

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE



# COUNCIL OF WOMEN WORLD LEADERS

Welcome to the [Council of Women World Leaders'](#) Summer 2009 e-Newsletter. The first half of 2009 was a busy period for the Council and we are pleased to share some highlights with you.

This year we welcomed our **new Council Chair**, President Tarja Halonen of the Republic of Finland; we hosted women leaders as part of our **Madeleine K. Albright Women's Voices at the Aspen Institute Series**; we engaged **Council Members** and members of the **Ministerial Initiative** to address and influence international policies for important issues including public health, human rights, and the environment; and we launched a new fellowship program, the **Public Health Graduate Fellowship Program**.

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## Support the Council!

The Council depends on tax-deductible contributions from individuals, foundations, and corporations who share our commitment to promoting good governance through the empowerment of women leaders worldwide.

Your support is crucial to helping us achieve our mission.



**Council Chair,  
President Tarja  
Halonen of the  
Republic of Finland**



President Tarja Halonen became the first female head of state of the Republic of Finland in 2000 and was re-elected in 2006. She has paid close attention to issues of human rights, democracy, and civil society. Issues concerning social justice and promotion of equality have been central themes throughout her political career.

## Recent Events

### UK House of Commons Leader and Labour Party Chair **Harriet Harman** QC MP at the Aspen Institute



On July 14, 2009, the Council welcomed the Rt. Hon. [Harriet Harman](#), UK Minister for Women and Equality. Minister Harman discussed the passage of the Equality Bill, which promotes fairness and equality of opportunity while simultaneously reducing nine major pieces of legislation and 100 statutory instruments into a single act. Minister Harman was joined by the Honorable Vera Baird QC MP, Solicitor-General for England and Wales, EEOC Vice Chair Christine Griffin, and US Congresswoman Niki Tsongas (D-MA).

### "Ending the Atrocity" **Stop Rape Now** - UN Action Campaign



On July 8, 2009, the Council hosted Council Ministerial Initiative Chair and European Commission Vice President Margot Wallström, along with US Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, Melanne Verveer, and UNIFEM Executive Director, Ines Alberdi, to discuss the [Stop Rape Now: UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict](#) campaign.

### Netherlands Antilles Prime Minister **Emily Saïdy de Jongh-Elhage** at the Aspen Institute



On June 10, 2009, Netherlands Antilles Prime Minister and Council Member [Emily Saïdy de Jongh-Elhage](#) gave an informative keynote address on the constitutional restructuring of the islands of the Netherlands Antilles and their ongoing relationship with the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

### Sixth Annual Meeting of the **Ministerial Initiative for Health**



The Council held its [Sixth Annual Meeting of the Ministerial Initiative for Health](#) in Geneva, Switzerland, on May 19, 2009. This meeting brought together women ministers of health to discuss current issues, share best practices, review and provide feedback to the first-ever World Health Organization global report on women's health.

President Halonen has served as co-chair of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, appointed by the International Labour Organization (ILO), from 2002 to 2004.

## New Programs



### Public Health Graduate Fellowship Program

Expanding upon our successful Graduate Fellowship Program, the Council launched the Public Health Graduate Fellowship Program this summer.

Students from leading public health schools including Columbia University, Johns Hopkins University, University of California at Berkeley, and University of Michigan have been placed with Ministers of Health in Samoa, Ecuador, Liberia, Moldova, Micronesia, and Namibia and in international organizations including the World Health Organization and the Finnish National Institute of Health and Welfare.

In 2009, the Council placed a record 22 fellows at 19 sites worldwide!

Visit our [website](#) to see a complete list of fellows and their placements.

## Upcoming Events

**Closing the Gender Gap: The Business Case for Organizations, Politics**

## Aspen Environment Forum Powering the Planet: Energy for the Long Run



The Council welcomed women ministers of the environment to the [Aspen Environment Forum](#) in Aspen, Colorado, March 25-28, 2009. Ministers and other high-level women leaders participated in a panel addressing the issue of gender as it relates to the environment and current global energy challenges. As part of the forum, the Council hosted a separate meeting of ministers and other women leaders where they drafted and signed the [Recommendations on Gender and the Environment](#) declaration, which identifies ways to leverage the global power of women leaders at the ministerial level.

## Council Members' Meeting at the International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security



Finland's President Tarja Halonen, left, with Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia.

Credit: Anna S. Sussman

On March 7-8 2009, Council member Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia, and new Council Chair Tarja Halonen, President of Finland, co-convoked a historic two-day conference in Monrovia, Liberia. The Colloquium brought together over 800 women leaders from around the globe to promote women's empowerment and address women's vital role in helping their countries prevent, end, and recover from conflict. On the occasion of the Colloquium, six Council Members; the Secretary-General of the Council, Laura Liswood; and Council Senior Advisor, Patricia Deyton, convened and were instrumental in drafting and signing two important statements including [The Monrovia Declaration](#) and the Council's [Statement on Darfur](#).

## and Society

In 2010, the Council of Women World Leaders and Harvard's Kennedy School of Government will co-host a conference on the business case for closing the gender gap in organizations, politics, and society. Researchers from academia, business, and politics will present their cutting-edge findings on the tangible benefits associated with promoting women's participation and leadership in all segments of society.

Heads of state and government, ministers, civil society leaders, and CEOs will be invited. The goal is to provide decision-makers with the tools and knowledge necessary to enact change within their organizations.

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