

*Women in APEC*  
**Our Contribution to Economic Prosperity**

Proceedings of the

**4<sup>th</sup> APEC Women Leaders Network Meeting**

20–23 June 1999

**Indigenous Women in Exporting Business Seminar**

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# Foreword

This publication presents a record of the proceedings and outcomes of the 4<sup>th</sup> APEC Women Leaders Network (WLN) meeting and the Indigenous Women in Exporting Business (IWEB) seminar, both held in June 1999 in Wellington, New Zealand.

It includes summaries of the formal sessions of both meetings, the declarations and recommendations that came out of the meetings, and relevant excerpts from the statements of the APEC Economic Leaders meeting, the 11<sup>th</sup> APEC Ministerial meeting, the APEC Trade Ministers meeting and the Human Resource Development Ministerial meeting.

I would like to pay tribute to the many people and organisations who contributed to the Women Leaders Network meeting and the Indigenous Women in Exporting Business seminar. They include the co-ordinators, Diana Burns (WLN) and Ani Waaka (IWEB), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the APEC Task Force, Avenues Event Management, Her Excellency Valerie Raymond and the Canadian High Commission, diplomatic and other representatives from all the APEC economies, the APEC secretariat, the session recorders, Ministry of Women's Affairs staff, the WLN reference group, the speakers, chairs and organisers, and those who contributed ideas and suggestions. All were critical to the success of both meetings.

With their guidance, input and assistance, a comprehensive programme was developed for both meetings that addressed the themes and objectives of APEC 1999. Outstanding women from throughout the APEC region were identified and came together with extraordinary goodwill as speakers, chairs, session organisers and delegates.

The outcomes of the meetings were endorsed by the APEC Economic Leaders. The Leaders also stated their support for the Framework for the Integration of Women in APEC developed during New Zealand's year as Chair of APEC.

A highly active network of participants is now working to ensure that the Women Leaders Network and the Indigenous Women in Exporting Business meetings have an ongoing place in the APEC calendar, and that women continue to have their voices heard and play an increasing role in APEC processes.

Judy Lawrence  
Chief Executive  
Ministry of Women's Affairs  
December 1999

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## Part 1

# APEC Women Leaders Network Meeting Wellington, 20–23 June 1999

## Introduction

The 4<sup>th</sup> Women Leaders Network meeting was held in Wellington, New Zealand, on 20–23 June 1999 at the Plaza International Hotel.

Entitled *Women in APEC: Our Contribution to Economic Prosperity*, the meeting celebrated and promoted women's role in sustainable economic development and social cohesion in the APEC region. The meeting had three main objectives which were those set by the New Zealand Government as Chair of APEC in 1999:

- expanding opportunities for doing business throughout the APEC region
- working with other economies to strengthen the functioning of markets
- broadening support for and understanding of APEC.

In addition, the Ministry of Women's Affairs, as organisers, wanted to provide for and enhance the special qualities of the Women Leaders Network:

- to give women a voice within the APEC processes
- to provide a forum for women to contribute to discussion about trade, the economy and women's role in economic development
- to enable women leaders to network with, learn from and do business with each other in a constructive environment.

WLN meetings have been growing in strength and importance each year since they began in 1996. With 400 delegates attending from all the APEC economies, this was the largest meeting to date. Participants came from business, science and technology, the rural sector, academia, non-government and government organisations. The programme focused on three streams: sustaining and thriving economies, economies and change, and science, technology and business. Other sessions were on women and trade, the relationship between business, leadership, government and NGOs, and linkages and networking.

Four public events enabled a broader audience to be involved, with speakers talking about the economy and the paths to success in business and sport.

Recommendations from the meeting, incorporating those of the Indigenous Women in Exporting Business seminar, went forward to the APEC Trade Ministers meeting, the Ministers Responsible for Human Resource Development meeting, the APEC Ministerial meeting and the APEC Economic Leaders summit.

Endorsements of the Women Leaders Network and of the Framework for the Integration of Women in APEC were included in the recommendations and statements from the ministerial and leaders meetings and can be found at the end of this report.

# Summary of Presentations

## Opening session

### An APEC roadmap and the role of the Women Leaders Network meeting

**Chair:** Judy Lawrence

**Panelists:** Maarten Wevers, Dr Hedy Fry (Canada), Teresita Castillo (Philippines), Pania Tyson-Nathan<sup>1</sup>

**Judy Lawrence**, Chief Executive of the New Zealand Ministry of Women's Affairs, outlined the role of the Women Leaders Network meeting. She stressed that women's integration in APEC was a means of ensuring that women have more influence over their economies.

**Maarten Wevers**, Chair of APEC Senior Officials, outlined the origins of APEC, pointing out that the APEC process was new and innovative and had grown in response to the demands of people in the Asia-Pacific region. He told delegates that the Women Leaders Network meeting was an opportunity to take gender issues right to the heart of APEC. He explained that the APEC process was voluntary and relied on consensus and peer pressure, but it worked because leaders were committed to it.

He set out APEC's three-pronged commitment to trade liberalisation through:

- improving the quality of regulation
- making compliance cheaper
- encouraging co-operation in the areas of economics and technology.

**Dr Hedy Fry**, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women), Canada, is a native of Trinidad and a medical practitioner. She was elected to Parliament in 1993. Dr Fry discussed Canada's pivotal role in co-founding and supporting the Women Leaders Network. She called for stronger links between economic and social policy and stressed the need for women to participate fully in economic policy and economic growth, while warning that women

could be adversely affected when barriers to free trade were removed.

She called for APEC to be inclusive of all women, including the poor and disadvantaged, and highlighted the importance of the first APEC-related meeting of indigenous women as a step towards inclusiveness.

**Teresita Castillo**, is a Commissioner and former Executive Director of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, attached to the Office of the President. She focused on the WLN's efforts to encourage APEC to recognise and consider gender issues and women's contribution. It had been a challenge for women to get the attention of APEC leaders and the goal of integrating women into the economic process was only partially achieved.

Remaining challenges, she said, included dealing with the perception that the WLN was elitist, ensuring the WLN produced results and providing more resources for its work. She drew attention to the steadfast support of the Philippines Government for the WLN.

**Pania Tyson-Nathan** is a partner in Tyson-Nathan and Associates which specialises in brokering business partnerships between Māori and non-Māori. She discussed APEC's importance to ordinary women. She said that women needed to understand what APEC does, but many women were simply too busy.

She said that, while removing trade barriers could deliver benefits, women were very susceptible to the negative effects of free trade. Much work still needed to be done to give women equal status, equal earning power and access to economic benefits. The challenge was to turn words into actions and for the voices of all women to be heard through good representation. Many small and medium enterprises were unaware of how APEC's work would affect them and they needed to prepare now for the free trade environment.

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<sup>1</sup> Participants are from New Zealand unless otherwise stated.

## Opening Address

### Prime Minister of New Zealand, Rt Hon Jenny Shipley

**Co-chairs: Roseanne Meo, Datuk Noor Azah Awin (Malaysia)**

**Roseanne Meo**, a New Zealand company director and business woman, referred to APEC's uniqueness in actively integrating government and the private sector, and fostering partnerships for business.

**Rt Hon Jenny Shipley** stressed that APEC is critical to the region's prosperity and that women are key players in ensuring prosperity. It had to be shown, however, that APEC could improve people's pay packets and put food on their tables. Women, with their family responsibilities, were at the sharp end of economic change, but APEC's goals of freer trade and better markets, resulting in trade, jobs, higher incomes and cheaper goods, were the best tools they could have.

Mrs Shipley paid tribute to the work of the APEC Women Leaders Network which had brought women's contribution to the fore since its inception in 1996. She hoped the meeting would develop strategies to assist Leaders in their deliberations in the three major areas of APEC's work for 1999. She highlighted the contribution women were making through their activity in small and medium enterprises. The secrets of their success were creativity, flexibility and resourcefulness, and their cautious, risk-averse approach to business. Women also valued personal and family issues and community achievements as much as business success, and this too enhanced their contribution to economic prosperity. She called for measures to quantify women's paid and unpaid roles to get a complete picture of their contribution to the economy.

She called on the conference to ensure gender issues were addressed right across APEC, and assured delegates that she intended to make sure that APEC took notice of the findings of the meeting.

**Datuk Noor** gave the vote of thanks to the Prime Minister. She recalled that the Women Leaders Network had come a long way since it began in 1996, and there were many emerging issues to be discussed at this 1999 meeting.

## Keynote Speeches

**Laura Liswood** is the author of *Women World Leaders* and a professor at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard, United States. She began with the reflection that leadership was often associated with greatness. In the past, she said, greatness was often associated with war, and in the United States it was also white, male and tall. But, as US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright once observed "resolving conflict through war is a bad habit". So too, observed Liswood, was excluding women from leadership.

We need leaders, she said, who understood the need for inclusiveness, had a sense of moral and spiritual values, an ability and willingness to challenge authority, and strong communication skills. Liswood thought that women leaders did make a difference but it might be too soon to really tell. More important, she said, was what was missing if women were not part of the power structure. She also asked the question, "Why are women not more visible in the management structures of large organisations and corporations?"

If women's dollars were valuable, she said, so too was their voice. Women must gain the economic literacy that makes them powerful. They could not wait like Cinderella to be rescued. Men had historically taken the leadership roles. It was now women's turn to speak and to have the voice that men have traditionally had.

**Wendy Pye** is managing director and owner of the Wendy Pye Group of Companies, New Zealand, whose vision is to "teach the world to read" in all languages and using all media. Her achievements are an example of APEC in action. She believes literacy is one of the keys to economic development in all countries, and sees a common goal for countries in the APEC region, using education as a pathway to economic growth. The Wendy Pye Group is a market leader in the knowledge economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, pioneering use of the Internet to create better learning opportunities for children. The group has also developed a seamless economic transaction, which allows people to access its resources from their own home and using their own currency.

## Science, Technology and Business

### *E-commerce*

**Chair: Elizabeth Longworth**

**Panelists: Andrina Lever (Canada),  
Supriya Singh (Australia), Kiyomi Saito  
(Japan), Donna Hiser**

**Organiser: Donna Hiser**

**Elizabeth Longworth** is principal of a New Zealand firm offering legal and advisory services on new technologies. She told the forum that e-commerce is central to APEC's trade liberalisation agenda. It has huge implications for education and digital literacy. The Internet would profoundly change the relationship between producer and customer.

The session needed to grapple with the fact that most of the poor and disadvantaged in APEC economies are women and e-commerce must offer opportunities to all women, rather than widening socio-economic gaps.

**Andrina Lever**, a member of the APEC Business Advisory Council, is a lawyer by training who serves on the boards of several companies and is an advisor on small business and finance. She talked about economic achievement in e-commerce by women entrepreneurs. Ms Lever reported on initiatives designed to encourage women to do more business in which the Internet had played a key role.

In a country like Canada with a small population in a large geographic area "virtual associations" such as WISTA (Women in Software Technology) were useful in creating networks and breaking isolation. The Internet had given women greater flexibility and economic opportunity, enabling them to do paid work at home. On the other hand, care was needed to ensure the Internet did not force women back into the home and create another ghetto from which they could not escape.

**Dr Supriya Singh** is Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for International Research on Communication and Information Technologies at RMIT University, Melbourne, and a sociologist studying money and technology.

Dr Singh said e-commerce had overlooked the domestic consumer. In the home, women tended to manage the money yet men used the Internet more. There were three possible policy responses: forget the domestic market; let men have more control of domestic money; or those interested in domestic e-commerce should start to design and talk about the Internet in different ways.

Dr Singh said she was more excited about the potential of e-commerce as a communication tool. E-commerce was seldom talked about in terms of culture or its use in the home. People in e-commerce also needed to consider how it could accommodate non-Western economic models, such as the whanau (extended family), which were about the economics of distribution not accumulation.

**Kiyomi Saito**, an Internet service provider, talked about the economic barriers to women's participation in e-commerce, which is still very small in Japan. Barriers included lack of family support and lack of business experience. However e-commerce could offer real opportunities to women. Start-up costs were low and it could fit in with women's other roles.

Another barrier was the lack of economic credibility of electronic retailers. This, she said, could be overcome with the establishment of a certifying agency. To succeed with e-commerce, Internet education, training and business education were essential too.

**Donna Hiser**, chief executive of Innovus in New Zealand, a company which provides consultancy and information system services, talked about the foundations of success in e-commerce in terms of national and global social development and economic growth, rather than personal or business success.

Policies, she said, must reflect the fact that information technology was commonplace. The global nature of the electronic marketplace required a co-operative, global approach to consumer protection, taxation and privacy issues and to removing legal barriers and in particular the barriers to cross-border e-commerce. With home-based manufacturing and teleworking on the increase, governments must monitor the trends and provide health and safety protection for home-based workers. With the transition to electronic services, governments must also ensure that those who were socially and financially

disadvantaged maintained access to essential services.

Discussant **Wendy Pye** noted that banks needed to respond more effectively to the changes and challenges highlighted by the speakers.

**Denese Henare**, of Ngati Hine descent, a barrister and member of the New Zealand Law Commission, talked about the participation of indigenous people in e-commerce and the significance of the Internet for indigenous women and those who are educationally and economically disadvantaged. Policies which promote access for the disadvantaged were essential if the current gaps between the "haves and have-nots" were not to increase. Policies were also needed to ensure that culture was protected on the Internet.

#### **Discussion**

Education, training and computer literacy skills are needed to reflect cultural values, and attention had to be given to ensuring that languages other than English could be readily employed on the Internet, as at present the Internet is 98% in English. Economies must collect gender disaggregated data on the use of the Internet and electronic commerce to identify and overcome gender-specific barriers.

### ***Profiting from science***

**Chair: Bronwen Holdsworth**

**Panelists: Maxine Simmons, Hermione Binnie,**

**Professor Dato Mazlan Othman (Malaysia),**

**Dr Kathy Garden**

**Organiser: Diane Young**

**Bronwen Holdsworth's** company, Pultron Composites, in Gisborne, New Zealand, deals in new materials technology and relies on research and development. She said that innovation and technology would be key factors in business success and competitive advantage in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Maxine Simmons** is executive director of Immuno-Chemical Products in Auckland, New Zealand, which manufactures products for the dairy, food and pharmaceutical industries. Specialised, added-value products could compete, she said, in knowledge-based, technologically innovative world markets. Simmons said not only had her company profited from science but people had gained as individuals from solving

problems in their industry and delivering new products to world markets.

The critical local issue, she said, was how to ensure New Zealand science and business maintained a state-of-the-art position when investment lagged behind that of trading partners. That meant focus was critical and industry and research organisations had to be closely aligned to ensure technological developments met market needs.

**Hermione Binnie** is a telecommunications engineer and a product manager and team leader at Deltec New Zealand, a manufacturer and exporter of telecommunications equipment.

To profit from science, she said, close co-operation was required between academia, industry and government. Small companies like Deltec, which sell a high-technology product to a rapidly changing market, were dependent on innovation and big markets to support a premium product and cover development costs. They also depended on a local climate that could attract and keep highly skilled people in New Zealand through world class centres of excellence in universities and research institutes, and appropriate employment opportunities.

**Professor Dato Mazlan Othman** is Malaysia's only astrophysicist and Director-General of the Space Sciences Division of the Prime Minister's Department.

There were large disparities in scientific achievement in the economies of the Asia-Pacific region, she said. Some villages in Malaysia and Indonesia still didn't have science teachers. Hence addressing science and technology capacity was essential if science was to be used for development. Promoting fundamental research was central to indigenous advancement.

Women's participation in science also fell far short of what was required to embody a female perspective, address female issues and meet the broadest needs of humanity. If women were to profit from science, their access to and participation in all levels of training needed to increase and the career opportunities for women in science and technology had to be promoted.

Dr Othman said scientists needed to promote the moral and intellectual application of science as the basis of a culture of peace.

**Dr Kathy Garden** is Sustainable Development Co-ordinator at Fletcher Challenge Ltd, New Zealand. She said sustainable development was about a better quality of life for all, over time.

However, different countries created dramatically different ecological footprints. The size of the environmental burden was a composite of population, affluence and technology.

Technology was the business of business, and business had a responsibility to take a lead in producing environmentally friendly products, she said. What would encourage business to do this? Consumer demand for sustainable products was important, but ensuring that sustainable products were the cheapest on the market was the most important factor.

To facilitate this, the environmental and social costs of production had to be reflected in prices and this meant there could be no free dumping of waste, for example.

#### **Discussion**

Delegates focused on disparities, both in gender participation in science and technology and among APEC countries, the need for ethical frameworks for science, and the issue of sustainability.

### ***Women and technology***

**Chair: Dr Helen Anderson**

**Panelists: Prof Danielle Bernstein (USA), Aliza Sherman (USA), Ann Moffat (Australia)**

**Organisers: Philippa Walker, Brenda Leeuwenberg**

**Dr Anderson**, who is the Chief Science Advisor to the New Zealand Government, outlined the three topics to be examined:

- technology impacting on life
- ethical dimensions
- opportunities for women through technology.

**Professor Danielle Bernstein**, who teaches computer science at Kean University in New Jersey, discussed the importance of a good mathematics education if women were to achieve high-skill, high-paying jobs. In the United States, the best predictor of income 10 years after high school was the number of mathematics courses taken in high school. However most women, she said, were derailed from continuing with maths

and science at some point in school and they never got back on track.

Despite high salaries and great demand, the percentage of women computer science graduates in the US had been dropping since 1985 and was now below 20%. Society - and women - needed to realise that studying technology at all levels would increase people's earning power and independence and positively impact on their lifestyle. Mathematics and science should be compulsory throughout high school as this was the most effective way to stop girls dropping these subjects, she said.

Women should also be encouraged to take charge of technology. The content providers, designers of operating systems and programming languages, programmers and analysts would determine the computer uses of the future.

Professor Bernstein also recommended study of the real effects of telecommuting on women's lives. There were now nearly 16 million telecommuters in the US, and while most of the literature extolled the advantages of telecommuting, like lifestyle flexibility, other issues needed to be examined, including motivation, overwork, isolation and career derailment.

**Aliza Sherman**, President of Cybergrrl Inc, a media and entertainment company developing content, resources, communities and tools to empower women to use technology in their everyday lives, spoke about the impact of the Internet on the lifestyle of women.

The Internet, she said, was about access to information and making connections with people. It gave women flexibility in work and at home, allowing them access to virtual communities where they could find support all around the world. It also offered consumer power through the ability to do research and make decisions, and personal power through access to information. At the same time, she said, matters such as privacy, safety and pornography must be addressed.

To improve their access to the opportunities offered by the Internet, women must gain computer and media literacy (the ability to disseminate and discern what is good information). Educational opportunities for women needed expanding. Mentoring and support for women entrepreneurs in technology

would also help make the web friendlier for women.

**Ann Moffat** has 40 years' experience in information technology in Australia, working at all levels from programming to management. Technology, she said, was an exciting field because it was constantly changing and applied to so many businesses and industries.

Women were not taking their rightful place in well-paid careers in IT, she said, and there was a significant gender imbalance, with women's participation dropping. In addition, women tended to be in the lower-end jobs. Yet many of the skills required to do well in the field were those at which women were generally good, such as interpersonal relations and attention to detail.

She noted that there was a tremendous shortage of skills in the sector, with an estimated shortfall of 30,000 jobs in Australia alone. Education in friendly environments was the key to reducing the gender imbalance. It was also critical, Ann Moffat said, that women educated themselves so that they could contribute to debate on the ethical issues associated with Internet use and not just inherit a situation developed by men.

#### **Discussion**

Delegates noted that women now had the opportunity to make a difference. They must not be "shrinking violets". They must learn to value the language that women tend to use when talking about IT, rather than only giving value to technical jargon. While recommendations from delegates focused on education and ethical issues, workplace conditions, privacy and safety and the use of technology for peaceful purposes were also considered important.

## **Economies and Change**

### ***Women's responses to the economic crisis***

**Chair: Mary Anne Thompson**

**Panelists: Lorraine Corner (Australia), Sheryl Kennedy (Canada), Isabelita Palanca (Philippines), Professor Kuniko Inoguchi (Japan)**

**Discussant: Angela Foulkes**

**Organiser: Lorraine Corner**

**Mary Anne Thompson** is director of policy advice in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet in New Zealand, with expertise in economics and international trade. She said that the session would explore ways to ensure that policies were in place to deal with external shocks such as the economic crisis of 1998. It was taken as a given that globalisation meant that no nation could insulate itself against such economic shocks, and that policymakers and governments needed to be able to respond.

**Lorraine Corner** of UNIFEM in Asia recalled that the Asian economic miracle that preceded the economic crisis had lasted for two to three decades with none of the fluctuations that marked economic conditions elsewhere in the world during that period. More and more women entered paid work, particularly in the export sector, although these were frequently poorly paid and vulnerable jobs. Women also played an increasing role in business, small and micro-enterprises. When the economic crisis came, these jobs and businesses disappeared, and women were further hit when men lost their jobs, leading to a decline in home incomes, increasing domestic violence, male suicides and marital breakdown.

However, as some women lost their jobs, others set up businesses, or went to work because they were the only source of income. As economies recovered, Lorraine Corner said, women must not be overlooked, as was happening now, in recovery packages and policies. The female workforce needed upskilling, and the enormous potential of women's business needed to be recognised.

**Sheryl Kennedy**, a Deputy Governor of the Bank of Canada, warned that there were lessons to be learned from a crisis, and governments and

policymakers, as the situation improved, should not lose the incentive to make the necessary structural changes to prevent a similar crisis in future. Governments also needed to think long term in developing structural reform.

Crisis prevention, she said, involved strengthening systems to reduce the frequency and effect of crises, and strengthening social systems that encourage self-reliance, full participation, and social safety nets. These should be in place before a crisis struck, rather than after. Governments needed to promote broad participation in the economy and in policy making. The role for the WLN, she stressed, should be to encourage policy design for crisis management that took the social impacts into account.

**Sabsy Palanca** of the Philippines Women's Business Council (PWBC) talked about the impact of the Asian economic crisis on businesswomen. They had tried to revive their businesses as markets for their products declined. They had introduced new products, entered joint ventures, and sought, through co-operation rather than competition, to survive and grow.

The PWBC had lobbied constantly for cheaper credit for women. She suggested countries adopt an early warning system to prepare for similar economic shocks.

**Professor Kuniko Inoguchi**, Professor of political science at Sophia University in Tokyo, recalled that at the time of the economic crisis, Japan was in a state of stagnation, but as the biggest economy in the region, it was the source of rescue packages for its neighbours.

She argued that those packages had been less effective than they would have been had they placed more emphasis on the social dimensions of the crisis, avoiding the devastating impact they had had on marginalised women and children.

Her call for nations to ensure what she termed "gender security", particularly in times of political and economic difficulties, was applauded by the audience. She suggested that gender security was an integral part of human security, just as women's rights are human rights. Since economic fluctuations could not be avoided, and the damage caused by these could be enormous, nations must be prepared, and try to minimise the social impacts.

Economic shocks should not be allowed to result in the deterioration of medical and health standards, nutrition, and other areas of social justice. Focusing on women, Professor Inoguchi suggested, would have a positive effect on all society.

She suggested that the situation of women and children might provide an early warning system of trouble to come, since, in an economic downturn, they were usually the first casualties. She believed, however, that there were opportunities during the recovery that follows an economic crisis. There is, she said, a critical point at which people were ready for change, and this could see women who have weathered the current crisis make their move towards self-empowerment. In Japan, more women were now involved in politics and were enrolling in university courses such as law and science, areas formerly dominated by men.

#### **Discussion**

Delegates emphasised the importance of micro-enterprises and the need for these frequently women-led enterprises to be helped to grow; the challenges of upskilling women in a changing world; and the question of how to change the perception that APEC had no place for ordinary women.

Delegates called for monitoring of what constitutes sound financial policy when it relates to women and for development policies to be overhauled in the light of the economic crisis. A delegate underlined the difficulties facing countries where traditional cultures are being forced into the modern world, having no option but to embrace technological change and free trade ideals.

### ***When the economic structures change***

**Chair: Bridget Wickham**

**Panelists: Christine McKenzie, Pham Chi Lan (Vietnam), Lorraine Corner (Australia), Miranda Goeltom (Indonesia),**

**Organiser: Deborah Moran**

**Bridget Wickham**, a consultant with Carter Holt Harvey Plastic Products, New Zealand, outlined the objectives of the session, namely, to identify:

- the key issues for women when economic structures change

- strategies that might minimise the impact of changing economic structures.

**Christine McKenzie** is a director of a large meat producer, Alliance Meats, New Zealand. She outlined the impact economic deregulation had had on rural Southland. As farm subsidies were withdrawn, incomes were halved and expenses doubled, and locals put away their cheque books. Local services were closed, and as farms came on the market they were amalgamated with existing properties, rather than passing to new owners.

An important development in the survival of rural Southland, Christine McKenzie said, was a group called Women in Agriculture, which initiated training programmes and, by giving rural women new skills, kept families on the land. Fifteen years on, she said, tourism had brought a new industry to the area, and the Internet had brought the rest of the world to this isolated region. Women's task, said Christine McKenzie, should be to persuade APEC to push social and environmental sustainability as well as economic development.

**Pham Chi Lan**, Executive Vice-President of Vietnam's Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said economic restructuring, which began in Vietnam in the late 1980s, had brought major changes. The change from centralised to market economy had brought more stability and economic growth. State sector enterprises no longer dominated the economy, and private business was now playing a major role. Trade barriers had come down, and the country had opened up to foreign investment. Agricultural production had increased and, whereas in the past Vietnam was unable to feed its people, it was now a major exporter of rice, as well as tea, coffee beans and seafood.

The country's industrial base had grown, as had the service sector, which now accounted for 42% of GDP. The standard of living had improved and average annual incomes had increased from about US\$100 to US\$300. Education had expanded, and the Vietnamese Government has in place policies for the less-advantaged sectors of society, including women, to try to alleviate negative impacts.

Pham Chi Lan said that Vietnam is still a very poor country, and there were discrepancies between rich and poor, urban and rural, and between regions. Women generally found it harder to get a job and were the first to be laid

off, in part because they were not as well-educated as men. With an end to government subsidies, childcare was more expensive, and some women had resorted to prostitution to support themselves and their families. She said, however, that the news for women was not all bad. They were increasingly involved in local and national politics, their status was improving, and they were well represented in management and in small and micro-business ownership, where their performance surpassed that of men. The economic reforms, she said, had presented new opportunities for women and they had taken advantage of them.

**Lorraine Corner**, an Australian economist with UNIFEM in Asia, talked about the need for policies to support women in their double burden of housework and childcare, as well as paid work.

In socialist economies, she said, governments recognised the contribution women made to the future of a nation by producing and raising children as well as their important role in the paid workforce. Governments helped with maternity leave, special working conditions and childcare. The rules of the market economy were, however, somewhat different. Some people wanted private enterprise to take over the role formerly played by the state, but private enterprise did not benefit in the way the State did, and to business it simply meant women workers cost more. The result, said Lorraine Corner, was that employers hired only unmarried women, pregnant women were sacked, and men were hired for professional positions while women were relegated to casual work.

Lorraine Corner suggested that, to overcome this, women must become economically literate so that they recognised the economic consequences of pushing responsibility on to private employers, and advocated solutions that helped, rather than hindered, women's standing in the workforce. She called for more networking between women in business and those in government. Finally, she said, women must demand women-friendly, but economically sound, policy analysis in the neglected area of how to support women when economic structures change.

**Miranda Goeltom**, Managing Director of the Bank of Indonesia, stressed that governments needed the right policy directions if they were to get the most benefit from their human resources, and drew on research she has done on women's involvement in micro-enterprises in Indonesia.

She said women's stubbornness in the face of crisis gave them the ability to explore their additional capacity. Governments needed to help, however, by reducing the bottlenecks that prevented women gaining the privileges that men have. Women needed training for the demands of leadership, and formal and skills training were important for the empowerment of women. There was a continuing struggle with measuring women's contribution in the home and for family, services that were at present unrecorded, she said.

While women's credit record was twice as good as men's, there were obstacles to women gaining credit and these needed to be addressed through training and the setting up of micro-finance networks.

**Angela Foulkes** of the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, said that while globalisation may have brought opportunity, it had also brought uncertainty and instability, with much of the impact falling on women. She argued that APEC nations must not abandon safety nets and labour protections, but develop them along with the globalisation. She appealed for greater contact between APEC and NGOs, which, she said, know what is happening in the real world.

#### **Discussion**

Delegates supported the need for greater access to finance for women, and for lending institutions to recognise that their regulations often raise unfair obstacles for women seeking credit. Training should equip women for economic realities, rather than focusing on traditional areas, such as crafts where competition might be so fierce that they were unable to make money.

### ***Economic rights***

**Chair: Suzanne Snively**

**Panelists: Fanny Cheung (Hong Kong China), Rosalba Ojeda (Mexico), Nadezhda Bikalova (Russia)**

**Discussant: Pamela Jefferies**

**Organiser: Pat Colgate**

New Zealand economist **Suzanne Snively** set the scene for the discussion with a quote from a New Zealand judge: "When you hear the words 'economic restructuring' it should come up in lights — beware, women, children, disabled, vulnerable people, you are about to suffer." She then highlighted the lessons learnt from New Zealand's restructuring over the past 15

years: "Focus on immediate cash returns at your peril." To succeed, she said, there must be a balanced approach that put the needs of people at the forefront.

**Fanny Cheung** is Chairperson of the Hong Kong Equal Opportunities Commission, set up in May 1996. The Commission is responsible for implementing laws against discrimination on the grounds of sex, disability and family status. It deals with individual cases of discrimination, and undertakes legal action and public education.

Fanny Cheung said that Hong Kong women faced the same problems as women elsewhere: under-representation in managerial positions and the professions, and lower pay than men.

There had been phenomenal advances in women's employment in the civil service. Women were now 25% of senior government officials, but gender discrimination was still prevalent. Fanny Cheung said that while legislation could inhibit unlawful acts of discrimination, long-term public education was vital to rally public support and bring about genuine change. The EOC was about to embark on a programme to introduce pre-school children to the concepts of equal opportunity, with the final objective being to have equal opportunities mainstreamed into everyday life.

**Rosalba Ojeda**, who is Director General for the Asia-Pacific region at Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Relations, outlined the history of women and work in her country. At the turn of the century, work for women was frowned on, with two exceptions — school teaching and charitable work. The Mexican revolution of 1910 was a turning point as women joined revolutionary armies and played other roles in the uprising. Women's groups formed to push for education, better working conditions and political participation.

Women's participation in Mexican society had advanced since then. Between 1970 and 1997, women's share in the economy increased from 17% to 34% and women's participation in tertiary education tripled. The advances have not been enough to overcome poverty, however. Work opportunities, she said, were far from fair, few women were employers, and women were still under-represented in the political arena. Women in Mexico's "macho" society also bore the full burden of household work.

She praised the work of APEC in areas important to women such as training for work and setting up in business, infrastructure development and eradication of poverty. APEC could now help to find solutions to endemic problems, and attain a balanced society where men and women were equal.

**Nadezhda Bikalova**, a Russian economist and an advisor to the State Duma Committee on the Problems of the Northern Regions, is also a professor at the International Slavic Academy. She welcomed the global co-operation of women, which meant more women were now in top level positions. However, more were needed.

She referred to APEC, where, she said, no more than 5% of the top positions were held by women when there should be at least 50%. The result was that women in general misunderstood the progressive role of APEC. A positive example, she said, was Western Europe where the proportion of women in power was around 40%. In Russia, however, women held only 10% of seats in parliament.

She talked of the impact of the economic crisis in Russia, focusing on the fact that the basic financial assets of the country were held by a limited number of "unprincipled people, aspiring only to become richer". High inflation and bank collapses had plunged middle class Russia into poverty, and women had been the first to feel the pain. They accounted for the greater number of the unemployed.

Because of the economic crisis, Russians had lost confidence in the state that used to provide all. They were now left to fend for themselves. Women had taken responsibility for family and small businesses, as they tried to adapt. Native and indigenous women in Russia had mounted campaigns to protect their rights in the mining of minerals in the areas where they live.

Russia's decision to join APEC recently had opened up new opportunities for Russian women to tap into new markets, and Nadezhda Bikalova looked forward to a time when women could create a happy future for all.

**Pamela Jefferies**, New Zealand's Chief Human Rights Commissioner, summed up the session by noting the similar concerns voiced by the panelists:

- greater participation by women
- pay equity

- family care responsibilities
- opportunities for self-employment
- equality under the law not always being delivered in practice.

She outlined that the toll economic restructuring in New Zealand had had on women. She indicated that the country's human rights legislation had been extended to outlaw discrimination on the grounds of political opinion and employment status, and to ensure access to public transport for those with disabilities.

She defined economic rights for women as: the right to lifelong participation in the workforce as equal, but not identical, workers; the right to share in the gains of economic growth; and the right not to be held back by a thick layer of men.

### ***Infrastructure for trading success***

**Chair: Kerrin Vautier**

**Panelists: Kate Clemans (USA), Susan Glazebrook, Peri Drysdale, Sung-Joo Kim (Korea)**

**Organiser: Yvonne Lucas**

New Zealand research economist, **Kerrin Vautier**, reminded participants of the goals of APEC: trade liberalisation, sustainable growth, and economic and social involvement. The question to be addressed, she said, was how to get there.

**Kate Clemans** is a New Zealander now based in Washington as director of C & M International, an international trade consulting firm. She described the ideal environment for business as one where there were no tariffs and there were business-friendly regulations, since the highest costs to businesses of all sizes could be the cost of complying with regulations. This was particularly the case with sectors such as the chemical, energy and pharmaceutical industries, where manufacturers were faced with high levels of regulation.

Attempts were being made in APEC to try to harmonise these regulations. The result, she said, would be lower costs in areas such as packaging. The challenge had been to get countries to understand that it is more efficient to lower the cost of business through harmonisation. This was what airlines were trying to do when they began