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Plan for summit on women's issues

By René Hill

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Bermuda is to host a world summit on women's issues following the success of the Island's similarly themed-event last October, Tourism and Telecommunications Minister Renee Webb has announced.

At a press conference to present two Bermuda charities with \$5,000 each was raised at the Women in Public Life Conference (WIPL) last year, the Minister said steps were being taken to hold an even larger summit next May.

"We intend this summit to both follow up some of the important issues raised in October and explore the achievements of women away from the world stage. "Again, we would hope to attract a range of key international speakers and strong representation from many of the global women's organisations."

The Physical Abuse Centre and the *ISIS Foundation* were each presented with \$5,000 on Monday, which was raised during the event, which aimed to raise awareness about women's issues and leading female figures.

June Augustus, chairperson of the Physical Abuse Centre said: "I am ecstatic about this as it signifies women helping women and that was one aspect of the conference.

"The increase in domestic violence situations has brought with it some progressive insights. It has exposed the need to have an improved facility to house women at risk, especially as there is such a terrible spill over from the housing crisis.

"We have the distinct advantage of having the only safe house in Bermuda where victims of physical abuse can find temporary refuge."

The ISIS Foundation helps women and children in Uganda and Nepal, running a transportation service for expectant mothers and people returning from the medical centre.

Sharon Beesley, who is one of the founders and general counsel of the *ISIS Foundation*, said: "We will be using the funds to train additional midwives and for transportation costs for the expectant mothers.

