

Women's Economic Empowerment as a Tool for Combating and Eliminating Violence against Women

Panelists' Bios

Aynur Sofiyeva

2007 – up to now Deputy Chairperson of the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

1998-2000 - Chief Legal Advisor of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection.

2000-2005- Member of National Parliament.

2002-2007 – president of Azerbaijan National Chess Federation.

Education: 1986-1991 Baku State University, Department on Journalism, diploma with honor.

1997-2001- Baku State University, Law Department.

At the age of 14 she was chess champion among girls, at 15 among women in 1986 she was USSR chess champion among girls: in 1993- silver medal at the world chess championship: 1990-first women international chess grandmaster.

Mazal Renford

Mazal Renford is the Director of the Golda Meir Mount Carmel International Training Center (MCTC), in Haifa, Israel. Under the auspices of MASHAV – Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation she has organized hundreds of training courses at MCTC, designed to promote women's leadership, poverty eradication and socio-economic development, throughout Africa, Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean Region.

Ms. Renford represents Israel at many international conferences (UNECE, World Bank, European Union, UNESCO, ILO) and participates annually in the official delegation of Israel to the UN Commission on the Status of Women. In 2007 she was elected to represent Israel for a three year term on the Executive Board of INSTRAW – the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

Her position as Israeli Delegate to the Permanent Commission of the Mediterranean Women's Forum affords her the opportunity for dialogue with women from the Arab world, creating contacts and breaking down stereotypes. In 2004, she initiated an ongoing series of seminars for Palestinian and Israeli women and youth, promoting education for peace. She constantly endeavors to advance dialogue and mutual understanding between Arabs and Israelis, through educational and cultural activities.

Within the framework of MCTC's activities Ms. Renford is also in charge of planning and implementation of international biennial conferences and symposia for women leaders on issues of global concern.

In her national and international work, she is committed to the achievement of the MDGs and is concerned with strengthening, supporting and mentoring the promotion of women in all spheres of society in the developing world.

Malinka Koparanova

Malinka Koparanova is Senior Social Affairs Officer and Gender Focal Point at the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). As Head of the gender activities in UNECE, she conducts and coordinates research on development issues and gender, policy analysis in the economics of gender, including women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship development; organizes intergovernmental meetings as a follow-up to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, workshops and conferences as a platform for exchange of good practices and negotiations for advancing gender equality in the ECE region. She is leading the Special Programme of the Economies in Central Asia on Gender and Economy which has a strong capacity building component focusing on trainings for women entrepreneurs. She has previously worked as a Senior Economist at the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the UN and is Senior Fellow at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Economic Research Institute. Mrs. Koparanova was a McNamara Fellow of the World Bank, was awarded Fulbright Fellowship and EU Fellowships, and was a Visiting professor at the California State University and the London Business School. She has a Ph.D. in Economics and has published books and articles on globalization, capital markets, structural changes, trade, FDI and most recently on women's economic empowerment.

Malka Claire Marcovich

Malka Claire Marcovich is a French author, historian and more than 20 years Feminist expert on VAW, Human and women's rights consultant, member of the International Board of the CATW, Director for Europe of CATW, Coordinator of the Mediterranean Network Against Trafficking in Women, and Co-Founder of the International Campaign Coalition ZeroImpunity. She coordinated in the past several campaigns, advocacy. Author of many articles and reports on the subject of trafficking as an independent consultant.

The Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) is a non-governmental organization created in 1988, struggling for gender equality. The organization works to end human trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of women and children and the legalization and organization of prostitution worldwide. CATW is engaged in advocacy, education, victim services and prevention programs for victims of trafficking and prostitution in Asia, as well as rehabilitation through training and entrepreneurship in Africa, Latin America, Europe, the Mediterranean Region and North America.

Since its creation, CATW has provided widely recognized leadership on local, national, regional, and international levels, in promoting legislative, policy and educational measures to raise awareness about the root causes of human trafficking. CATW holds Special Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and was a key consultant at the UN Transnational Organized Crime Meeting from 1999-2000 the outcome of which is the Palermo Protocol, the world's most recognized legal instrument on human trafficking.)