

international women's day

IWD originated in the USA in 1908, when women garment workers held demonstrations protesting against their appalling and dangerous working conditions.

Then, in August 1910 at the 2nd International Women's Conference at Copenhagen, Clara Zetkin proposed that a Socialist Women's Day be held annually, organized chiefly around women's suffrage, and with an international character.

On IWD in 1917, Russian women textile workers went on strike. They acted against State, Church and the Bolsheviks but gained wide public support and initiated the Revolution - the Tsar abdicated 4 days later.

The first IWD public meeting in Australia was organised by the Sydney Militant Workers' Group in the Sydney Domain in 1928. It called for equal pay for equal work; an eight-hour day for shop assistants; no piecework; annual holidays on full pay; and the basic wage for the unemployed.

The first IWD marches were held in Sydney and Melbourne in 1931. The Melbourne rally in 1934 was marked for its concern about Aboriginal rights, and Aboriginal activist, Anna Morgan, speaking at the rally, denounced the "black flag of the Aboriginal Protection Board" and called for legal changes and access to social welfare.

the financial crisis affects women workers throughout the region

More than 17,000 workers are affected by layoffs in several large economic zones in the Philippines since November 2008. The situation is expected to worsen as many factories close down, impacted by the global finance crisis. Nikon (Thailand) is laying off at least 2,600 workers without any notice. The workers claimed they were given a payout of only two months' salary, even though labour law demands employers give three months' pay to contract workers. An underwear producer for Pierre Cardin in Indonesia, dismissed the trade union leader. Workers went on strike immediately. Then another 446 workers, most-

ly women, who participated in the strike were sacked. On 25 November 2008, the factory brutally dispersed the strikers causing 30 injuries among workers. In 2008 ABC crashed in Australia making it harder for women to get child care. In February 2009 Pacific Brands (manufacturer of King Gee, Yakka, Bonds, Jockey, Dunlop Volley and Holeproof) announced it would sack 1,850 workers in Australia. In 2009, despite Australian laws that enshrine equal pay, women's pay is 65% of the total earnings for men. Currently Australia is one of only two developed countries that do not offer paid maternity leave. The other one is the USA.

we have to fight back - together

All around the world as the economy crashes, women workers lose their jobs, wages & conditions, pensions & houses. Women throughout the region are suffering the same. It is not in our interest to compete with women workers from around the world.

We have to learn from the women at the turn of the 20th Century who initiated International Women's Day. Women workers must come together to initiate change - sometimes in spite of demands from family, religion, race, nationality, ideology or tradition.

our strength is international industrial action & solidarity
our strength is the unity of workers all over the world
workers change the world

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tel: 03 9663 7277 email: aawl@aawl.org.au web: aawl.org.au - aawl march 2009



aawl solidarity

Workers have common interests and common enemies, no matter what country they live in.

Australia Asia Worker Links builds solidarity between workers' organizations so that we can support each other more effectively. We build solidarity to help workers in struggle in all countries in the Asia Pacific region.

AAWL is a labour movement solidarity organisation with individual members and trade unions and trades & labour council affiliates. AAWL has been active since 1979.

We have assisted and defended unions from their very beginning in many countries. We support Indigenous struggles and the rights of migrant workers and refugees.

AAWL is a membership run organization. Members can participate in all meetings. Meetings set policy directions and the Executive is responsible for implementing these policies.

AAWL members are activists, proud to be union and support building international workers solidarity as the best way to improve the rights and living standards of all workers.



aawl meetings

Wednesday 1 April
Wednesday 6 May
Wednesday 3 June
Wednesday 8 July
Wednesday 5 August

Our public meetings
are at 6 pm in
Trades Hall
54 Victoria Street
Carlton South

radio

Asia Pacific Currents is our radio programme that can be heard every Saturday morning at 9:00 am on Melbourne Community Radio 3CR - 855 AM

Download 3CR Podcasts: <http://www.3cr.org.au/podcasts>

join aawl

Membership: \$50 solidarity / \$30 full / \$10 concession

Affiliates: Large union \$1,000; Medium size union \$500; Small union \$200

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Tel: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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