



WOMEN'S FEDERATION
FOR WORLD PEACE INTERNATIONAL

UN Newsletter



More than 30,000 women from around the globe attended the Fourth World Conference for Women in Beijing in 1995.

WFWP Reflects on the Fourth World Conference for Women in Beijing

By Tamara Starr

In 1995, there was a delegation of more than 500 women leaders, from 16 nations, who represented Women's Federation for World Peace, International (WFWPI) at the Fourth World Conference for Women in Beijing.

Dr. Lan Young Moon was the President of WFWPI at the time, and she was so pleased to meet with women leaders from all over the world in Beijing.

"Through participating in this conference, WFWPI came to understand the value of supporting the work of the United Nations as an NGO, and applied for status with ECOSOC. WFWPI has been active in the UN as an NGO in general consultative status with ECOSOC since 1997," she said.

For Nora Spurgin, former WFWP President for U.S.A., she was amazed by the number of activities that were held.

"Hundreds of programs, workshops and seminars were scheduled all day, every day, throughout the eight days," she said. However, as they left Beijing, she believed that their experiences there "will live on as a reference point-a time when women's voices mingled."

Betsy Jones was the former WFWP Vice Chairwoman for the U.S.A. For her, it was very exciting to see around 30,000 women from all around the world. This event seemed like a whole new level for women, and it was very exciting to see WFWP at the core of it," she said.

"I felt proud to bring the core values of WFWP to the international table. We had a very important message to bring-family values and the sanctity of marriage, and to take those core values to a world level was just very exciting to see."

On September 5, WFWPI organized two workshops with the theme, "True Families and the Moral Renaissance."

According to the former WFWP Colorado Chairwoman, Shirley Chimes, she felt inspired that Maureen Reagan, the daughter of U.S. President Ronald Reagan, felt very close to the founders of WFWP and its mission and that she was able to give the keynote address:

"We are builders of our communities. The peacemakers on a daily basis. Ask any mother the art of family peace and you will receive a lecture in psychology and understanding which will rival any course in a university.

Family values is not an abstract notion, it is the real day-to-day workings of a family unit. Each family unit is a group of individual human beings with their own particular experiences. The dreams, the goals, the ambitions of each of those family members is important...."

"All in all, it was a memorable experience for me to learn firsthand that women's issues around the world are basically the same. When women get together to heal their differences and make a difference in society, there is a lot of hope for the future," Chimes said.



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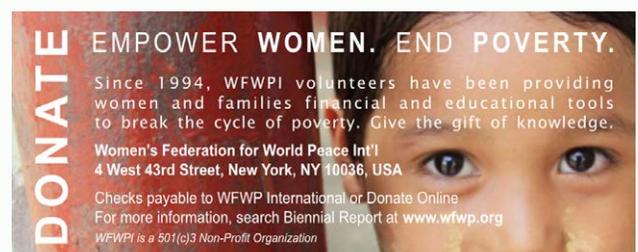


VISION

Women working together to realize one global family rooted in a culture of sustainable peace.

MISSION

Empowering women as peacebuilders and leaders in the family to transform the community, nation and world. Through education, advocacy, partnership, reconciliation and humanitarian service, WFWPI aims to create an environment of peace and wellbeing for future generations and people of all races, cultures and religious creeds.



UN HQ IN NY

Events and programs that took place in and around the UN office in NYC.



Commemorating the UN International Day of Families with a Family Literacy Webinar

By Tamara Starr

On May 28, over 300 participants from more than 30 countries attended WFWP, International's launch of WFWP Perspectives, a digital platform that showcases distinguished leaders who are creating an impact within their field or within their community. The first webinar was entitled, "Family Literacy in the Time of COVID-19: Impacts Now and Moving Forward" and it featured Dr. Denny Taylor.

The event was also held in commemoration of the 27th Anniversary of the UN International Day of Families. Dr. Taylor is an author, academic, and an activist. She has been continuously engaged in research with families living in extreme poverty, and in regions of armed conflict and natural catastrophes, since 1977. The concept of "family literacy" originates in her doctoral research--which is now being used by many UN Member States in local projects and initiatives that are a conduit for peace-building and for addressing the many problems and challenges that are

captured by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

During the webinar, Dr. Taylor first gave a presentation about what family literacy is and then one of WFWPI's International Vice Presidents, Alexa Ward joined her for a discussion about how family literacy affected the many families that she has worked with during the years.

Alexa Ward was impressed by the depth and breadth of Dr. Taylor's work with Family Literacy, which includes families, schools, first responders, as well as UN organizations and UN member states. She believes that the material is both relevant and applicable to all stakeholders. After the discussion, participants were able to ask Dr. Taylor a variety of questions.

Many participants like Mitty Tohma, felt very inspired about the whole presentation. "Many thanks Dr. Taylor for a wonderful presentation. It's very encouraging [for] the children to use their skills and talents. I found the whole presentation thoroughly informative and relevant," she shared on Facebook Live. Some even expressed how they would like to learn more about how they can start a Family Literacy initiative in their own community. For Irmgard Baynes, she agreed with Dr. Taylor's "...point on being concerned that children will be academically arbitrary [and that] quality time spent with parents and one's siblings or friends is so important [along with] collecting family treasures and stories."

For more information on Dr. Taylor's work on Family Literacy can be found at www.dennytaylor.com.



One of Dr. Taylor's Family Literacy projects in Africa.



Tamara Starr is the Managing Editor for the WFWP, International UN Newsletter and is the Director of Communications and Publications for WFWP, International.



Ambassador Isaiah Chabala



Zainab Al-Suwaij



Carolyn Handschin

WFWPI Co-Hosts the 'Gender Equality: A forward looking, hopeful perspective' Webinar

By Grace Kellett

On July 30, the WFWPI Office for UN Relations in New York hosted a virtual CSW64 Parallel Event, co-sponsored by the Women Peace Pioneers Initiative, on the topic of "Gender Equality: A forward looking, hopeful perspective." Mrs. Alexa Ward, Director, WFWPI Office for UN Relations in NY, gave the welcoming remarks.

In this time, Mrs. Ward set the tone for the event by describing WFWPI's position on gender equality as one that recognizes and upholds the dignity of women and men and believes that, when they work together, in unity and in harmony, they are well suited to contribute to the advancement of gender equality in a manner that is both forward looking and hopeful. It is from this perspective that a panel of three speakers were then invited to give their presentations by the moderator, Mrs. Tamara Starr, Director of Communications and Publications, WFWPI.

The keynote address was given by H.E. Isaiah Chabala, former Permanent Representative of Zambia to the UN and EU and Founding President of Visionary Empowerment, a Zambia based NGO that primarily serves to empower widows and orphans. Ambassador Chabala opened by expressing his gratitude and admiration for the "great works" of WFWPI's co-founder, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, who has "successfully sustained the mission to expand world peace across the globe...with indomitable spirit, courage, humility, elegance [and] compassion."

A man of faith, the Ambassador described the issue of gender equality and women's empowerment as his "humbling vocation" and

"spiritual calling." Both on the grassroots and international levels, the Ambassador emphasized how he sees collaboration as centered upon a "divine mission" to enrich the lives of others, living in harmony and peace based upon an understanding that all are equal in "dignity and divinity" in front of God.

Commenting on the current crises, Ambassador Chabala emphasized the need to view them as opportunities for reflection and to emerge determined to "to do better, to love better, to connect better."

In closing, the Ambassador drew upon the words of peace leaders such as Rev. Sun Myung Moon, co-founder of WFWPI, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders who embodied the power of hope, faith, and love. In this spirit he called for young people to speak up and become leaders and reminded all in attendance that we all have a responsibility to be part of the solution.

Following the Ambassador was Mrs. Zainab Al Suwaij, Co-founder and Executive Director of the American Islamic Congress. Mrs. Al Suwaij reminded the audience that while much progress has been made, there is still much work to be done in order to reach gender equality.

In addition, she acknowledged the unprecedented situation of COVID-19, and emphasized how "women are more vulnerable in crisis" and achieving goals are also more difficult as women are disproportionately burdened with childcare and home education, among other things.

However, Mrs. Al Suwaij noted that communities have been becoming increasingly aware of the need for collaboration of all parties, men and women, in creating peaceful and successful communities, and so believes that with more activism in educating communities, they will become able to realize a better future together.

The third panelist was Mrs. Carolyn Handschin, Vice President of WFWP Europe and the Director of the WFWPI Offices for UN Relations. Mrs. Handschin spoke upon the idea that a forward looking and hopeful approach to gender equality is one that seeks to build a peace culture through reconciliation that is not reactionary or accusatory but is instead collaborative and constructive. She reminded the audience that in the past 100 years, much of the progress that has been made in this area has been

thanks to women who had husbands and fathers that supported them.

Mrs. Handschin emphasized that in these partnerships, men not only supported women, but women made the effort to explain to the men what they wanted, why they wanted it and how it would benefit not just the couple, but the whole society. Women today would do well to spend less time accusing and more time aiming to work together on discovering how to build a gender equal future, something which she believes WFWPI's principles of reconciliation could be very helpful in fostering.

Finally, Mrs. Handschin concluded with the statement that "more important than who leads whom is that we look around to take care of each other," and that in this spirit of being forward looking WFWPI has begun to develop a curriculum that will serve to that end.

These remarks were followed by a question and answer period, and Mrs. Ward came back on to give her concluding remarks, thanking the speakers and informing the audience of two forward looking and hopeful opportunities: the Mother of Peace memoir and the launch of the Rallies of Hope.



Grace Kellett is the Administrator and UN Representative for the WFWPI Office for UN Relations in NY.



A Discussion with Madeleine Albright on Standing with Afghan Women

By Amanda Bradley

The Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security hosted a Zoom webinar entitled “Standing with Afghan Women: Ensuring Meaningful Inclusion in the Intra-Afghan Peace Talks,” which focused on the importance of Afghan women in the anticipated peace talks in Afghanistan.

Viewers were able to explore the delicate nature of these peace talks through the guidance of the Hon. Madeleine K. Albright. Albright served as the 64th U.S. Secretary of State, making her the first woman ever nominated to that post. Prior to that,

Albright was the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. She also headed the U.S. Delegation to the UN’s Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.

When asked about the current state of the region, Albright denounced the idea of self proclaimed experts that consider women’s rights to be a marginal concern to the so called hard issues such as big power politics and the military.

In her statement, she drew attention to Afghanistan in the 1990s, where the mistreatment of women under the Taliban was not a side issue, but a symptom of something much larger.

Growing concerns over the price of peace following the progress made since the Taliban have been overthrown are not exaggerated.

The Taliban banned girls from school and refused to honor their basic human rights. However, Albright explains how today, over 3 and half million girls are enrolled in schools. Former Secretary of State Albright also explains how women went from being virtually erased, to becoming public officials and entrepreneurs.

Given this, many fear that an agreement with the Taliban may threaten any gender progress that has already been made, once again bringing Afghanistan to a standstill.

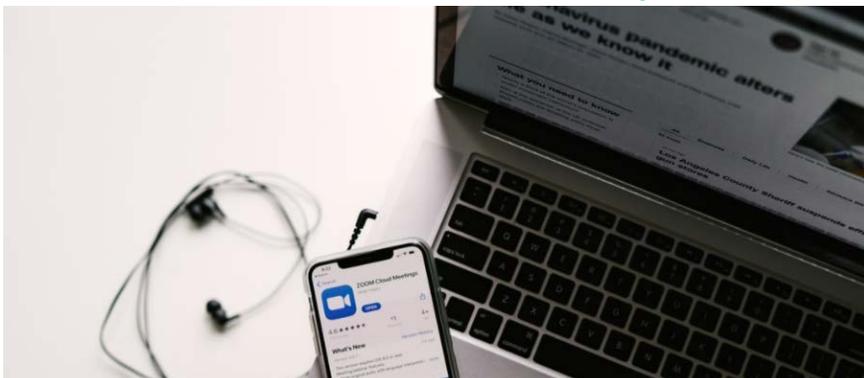
Albright makes a profound statement in her assertion that “peace cannot be made on the backs of Afghan women.” She insists that the best way to ensure this does not happen is for women to fully participate in the peace process.

Women need to be involved in every step of the process while also being a party to the peace negotiations, not just an issue to be discussed after the fact. It is imperative that the perspective of women be reflective in any potential agreement.

“In order to honor the sacrifices and investments that have been made over many years, we must prioritize the future role of women in Afghanistan,” Albright states. This can only be achieved through their full participation in the peace processes. It is imperative that women obtain a seat at the table.



Amanda Bradley is currently a part-time volunteer for the WFWPI UN Office in NY and has worked with NGOs at the United Nations for the past couple of years. She currently works full-time on a legal service team in New York.



WFWPI's Journey to Virtual

By Mako Mori

When the globe was hit with the pandemic lockdown in March, it shook WFWP’s normal flow of activities. Since 2019, WFWP was deeply invested in the planning of the 64th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. The session lasts two weeks and is filled with meetings about education and new commitments towards gender equality.

The organizers of CSW64 were planning on hosting high-level officials from over 200 countries.

WFWPI also had several events that were to take place in parallel to the official meetings. But due to the wake of the pandemic, the UN had postponed the conference, with the high possibility of cancelling. WFWPI is an organization that is heavily reliant on in-

person meetings, interactions, and networking in order to develop and sustain relationships. Once COVID hit, we had to quickly shift gears to continue carrying out our plans for the year. The team did this through moving in-person meetings to virtual Zoom calls. Grace Kellett, the Administrator for WFWPI, took on the tedious task of learning the technicalities of how webinars worked.

With this new skill, in-person events that WFWPI planned to host did not have to be cancelled, but could be moved to a virtual platform. What we thought was going to be only a temporary change, actually set the bar for the new norm.

Now meetings could be held virtually, without the trouble of having to have everyone physically present in the same room. Virtual platforms also had the capacity to host a greater number of audiences, both at home and abroad. What we thought would be a limitation to our capacities actually expanded our capacities to dream bigger.

A limitation often posed by official intergovern-

mental organizations (such as the UN) was its rigidity and rather traditional approaches to make information more readily available to the public. In order for awareness to spread, social media platforms must be actively engaging the people. Similarly, this pandemic was WFWP’s opportunity to learn how to be tech-savvy and utilize digital tools to connect and engage a broader audience. With this new knowledge of running a virtual platform under our belt, we hosted our first webinar with Dr. Denny Taylor, on the topic of “Family Literacy” in June. After countless hours invested into the logistics of the presentation and outreach to our global organizations, we were successfully able to engage an international audience of nearly 300 people.

Then, on July 30th, we hosted our CSW64 webinar: “Gender Equality: A hopeful, forward-looking perspective” with former Ambassador to the UN and EU, Isaijah Chabala, as the keynote speaker. Although virtual calls and events certainly cannot make up for the human connection we feel when we are together, times are changing and we have learned to adapt. Even when the pandemic dies out and the UN opens its doors once again, this skill of adapting to digital platforms will certainly continue playing a pivotal role in serving WFWP’s mission.



Mako Mori recently graduated from the University of California-Los Angeles with a Bachelors in Political Science. She is currently a volunteer with WFWPI UN Office in New York.

UN AT GENEVA

Events and programs that took place in and around the UN office in Geneva.



UN Generation Equality Forum and the WFWPI Approach

By Srruthi Lekha Raaja Elango

The Generation Equality Forum (GEF) is a milestone for Youth involvement. Its goal is to attain gender equality through an intergenerational approach, and it is also a part of an International Youth Initiative.

WFWP's mission is to empower women as peace-builders and as leaders within the family to transform the community, nation, and world. This is done through education, advocacy, partnership, reconciliation, and humanitarian service.

WFWPI aims to create an environment of peace and well-being for future generations and people of all races, cultures, and religious creeds, and has been able to work internationally with various local and international UN initiatives.

As a strong stakeholder and representative of the Civil Society at the UN, WFWP aims to make its strong reach through advocacy and dedicated commitments at the upcoming UN GEF and their action goals. The focus of work has been very diverse and has been covering the major international Action Coalition themes of the UN GEF. There are currently projects in various local chapters from Southeast Asia, Africa, the Americas, and the Pacific regions. All of these regions have already been able to create great peace-building and development

processes.

The Youth Initiative aims at incorporating two major Action Coalition themes in our sets of work. The first one being gender-based violence, which is prominently being addressed by various groups in various parts of the world. Gender-based violence and its impact on women is a very important issue to be addressed. As youth leaders from WFWP, they believe that the impact of gender-based violence can be very devastating for the growth of young people and their mental health. If this is not addressed, it will lead to unhealthy societal consequences.

Gender-based violence, especially in family and personal relationships, is prioritized through building a sustainable community by building sustainable families.

The second Gender Equality Forum action coalition theme in which our Youth Initiative focuses its work is "feminist movements and leadership." Though the understanding of feminism is very different due to multiple perspectives and cultural backgrounds, it is important for individuals to promote the most sustainable and peaceful process of feminism. In this area, the Youth Initiative offers a perspective in which it aims to empower women by upholding the legitimacy and strength of the feminine perspective and values.

When both are empowered, we believe women and men can move forward as partners and, through cooperation and mutual understanding, a world of peace and equality can be realized. While feminism may have its complexities, women's leadership, on the other hand, has been one of the major focuses for decades.

Since the Beijing Platform for Action, creating and inspiring leadership that can stand for women's rights and peace has become a major focus for the

international community. With the Youth Initiative, WFWP will be working with young potential peace-builders across the world through curricula developed by WFWP EU and Middle East.

The curricula will focus on capacity building and creating leadership projects. With its focus on understanding the potential of young people to engage in peacemaking, we look forward to the great success of the WFWP Youth Initiative in becoming a leading platform that uplifts and unites all generations in the common goal of creating a more peaceful world. Joining hands with the international civil society and multinational engagements, we stand together in this inter-generational approach believing in the dreams of today's youth for tomorrow's peace.



Srruthi Lekha Raaja Elango is an intern for the WFWPI UN Office in Geneva.



COVID-19, Women, and Opportunities: 44th Human Rights Council

By Carolyn Handschin

The High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, addressed the 44th HRC saying, “the pandemic has exposed and exacerbated the inequalities and vulnerabilities, but it also gives us the opportunity to address shortcomings in respect for human rights... It gives us an opportunity to build a better future for all, where human rights are at the centre of our models, and where prosperity is shared.”

The Vice President of the HRC, Nasir Ahmad Andisha (Afghanistan) presided over the 21st session of the 44th Human Rights Council for the “Annual Full-day Discussion on the Human Rights of Women.” Usually full to capacity of 754 seats, there were barely 35 seats occupied in the Human Rights and Alliance of Civilizations Hall to hear the debates on “Covid 19 and Women’s Rights” due to restrictions. WFWPI was able to attend.

OPENING STATEMENTS

The program, a combination of live and video conferencing, began with Peggy Hick, Director, Right to Development Division of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights signaled the increase in gender-based violence, the adverse effects on girls education due to schools closing, maternal and newborn mortality due to mobility restrictions and the problems arising when women are not included in the response team’s decision-making. She also cited some positive developments under the UN’s “Build Back Better” slogan; states expansion of women and girl’s access to health could have long-lasting impact, and the growing solidarity of 146 states under the Secretary General’s “Peace in the Home” Call to Action. HE. Ilya Gonzales, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Spain, addressed

the Council by video. He conveyed that human rights should be at the heart of our multilateral response to the pandemic. He also mentioned that we must try to see from the lens of the most vulnerable and use that as a response guideline. He believes that civil society women’s groups have invested a lot of effort during the crisis and must be included in COVID response plans.

PANELISTS

Editor Adhiambo Ochieng is the founder of the Feminist for Peace Rights & Justice Center in Kabira, Kenya. Herself a victim of rape at age six, gang raped at 16 and angry for so many years, she experienced first-hand how disempowered young women can suffer. However she insists she “is not fighting men.” The pandemic has hit women hard. Often the breadwinners engaged in social care, they are blamed for the economic downturn when they cannot work. Social unrest, an increase of domestic violence, including sexual violence to young teenage girls results. These girls need to be able to speak and report their experience, be given counselling and a safe place. She implored that libraries or study halls stay open.

The Executive Director of UNFPA, Dr Natalia Kanem, asked the HRC to address the increase in domestic violence. Women are at times trapped with abusers. “Peace in the Home,” the initiative of the SG, provides some solutions to the pandemic within the pandemic. There are long term setbacks due to girls no longer being in schools.

Dignity must be ensured, including for men who help and protect women. A targeted investment in young girls, older women and indigenous women is needed and an enabled policy environment to address inequalities. “Let’s work together [both] women and men to put peace in the home.”

Dr. Jayati Gosh, Professor of Economic Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, India described that lockdowns have affected women’s income dramatically. More women have dropped out for childcare. Women in health services earn wages that are 28% less than men, and they are more easily exposed to infection. The food crisis is also inordinately affecting women and girls, sometimes last to be fed. There is a need for bold visionary leadership and international cooperation, a global new deal that is multicolored with emphasis on reducing inequalities, while encouraging good

quality work and living standards.

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the Exec. Director of UN WOMEN was the final panelist. She referred to Article 21 of the UDHR saying that, “all have [the] right to take part in their government.” Women continue to face barriers to full participation; only 25% seats of parliament, 7.2% heads of state are women, in spite of their holding 70% of healthcare work frontline. Women have been lauded for making tough decisions, designing effective crisis response models, creating sound budgetary policies, and balancing priorities in legislation. Yet access to justice in courts, and the digital divide are keeping women away. Some governments are stepping up and that is commendable.



Carolyn Handschin is the Editor-in-Chief of the WFWPI UN Newsletter, Director of the WFWPI Offices for UN Relations, and the Vice President of WFWPI Europe.

WFP Youth Initiative Launch

By Srruthi Lekha Raaja Elango

On July 23, the WFP Youth Initiative was launched through a Zoom webinar entitled, "Youth Initiative Launch Talk." The WFP Youth Initiative is a forward-looking initiative that will engage and empower youth to influence peace-building and leadership. Through partnerships with international organizations, advocacy campaigns, research projects, skills training, fieldwork, and event management, this initiative can help empower young innovation.

The launch talk included a panel discussion focusing on peace-building, security, and the importance of youth participation, especially young women and girls.

The theme of the panel discussion was focused on the UNSCR 2250 (2015), which identifies five key pillars for action: participation, protection, prevention, partnerships and disengagement, and reintegration.

This landmark resolution urges Member States to give youth a greater voice in decision-making at the local, national, regional, and international levels. The discussion also involved the idea to consider setting up mechanisms that would enable young people to participate meaningfully in peace processes.

The panelists included Karima Rhanem, CEO of Africa My Home and President of the International Center for Diplomacy; Rachel McCave (New York, United States of America), Director of Program Development, an associate of Unite 2030 Program, Intersections International; Celina Herrera (Hawaii), Prevention, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Treatment and Rehabilitation Section (PTRS); and Tua Manase-Ale (Melbourne, Australia), President of WFPW Samoa.

The panelists spoke about using multiple forms of art and youth talent as a means to promote peace and involving them in the process of negotiation. They highlighted various important international to personal engagements such as "Youth for Silencing the Gun" to the UNODC divisions and projects which focus on peace-building within families.

The panel highlighted the role of young women in youth peace and security agenda and how they can be incorporated in youth led projects.



For example, UNITE 2030 has more than 11,000 youth leaders who are actively fighting against world problems. The panel discussed the importance of social cohesion, Balance Prevention Activities and followed up with a question and answer session.

WFPW strongly believes that peace-building is pivotal for a better community and a better world. It must start from the individual, to a family, followed by the community and society which can further world peace.

The release also insists on various ways of how states and stakeholders must act on nine key points with regards to the protection of women's rights.

Various UN bodies, treaties, and entities and other international organizations are working to act towards adapting and reacting to the current issues of gender inequality during this period.

We all have the responsibility to act and influence the actions of state and non-states to answer the cries of women (and men and children) under discrimination, abusive environments, and unjust treatment at home and in communities.

From female front-line warriors to household informal workers, women have often born disproportionate workloads and disenfranchisement.

From UN actions and guidelines to local organizational contributions through self-help groups, we see an unexpected opportunity for

system change for equality, safety, and the full empowerment of women.

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UN AT VIENNA

Events and programs that took place in and around the UN office in Vienna.



Women in conflict zones, Part I

By Renate Amesbauer
Edited by Laleh Ashrafi

On June 5, WFPW UN Office in Vienna in cooperation with WFPW Middle East office hosted the first session of a seminar series on the topic of women and peace-building.

This series is in line with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security and aims to highlight and address the important role of women in the implementation of this resolution on all levels especially in community capacity building.

Renate Amesbauer, President of WFPW Austria pointed out WFPW's strong commitment to the peace process in her welcoming remarks.

"In recent times there have been voices heard who called on upgrading military, increasing on military expenses, for more safety in the world! As Women's Federation for World Peace we dearly feel we want to counter this, we want to talk about 'Peace-building', 'Peace Education,' and 'Reconciliation' instead," she noted.

Carolyn Handschin, Director of the WFWPI Office for UN relations, gave an overview of the worldwide activities of WFPW, highlighting the strength in grassroots work in more than 120 nations and emphasized that reconciliation, education, and engagement in sustainable development are three essential steps towards sustainable peace.

The first speaker Professor Zilka Spahic-Siljak, Program Director of the Transcultural Psycho-social Educational Foundation (TPO Foundation), focused on two dimensions of the role of women in peace-building processes,

namely "the role of women as mothers" and "the linkage between women's peace-building and sustainable development."

She highlighted the sense of 'caring' and 'moral imagination' as characteristics of motherhood that are also essential to peace-building processes.

"There is no sustainable development without peace and there is no peace without sustainable development...Economy and peace are interdependently linked. When people earn enough, they live in dignity and can give more. We speak about social capital when people can accumulate economic assets to provide for themselves and can also invest in the development of their community," she noted.

In the following presentation, Laleh Ashrafi emphasized the role of women in anti radicalism and developing the culture of peace on the community level as mothers and wives. She highlighted the fact that "Peace starts at home" is true as mothers can stop ideologies such as racism, radicalism, and extremism that could lead to serious conflicts rooting in the next generation.

Moreover, women are also influential in their own communities in terms of preventing wrong ideologies by spreading and raising awareness among other women. They also can be a great asset to their communities as role models bringing confidence in other women and raising awareness about the 'leadership' ability in every single woman.

Dr. Maria Riehl WFPW- UN- Office – Director, Vienna gave the final presentation introducing Bridges of Peace as a tool for reconciliation, that has been exercised by WFPW chapters worldwide to heal resentments that result from war and other conflicts.

She went on explaining our Key Elements of restoration Relationships namely responsibility, respect, regret and renewal, and

commitment.

"War is an accumulation of acts of violence and therefore long after the external destruction has been restored the internal scars still linger on...When emotions of hate and resentment are not restored, they are the source of conflict or even wars in the future," she stated.

"Women participating in peace-building understand the roots of conflicts in practical terms, such as education, health and other areas of need in the community." Zilka Spahic-Siljak



Renate Amesbauer is the WFPW, International Representative for the UN Office in Vienna.



Laleh Ashrafi is a part-time volunteer for the WFPW, International UN Office in Vienna.



Women in Conflict Zones, Part II

By Renate Amesbauer
Edited by Laleh Ashrafi

On June 22, the Women's Federation for World Peace Vienna Office and Middle East Office jointly hosted a virtual conference entitled, "Women in conflict zones." This was the third part of the series "Role of Women in peace-building and conflict resolution."

Carolyn Handschin, Director of the WFP Office for UN relations in her welcoming remarks highlighted WFP's long history in peace-building and stressed that the vision of WFP is in alignment with the SDGs, various Human Rights articles, and other formal or informal covenants.

"Women's intuition, commitment to peace and development, local knowledge and skills, passion and preference to work for prevention, reconciliation and in consensus are all calculable and astonishing steps in peace-building and community transformation," Carolyn Handschin said.

Further on, Hermine Schellen, President of WFP Lebanon highlighted the positive and supportive role of NGOs like WFP in helping vulnerable people in conflict zones including refugees. She pointed out that there were a few educational projects being developed with universities and embassies.

The discussion further benefited from Maria Hadjipavlou, Associate Professor of the University of

Cyprus, and the Gender Advisory Team.

After a brief history of UNFICYP, she went on about the ethno-national conflicts such as the Cyprus conflict, and the marginalization of issues such as women's rights, health, environment, migration, violence against women, etc.

"One of the reasons [for] this marginalization and what is included or excluded from the agendas is the male predominance in all levels of decision making. In conflict resolution I work with some of the basic principles which are: complexity, building a network of relationships, and transformation," she said.

Professor Irene Etzersdorfer, Political Scientist and Contemporary historian at the University of Vienna, highlighted challenges that humanitarian helpers, including International Organizations such as UNHCR, are facing while helping nations in conflict zones and refugees.

"...women, double-disadvantaged, depending on the environment, no one cares about their education, even though they would have a right to do so by international standards, but they do not understand what they could do with their rights. To do so, they would have to be empowered, so they would have to learn that it is also their own social structures that keep them down, religious interpretations that are being instrumentalized and forced to submit," she stated.

Zoe Benett, WFP International Vice President for the Middle East, was the last speaker and she stressed 'resilience' as an outstanding feature of women in conflict zones. She mentioned that the UN plays a major role

in helping women in improving post-conflict conditions.

"Women's responsibility in post-conflict situations is not only communication and negotiation, it is also awareness of the humanitarian work that is needed. They have the sensitivity and empathy to recognize the urgent needs of people and families devastated by conflict," she said.



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GENERATION QUALITY

CND63

Commission on
Narcotic Drugs

CCPCJ29

Commission on Crime
Prevention & Criminal Justice



Celebrating the Commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration

By Laleh Ashrafi

On July 12, The Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), two Vienna-based commissions, celebrated the commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration. They also hosted a virtual high-level event with the intention of raising awareness for the vision that the Fourth World Conference on Women set out in 1995 and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, particularly in regard to the work of these two commissions.

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and girls has caused the emergence of pre-existing inequalities to light. Gender equality and empowering women are goals central to the work of the Vienna-based commissions. When regarding mainstreaming of a gender perspective, CND, and CCPCJ have adopted Resolution 59/5 and Resolution 26/3.

The welcoming remarks were given by Ambassador Mansoor Ahmad Khan, Chair of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs during the 63rd session, stressed the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender equality and also shared the gains made within the last decades by "cracking the current system all around the globe." He also underlined the efforts CCPCJ has devoted to gender equality in recent years."

Not only is it essential to facilitate an inclusive process from a substantive point of view, but there is also a need to advance gender equality in terms of participation in the intergovernmental processes taking place here in Vienna. I'm sure we will benefit from the discussions today," he noted.

H.E. Mr. J. Antonio Marcondes, Chair of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice also stressed how COVID-19 is affecting women and girls worldwide and that "collective actions" need to be taken in order to tackle these impacts.

The Executive director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Ghada Waly also delivered remarks about the changes that need to be made.

"25 years ago, world leaders agreed on an ambitious framework so that every woman and girl can realize all her rights. On this 25th anniversary, UNODC stands with you to make this objective reality. To build back better, we need a people-centered approach and a woman-centered approach within the UN," she stated.

Further on Mher Margaryan, Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women at its 64th session; Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger, President of the Human Rights Council; and Ása Regnér, Deputy Executive Director of the UN Women addressed the meeting. She spoke about the need for greater protection of female human rights defenders, preventing the demand and markets for trafficking of women and girls for sexual purposes, women's participation in decision making, and leadership, women's economic empowerment, and equal opportunities for participation in the labor market.

Social protection, including for women workers in the formal sector were some of the issues pointed out in intergovernmental perspectives. The Vienna-based International Gender Champions, including Alicia Guadalupe Buenrostro Massieu, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the

United Nations in Vienna, and Khojesta Fana Ebrahimkhel, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations in Vienna shared during the meeting about issues such as empowerment of all women and girls in relation to international drug policy and women's leadership to mention a few.



