



WOMEN'S FEDERATION FOR WORLD PEACE INTERNATIONAL

Beijing +25 "Generation Equality" ECE Regional Review Civil Society Speaks October 29-30, 2019



By Carolyn Handshin, VP NGO CSW Geneva WFWPI

Non-Governmental Organizations from over 50 countries traveled to Geneva on October 28 with eager hopes of adding their unique insights and concerns to the government debates on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA).

The Beijing + 25 Regional Review Meeting of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) was held on October 29-30 at the United Nations in Geneva.

It had been a tradition of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women (NGOCSW) in Geneva, to host a Civil Society Forum every five years, the day before the meetings of the governments of the region to appraise their progress since the BPfA was adopted at the 4th World Conference on Women in 1995. The commitments that were honed at that historic event remain relevant to this day.

The goal of the CSO forum has been to provide a platform to study the National B+25 Reports of the region, highlight current challenges and good practice models from civil society's angle- and assemble a list of recommendations that governments could include in their Regional Review report. Each region's submission would then contribute to the upcoming 64th Commission on the Status of Women and the landmark Global Beijing + 25 review at the General Assembly in September 2020. There was a palpable excitement to be a part of it.

Preparations began in early summer with Zoom meetings hosted by the Women's Major Group, a body born of the Rio Earth Summit in 1982, with much support from members of the NGOCSW and others. Working Groups were created that covered each of the 12 Critical Areas of Concern identified in 1995. Members of NGOCSW Geneva lead four of those groups. In the name of WFWPI, I did so for the Working Group on Education, Training, Mentoring and Access to Knowledge through

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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.

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UN HQ in New York

Expanding the Foundation

The 11 Days of Action and the International Day of the Girl

October 12, 2019 - UN HQ in New York



By Grace Kellett

The Women's Federation for World Peace, International (WFWPI) Office for UN Relations in New York was pleased to be involved in the NGO Working Group On Girls (WGG) for the past several years, as one of the office's five main areas of impact. Every year WFWPI aims to build the level of involvement in all five areas, and this year that included becoming a sponsor for Day 6 of WGG's 11 Days of Action campaign.

The Working Group on Girls (WGG) is an organization of NGOs who are united in their commitment to working with and for girls to advocate for the unique issues that girls face around the world. Originating during the build-up to the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, WGG has continued its work at the UN through their standing with UNICEF and has developed several key initiatives, including sponsoring the annual summit commemorating the International Day of the Girl (IDG) at the UN Headquarters in NY on October 11.

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The Role of UN and Multi-Faith Collaboration

The Role of Multi-Faith Collaboration in Sustainable Development

September 16, 2019 - UN HQ in New York



By Isys Onodera Israel

On July 15, the 2019 UN Task Force on Religion and Development and the Multi-Faith Advisory Council (CA) co-hosted the Kofi Annan Faith Briefings in New York, a day long conference that takes place every year during the UN High Level Political Forum. The day is named after Kofi Annan, the late and former UN Secretary-General who hosted

the Millennium Peace Summit in 2000, the largest gathering of religious leaders in the United Nations since it was founded in 1945. In the same spirit, the purpose of this day is to provide a regular space to build strategic partnerships between different faith leaders and groups and the UN and its member states in order to engender multilateral support towards the realization of human rights, sustainable development and peace and security.

The event this year focused on the theme, "Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality - the role of multi-faith collaboration with the UN" and included keynote speeches from high-level experts as well as four panel discussions. The panels discussed issues focused on multi-faith collaboration, intergenerational dialogue, the rights of children from a multi-religious perspective, and climate change and its impact.

On behalf of the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Antonio Guterres, H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos made his opening remarks as Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the UN Alliance of Civilizations. In his speech he celebrated the legacy of the late UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who had an important role in establishing the UN Alliance of Civilizations, which has become an instrument used to overcome prejudices and strengthen dialogue and mutual respect between parties in order to move towards the realization of peaceful and inclusive societies. He stated, "the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies and the emphasis on a global partnership for sustainable development are the common thread that weaves through every activity and project undertaken under the pillars of the Alliance of Civilization, namely,

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UN HQ in New York

Small Asks for Big Impact

Why Early Childhood Matters

September 16, 2019 - UN HQ in NY



By Isys Onodera Israel

From July 9 to July 19, the fourth annual United Nations High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) took place. The HLPF is the central program for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. During this HLPF, on July 17, WFP, International had the opportunity to attend a side event co-sponsored by the Permanent Missions of Bangladesh and Rwanda to the UN, UNICEF, The Moving Minds Alliance, the Early Childhood Peace Consortium (ECPC), and the NGO Committee on Migration.

The event “Small Asks for Big Impact: Investing in the early years for sustainable development and peaceful societies,” discussed the importance of investing in the early years of a child as the time period that establishes the foundation for a child’s future learning, behavior and well-being.

The event included speakers such as Dr. Charles A. Nelson, Ph.D, Professor of Pediatrics and Neuroscience at Harvard University and Director of research at the Boston Children’s Hospital, who spoke from a science-based perspective on the vital importance of investing early on in a child’s development. In his presentation, Dr. Nelson explained how the life-long mental and physical challenges of adversity, trauma and neglect affect the development of young children, stating how, “chronic exposure to stress without a buffering relationship can lead to long term changes in the brain.” Dr. Nelson went on to explain the findings of research he conducted in Bangladesh, where he and his team discovered that children from families who are at a lower rank in society, and thus had lower quality caregiving, demonstrated a weaker response to basic visual stimuli when they were under the influence of brain electrodes. In his conclusion, Dr. Nelson made the point that the effect of experiences of adversity, such as neglect, have on young children, can have far reaching consequences on their brain, biological

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and psychological development. For that reason, in order to decrease both physical and psychological disorders in adults, it is essential to address this issue of children growing up in adverse circumstances.

Another important moment of the event occurred when Dr. Rima Salah, Chair of the Early Childhood Peace Consortium (ECPC) and Former Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF, made an inspiring call to action on advancing early childhood development in order to achieve a sustainable peace and the need for immediate action to expand investments in young children and families in crisis. In her statement, she also addressed how early childhood in being promoted in the sustainable development goals (SDGs) through special organizations like UNICEF, Open Society, and ECPC. She added that “the exposure to instability and stress in displacement challenges families to [secure] the protection and nurturing care that their young children need.”

Representatives of Bangladesh and Rwanda also spoke, sharing their countries’ contributions to and experiences with the issue of young children and their development. Dr. Anita Asimwe, the National Coordinator for the Government of Rwanda’s Early Childhood Development Program, addressed the importance of the early years of a child and how engaging parents in learning and nurturing activities help with the implementation of the SDGs and the promotion of sustainable peace. Dr. Asimwe shared how, in Rwanda, UNICEF supported and worked with different stakeholders to create strategic policies. In 2018, these policies resulted in more than 27,000 young children, up to six years of age, having access to safe spaces to live, play and be nurtured, which included refugees as well. After Dr. Anita Asimwe’s presentation, Bangladesh’s Vice Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Mr. Md. Sherajul Islam, stated “if we change the beginning of the story, we change the whole story,” and emphasized the crucial role of ECD and education in assembling a Culture of Peace.

Concluding the side event, a former refugee from Afghanistan and now a Direct Response Associate at the International Rescue Committee, Ms. Nargis Bigzad, delivered an emotional speech on how she struggled to raise her son on her own while working as a refugee, and for that reason had missed precious time to spend with her child.

It is agreed that the early years of childhood are a driving force in achieving peaceful societies. Investment in early child development policies and services can help to transform

individuals, communities and nations. In this way, the urgent need to support and elevate investments in young children and caregiver programs is crucial, particularly in adverse environments where conflict and crisis prevail, which can have a negative effect on children’s brain function leading to stress in adulthood. For this reason, the event concluded that with no effort to support young children’s development, the achievement of the SDGs will be compromised. We cannot afford to leave any child or vulnerable young person behind, because the youth of 2030 are the young children of today and psychological development.



42nd Human Rights Council UN High-Level Forum on the 20th Anniversary of the Culture of Peace

July 15, 2019 - Ford Foundation,
Center for Social Justice, NY

By Isys Onodera



In observance of the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace convened on September 13, 1999, the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) held a high-level forum on that date of this year to renew the commitments made to further strengthen the global movement for the culture of peace.

At this year’s forum, WFWPI members had the opportunity to volunteer and collaborate with the The Global Movement for the Culture of Peace (GMCoP), one of the organizers of the event, preparing materials and welcoming the participants to the forum. WFWPI representatives were present when the major statements were given in the UNGA hall and had the opportunity to meet some of the people who gave these addresses.

The day long event opened with remarks by the President of the 73rd Session of the UNGA,

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UN at Geneva

42nd Human Rights Council

Engaging Women for Peace on the Korean Peninsula

September 19, Room 4 - UN at Geneva

By Chantal Komagata & Carolyn Handschin

In the spirit of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (SCR1325) on Women, Peace and Security, and with flickering hopes of new opportunities for peace and cooperation between North and South Korea, a fourth Human Rights Council (HRC) Side event was held on the theme “Korea Women, South & North: Peace Family Strengths, Rights and Development”. The Women’s Federation for World Peace, International (WFWPI), the Women’s UN Research Network (WUNRN) and the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) hosted this panel discussion to provide a platform for governments, UN bodies and civil society actors engaged on the peninsula. to assess and coordinate strategies for that future peace.

The UN Special Rapporteur (SR) on the Human rights situation in the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK), **Tomas Ojea Quintana** has encouraged the continuation of the panels and expressed, “When I hear that women from the south and their networks globally have been reaching out to women in the north, investing in reconciliation, dialogue, cultural and humanitarian projects that have built bridges of trust, I feel encourage about the future of the Korean Peninsula”.

The panel chair, **Ms. Carolyn Handschin**, VP of the NGO CSW in Geneva introduced the focus of the panel which included initiatives that could be applied in the Korea case. She described the enthusiastic support for the panel theme, but the reticence to take an active stand. She reassured all that we cannot loose by making plans for peace. The three main speakers will be followed by several discussants from the audience.

Dr. Rajat Khosla, World Health Organization (WHO) and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) expert on Women’s Health opened the discussion citing the astonishing numbers of people living in conflict zones: 125 million. Still, almost 20 years after the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325, gender based violence accounts for 70% of that. Humanitarian agencies deal with abuse toward women and children who receive proportionately less access to services: less than 0.5 % GDP. Still women are too often seen as victims and not empowered as agents of change. The World Humanitarian Summit set this as priority, as well as sexual and reproductive health. The 2019 Security Council debate on Resolution

1325 adamantly confirmed women’s protection against violence and taking more seriously their engagement in all post conflict processes as critical to sustainable peace and development.

Dr. Thania Paffenholtz, is the Director of the Inclusive Peace & Transition Institute, of the Geneva Graduate Institute. Our focus is evidence-based analysis, she explained. What have women in the world done, and specially in peace processes? While everything is said in SCR1325, statistically it’s still very different. Human rights in governance and constitutions have had a positive effect on unification- on many levels. Evidence takes time to assemble, but it becomes more and more apparent that when women are involved, there is a higher rate of agreements and progress. Women are more effective: they make time to meet, women movements stretch beyond politics. An example is the women’s movement in Israel which had forged breakthrough in listening, whereas before there were only accusations. Networks have formed between these movements, sharing resources and knowledge.

Realistically, women are as divided as men, but when they overcome the divide, they are much more effective, also on grassroots, confidence building measures, as mothers, and for society. So it’s about sisterhood and solidarity. Actively influenced with soft measures, mobilizations, what we’d like politicians to talk about. Participation in political negotiations. The official form of delegation, activists, observers, lobbying works only if women had beforehand the possibility to exchange. Symbolic events to allow people to come together. International solidarity is not dependent on financial support; giving women access to talk to member states is key.

Invited again to elaborate upon the proposal to establish a major UN Office for Asia on the Korean Peninsula, possibly in or near the DMZ. **Mr. Heiner Handschin**, UN Office Director in Geneva for the Universal Peace Federation described the geopolitical justification for housing the work of certain agencies and institutes of the UN in Korea. He presented diagrams of a UN Complex that was proposed by the Office of the governor of Gyeonggi province to a conference at the UN in 2014 organized by UPF and WFWPI, including how it could be funded. He referred to the proposal of WFWPI, WUNRN and partners to create a “Peace- Zone”, a meeting place and refuge in or near the DMZ where North Korea and South Korea women could generate innovative peace initiatives, saying that it could be first step in a larger transformation. In the words of the

SR on the DPRK, “Count on me to advocate for this “Peacebuilding/Partnership Meeting Place for Women”, an original and concrete initiative, which may help erase division and forge a vision of a sustainable peace and the respect for human rights”.



Discussants

Mrs. Lois Herman of WUNRN, but representing Women Across the DMZ, explained that few agencies work in NK, but the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) does and with whom we are in communication with about our proposals to engage women. NK women have the same goals and needs as we do, so we need to include them on a non-confrontational position, on a positive level. Women can lead the way through a different entry point. Christine Ahn, who could not join us today has been working tirelessly on peace between the Koreans.

Dr. Kathryn Botto of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace spoke of the prospect of de-nuclearization as an “opportunity to lifting sanctions and fostering humanitarian and development assistance, and further interpersonal contact between the two Koreas and the world, an important building block for peace”. North Korean refugee women face major obstacles of employment in South Korea, making up as much as 85 % of refugees entering the South in 2018. In the North, they are estimated to bring 70% of the family income. With less educational experience than the South Korean women, the northern counterparts, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) claims that female refugees face “serious social, economic and political obstacles to integration”

Professor A. Basseer Jeeawody, Founder and President of the Emotional Well-being Institute (EWI) explained that his institute advances

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Technology (WGoE). Each group worked autonomously and diligently with their team of volunteers by email and video conferencing to assemble Factsheets on the topic, envisaging their use as a civil society resource for our governments.

Of the 19 members of the WGoE, we spanned 13 countries across the UN ECE, from Alaska in the west to Russia in the east. Very few of us knew each other before, nor were in the same line of advocacy, but with our common goal of “gender equality and the empowerment of women”, we respectfully negotiated through our differences.

Having researched the events through a collection of YouTube videos filmed during the conference in Beijing 25 years ago, the WGoE team felt that they had tapped into a similar solidarity and historicity. The choice modus operandi was to prepare a survey to scientifically collect data from throughout the region, answering 3 main questions. 1) What are the structural barriers and negative trends concerning education in your nation? 2) What progress do you see in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action? 3) What are the recommendations to governments beyond Beijing + 25?

The WGoE team worked together to assemble the findings into a factsheet in a very consensus-bound way. They also had five minutes to present their conclusions at the Beijing + 25 UNECE government forum on October 28.

There were a few stumbling blocks, in particular on sexuality education. Not having enough time to study the information and analyze the various strong opinions on the topic, the team decided to say less. However, they also decided to continue the heated discussion leading up to CSW64 because of the importance of the issue and the clear need for mutual understanding and wise decision-making. There was certain exhilaration in participating in the process of shaping the content of such important issues, each sacrificing some of their concerns for the sake of a unified appeal, strengthened in our solidarity and numbers. Not only was a very good document produced, but great friendships were also created.



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The International Day of the Girl (IDG) was adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 19, 2011 with the intention to “galvaniz[e] worldwide enthusiasm for goals

to better girls’ lives, providing an opportunity for them to show leadership and reach their full potential.” Since its adoption, WGG has commemorated this day on October 11 of each year with the IDG Summit, an inspiring day of celebration and speakers that has become quite popular among “girls, boys, adults, teachers, leaders, politicians and...organizations.”

To generate a global conversation about girls and their experiences in the lead-up to the IDG Summit, WGG initiates a social media campaign called the 11 Days of Action. Every day is sponsored by a different organization who presents their perspective on the topic of the girl child. This involves the opportunity to host a Twitter chat where people from all over the world can interact over the questions that are posed, and to initiate a social media call to action for that day, such as calling everyone to post on their Instagram using a specific hashtag. This creative campaign builds up global momentum, exposure and excitement and culminates as the IDG Summit. While WFWPI has contributed to the campaign and the IDG Summit in the past, this year the office in NY decided to become one of the sponsors in the 11 Days of Action Campaign.

As the official sponsor of Day 6, WFWPI was featured on the IDG Summit website. WFWPI used that exposure to highlight its holistic approach to the empowerment of girls as leaders in their communities, pointing to such projects as the initiative in Thailand to educate girls of the Karen tribe. In addition, WFWPI hosted a twitter chat and called for those in the audience to show solidarity through the use of specific hashtags and posting on Instagram with a caption that started with “An educated girl is...”

WFWPI is privileged to have been able to support WGG and its efforts related to the IDG this year, and looks forward to continuing to develop its impact in this area through its invest and support approach.



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H.E. Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, in which she addressed the importance of being committed to peace and recognized the essential role the UN plays by providing a platform for all stakeholders to work together as one in order to achieve peaceful societies. “Peace is more than an absence of war. It needs constant nurturing through the pursuit of dignity and equality, of human rights and justice, of respect and understanding - and of cooperation and multilateralism,” she said.

Following the plenary discussions in the GA Hall, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate for 2011,

Ms. Leymah Gbowe, delivered a message of solidarity, and in which she stated: “It looks like a population of satisfied people: healthy children, educated children, a functional health system, responsive justice structure, an empowered, recognized, appreciated and fully compensated community of women; food on the table of every home, and a lot more. It is the full expression of human dignity.”

During the panel discussion in the afternoon that was led by H.E. Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, former Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the UN, the importance of the concept of the Culture of Peace and its contribution to sustainable peace was discussed by a select group of experts. Ambassador Chowdhury was the one responsible for the initiative that resulted in the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Culture of Peace at the UNGA in 1999. In his opening, he declared: “The Culture of Peace as a concept, as a motivation, means that every one of us needs to consciously make peace and nonviolence a part of our daily existence.”

Ambassador Chowdhury acknowledged and thanked WFWPI, International for launching the 20th anniversary commemorative year with its annual event, the Horizon Summit, which was held in March 2019 with the theme of “Advancing the Culture of Peace.”

The need to shift the mindset of people from a culture of war to a culture of peace was addressed by H. E. Ambassador Miguel A. Morationos, High Representative for the UN Alliance of Civilizations (AOC), “from tolerance to respect of the other; from minorities to citizenship rights; from co-existence to living together peacefully; from dialogue to an alliance and a commitment to peace,” he said.

Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). She spoke of the need for governments to commit to include those that are more vulnerable in the system, particularly women.

Following Ms. Barron’s comments, the Ambassador for Women, Peace and Security, appointed by Canada, Ms. Jacqueline O’Neil, reminded the participants that peace should be a goal sought by all. She also called for the inclusion of women if the culture of peace is to succeed.

Sharing the challenges faced in Afghanistan, the Permanent Representative to the UN, H.E. Ambassador Adela Raz, explained that the existing conflicts in her country result from external factors and are not due to

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UN at Vienna

The Coalition of Faith-based Organizations Spirituality and Justice Initiative

October 8, 2019 - UN at Vienna



By Renate Amesbauer, Laleh Ashrafi, and Tamara Starr

On October 7, representatives from ten different faith-based organizations gathered for The Coalition of Faith-based Organizations.

The also discussed how the organization plays an important role in the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals, and in disseminating the UN standards on the treatment of people in prison.

The Coalition of Faith-based Organizations is a new multi-religious platform founded in 2019 with the support of the International Dialogue Center (KAICID) at the headquarters of the United Nations (UN) in Vienna-Austria.

The following texts inspired the formation of the coalition:

- The world stands upon three things: upon the Law, upon worship, and upon showing kindness. Judaism, Mishna, Abot 1.2
- Compassion is the root of all religious faiths. Hinduism. Basavanna, Vacana 247
- Rendering help to another is the function of all human beings. Jainism, Tattvarthansutta 5.21
- Then he will say to those at his left hand, Depart from me, you cursed, in the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome

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Peace Network

Redefining Pathways to Peace at the South East European Peace Summit

October 29, 2019- Europe



By Renate Amesbauer, President of WFWP Austria and Tamara Starr

During October 25 to October 27, the South

East Europe Summit was held with around 230 participants from over 40 nations, including men and women of all ages. International President of WFWPI Julia Moon and International Vice President, Sun Jin Moon also attended the event.

Mrs. Carolyn Handschin, Director, United Nations Office, WFWP International gave the opening remarks. She welcomed the full house on behalf of the organizers, thanking the many who contributed to the preparations, especially WFWP Albania. She also reminded the audience that we are here to advance together, saying “the EU has no monopoly on solutions” and referred to the debates during the WFWP

events that brought women Parliamentarians and civil society together in the Albanian Parliament and Kosovo Parliament in 2018 and 2119.

The solidarity among women leaders in the Balkans and their concern about how to promote women’s participation while taking consideration of the outgoing men in office was striking- and something European women leaders seem to be less concerned about. Ms. Handschin explained that the organizers tried very hard to include a male voice in the panel, believing that it is important not just to talk

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UN Day of Nuclear Disarmament

International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

October 1, 2019 - UN at Vienna



By Renate Amesbauer and Laleh Ashrafi

With the cooperation of the Women Federation of World Peace (WFWP) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), the International Day

for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons was celebrated in Vienna International Center (VIC) on September 30.

United Nations International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (Nuclear Abolition Day) was established on September 26 in order “to enhance public awareness and education about the threat posed to humanity by nuclear weapons and the necessity for their total elimination, in order to mobilize international efforts towards achieving the common goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.”

“Instead of investing money in the development of nuclear weapons, we should

invest more in education, eradicating hunger and providing nations with better opportunities,” said H.E. Mr. Solano Ortiz, Ambassador, and Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to Austria.

Having emphasized the role of CTBTO in “constraining the quantitative improvement of nuclear weapon,” H.E. Ms. Alicia Buenrostro, ambassador of Mexico to Austria highlighted Mexico’s commitment to nuclear disarmament in the last 75 years.

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the lack of tolerance. Also, she said that the transformation from conflict to an agenda focused on development is possible because of the participation of women.

The panel discussion concluded that the culture of peace needs to be nurtured by all people, and that women are vital agents to prevent conflict and create a peaceful environment. It also highlighted the important role education plays in the development of peaceful human beings. The panelists agreed that everyone must be a stakeholder in this process.

Toward the close of the event, the discussant, Mr. Francisco Rojas Aravena, Rector of the University for Peace, summarized the relevant points brought by all panelists and talked about the importance of the University for Peace to the promotion of peace education, solidarity and non-violence for the past 40 years.

The Chairman of the Foundation for a Culture of Peace and former UNESCO Director-General, Mr. Federico Mayor Zaragoza gave his comments expressing concern about the increase of military spending, and encouraging the UN to lead its discussion on peace and security with a new approach, which places the human being as a top priority.

At the conclusion of the high level forum on the Culture of Peace in 2019, the President of the 73rd Session of the UNGA gave the closing remarks, inviting all to build bridges of peace and solidarity in order to create an environment that supports inclusion, equality, and education. She thanked everyone for their contributions and efforts towards peace.



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youth, migration, media and education. [The Alliance] will also permeate a fifth focus area that I have introduced in my capacity as High Representative in order to promote the role of women as peace mediators in conflicts with an intercultural and interreligious component.” The first panel discussed the “Role of multi-faith for Sustainable Development,” where the speakers addressed the following questions: “How do Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) partner with UN?” “How do these partnerships address issues of women’s empowerment, children’s rights, youth, employment?” “What are some challenges to partnerships?” “And what are some success stories of overcoming and consolidating partnerships in spite of the challenges?” The panelists spoke on the importance of faith to advance the SDG’s

and the role of women in faith based activity. As stated by Ms. Dana Buzducea from World Vision, those involved in some kind of faith are predominantly female, and for that reason women are a key element in building social integration. Reverend Carlos Tamez, from ACT Alliance added that, because of the significant role that faith based organizations play in society, those organizations are important partners for the UN in finding effective mechanisms to advance social development. Mr. James Patton, from the International Center for Religion and Diplomacy (ICRD), emphasized the relevance of religious peacebuilders and the need to train and build the capacity of religious people to increase their participation and role in the peacebuilding process. He added to this by emphasising that religion is not the cause of conflict and the urgent need to remove this idea.

The second panel was entitled, “Intergenerational Gender Dialogue: Realizing equality now, leaving no one behind.” The speakers gave their thoughts based on the following questions: “How can intergenerational alliances be strengthened to advocate against discriminatory laws and practices that stand in the way of gender equality?” “How can young women’s leadership be strengthened to break stereotypes that promote discrimination?” “How can young men and boys and young women and girls be integrated into different alliance structures to promote new ideas of equality and solidarity?” The panelists explored the relevance of women of faith in creating an agenda of transformation away from discriminatory laws and practices. There was also an important discussion on how to integrate young leaders in the efforts to remove stereotypes that encourage discrimination and it was concluded that promoting dialogue between women and young girls is essential and would add to the legitimacy of new ideas on gender equality.

In the third panel, they discussed the multi-religious perspectives on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). As part of the conversation, the panelists spoke about good practices taken by religious leaders to protect children’s rights and their review of the CRC since its adoption by the UN General Assembly in 1989. Because of the power faith leaders have in their communities, this creates a feeling of trust between leaders and their followers, engaging leaders to encourage partnerships can produce policies and measurements that can prevent acts of misconduct involving children and adolescents.

The final panel was on the role of multi-faith partnership in combating climate change and its impact, and the discussion was guided by

the following questions:

“What are some challenges of multi-faith and UN collaboration in this area and what are some success stories?”

“What are some of the partnership efforts in this area which also tie in concerns about peace and inclusive societies? educational dynamics? reducing inequalities?”

The panelists discussed the role of faith in the climate issue, and called attention to the fact that it is crucial for all leaders to come together at all levels. To combat climate change, it is essential to promote dialogue between different groups, including youth, faith leaders and local representatives.

Mr. Gropal Patel from Green Faith expressed the need for governments and institutions to reshape their policies and move from fossil fuel based economies to renewable ones. Ms. Karena Gore added that the faith community should be engaged as well, because today we have a new scenario different from when the UN was created in 1945. Ms. Gore also addressed that, due to the fact that faith leaders have legitimacy in their communities, these people can contribute by promoting environmental consciousness that can be reflected on all levels of society and transcend religious divides.

The relevance of religious actors in the international arena has increased and many faith based organizations are engaging more and more with the issue of sustainable development and in humanitarian initiatives. In this way the event served as a forum for exchanging information and celebrating and consulting with these FBOs in order to strengthen partnership and multilateralism. Religious organizations are able to develop strong connections on the local level, contribute to data, facilitate the engagement of the grassroots, and also create a space for the youth and build an intergenerational dialogue. Therefore, religion is not what causes conflict, but is a part of the solution and the contribution of faith communities is essential if we want to achieve sustainable development.



Vienna Continued...

Summit for World Peace WFWP Europe Holds GWPN Banquet and South East Europe Peace Summit

October 28, 2019 - UN at Vienna

By WFWP Europe and Tamara Starr



On October 26, WFWP held a Global Women's Peace Network Banquet and Awards Ceremony in Tirana, Albania. Over 100 guests attended including 15 parliamentarians, former government ministers, Pres. Moisi's daughters and many other prominent women leaders from the Balkans, Europe, Middle East and Eurasia.

Suzana Rexhepi of WFWP Albania, and Mitty Tohma, WFWP UK President, co-hosted the event, guiding the audience throughout the evening. The program included welcoming remarks from WFWPI Europe President, Carolyn Handschin who told the story of a venerable Buddhist monk from France in Europe who sat next to her at lunch during the UPF Summit last year in Korea. He leaned over, so seriously, as if he had been waiting to say this, and announced, "if WFWP can lead the way among women's organizations to show the model of how to protect the sanctity of men's "true honour" during this era of women's rise to leadership, this new time of enlightenment can proceed more quickly".

WFWPI President, Julia Moon delivered the welcoming remarks. She described her profound appreciation of the founding vision for WFWP and of the great sacrifices of our devoted sisters in missions around the world.

Introduced by Julia as, "like the Sunshine", Sun jin Moon, new Senior Vice President for WFWPI came to the stage to deliver the main address. It was deep and broad, painting a detailed picture of the world's needs, and the love and capacities of women needed to respond. Of course, she spoke her mother, Dr. Hak Jah Moon, Founding President of WFWPI and in tears, about the strengths and sacrifices being called for at this time.

The event was highlighted with the Global Women's Peace Leadership Award Ceremony,

bestowing "Women of Excellence" Certificates and a grant from WFWP Europe for two outstanding women; Former First Lady of Albania, Dr Liri Berisha and Human Rights defender, Dr. Feride Rushiti.

Dr. Berisha is well known for founding and currently directing multiple institutions that diagnose and care for children with autism and their families. On a visit, a team visited there and saw how she chose the location and designed the buildings with so much attention to detail, in addition, the amount of care that she personally gives to the young patients and their parents. Dr Berisha proved that she worked like a mother of the institution. She spoke in tears in her remarks upon receiving the award.

The second recipient was a gynecologist who served at the time of the war in Kosovo in the early 1990's. She realized that medical attention would never be enough to heal the thousands of women victims of torture and rape. Creating an NGO to provide a safe place for listening, counseling, treatment and lobbying to the government for support for the needs, she has been recognized around the world.

Her legal reforms are being imitated in other post war countries. But most amazing is clearly the heart of their investment. She too spoke in tears, describing the victims they were helping who have sometimes held their experiences inside their hearts for 20 years- never speaking to anyone.

The former President of Kosovo, HE Fatmir Sejdiu, heard about the dinner meeting and came to greet us informally, thanking WFWP for honoring his compatriot, Dr. Rushiti. The evening closed with the young Czech FFWPU National President, Eva Kacirkova, who performed two beautiful classical songs on the violin.

On October 27, WFWPI in collaboration with UPF organized the South East Europe Summit. WFWP was invited to be the MC and facilitator for both the Opening Banquet (Carolyn Handschin) and the Closing Session (Marilyn Angelucci) of the Summit.

A very heartfelt appreciation to WFWP Albania and their President, Kasia Minolari, who managed to bring many very influential guests from Albania, with Vice President, Marjeta Roshi and the many WFWP members who got together to create two amazing events.

Spirituality / Justice continued from page 6

me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me. Christianity, Matthew 25:31-46

- Where there is forgiveness, there is God Himself. Sikhism, Adi Granth, Shalok, Kabir, p. 1372
- Conquer anger by love. Conquer evil by good. Conquer the stingy by giving. Conquer the liar by truth. Buddhism. Dhammapada 223
- Fulfill the covenant of God once you have pledged it, and do not break any oaths once they have been sworn to. You have set up God as Guarantee for yourselves; God knows everything you are doing." Islam, Qur'an 16.91
- The superior man tends to forgive wrongs and deals leniently with crimes. Confucianism, I Ching 40
- How do you pray that sinners die? Rather pray that they should repent, and thus there will be no more wickedness." Judaism, Talmud, Berakot, 10a
- Lack of respect to the constituted authority is the source of most conflicts in the world. African Traditional Religion, Yoruba Proverb, Nigeria
- Governance is the function of the ruler in order to protect the state from the wicked and nourish the good. Jainism, Somadeva, Nitivakhamrita 5.1-2

Coalition of faith-based Organizations will consist of civil society representatives, the interreligious Dialogue Center of the Catholic Church and UPF+WFWP. This platform was designed to promote more effectively the role of religions in crime prevention and peace building.

Having faith in individuals, the representatives went on by considering "necessary supports" as a driving fact helping victims of crimes and abuse of power, those who seek reconciliation between the society and themselves, to "forgive" and move on.

The session concluded with the signing of the Foundation Document of Inter-religious Platform.



New York, Geneva, and Vienna continued...

Culture of Peace continued from page 3

Ms. Gore also addressed that, due to the fact that faith leaders have legitimacy in their communities, these people can contribute by promoting environmental consciousness that can be reflected on all levels of society and transcend religious divides.

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Engaging Women continued from page 4

synergy toward a more flourishing world. The division of N and S has created a wound and a healing process is needed. Korean women need to recognize the wounds and their capacities to search for their personal, collective selves? Women can, and must find ways, like ants, to be purpose driven. There is no reason that this self-discovery, this self-healing process that has been working among indigenous Australian communities cannot be applied in the DPRK.

Intervening for Graduate Women International, Mrs. Stacy Dry Lara, emphasized education for girls. With a century of experience and an office in Korea, they are convinced that educated women could use their empowerment and well-being wisely to avoid war and promote development.



South East Peace continued from page 8

among ourselves and not to repeat the same mistakes attributed to historic male dominance in politics. That speaker, an important male representative of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in the Balkans, the was unfortunately called away to mission just before the conference.

Julia Moon, International President of Women's Federation for World Peace International also shared remarks during the event.

"Women are those that suffer the most in conflicts and wars, losing husbands and sons, with a possibility of being victim of violence themselves. We are here to find new pathways for peace therefore, it is high time that societies are not led by the logic of power, but by the logic of love and reconciliation! It is through love and forgiveness that wounds can be healed," she said. "These qualifications need to be used for the wider society: What is most needed now is the ability to embrace, have empathy and compassion that can heal the world!"

Hon. Mrs Ardiana Jaku attended and is currently a Member of the Albanian Parliament. She has served previously as a Vice-Minister of Health and Social Protection and as a Regional Director of Social Service in Lezha city. Before being involved in politics, she had experience of leadership in civil society and has qualifications in management and finance. Mrs. Jaku has degree in Finance, is married and has two children.

Ms. Jaku has always been concerned with social wellbeing, to improve equal chances for men and women! Laws had to be adapted to counteract gender-based discrimination. It is believed that women are the main caretakers in the household and are unfortunately often victims of domestic violence. Hon. Ms. Jaku pleaded for the support of victims and the consequent pursuing of the perpetrators, in order that women and girls are better protected. 61% of work is currently being performed by women, but are not making enough of an income- just 26% of what men usually make. Therefore, Ms. Jaku started a plan of action for entrepreneurship of women.

She also developed the system of early diagnosis and treatment of cancer, primarily concerning breast and uterine cancer. She founded new pediatric hospitals. Hon. Ms. Jaku very energetically stroven for a society of justice and well-being for all! She says "Quotas is not enough, it is quality that is so important," she said. She also mentioned not to forget that "for every women to step in, a man has to step back! How can we help them to keep their dignity?"

Dr. Céline Guérin completed her PhD in Neurosciences in 2008 in the CHUV, the hospital of Lausanne in Switzerland. Her willingness to explore consciousness and human behaviors brought her to work in a Psychiatric Institute and to experience alternative healing techniques such as meditation, EFT and hypnosis.

Today she specializes in relationship issues, self-esteem, stress management and sexual abuse

and she is working in Sophia Health Centre in Lausanne as a certified Peak States® therapist. This therapy is the accomplishment of 30 years of research led by the ISPS- Institute for Study of Peak States (of Consciousness) and is based on a psychobiological model explaining how our emotions and physical sensations are correlated to biology.

During the conference, Dr. Guerin spoke about the links between our story, epigenetic and behaviors and how trauma therapy techniques might be efficient tools to bring peace within ourselves and, by extension, to increase peace in the world. Dr. Guerin shared how she at a young age -watching the news – always was asking herself: "Why does history always repeat itself, why do people continue to make the same mistake over and over again?" She learned that all you can do, like Mahatma Ghandi has been stating, is to change yourself! Ghandi said, "if everyone would transform into a better person, the world would become a better place." So for her it is important for us to understand more about ourselves, and figure out why traumas are so deeply rooted in us.

As a neuroscientist she found, that heavy trauma is changing our epigenetics- it is changing our DNA. This implies that, if not healed, it will be transmitted to the next generation, and we can inherit from the past. Again, what can be done about that? Dr. Guerin explained three dimensions: Consciousness, a relationship issue and meditation. She assisted in bringing meditation into psychiatric institutions. She believes that since trauma is an experience with strong emotions, like in the case of (sexual) violence, it needs a therapeutic relationship in order to be healed. Meditation can help to heal the inner wounds.

Dr. Gurin says that 70% of healing takes place once a person can speak about the painful experience, is able to share what she or he has gone through! "Healing for peace is finding peace within ourselves" and with influential people, and when there is love between nations.

Ms. Bettina Kircher, International security Sector Advisor; independent conflict consultant and mediator for Germany also attended the summit. Her strong recommendation is an international security team with a mandate to act. She believes that in a war, women are even more affected than man, being prone to multiple acts of violence. But also boys and men are misused - having to wear a gun, being forced to fight, or boys being forcefully recruited as soldiers at an early age.

South East Peace continued on page 10

New York, Geneva, and Vienna continued...

International Day continued from page 4

In an age of 14000 remaining nuclear weapons, “raising awareness of the importance of the nuclear-test-ban on a global level” is vital. According to Nathalie Mayer, representative of CTBTO Youth Group and the last speaker of this event, spreading knowledge of “threats and risks of nuclear weapons at schools should be encouraged” and this responsibility is on the young generation’s shoulder. She also went on presenting her project “Peace Education” with the aim of increasing awareness of threats on nuclear weapons.

This event was commemorated with the song “the Angry Flame” describing the trail of devastation left by an atomic bomb, sung by the UN Choir.



South East Peace continued from page 9

Her first mission was to go into the jungle to meet the guerrillas to protect civilians from more killing in the Ivory Coast. “First it took months to explain to the authorities that I want to meet them, they are people, someone has to start talking to them,” she said. It then took weeks to get local permission to enter the area before informal negotiation could start. “I wanted to show – they are human beings! It is possible to negotiate,” she said. For one year now unlawful killing did take place and peace negotiations could now start.

In order to reach successful and sustainable peace and reconciliation (and also income), generating projects can be important. Dr. Kirch believes that lasting peace can only be reached with participation from the field, the people themselves, plus a strong involvement of women. “Let the people find the solution and work for it – together, create a common goal and vision,” she said.

Prof. Zilka Spahić Šiljak attended the events and holds a PhD in gender studies. “I am a Muslim feminist... Peace is not the mere absence of war or violence; we need a positive Peace: This means the rebuilding and healing of broken relationships! We need a culture of trust and overcoming historical barriers,” she said.

She also believes that women are differently affected by war than men. She mentioned how a woman’s first interest is the wellbeing and socialization of her family. Through motherhood a high potential of the heart is reached. This is why women can reach out the hearts of people. What has been learned in the

family can be extended to the wider society. Men are more the negotiators.

She mentioned how during or after wars- it is often the women who are the first to reach out to the “enemy” and are ready to cross the border again. Women have a high desire for peace, and a peaceful surrounding for the sake of their children. She expressed that the fact is that women often lack confidence and it is important for their confidence to be rebuilt. She also said that often a woman needs one year of intense training in order to feel, “yes, I can do it, I can start up with something.”

“Women need peace and peace needs women! It needs a women and men equality; that men to be the supporters and allies of women, and of course the other way around,” she said.



UN Geneva NGOCSW Geneva Film Project for Beijing + 25 November 1, 2019 - UN Geneva



By Julia Handschin, WFWP Intern

Launched back in July 2019, the “Women’s Mosaic of Lived Experience” Film Project aimed to bring together women from different walks of life across the UNECE Region and to shed light on the progress as well as the ongoing challenges to the empowerment of women and the realization of their full potential.

Many women’s lives and their communities have been dramatically and constructively influenced by their engagement with the extensive networks of the United Nations; the World Conferences on Women and Beijing Platform for Action, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Development Goals’s, Security Council Resolution 1325 and others.

While policy makers increasingly understand the value of local knowledge about- and mobilization for- the goals, most of civil society remains out of reach. Members of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women in Geneva decided to launch a multifaceted project within the framework of the Beijing + 25 Review process to:

While policy makers increasingly understand the value of local knowledge about- and mobilization for- the goals, most of civil society remains out of reach. Members of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women in Geneva decided to launch a multifaceted project within the framework of the Beijing + 25 Review process to:

1. Understand and improve local awareness
2. Give voice to the local needs
3. Facilitate partnership with UN bodies and instruments to fulfill those needs.
4. Highlight successful projects and partnerships

The Task Force members, led by committee member Valerie Bichelmeier (World Movement of Mothers), would reach out to our networks to collect video clips from women active in the field throughout the wide ECE Region. In a few sentences, each described how they are engaged to improve their lives and their communities in spite of all the odds. These issues would connect to the 1995 Beijing 12 Critical Areas of Concern, according to four priority areas:

- Women and well-being: Some practices are dangerous to women and girls mental, physical and spiritual well-being and must be replaced with stronger commitments to healthy, safe, empowering health services and opportunities.
- Digital women: Media can condone discrimination or violence or showcase strong women leaders. Once in positions of influence, women can bring significant change.
- Following the money: due to gender discrimination, women may remain in insecure, undignified, low-paying jobs. With support, they can fully benefit from the economy, secure decent jobs, accumulate assets and go on raise responsible children, families and influence institutions.
- Peace through reconciliation and education: Violence (from domestic to protracted conflict) damages victims and perpetrators. By engaging survivors and addressing roots causes-laws and policies can be guided toward prevention and reconciliation. Early childhood education and family cohesion through trauma is critical for resilience- often assumed by mothers. Educated and stable women benefit entire societies.

Julia Handschin, filmmaker, media producer, and daughter of the NGOCSW Geneva Vice President, was brought in to guide the project technically and edit and compile the collected interviews. Her responsibilities included creating a how-to document, coaching members of the taskforce about conducting one-to-one interviews, lighting, framing, sound and as well, preparing a “Release form” to secure permission in writing to reproduce each interview.

As a result of many early morning Zoom calls and field trips, around 20 submissions came in from a wide range of women of different ages, cultures, religions, and professions. Many discussions were held to choose most appropriate clips, some sacrifices had to be made, but finally all can proudly say that it was really a very collaborative and invigorating undertaking. The video can be found on YouTube here: <https://bit.ly/2U2lShj>

Belarus Article

Creating an Environment for the Future Generations

September 12, 2019 - Europe, GWPN



By Alla Chako

From September 3 to 11, twelve representatives of WFWP Japan visited Belarus. The Japanese delegation was headed by the President of WFWP Japan, Mrs. Moriko Hori. Six youth volunteer members from Japan came to Belarus on the delegation to inherit the foundation that had been created by elder volunteer members of WFWP Japan who had been coming to Belarus with charity mission for more than 25 years.

On Thursday, September 5, Japanese women were welcomed in Vitebsk city. Together with Belarusian representatives of WFWP, students of the Vitebsk State University, delegation from Russia headed by president of WFWP Eurasia Mrs. Olga Vakulinskaya and three VIP they participated in Service for Peace and Culture Exchange Programs that were organized by Zoya Krot (Belarusian Ambassador for Peace).

Japanese youth volunteer members helped to plant nice trees and bushes in front of the Territorial Center of Social Services. Members of the center prepared a heartfelt and colorful performance for guests. The program continued inside of the center where Japanese guests gave a sushi cooking master class and Belarusian women presented a traditional tea party. The atmosphere was very warm and joyful as all of the women sang songs together.

On September 6, the Global Women's Peace Network conference was organized by the Vitebsk regional branch of Belarusian Peace Fund and WFWP Japan with support of the

Belarusian representatives of WFWP. The title of the conference was "Women's role in building a culture of peace. Empowering women and creating an environment of peace for the future generations".

The guests of the conference listened to speeches and welcoming addresses of the Chairman of the Vitebsk Regional Branch of the Belarusian Peace Fund Tatiana Tumanova, of the member of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus Tatiana Starinskaya, of the head of WFWP Eurasia Olga Vakulinskaya, of the Head of the Muslim Women Union of Russia Nailya Ziganshina, the President of WFWP Japan Moriko Hori and of one of Japanese youth members.

The participants of the conference also enjoyed watching and listening to traditional Belarusian and Japanese songs and dances. In the end of the event a sisterhood ceremony between Belarusian and Japanese students took place. It was a very bright and touching part of the evening.

The same day in the morning a lecture on the topic "Love and sexuality in the era of AIDS" was given by Mrs. Vakulinskaya to 30 students of the Vitebsk State University.

Here are some reflections from the event:

"Nowadays this topic is very important. I absolutely agree with all information I've heard

today. I wish in the future this lecture can be done more often and not only in universities. I liked the trustful atmosphere of the lecture and all information I had received there. I want to become the member of such organization and to take part in these programs".

"For me this topic is very important, because I have a tremulous attitude to family, children and my love. I do not want to create empty relationship that does not make sense, and even more so, doesn't base on traditions and values. I want to have a mutual love in my relationship. I wish to all people happiness and ability to keep love till the end".

"This topic is very important. I realized that it is very important to respect yourself and to create a harmony inside of yourself in order to feel happiness. I liked the positivity of the lecturer. This world can be kind when each of us creates a kindness inside of himself or herself and treats the world in a kind way".

On September 10, in the Republican Center of National Cultures (RCNC) in Minsk City, a Japanese cultural night was organized for the second year in a row. More than 170 people visited the event.

The program of the event included a presentation about Japan, tea ceremony, traditional Japanese dance and several songs and the art of calligraphy and origami. Some guests tried on yukata (traditional Japanese clothes), some played traditional Japanese toys on the stage and received presents. The Belarusian representatives of WFWP received so many thanks from the guests of the evening!

The same day before the cultural night a sisterhood ceremony was held between the President of WFWP Japan Mrs. Hori and the Director of the RCNC Mrs. Olga Antonenko. The program of the Japanese delegation visit to Belarus was very busy. Japanese youth members were able to see the great foundation that had being created for decades by senior volunteer members of WFWP Japan with the constant assistance of representatives of the Belarusian Women's Federation. We hope that in the coming years some of them will return to Belarus with their own projects.



WFWPI Updates Continued...

24th Women's Conference For Peace In The Middle East

24th Women's Conference For Peace In The Middle East

September 12, 2019 - Europe, GWPN



By Carolyn Handschin, Magda Haugen & Zoe Bennett

For 23 years, the Women's Conference for Peace (MEWC) in the Middle East has gathered women leaders from throughout the Middle East (ME) to forge partnerships among themselves, and with concerned European counterparts to work out obstacles to the long-sought ME peace. This year's theme was, "The Path to Reconciliation and Rebuilding Peace", and was organized with the sponsorship and support of WFWP Japan and WFWP ME. The city of Berlin was chosen because it stands

as a historic example of success in rebuilding peaceful relations after painful division. The eighty participants, included 33 women from 14 countries in the Middle East-North Africa (MENA) region, with 30% of them young women.

After welcoming remarks on behalf of WFWPI by Mrs. Carolyn Handschin and Dr. Zoe Bennett, both having been engaged in the MEW conferences since 2002, Ms. Monica Goracci, who has worked for twenty years with the International Organization for Migration-IOM, gave a presentation about the current situation of migrants in

Germany. She explained about the national framework for integration and the reason that women migrate: in order to find work, equal opportunity and better education for their children. Because what they find does not always match their expectation, the support and care of international organizations and local community can make tremendous difference in their lives and those they touch.



WFWPI Updates Continued...

WFWPI New Director of Communications Announcement **Meet Our New Director of Communications and Publications**



On October 1, Tamara Starr joined our team as the new Director of Communications and Publications for Women's Federation for World Peace, International. She is also the new Managing Editor for the WFWPI Newsletter. Ms. Starr comes to us with over 10 years of journalism and publishing experience. If you have any story ideas you would like to submit for the website, please reach out to her via email at t.starr@wfwpi.org with the term "WFWPI Website Content" in the subject line.

Young Voices

Intern Series

Sanjana Bhambhani

August 27, 2019 - Young Voices, United Nations



By Sanjana Bhambhani

Interning at the Women's Federation for World Peace, International (WFWPI) has been a truly enriching experience. I had the opportunity to represent WFWPI at various events and conduct my own research on a subject of my interest.

At the ECOSOC High-Level Political Forum held in July 2019 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, I was able to observe world leaders in action, take notes and speak during panels and discussions, and interact with individuals working in the field of human rights - something I am extremely passionate about.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to understand how the United Nations and its affiliated organizations work, to see what they

do and how they do it at the headquarters where it all happens.

Through the hands-on approach WFWPI allowed me to take, I was also able to design my own research project on the subject of Early Childhood Development (ECD) as it stands in the United States (where I currently study) and in India (my home country), and how the United Nations and other organizations are working to improve ECD around the world. With access to events where speakers are personally working in the area of Early Childhood Development at the national level and/or at organizations such as UNICEF and WHO, I was able to give my research a depth it would have lacked if left solely to secondary sources.

Ms. Ward and Ms. Kellett were extremely generous with their time and resources and truly

ensured that I was able to make the most of my internship experience with their organization. I hope to be able to continue working with WFWPI on their future projects which, I am certain, are making the world a better place!

Sanjana Bhambhani is an undergraduate student at New York University's Gallatin School of Individualized Study, developing a concentration around Global Politics and Performing Arts. Ms. Bhambhani was inspired to get involved as an intern for the summer of 2019 after speaking with the Director of the WFWPI Office for UN Relations in NY, Alexa Ward, at a mentoring fair hosted by the Women's Foreign Policy Group at NYU in Spring 2019.

