that violence is never acceptable. When more women are aware of their rights, more women will be able to pursue justice and to escape from dangerous situations.

The Al Shehab Foundation will also work directly with shelter workers and survivors of violence. Workers will be taught the importance of interactive listening, of understanding and emphasizing women's rights, and will be educated on the correlation between violence and HIV. Survivors will be given the legal, medical and psychological support they need, and will be taught how they can raise awareness in their own communities.

■ **Project: Community-Based Center for Housing and Rehabilitation of Women Victims of Violence in Syria**

Funding: US\$100,000 to UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women, Administered by UNIFEM

In Syrian society, violence in the home is still largely considered a family matter, not to be interfered in by outsiders. According to General Union of Women spokeswoman Hana Qaddoura, many Syrians believe that violence in the home doesn't count as real violence, and a woman who is beaten by her husband is generally only considered to be in a bad relationship and not the victim of violence.

For many years a code of silence has meant that violence against women was not talked about. Syria is a country in which family honor is taken very seriously, and to discuss such matters would not have been in keeping with the honor code. Women have been afraid or ashamed to report violence either experienced or witnessed, the media refrained from reporting on the phenomenon of so-called honor killings, even as nearly 300 were committed each year, and until recently the government would not even collect information about violence against women.



This silence means that women victims of violence in Syria often do not know what to do to escape from their abusers. One in 4 married Syrian women report being beaten by a family member, usually their husband or father, and even more have experienced emotional abuse. The few available shelters are often ill-equipped and poorly publicized, so that even those women who understand that they have a right to live free of violence do not know where to go.

RESPONSE:

The Association for Women's Role Development (AWRD) will create a high quality one-stop center for survivors of violence, focusing especially on those women who are living in poverty. The center will provide immediate protection for women escaping from an abusive situation in addition to offering medical and legal aid. Survivors will have access to counseling and will be assisted with reintegration into their communities when the time comes.

The center will also address the broad causes of violence by launching awareness and advocacy campaigns aimed at survivors, victims, authorities and the general public. By addressing harmful societal ideals and discriminatory practices, women will become less vulnerable to violence, and women along with men and boys will be taught to speak out against violence against women.

- *Co-branding Zonta International / UNICEF Partnership*



UNICEF has produced an excellent DVD called Missing Mothers – available on ZI website – www.zonta.org. As the message may very well not only be related to women that will die during pregnancy or childbirth, but also to our service project in Rwanda, where deaths of HIV positive mothers have created a wave of orphans.

We are grateful to UNICEF for allowing co-branding with Zonta of this production that will increase the understanding and importance of funding to the international service projects we have promised to support.

Although this DVD is produced by UNICEF and ZI does relate it to our Rwanda project, the message and statistics of Missing Mothers are as relevant for our service project in Liberia together with UNFPA. Prevention of obstetric fistula is not only repair and reduction through surgery, it is a matter of changing attitudes relating to the underlying reasons such as girl marriage (resulting in too young girls being pregnant) and the practice of FGM (female genital mutilation).

- *Safe Cities Project*



How right in time ZI was when choosing the Zonta Safe Cities project as UNIFEM and UN-Habitat in June 2009 joined their efforts to make cities free from violence against women and girls.

THE NEED:

As Latin America becomes an increasingly urbanized area, violence is escalating at an alarming rate. Recent civil wars, a lack of economic and employment opportunities, the repatriation of gang members and criminals and increased drug trafficking have lead to a culture of violence. The homicide rate in the region is a staggering 114% above the world average, and is even higher in the especially dangerous countries of Guatemala and El Salvador. As conditions worsen and violence increases, women are especially vulnerable to becoming victims due to their traditionally subordinate role in Latin American society.

RESPONSE:

By focusing on urban violence as a gender issue and strengthening women's right to active citizenship, UNIFEM will work to make these dangerous cities safer for women. As women take on more active roles they will be empowered to more effectively combat the increasing violence in their neighborhoods and communities. UNIFEM will work with established women's organizations in partnership with local authorities in order to develop and implement policies on urban violence that specifically address the needs of women and the prevalence of violence against women in this environment. The women's organizations will identify risks and potential solutions, advocate for more effective anti-violence policies and participate in urban planning aimed at making the cities

safer. They will launch sensitization campaigns and stage local interventions in order to educate the public and to decrease violence against women.



Zonta International

Advancing the Status of Women Worldwide

Zonta International empowers women to overcome barriers to their equal human rights through its International Service Projects funded by the Zonta International Foundation.

Mission

The mission of the Zonta International Foundation is to support the charitable and educational programs of Zonta International through effective fundraising, investment of funds, and the distribution of proceeds. Through its financial support of Zonta International programs, the Foundation becomes the catalyst for greater service to women throughout the world.

Since 1923, Zonta has provided more than \$8 million to projects benefitting millions of women and their families representing 34 countries.

*Your Zonta contributions are needed to continue supporting these important projects!
To contribute in various ways and to specific funds, please review www.zonta.org*

THANK YOU!

District 5 Foundation Ambassador

Joanne 'Van' VanSant, Zonta Club of Columbus
*9100 Oakwood Pointe, Westerville, OH 43082 * 614/882-4038 (home) * no e-mail*