

HELSINKI CONFERENCE STARTS WITHIN TWO WEEKS.

HELSINKI CONFERENCE PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

■ **PLENARY** on Added Value of Multistakeholder Action: Different stakeholders have diverse resources at their disposal which through joint and well co-ordinated action could make a difference in addressing complex globally manifested problems. Whilst governments are able to agree on norms and legal frameworks, it is the business actors who often have the technical solutions and know-how to address the problems efficiently. Civil society, typically, has at its strengths the ability to contribute to civic dialogue on priorities and mobilisation of awareness and political will. If combined, the common action of the stakeholders could manifest a new era in agreeing upon and implementing the global agenda. The value of dialogue between various stakeholders can be easily agreed upon but the question of how to turn the dialogue into action still remains.

■ **ROUNDTABLE** on Human Rights: A violent assault, aiming at suppressing and inflicting fear upon the abused person, is, in most societies, a serious crime. If this happens inside the walls of one's home, however, it often can be committed without punishment and, at times, even with encouragement from people who are in a position to prevent the act and protect the victim. Experts, activists, governments and members of the business community believe that societies would benefit economically, socially, democratically and grow in terms of their security if there were no violence against women. What are the actions that need to be taken and who are the actors therein who need to be involved in order to eliminate this senseless which seriously impedes growth and development?

■ **KEY DIALOGUE** on Democracy in International Relations: The international parliamentary networks and assemblies are an example of a new kind of coalition building that is deeply needed in the global political arena. These coalitions could provide the answer to the question of the legitimacy of international organisations in the eyes of the national electorates whilst further addressing their accountability to citizens' representatives and making available the local and national expertise of the parliamentarians to the international organisations within a well-planned and organised manner.

The full conference agenda is available at:
www.helsinkiconference.fi/netcomm/news/eventlist.asp

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE SESSIONS

The facilitators and speakers have been directly responsible for preparing the Conference sessions. Background papers, solicited and drafted in order to frame the individual sessions, are available on the Internet. These papers indicate the aims of the sessions, the political context in which the dialogue is being held and provide an indication of previous multistakeholder work that relates to the session.

EXHIBITIONS

■ The Youth delegates will host a Youth Corner at the Helsinki Conference and will be prepared to speak about their work at the Helsinki Youth Conference (5 - 6 September 2005), the Helsinki Conference and at their delegation to the UN General Assembly 2005.

■ The "Control Arms" Photograph Exhibition will be presented for the first time in Finland at the Helsinki Conference. The exhibition illustrates the need for tougher international arms control with visitors having the possibility to join the Million Faces Photograph Petition to show their concern about the spread of arms.