



UN Summit on Sustainable Development

September 25-27, 2015 - UN HQ New York



Education advocate Malala Yousafzai (third left) addresses the General Assembly during the opening day of the UN Sustainable Development Summit. UN Photo/Mark Garten

By Alexa Ward and Rebecca Ward

The UN Summit began with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The adoption of the agenda set the global direction for development for the next 15 years. This agenda builds on the foundation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), tackling issues such as poverty, inequality and climate change and will replace the MDGs, established in 2000, effective January 1, 2016.

The Summit opened with an address to the General Assembly by **Malala Yousafzai, a Nobel Laureate** from Pakistan and an advocate for female education. In her address, Malala urged the General Assembly to work to ensure that every child receives a quality primary and secondary education. Malala, who is just 17 years old, reminded the assembly that she and the other 192 youth representatives she stood with are the world's future. Each of the representatives held a blue lantern which, Malala noted, represented the hope that each youth representative holds for the future which the General Assembly would commit to improving through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. She addressed the crowd, saying, "World leaders sitting there, look up because the future generation is raising their voice."



Malala addressed the General Assembly from the highest mezzanine in the hall.

Malala's speech was followed by a performance of John Lennon's "Imagine" by Shakira. Following speeches by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who stressed the need for action following the adoption of the agenda, and others, the Assembly was ready to vote. The 17 goals and 169 targets encapsulated within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development were adopted unanimously by the Assembly.

The first day of the Summit included two interactive dialogues titled "Ending poverty and hunger" and "Tackling inequalities, empowering women and girls and leaving no one behind," respectively.

The Assembly also heard from many heads of state and senior officials as well as from the International Monetary Fund, African Union, Eurasian Development Bank, and others. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda led to widespread enthusiasm throughout the hall, though following the adoption a number of states, particularly island and landlocked states, voiced concerns over the difficulty of attracting funds in order to achieve the goals of the agenda.

On the second day of the Summit, Chinese President Xi Jin Ping addressed the General

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Assembly and pledged \$2 billion to support south-south cooperation and to assist developing countries with the implementation of the agenda goals. The second day of the Summit continued with interactive dialogues.

Deputy Director of the WFWPI UN Office, and International Vice President of WFWPI, Alexa Ward, had the opportunity to represent WFWPI at this historic Summit. She attended the third interactive dialogue, which was titled "Fostering sustainable economic growth, transformation and promoting sustainable consumption and production," and remarked, "I was encouraged by the number of speakers who understood the importance of investing in women in order to achieve the SDGs," and went on to say, "It was clear from the many speakers that all involved are very serious about providing and securing the resources needed to give this set of goals every opportunity to succeed."

Heads of state and ministers, as well as leaders of financial institutions, spoke about the need for strong economic growth in order to eradicate poverty and achieve the SDGs. Kailash Satyarthi, the Nobel Laureate from India, emphasized the need to focus on children and youth as the "change makers," as well as on collaboration and compassionate intelligence. Mark Zuckerberg, the Founder of Facebook,

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Statement of Purpose

The Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) supports a network of National WFWPI Chapters in over 120 nations that are dedicated to empower women with "the knowledge, the tools and the support needed to create peace at home, peace in our communities, our nations and throughout the world."

Programs, designed according to local needs and capacities, include: leadership training for women and girls, education for peace and reconciliation, skills development and advocacy at major UN Offices and various regional and national institutions. In support of United Nations Millennium Development Goals, WFWPI maintains over one hundred service projects in fifty nations, in the areas of education, vocational training, microcredit, AIDS prevention education, technical support, medical assistance and nutrition guidance.

WFWPI Chapters adhere to the principle that women, working together, taking initiative and empowering one another across traditional lines of age, race, culture and religion to create healthy families, are resolving the complex problems of our world. Ultimately "solutions" come as true partnerships between men and women are established in all levels of society. The beginning point is within society's most elemental level—the family. From there, peace will naturally expand.

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At the UN in New York...

2015 International Conference on Sustainable Development

September 23-24, 2015 - Columbia University, New York

By *Roshan Wolff*

Mr. Jeffrey Sachs, the Director of the SDSN (Sustainable Development Solutions Network) warmly welcomed 1,100 professionals, students, academics and members of government and the United Nations to the Albert Lerner Hall at Columbia University for the Third Annual Conference on Sustainable Development Goals. Her Excellency Elle Johnson Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia, Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, and Jan Eliasson, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, were keynote speakers at the Kapuscinski Keynote lectures and discussants panel on: "How we Get Started: Perspectives from the Experts." The afternoon session began with Stephen P. Groff, VP Asian Development Bank, moderating the session on "Mobilizing the Private Sector for Sustainable Development." Robert S. Chen followed with moderating the session: "Monitoring the SDGs: Are OECD Countries Ready?"

Kofi Annan, in his foreword to Christian Kroll's published magazine, "SDGs: Are the rich countries ready?" thanked Bertelsmann Stiftung for its first systematic assessment of what will become the global policy goals for the next 15 years, outlining the strengths and weaknesses of each country and highlighting best practices in ways of achieving the SDGs. The study advocated for workable and understandable SDGs which would allow civil society to

put pressure on governments to hold them accountable for what they pledge at the UN summit. One of the lessons learned was that the biggest challenges cannot be solved in isolation and that the new SDGs would be a universal set of goals for all countries, both rich and poor. The first SDG calls for, as the top priority of wealthy countries, the eradication of extreme poverty in the poorest regions of the world.

The day sped by all too quickly. Some participants, (including my boss, myself and a new-found friend) attended the *Music for a Sustainable Planet* concert. It was an interesting medley of the depiction of the forces of nature gone awry, Tchaikovsky-like and intense – conjuring up images of volcanoes, hurricanes, and other natural disasters, leading us to give thought to the impending dangers of climate change.

The second day of the conference began with Benjamin Christ, MDP Candidate from the University of Florida, moderating the session on "Careers in Sustainable Development." Gabrielle Lindau, Director of Sustainability Marketing and Communications at Emerald Brand, addressed the growing concern of youth, who are faced with the challenge of finding new ways to equip themselves for the job market. She encouraged the use of creativity and all of one's past experiences in order to brand one's

SDGs Conference, contd. on pg. 8

World Commits to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

September 27, 2015 - UN HQ, New York City

By *Nandi Bengu and Rebecca Ward*

The UN Global Leader's Meeting was co-hosted by the People's Republic of China and UN Women. During the meeting, many heads of state and government committed to concrete and measurable action steps for change in his or her respective country. This event brought the issue of gender equality to the forefront of the UN Summit. The UN Summit was organized in order to adopt Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

This meeting highlighted the central role which women play in sustainable development. In China in 1995, 189 nations committed themselves to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the Fourth World Conference on Women. This declaration laid out a comprehensive strategy for attaining gender equality and advancing the rights of women and girls everywhere. Now in 2015, while the nations of the world met in NY to commit themselves to the post-2015 agenda, UN Women together with China seized the opportunity to position the issue of gender equality at the center of the strategy for sustainable development.

The objective of the event was to provide a platform for country leaders to re-commit

themselves to the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment by re-committing to the Beijing Declaration. Chinese President Xi Jin Ping opened the event and pledged \$10 million to UN Women in support of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said in his opening remarks, "As Heads of State and Government you have the power and the responsibility to ensure that gender equality is-and remains-a national priority."

Throughout the day, one leader after another shared his or her determination to end gender inequality by 2030. The Honorable Edi Rama, Prime Minister of Albania, spoke about the need to increase access to credit to women and the need for improving employment programs for women and girls in Albania. H. E. Natasha Stott Despoja, Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls, addressed violence against women, committing new funds to "primary prevention initiatives to change the attitudes of young people towards violence against women and their children." Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta and Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf each declared his and her respective country's commitment to ending the practice of female genital mutilation.

Gender Equality, contd. on pg. 8

At the UN in Geneva ...

30th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council

On Syria and Refugees

September 14 - October 2, 2015 - UN HQ Geneva

By Dr. Yvonne von Stedingk

Seldom has a session of the Human Rights Council been so dominated by one issue as the thirtieth session. With no end in sight, the conflict in Syria has continued to intensify, with individuals suffering because of their gender, age, religion and/or profession.

In the report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic (submitted pursuant to the HRC Resolution 22/24), the Commission presented its findings based on investigations conducted in the period January 10 – July 10, 2015. Denied access to the country as such, the Commission had to rely on first-hand accounts only. The findings concluded that without stronger efforts to obtain peace, the present killing and destruction is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

The Report examines the impact of the Syrian conflict on some of the most affected groups and communities, reporting how indiscriminate attacks on residential areas have caused massive casualties among Syrian civilians, with some of the attacks being directed towards civilian gathering places, such as markets. While few civilians have been left unscathed by the continuing brutality of the war, civilian men perceived to be of fighting age have been targeted by warring parties during ground attacks. Furthermore, throughout the conflict, women and girls have been targeted on the basis of their gender, imprisoned and subjected to torture.

Thousands of children have been killed or injured in indiscriminate aerial bombardment. Children are also one of the groups most affected by sieges. Of those who have died of malnutrition or dehydration, the majority are young children. The brutality of the conflict

continues to generate unprecedented levels of displacement. With more than 4 million refugees and some 7.6 million internally displaced persons - IDPs - at least half of the Syrian Arab Republic's population has now been uprooted.

Medical personnel, Human Rights defenders, lawyers and journalists continue to be targeted for arbitrary arrest and detention, enforced disappearances, torture, and executions because of their professional activities. On the basis of the above, and more, the Commission of Inquiry reiterates the recommendations made in previous reports.

- a) The international community curb the proliferation and supply of weapons.
- b) Sustain and expand funding and other supports for humanitarian operations.
- c) Protect the human rights of all persons, including migrants, IDPs, asylum seekers and refugees, which are part of customary treaties such as the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol (<http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10.pdf>) and other relevant documents.

Finally, the Commission recommends that the Security Council:

- a) Support its recommendations made in previous reports.
- b) Include regular briefings by the Commission of Inquiry as part of the formal agenda of the Security Council.
- c) Take appropriate action by referring the situation to justice, possibly to the International Criminal Court or an ad hoc tribunal, bearing in mind that in the context of the Syrian Arab Republic, only the Security Council is competent to refer the situation.
- d) Ensure immediate commitment by the relevant actors and stakeholders to a

comprehensive peace process that responds sustainably to the aspirations of the Syrian population.

On Refugees

With the war in Syria intensifying, the number of armed incidents is rising. Many Syrians are fleeing from the Islamic State (ISIS) as well as from rebel-held areas attacked by the regime. These refugees are fleeing to nearby countries. Increasingly, the refugees living in neighboring countries, such as Jordan and Lebanon, where Syrians first found safety, are now actively being encouraged to leave. Refugees are frustrated with what they see as an additional burden on their already stretched resources. Furthermore, since neither Jordan or Lebanon are signatories on the 1951 Conventions, refugees are not allowed to work in those countries legally.

The UN has had to cut the assistance to Syrians considerably, having only received a minor portion of the funds it needs this year. Most recently, therefore, it dropped the majority of Syrians in Jordan from its food assistance programs. It is hoped that money promised by the EU will help some. However, the reasons pulling people away from neighboring camps and towards Europe have become more powerful, particularly as the war in Syria is intensifying and the expectations of a possible return to Syria are unrealistic.

On Germany

Very quickly, Germany took the lead with the German Chancellor proclaiming that today's refugee situation could have grave consequences for the entire European Union. She reminded everyone that the EU was born after a devastating war on the promise of solidarity with the persecuted. "What now amounts to the biggest displacement of people since 1945," the Chancellor reminded, "is a test of European values and the ability of member states to work together. Clearly, the refugees from civil wars in Syria and Iraq and others

Syria, contd. on pg. 12

HRC High Level Panel on Gender Parity in the UN System

September 15, 2015 - UN HQ Geneva

By Carolyn Handschin

During the 30th Human Rights Council, the annual discussion on the "Integration of a gender perspective throughout the work of the HRC" chose to focus on gender parity. That was the 7th such panel since HRC Resolution 6/30 was passed in 2007 with the mandate to integrate the human rights of women throughout the UN system. The goal of the panel was to consider challenges to the inclusion of more women in all human right bodies, to identify existing successful initiatives and make recommendations. The UN archived webcast can be found at <http://webtv.un.org/>

Two statements were made as an introduction to the panel. Zaid Ra'ad Al Hussein, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, opened the debate, stressing that giving women more

voice increases the chances of better outcomes, as we are then "drawing from the talents and skills of the entire population." Gender parity means visible equality and helps deconstruct gender stereotypes. Committed to improving the gender balance, he said he would no longer sit on panels that did not have female experts.

Her majesty, Queen of the Belgians, explained that, although the Beijing conference on women in 1995 opened many doors, there is still much work to be done. Men are needed to help combat stereotypes. A stronger stand needs to be taken against victims of discrimination, denigration and harassment. Thanks to the change in laws and selective use of quotas in Belgium, women's participation has sharply increased.

Opening remarks were made by the panel moderator, Patricia Shultz, a member

of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). She summarized the dialogue with governments at CEDAW sessions on the issue and stressed the need for a "clear and coherent will." Also important is monitoring, accountability and sufficient financial and human resources, she added.

Director General of the UN in Geneva, Michael Møller, referred to the International Labor Organization (ILO) as being the first to monitor gender parity in delegations. They discovered that in 2001, there were 13% women and with effort, have now increased to over 30% female delegates. The UN is doubling its efforts to include feminine voices in defining and implementing global policies. There are currently 30% women in senior leadership positions in the UN system. Mr. Møller closed with 2 recommendations: that member states

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At the UN in Vienna ...

A New Educational Landscape! Global Citizenship in the 21st Century

October 9, 2015 - UN Vienna

By *Injoo Riehl, WFWP Youth Austria and Elisabeth Riedl*

“Let us advance together until education is no longer a privilege for some — but a right for all. When we put education first, a life of dignity will follow. Thank you for your commitment.” - United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Women’s Federation for World Peace, Austria, hosted the 6th WFWPI Education Forum at the United Nations in Vienna. Three panels were held with experts, including a youth panel. A recurring reference among several of the speakers was to the family as the natural and traditional starting point of education.

Special Advisor of the Global Women’s Peace Network, **Lan Young Moon**, introduced by **Dr. Maria Riehl**, gave the keynote speech on Global Citizenship in the 21st Century. She thanked the 120 gathered participants for their interest and for taking the time to examine the subject more closely and share ideas in order to cultivate an active educational environment surrounding Global Citizenship. A film was shown about WFWP’s Korean Chapter’s work assisting refugees from North Korea.

Mamadou Kone, Mali advisor for the Club Foot Project Initiative, chaired the first session

on “Global citizenship in the 21st Century.”

Hans Göttel of the Europahaus Burgenland, Eisenstadt, spoke on “Global Citizenship Perspectives.” He posed the questions, “How to serve the world through service to our Nation? How to serve the nation through service to the World?” He gave a philosophical overview with references like this one: “What keeps a community together is the law above beings, but what creates a community is friendship that lives within these beings, thus the primeval word for community is – *Philia* (Béla Hamvas).” Göttel also referenced Ivan Illich, who proclaimed the de-schooling of society in the 1970s. Illich said, “Learning is not the result of instructions; it is the unhindered participation in open and meaningful surroundings.”

Zhannat Kosmukomedova, UNODC, spoke on “Women’s Leadership towards Global Citizenship.” She identified tolerance as a virtue requesting the participants to respect different ways of living, thinking, and behaving. She asked “Who identifies with world problems/issues?” She highlighted the role of women as natural educators, nurturers for a culture of peace, and transmitters of values, tradition and culture.

Carolyn Handschin, International Vice-President and Director of the UN office for WFWPI, spoke on “SDGs and

Civic Participation by Educating for Good Character and Responsible Citizenship.” She remarked that linking education and sustainable development will require rethinking educational methods and content as well as all components of education. It will also require different aspects of development and a higher order of thinking skills (HOTS). In fact, a higher order Mind-Set would be needed (HOMS) to guide such skills. An underutilised structure in accomplishing this “higher order of thinking” is the Family, which is a vessel for learning norms and ethical life choices. SDGs can only thrive with passionate and inclusive civil society partnerships. Let governments give a prominent platform/voice for sustainable good global culture to interfaith and intercultural pro-family lobbies and youth.



Session 2: Youth Civic Engagement and SDGs, Chaired by Mrs. Yoshiko Pammer.

Theresa Habjan: UNESCO promotes international education, science, knowledge

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How to Foster Global Citizenship through Enhancing the Right to Education in the 21st Century Meeting Socrates in the United Nations

By *Slawomir Redo*

I cannot teach anybody anything.
I can only make them think.
- Socrates (469-399 B.C.)

Think of a defendant. He is accused of treason. His crime is inciting others to violate the constitution. Instead of defending against this charge, he questions the authority of the jurors to try his case, because they were chosen, not by merit as qualified lawyers, but by ballot, as laymen. Even though he knows that they could not handle the truth, he eventually recognizes those laymen’s mandate asserted by a democratic majority vote, and their sentencing him to death. He neither appeals the sentence nor tries to escape before his execution.

A question: has he given up all his hope and merely offered his life to these happenstance non-professional jurors, or did he have something else in mind? Or, to put it another way, is there ultimately something rational in his decision to accept his death sentence?

The above was, broadly, the case 26 centuries ago with Socrates, a Greek philosopher (469-399 B.C.), known as the first criminal justice educator.

That educator was charged in Athens with heresy. Socrates’ heresy was that not only did he question the official doctrine of the limited power of the city-state gods, but he also taught his students that in Athens and elsewhere, the power of gods is unlimited and that there are other gods who rule the world. That teaching also earned him a charge of “corruption” because he taught that heretical opinion to his students. On both counts, he received a capital sentence, regarded by him and his like-minded contemporaries as unjust. But instead of escaping from prison, Socrates succumbed to that unjust verdict, knowing that the jurors could not handle the truth. His self-execution took place in prison where he drank the hemlock - a highly poisonous plant- as if it were wine.

His and our contemporaries both agree that Socrates accepted the death sentence because otherwise he would have committed a wrongdoing against a democratic state – the superior good with its somewhat outdated sense of justice. By meeting his death, Socrates eventually showed a new moral standard for his state and humanity – the independence of social thought that should prompt any state to facilitate its citizens to live in harmony with modern times with new justice standards.

Socrates was a global standard-setter, ahead of his time. What he did is neither “Higher Order Thinking Skills” nor “rocket science,” but the brightness, simplicity, power and outreach of his logic is very compelling for stimulating reformist positive social thinking and action.

“A new educational landscape! Global Citizenship in the 21st Century” conference gives me the opportunity to thank its organizers - Women’s Federation for World Peace International - for bringing the above point into its agenda. For its benefit, it now may be added that almost since the inception of the United Nations, it has in one way or another addressed moral education for global citizenship through the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice work. Among its stakeholders, there are, of course, UNESCO, UNICEF and numerous non-governmental organizations and academics. There is also the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Vienna – the custodian of some 70 global crime prevention and criminal justice standards and norms.

As a former staff member of UNODC, but now a freelance academic, I would like to introduce to this Conference one case, and ask you later a Socratic-type question which you

Socrates, contd. on pg. 10

19th Women's Conference for Peace in the Middle East

Young Women as a Driving Force in Securing Peace and Wellbeing in the Middle East

May 26-29, 2015 - Athens, Greece

By WFPW Middle East Staff

The 19th Women's Conference for Peace in the Middle East was held at the Metropolitan Hotel in Athens. A total of 71 women from 23 nations attended, mostly from the Middle East and North Africa, but also from Europe, Korea and Japan. The Korean participants were a 25 member strong delegation from WFPW Korea, invited by WFPW Japan.

The conference focused on the ways to include young people in the different peace processes, as well as how to raise them to meet the challenges of our times. Cooperation of women across all ages was the recommendation of the Co-chair, Dr. Amal Osman, former Deputy Speaker of the People's Assembly of Egypt. She also encouraged the audience to take advantage of the formative years by empowering young women while adolescents. The Chair, Dr. Zoe Bennett, underlined the responsibility that women have to create an environment where human life and dignity are respected and where women can participate in making peace. The WFPW International President, Professor Yeon Ah Moon, sent her message through the Secretary General of WFPW Korea, Mrs. Young Sun Choi. She described the experiences of WFPW members during the earthquake in the Philippines and emphasized the uniqueness of parental love. She explained that if every woman's effort for success was geared towards the common goal of world peace, our individual successes would be far-reaching.

Session 1 Challenges to Peace and Security in the Middle East and Ways to Intervene

The representative of the Office of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) in Tunisia, Ms. Seynabou Dia, spoke on "**Tunisia in transition and its women: A Model to follow?**" She described young women as guardians of the 2011 revolution. She gave a historic overview of women's leadership. There exists a divide between the generations, to which she recommended possibilities for healing. Dr. Firdevs Karahan from Turkey depicted the deeply conflicting situation of the Middle East and the historical impediments to peace, concluding that dignity, sincerity and maturity are the elements needed by all parties if we want to construct a peaceful future. H. E. Mrs. Najah Al Azzeh, a Member of the

Parliament of Jordan, prepared a presentation on the current situation in the Middle East and she emphasized that solving the Palestinian issue would be key to peace throughout the Middle East. Ms. Rawan Fadayel, also from Jordan, ended the session by passionately explaining the need for more solidarity and networking in order to build a more peaceful and safe society.

Session 2 Improving Young Women's Participation in Peace and Development Issues in the Region

This session included the presentation of Dr. Shokouh Navabinejad from Iran, who described the conditions of the youth in her country, representing 60% of the population. They are gradually being educated and empowered to be more active in the country's decision making. Mrs. Sjetlana Jovic, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), described the difficult living conditions of the Syrian refugees in the camps of south Lebanon. "...not only victims of wars but one should not forget that women have been capable of building bridges of dialog and empathy in polarized societies. The rising of radical extremist groups in the region puts women's safety at stake." Dr. Hajiba Ayoubi from Morocco listed the obstacles that prevent women in the MENA region from participating in decision-making and peace-making processes. She asked "how can we make war against the culture of war and conflicts?" Education and civic engagement are the key. Mrs. Henem Ennaifer from Tunisia concluded the session by explaining in detail the victories and challenges that the Tunisian women are facing today.

Session 3 NGOs, Civil Society and Governments' Partnership with Youth

The sub-theme that was examined first by Dr. Lamyia Hayat from Kuwait; she reported on the fruitful cooperation between the Kuwaiti government and a US-based NGO, the US-Middle East Partnership Initiative, in regard to youth education and empowerment. Next, Ms. Nada Harward, resident of the UAE, explained the high rate of education of the youth in the Emirates, but also the youth's challenges in developing their knowledge and skills for the benefit of the global Emirati society.

Finally, Mrs. Domniki Boyiadji from Cyprus explained the twofold activities of her NGO (SPAVO, the Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family), namely the protection and care of victimized women and children, and information sharing. The final speaker, Ms. Milina Shahin, public information officer of UNRWA, was not permitted to exit Gaza.

Session 4 How can a "Compassionate" Society be Created

Ms. Iris Dotan Katz from Israel explained the practices of Buddhism as a means to conflict resolution in Israel and Palestine and her experiences in working with activist groups in Israel, Palestine and elsewhere. Justice Ioanna Mari, president of the Prenatal Education Association International, demonstrated the importance of the prenatal period of human life in forming individuals endowed with good and peaceful characters and the responsibility of the mother.

Session 5

The final session was dedicated to a very informative report on the many worldwide activities of the sponsor and main organizer, the Women's Federation for World Peace-Japan. The report was given by Minako Kobayashi, staff of the WFPW office in Japan.

The very profound testimony of Mrs. Asmaa Kftarou, President of the Muslim Syrian Women's Forum at the Islamic Studies Centre, closed the conference. She emphasized the need to empower the Syrian women and to pressure the UN to secure their safety and their participation in the peace processes of their country. "Women are able to make different kinds of decisions for peace, using both their heart and their mind," she said. A new youth club was created this time, the "Middle East Young Women's Peace Network." The purpose of the club is to develop among the youth of each country a network for discussion on subjects related to peace and wellbeing that would be followed by activities. A set of recommendations was voted on at the end of the conference.

The Athens Declaration and complete speech of Ms. Seynabou Dia are available at www.wfpw.org.



Activities Around the World 2015

Launch of Global Women's Peace Network New Zealand

September 14, 2015 - Auckland

By Felicity Cairns, President WFWP NZ

WFWP New Zealand was honored to have WFWP International President Prof. Yeon Ah Moon as the keynote speaker for the launch. Among the 110 attendees were prominent women leaders, representatives

of women groups, representatives of youth groups, Ambassadors for Peace (AFP), guests and friends of WFWP. Panel speakers, Alexis LewGor, National President of NZ Federation of Multicultural Councils,

and Rev. Diane Winder, Interfaith minister and former Vice-President of UN Association of NZ, focused on the topic: "The Role of Women in the 21st Century".

The program - interspersed with beautiful cultural performances - concluded with a "Bridge of Peace" ceremony, bringing together East and West, as well as Christian and Muslim faith representatives.



Center: Felicity Cairns, WFWP NZ President, Prof. Yeon Ah Moon, President WFWPI, Anne Bellavance, WFWP Australia President with event speakers and organizers.



Group Photo



Welcome Remarks by Mrs. Ruth Cleaver, WFWP NZ Founding Member



Audience



Bridge of Peace Ceremony: East & West



Duet by James and Elinora Prentice

WFWP Island Lights Project: "Support our Pacific Island Neighbors Walk-a-thon"

Solar Lights delivered to Lamnutu and Imaelone Villages in Vanuatu - July, 2015

Complete reports for Oceania at www.wfwp.org.



During a Women's Health workshop in Lamnutu, women expressed to Dianne Simboro the need for lighting in order for their children to be able to study at night and in order to run home-based businesses.



Anne Bellavance (President WFWP Australia) met with women leaders in Lamnutu. The project "Solar Lights" belongs to the local women who will manage it.



Started annual Walk-a-thon in Victoria and New South Wales. Total of \$4,000 was raised to purchase and transport high quality, portable solar lights for two remote villages in Vanuatu.



Lamnutu is home to 340 people, 40 households and 15 family groups. The women's leader, Joyce Daniel, expressed gratitude to WFWP Australia for the donation. Each mother received lights for their own family use.



Solar lights delivered to Imaelone Village on Tanna Island. Tess Natuman, leader of the Imaelone Women's Group, expressed her gratitude to WFWP Australia.



Thanks to all walkers, sponsors and supporters during the Annual 'Support our Pacific Neighbours Walk-a-thon': You have made the lives of the women in the remote villages of Lamnutu and Imaelone, Vanuatu easier.

Oceania - Australia & New Zealand

UN International Day of Peace Conference: Peace Building in the Asia Pacific Rim

September 19, 2015 - Melbourne, Australia



Conference speakers, left to right, Zakia Baig, Australian Hazara Women's Friendship Network; Yeon Ah Moon, Keynote Speaker and President WFP International; Dr. Mimmie Watts, Patron of WFP Victoria.



Mayor Sean O'Reilly warmly welcomed the capacity crowd of 195 dignitaries, community leaders and participants to the City of Dandenong, a suburb of Melbourne.



Women leaders (left to right) and conference presenters: Anne Bellavance, Alia Sulzana, Dr. Mimmie Watts, Jenny Funston, Zakia Baig, Cr. Roz Blades, Yeon Ah Moon.



Release of "Doves for Peace" by children in Hemmings Park.



Conference participants - Women's Federation for World Peace (WFP) and Universal Peace Federation (UPF) sponsored and hosted the conference.



One of several beautiful and unique cultural performances: New Eastern Arts College Orchestra.

Bridge of Peace Ceremony: Commemorating 70 Years After World War II

September 16, 2015 - Premiers' Hall at Queensland State Parliament in Brisbane, Australia

By Mamiko Rattley, Chair WFP Queensland

The Bridge of Peace Sisterhood Ceremony was hosted by Women's Federation for World Peace Queensland (WFWPQ) and the National Council of Women of Queensland (NCWQ). The program started with an Acknowledgment of Country by Aunty Peggy Tidyman,

President of Logan Elders. MC Anne Bellavance, President of WFP Australia, introduced the history and background of the Bridge of Peace Sisterhood Ceremony. Noela O'Donnell, President of NCWQ, welcomed all the participants as a host.

The Governor of Queensland, His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, congratulated the sponsors for this historic event and commended the work of NCWQ and WFP.

Mrs. Oizumi, former MP of the National Parliament of Japan, gave greetings as a representative of WFP Japan's 19 delegates, saying that Japan and Australia can reconcile the past of World War II and develop truly deeper friendships through today's ceremony.



The conference was attended by dignitaries from the highest office in the state, the Governor of Queensland, and international guests, the President of WFP International, Professor Yeon Ah Moon and 19 WFP Japan delegates.



Professor Yeon Ah Moon, President of WFP International, greeted participants. She said we need to 'forgive, love and unite' in order to bring lasting peace in the world.



Mrs. Nishii, WFP Japan Secretary General and the wife of RSL Queensland President Mrs. Cathy Cameron.



Mrs. Oizumi, former MP of Japan Parliament and Mrs. Kathy Cavanagh of NCWQ's Secretary.



Queensland "Bridge of Peace" Ceremony Planning Committee.

At the UN in New York contd...

UN Summit, contd from pg. 1

spoke about the role of the internet as an “enabler of global justice and opportunity.” Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, spoke passionately about the need to invest in women, stating “If we do not invest in women, we will not reach the goals. If we invest in women, they will take care of the family and the children.” The final interactive dialogue of the second day dealt with protecting the environment and climate change.

The third and final day of the Summit covered two more interactive dialogues. The first, co-chaired by the presidents of South Korea and Chile, both of whom are women, was titled, “Building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions.” The dialogue touched on many elements of the SDGs, including the need for all citizens to take ownership over the 2030 agenda and the importance of partnerships as a foundation for the realization of the entire agenda. This dialogue overlapped nicely with the final interactive dialogue, which covered strengthening partnerships in pursuit of the realization of the 2030 agenda. In this final dialogue, the importance of public and private, as well as domestic and international, partnerships were highlighted as a cornerstone for engaging civil society in the 2030 agenda.

The UN called the MDGs “the most successful anti-poverty movement in history.” Member states were not collectively able to fully accomplish all of the ambitious goals set out in the MDGs, but the success of the MDGs cannot be ignored. The MDGs provided a framework through which UN member states, in just 15 years, were able to halve the number of people living in poverty. The rate of infant mortality has been halved and the rate of mothers dying in childbirth has declined by 45 percent. More than 2 billion people have improved sanitation conditions, more girls are attending school and more women are acting in representative positions in almost 90 percent of the countries committed to the MDGs.

The success of the MDGs lends hope and promise to the SDGs and the future of the world, but the adoption of the agenda is only the first step. Following the momentous unanimous adoption of the agenda, it falls on the states to implement the agenda items contained within the document. The real leg work now begins.

More information on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda at: <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview/post-2015-development-agenda.html>



SDGs Conference, contd from pg. 2

self successfully away from the traditional jobs. She gave an example by sharing that wastage from products like plastic and Styrofoam, which are used by many corporations, can be replaced by plant-based, biodegradable plastic and styrofoam-looking products. Analysis shows that this replacement successfully contributed to sustainability and water reduction in processing. Both Michael Berkowitz, President of 100 Resilient Cities, Rockefeller Foundation and Mathilde Mesnard, Former Senior Advisor to the Secretary-General, The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), made the case for cities that could thrive in a changing landscape.

Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro-Preca, President of the Republic of Malta, gave the keynote address, after which the best paper award was presented to Patrick Paul Walsh, Chair Academic Steering Committee, GAMD. Sam Vaghar, Executive Director and Cofounder of the Millennium Campus Network, moderated the session on “Empowering Youth for Sustainable Development.”

I attended the session on “Ending Extreme Poverty,” moderated by Dileni Gunewardena. Her Excellency Lorena Castillo de Varela, First Lady of Panama, spoke on “Biocommunity: A Multidimensional Approach to address Poverty in Panama.” Fluent in both English and her native Spanish, expressing great hope in her staff, she uplifted her audience by vibrantly proposing ending poverty in Panama by the year 2030!

His Excellency Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, gave the World Leaders Forum Address at the Closing Plenary on: “Beyond Policy and Financing: How to Sustain Development.” The Farmer’s Market outside the conference venue was an encouraging sign of lifestyle changes being implemented.

Gender Equality, contd from pg. 2

Leaders also shared their successes in implementing the Beijing Declaration. Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe, shared that more than 90,000 women entered the Japanese labor market in the last three years. Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto shared the success of a political reform that required 50 percent of candidates to the legislature be women. As a result, today the elected Chamber of Deputies in Mexico is 42 percent women. Namibian Deputy Prime Minister Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah likewise shared that in the Namibian National Assembly, female representation has increased from 24% in 2009 to 46% today.

In closing, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon shared his observations from the day, stating, “With our leaders on the podium all talking about women and girls, we looked into the future we want: where women are not treated as a small interest group but as the majority issue that is mainstreamed in every facet of life and at the highest tables.”



During the UN Global Leader’s Meeting on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment, a parallel event took place at CUNY’s Graduate Center. The event, entitled “Civil Society Watch: Governments’ Commitments to Action” was cosponsored by the NGO CSW New York and Planned Parenthood Federation of America in partnership with Bahai International Community, Center for Women’s Global Leadership and Post-2015 Women’s Coalition. The event was supported by UN Women. Deputy Director of the WFWPI UN Office, Alexa Ward, and WFWPI UN representative, Nandi Bengu, had the opportunity to attend the parallel event.

Following the opening session, conference participants attended one of five breakout sessions, which provided participants the opportunity to give recommendations to UN Women. These will be followed up on during the UN Women strategic meeting in November 2015 as well as at the CSW in March 2016.

At the conclusion of the discussions, the entire conference gathered to share the result of each session. In the session on accountability, participants discussed strategies for holding leaders accountable to their commitments to gender equality. In the session on civil society action and community pledges, the main issue was gender equitable development. The session on civil society access called on UN Women directly to do more in the area of partnerships with and ongoing support of civil society. The session on youth expressed concern that youth are only mentioned as a target group within the SDGs, rather than as active participants in the implementation of the SDGs. The fifth session was more of a networking opportunity. The event concluded, just as at the UN, with a call for action and implementation.

September 27th was a hopeful day for women everywhere. Increasingly, the role of women in peacemaking and development is being recognized and appreciated. While progress was made in the last 20 years since the Beijing Declaration, much is still to be done. Now is the time for women and men everywhere to take ownership and take action.

Forum: Raising Children of Peace

November 4, 2015 - One UN, New York City

By Alexa Ward

The Women's Federation for World Peace, International UN Office (WFWPI) collaborated with the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) to sponsor a forum, "Raising Children of Peace," in commemoration of the 21st Anniversary of the UN's International Year of the Family, at the One UN New York, on Wednesday, November 4, 2015.

The forum was well attended by a select group of sixty guests, and included United Nations ambassadors and officials; a political leader; a dean, academics, and students; NGO leaders and interns; UN representatives; as well as medical and business professionals.

The forum, which included two sessions, opened with welcome remarks by Mrs. Lynn Walsh, Director of UPF's Office for Marriage and Family. In the Opening Session, Mr. Taj Hamad, UPF Secretary General, introduced H. E. Denis Antoine, Ambassador of the Permanent Mission of Grenada to the UN, and H. E. Mrs. U. Joy Ogwu, Ambassador from the Permanent Mission of Nigeria to the UN.

Ambassador Antoine gave an introduction sharing research, news and stories about raising children of peace, starting from early childhood. He encouraged everyone to reflect back on their own childhood and how it shaped who they are today. "Look at yourself, the things that molded you, the things that motivated you, what made you laugh and what made you cry."

Ambassador Ogwu added to the conversation, quoting scripture from Proverbs 22:6: "Raise a child in the way he should go. When he grows he will not depart from it." She shared her personal experience growing up and the principles her mother passed on to her, which established peace in her mind and influenced her life. "When you have peace, you are at peace," she said. "You have the majesty of calmness all around you, and you radiate it to others. That is what I try to pass on to my own children. They know that there is a fundamental principle in the house, that there are limits, and that you can't bear grudges."

For the Keynote Session, the meeting room was turned into a living room with two armchairs at the front, which allowed the speakers to engage in a discussion on the theme, as well as draw the guests into the conversation. Mrs. Alexa Ward, Deputy Director of WFWPI's UN Office, introduced the two main speakers, Dr. James Leckman and Dr. Rima Salah, who spoke about the key role that child development and parenting play in building and maintaining healthy families as the basis for lasting peace in the world.

Dr. Leckman is the Neison Harris Professor of Child Psychiatry, Psychiatry, Psychology and Pediatrics at Yale University. He is a well-known child psychiatrist and patient-oriented clinical investigator. For more than 20 years, he served as the Director of the Child Study Center at

Yale. Dr. Leckman referred to a number of projects around the world as well as recent discoveries in biology and genetics that give evidence to the importance of parenting in the role of child development.

Through his efforts to bring scientists and experts in child development and parenting together, he was determined to answer the question of, "If we brought people together to talk about children and parenting interventions, would we actually make a difference in terms of a peaceful world?"

Studies involving the Mother-Child Education Foundation and other research groups examined parent responsiveness to their children in their early years of development. These ventures continued to involve a growing network of scientists, psychologists and parents who committed to studying the effects of parent responsiveness on the development of healthy children, families and communities. Dr. Leckman shared several of these findings with the group.

Dr. Rima Salah, a member of the UN Secretary General's High Independent Panel on Peace Operations, then spoke about the need to turn this clinical evidence into policies, which could be adopted by the UN as well as by governments around the world and thereby substantially build healthy, strong and peaceful families. Dr. Salah had a distinguished career with UNICEF over a period of twenty-one years, having held positions in Pakistan, Burkina Faso, Vietnam, and Chad. She completed her career with UNICEF as Deputy Executive Director in New York. Dr. Salah is affiliated with the Child Study Center at Yale.

In her presentation, she led with the question, "How can we link early childhood development and peace-building?" She proceeded to share about the sustainable development goals that emerged from meetings with researchers and policy-makers, and listed those who had already begun to adopt them in their organizations. "This was a triumph that was hailed by civil societies," she said. "We are also mobilizing 'Friends of Early Childhood Education,' a group of UN Ambassadors who can build a resolution saying that children and families are agents of peace."

Dr. Leckman and Dr. Salah coauthored a book, "Pathways to Peace: the Transformative Power of Children and Families," along with Dr. Catherine Panter-Brick, Professor of Anthropology, Health and Global Affairs at Yale, which was the basis for the two main presentations.

In closing, Mrs. Ward expressed her gratitude and appreciation to WFWPI's founder, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, for her enduring vision and leadership. This forum was the first of a series that is being developed by WFWPI on topics related to women, the family and peace.



30th HRC Geneva, contd from pg. 3

and international organizations join the Geneva Gender Champions Initiative and called on the High Commissioners Office (OHCHR) to "make public statistics on gender balance in delegations, panels and speaking time."

Independent Human Rights expert, Virginia Dandan, reported that gender balance was a primary consideration at the time of the creation of the HR Council, including in the selection of mandate holders such as Independent Experts and Special Rapporteurs. Since 2011, there has been a steady decline. While those focusing on women's rights have remained in the hands of women, seven thematic mandates have been held only by men since their creation. It has been considered that some women are less flexible for travelling around the world due to their care-giving responsibilities. Ms.

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all may answer in your mind.

This case involves Afghanistan, where the Taliban killed the British aid worker. She was engaged in that country's community development, education and vocational training.

The question is: "Should Afghani children have the right to education?"

The answer that comes to our mind is obvious: Yes! The same answer would have come for any other country and child, particularly in distressful conditions.

Now, therefore, let's ask another question, prompted by the recent influx of irregular migrants into Western Europe, including Austria:

"Should children who come to a country as refugees have the same right to education as children born in that country?"

The answer is rather obvious and already given in the 1960 UNESCO's Convention against Discrimination in Education (art.4, 429 UNTS 93), the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (art. 22, 1577 UNTS 3), and the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (art. 30, 220 UNTS 3). These global treaties stipulate the right to education for such children, although the pre-1990 treaties not so completely. This means that this regulation enjoys a strong global consensus because it is treaty-stipulated. Comparable to this level of consensus can only be the United Nations "soft law" standards and norms that further advance such regulations, while others which aspire to be eventually treaty-regulated may not necessarily enjoy the unanimous consensus. However, if in principle this is so specific and global, how about then materializing that right in similar cases? How do we follow this mind-query that reveals how obvious the action-path is without even awaiting the answer from anybody? Finally, and separately, how in line with the conclusions of the above Socratic method do we have to be in order to attain the full right to education

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Dandan noted that in all but two of the treaty bodies committees, men were prominently over-represented. In her recommendations, Ms. Dandan advised special measures such as always "including female candidates in the short list of nominees, giving preference to female candidates of equal qualification, providing more favorable working environment for mandate holders with care-responsibilities and encouraging experts of both sexes to integrate gender perspective in their work."

The third panelist, Tracy Robinson, Rapporteur for the Rights of Women, Inter-American Commission on Women, was asked to describe the perspective of regional human rights mechanisms on gender parity. "Women are under represented on most such bodies

for all young students, girls and boys, so that the future generation of decision-makers in the world will, with their inculcated attitudes, values and resolve, be independent, pro-social thinkers with creative skills?

In looking for the answer to this last question, such a standard-setting method is followed in the European Union and Northern America, particularly at the primary and secondary levels of education through the programme of teaching moral philosophy to youth. Various moral dilemmas are discussed with youth by trained teachers in a classroom setting, as per the Socratic Method. Unfortunately, this practice does not usually focus on the kids' problem-solving abilities. The classes are generally reflective and for older kids more contemplative, but they are rarely action-oriented.

While this useful method for teaching kids in the West the elements of moral philosophy is valuable to the kids' education, it is not a part of the assessment of their education performance as measured through the PISA exercise - the Programme for International Student Assessment of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Since the year 2000, this has been a recurrent intergovernmental 3-year assessment of reading, mathematics and science performance by 15-year old students from, potentially, almost 80 countries across the world. What PISA measures in the participating countries is the performance in "scientific literacy," that is the knowledge of science and science-based technology, understood as a pre-eminence to citizenship. In the opinion of PISA framers, for these 15-year old students this constitutes the basis for reflective citizenship, including the risk assessment of lifestyle choices that may be jeopardized by new technologies.

Interestingly, although "science" emerged from "philosophy," PISA does not measure lifestyle choices that include moral problem solving, for example, it does not measure the choice between cooperation and social exclusion

and there are only men on the Inter-American Court. The African Commission is doing better, with 6 out of 11 female commissioners due to its protocol for due consideration to gender parity." Her two recommendations were that member states delineate specific criteria for gender balance in their institutions and that rules, culture and practices within the bodies are monitored for their enforcement of gender balance.

Finally, Subhas Gujadhur, Director and Senior Analyst at the Universal Rights Group, was requested to present an analysis of how the HRC and its mechanisms fared in gender parity. Over its nine years of existence, the HRC has adopted over 820 texts. While 55% were thematic, only 4% made mention of women

in schools (i.e. school bullying (real and virtual)) of girls and boys, the treatment of immigrant school children, drug peddling and use, etc. So far PISA has been lacking an indicator or indicators of such uncivil behaviours, while criminologists and educationists alarmingly report on their manifestations among children from all over the world.

In conclusion, a student's good performance does not only involve "problem-solving" through which the student scientifically evaluates and forms a hypothesis which is then tested against data and evidence.. "Problem-solving" is also a moral issue to which PISA should attend. Practical education is needed in order to educate refugee children about the proper treatment of girls, drugs and alcohol, and virtual reality, as well as how to be a good colleague at school, a good life partner, a good parent, and how to treat mentally sick people both within and outside of the family. Education in that direction may change social attitudes. Therefore, one of the next PISA surveys could also measure whether, and if so, how, the Western and Eastern instructional institutions meet the civic moral education needs that improve those attitudes. Given that PISA has been measuring "Environmental Quality," this will not be such a big challenge to extend it, first, to "Environmental Justice," and, next, to other moral issues, some of which were mentioned above.

Finally, therefore, the new educational landscape for global citizenship may succeed when and if PISA and other countries deal with what Socrates meant by making a life choice. He pre-eminently highlighted the independence of social thought. It drives modernity as much as scientific thought. Both must be taught for the new educational landscape in the 21st century. "Meeting Socrates in the United Nations" - the topic of this statement - may then be successful, because we could replace in the topic's wording "in" by "at".

Complete speech online at www.wfwp.org, including foot notes and references.



or girls. Of the 33 resolutions dealing with women's rights since 2011, only 23 mention women's empowerment or participation. Mr. Gujadhur's recommendations included a request to States to "use Item 5 (HR Bodies and Mechanisms) of the HRC agenda to report on implementation of resolutions on gender parity and similarly, that the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) make better use of its Item 6 on implementation of recommendations dealing with gender parity as well as providing more information about how gender parity is integrated in the preparation of national reports."

An interactive dialogue with member states and observers can be found at: HRC30 interactive discussion panel.



Women, the Family and Peace World Summit 2015

August 29, 2015 - Intercontinental Grand Seoul Parnas Hotel, Seoul Korea

By William Selig

The Third World Summit was sponsored by Universal Peace Federation (UPF) in association with the Sunhak Peace Prize Committee. Plenary Session VI, with the theme, "Women, Family and Peace," was held on August 29, and was organized in cooperation with the Women's Federation for World Peace, International (WFWPI), a cosponsor of the Summit. This session was chaired by Ms. Alexa Ward, a vice president of WFWPI and deputy director of the UN Office.

Women leaders from various nations offered their thoughts on the role, responsibility and capacities of women to contribute to peace, human flourishing and mutual prosperity for all people. In particular, the significance of the family as an instrument of peace and global prosperity was emphasized.

Professor Yeon Ah Moon, the president of WFWPI, spoke about the importance of "creating a peaceful society and environment for the sake of the future happiness of all humankind." We are in an age when the views of women are being increasingly appreciated and welcomed, particularly with regard to peace-building," she said. The founders of UPF proclaimed "The Coming of the Age of Women" in 1992 and invested in numerous programs to educate and support women "to be leaders for a century of true peace and happiness."



She quoted Dr. Sun Myung Moon on the role of women centering on the family: "Peace must first be realized in the individual and in the family, because these form the basis for all human organizations and systems." Professor Moon spoke about the activities of WFWPI, which include the true family movement and pure love youth education. "Participation by women is needed in all aspects of society, from diplomacy and politics to the economy and legal system reform," Professor Moon said. "Women need to be active in education and culture, in sports and the arts, not to mention the diverse activities of NGOs." In closing, she emphasized the need to encourage and foster the practice of living for the sake of others.

Dr. Emilia Alfaro Franco, Senator, Paraguay, reported on the status of women in Paraguay. Women have helped to protect and create the nation, Senator Franco said. Women have worked in the fields, the factories, and in all areas of society. Since 1950, the population in Paraguay has quadrupled. Senator Franco spoke about the difference in the number of children born in rural areas and urban areas.



More than half of Paraguayan women who work in the urban sector are located in only three occupational categories: self-employed worker

(34.8 percent), domestic worker (16.1 percent) and unpaid family worker (6.2 percent). The educational situation of Paraguayan women in general has improved in the last decade, although there are still significant problems, mainly in rural areas. Today women are taking major roles in the country and supporting the development of democracy. The current minister of defense and the minister of labor are women. The participation of women in the exercise of power and decision making in the Paraguayan Parliament (2013-2018) is 12/80 in Chamber of Deputies, and 9/45 in the Senate.

Ambassador Haruko Hirose

former ambassador to Morocco, Japan, spoke on "Women, the Family and Peace," from the perspective of a Japanese woman. Ambassador Hirose praised the WFWPI for "fostering solidarity among women around the world." In the aftermath of World War II, the Japanese people, particularly women, learned to appreciate the value of peace, she said. Although the world has advanced in terms of economics, health, life expectancy, etc., many nations suffer from the effects of hostilities and other tragedies. Women and children, said the ambassador, are innocent victims. Today in Japan, more women choose to work outside the home, seeking economic independence, but since women's salaries, on the average, are lower than those of men, they're more likely to succumb to financial difficulties, which creates implications for child care, education, and housing. Another big problem for Japan is its aging society. In 2014, the percentage of people over the age of 65 was 25.9 percent of the population, and it is forecast that this will rise to 33.4 percent by 2035.



These facts create two major difficulties for women. First, responsibility to care for the elderly is traditionally the role of women. Second, as the life expectancy of women is longer than that of men, women often are left alone, poor and without means of support. Ambassador Hirose referred to her own experience at UNESCO. The preamble to the constitution of UNESCO declares: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed." Hence, the importance of securing the role of women and the family, since the mother is instrumental in raising children as well as being the center of the family. "A happy family is the best place for raising children as well as for maintaining social security," she said. Education is also a key to national development. "We need to bear in mind that we are citizens of the world: We must learn not only to be good citizens of our own country but also to be good citizens of the world."

Madam Adi Koila Nailatikau, the first lady of Fiji, recalled the words of the



late Dr. Sun Myung Moon, who said: "If we have not achieved peace, it is because people forget its most fundamental aspect. Before we talk about peace among nations, we must settle our peace with God." She spoke about the importance of the family, where children learn the rules of conduct, including cooperation, truthfulness, love and caring and "where we equip them with their compasses, charts and suitable provisions for their voyage" to be good citizens. Women hold a special place in the family. They are the foundation upon which the nation is built. Without a secure foundation, she said, it eventually will fall. "The last 20 years have seen Fiji remove all vestiges of discrimination against gender from laws and policies, but it is something that is still slowly being enforced in my country and region," she said.

Dr. Rima Salah is a member of the U.N. High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, which was created by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in October 2014 to review U.N. Peace Operations. It also reviewed issues relating to women and peace and security. In her experience, she said, women are often not represented and consulted in U.N. assessments. "Today a historic 60 million people, mainly women and children, suffer the fate of internal displacement or being refugees abroad. In addition to indiscriminate killings, appalling abuses are perpetrated against civilians in the midst of today's armed conflict. Sexual violence remains a pervasive tactic of modern war; women and girls are subject to mass abductions, as well as forced conversion, marriage and sexual slavery," she said. However, there is a "growing body of evidence that participation of women in all aspects of peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building has a tangible impact on human security and on peace and security in general." Despite progress in the status of women, "there are still significant implementation gaps that need to be addressed, and the vision of [U.N.] Resolution 1325 [which calls for the adoption of a gender perspective to consider the special needs of women and girls during conflict] remains only partially realized. Dr. Salah called for a shift in the U.N. peace operations to encourage a transformative shift to elevate women in the peace and security agenda.



Mrs. Judith Karp, former deputy attorney general, Israel, and former deputy chair and member of the U.N. Committee on the Rights of the Child, spoke on "The Gender Perspective of Peacemaking." She said, "Women around the world share common perspectives that emanate from their experiences as women. Women share sensitivity to injustices and sufferings stemming from the history of injustice toward them as women." She said that women have an inherent nature that predisposes them to "favor peaceful



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solutions and peaceful actions.” Mrs. Karp relayed the Bible story about the five daughters of Zelophehad, who petitioned Moses to allow them to receive their father’s inheritance. Moses agreed and a precedent was created—the first law of inheritance for women. Mrs. Karp said the underlying reason for this ruling was because “the daughters were united and stood together in their fight.”

Mrs. Karp then referred to U.N. Security Council Resolution No. 1325, “On Women, Peace and Security” (2000), which “focuses on giving women their own voices in peace processes based on universal rights.” The resolution brings out the gender perspective which, according to Mrs. Karp, represents a new approach to peace—a “feminized concept of peace.” Historically, men have interpreted peace as the absence of hostilities and war, but women “interpret peace in terms more sensitive to the need of ensuring personal security as well as familial and communal well-being.” Women “tend to look at society as a family.”

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and technology. Austria joined in 1949. Global citizenship education focuses on three main skills: cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioural. A vision for peace is more than just security and an end to wars. We need the minds of men and women to create peace with an intergenerational approach. Just recently, on October 14, 2015, in Paris, a Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI) was created as a partnership of UN entities (UNESCO, UN-DESA, UNEP, Global Compact, and UNU) in the run-up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).

Ewald Schenkermayr of UPF Youth is a teacher in one of the UNESCO schools. He outlined the five UPF “Principles of Peace”: One Human Family; Mind Matters; Peace Grows Bottom Up; Living for the Greater Good; and Cooperation Beyond Boundaries.

Madi Kilic, representing ‘Youth Education Ambassadors’ was the third speaker in session 2. An 18-year-old English teacher, she spoke on “Civic engagement of youth volunteering abroad.” Kilic quoted Gandhi, “You must be the change you want to see in the world,” and then continued, stressing that we must be committed to quality education and to spreading it globally. She read from the SDGs, “Sustainable Development Goal 4: Achieve quality education by 2030, including teacher training with international cooperation to maintain the supply of qualified teachers.”

Rene Mijer-Heil spoke next on “Media and Technology.” She quoted UK’s Watchdog, which reported that 16-20 year olds spend 20 hours on the internet per week in the UK. In the USA, 71% of 18-29 year olds use the internet as their main news source. More time is spent on devices than with people.

Moderator Peter Zoehrer opened Session 3, entitled “A New Educational Landscape,” with Malala’s motto: “One child, one teacher, one book, and one pen, can change the world.”

Gaby Zoehrer, Family Federation for World Peace, Austria, spoke on, “The Family as the school for character education.” The family is a dynamic structure where each family member finds his or her own place, equal in value, regardless of age, or gender. She emphasized the parent-child bond as a key to moral development. The bonds between siblings, she noted, are the longest relationships of one’s life and aid in fostering empathy and pro-social behaviour. Living in large families creates a larger tolerance for differences. Marriage also helps in character development. A spouse is a gateway to half of humanity for his or her partner (masculinity, femininity). Society is an extension of the family, which is the cornerstone of world peace. Families bridge cultures.

Maga Teuwen, retired social worker, Vienna Youth Welfare Office, spoke on integration and the identity crisis of the refugee or migrant. The required assistance is often unavailable to enable full integration for refugees and migrants. This is a challenge for the education system. She stressed new media as a tool that can serve, rather than enslave, young people. She quoted Julius Tandler, Austrian City Councilor for Welfare and Health Services in Vienna in the 1920s, “Who builds palaces for children, tears down prison walls.”

Alenka Jeraj, Vice-President Social Democrats, Slovenia, former MP, spoke on “Women’s education towards leadership.” She strongly stated, “Countries should set up objectives to educate and train confident, positive, determined individuals who can be steadfast with clear opinions.” She praised peer training as an invaluable tool for assisting young people in dealing with different fragile feelings and developing steadfast personalities. “Someone has laid pearls in you and is now waiting for them to be discovered,” she said.

Dr. Hanna Heikkila – UNODC Connection. Drug use is a developmental problem (12-22 year olds). Heikkila emphasised supporting the relationship between caretakers/parents and youth because the home is the best place to learn about drug use prevention. Schools are the second way to prevention. The main tool against rampant drug use is “International Standards on Drug Use Prevention,” however, early childhood education can also have a major impact on one’s life. This is especially true for boys. UNODC Works in 23 countries with successful parenting classes and teaching skills.

Slawomir Redo – ACUNS Austria. “Meeting Socrates in the UN” or “How to foster global citizenship through enhancing the right to education.” War does not have a women’s face. Socrates was charged with treason and sentenced to death. Socrates let them put him to death. Should he have fled or not? He was fighting for a new standard, a new sense of social justice. UNESCO is among several NGO organisations doing that with projects teaching reflection and problem solving. The quality of education matters, not just the quantity. PISA, an assessment exam, measures only reading, math and science. Moral choices, such as drug use, mobbing and deviance at school, remain

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largely unmeasured. For the 21st century, a moral component is needed. In this way, we hope to meet Socrates at the UN.

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need help, and European countries can provide it only if they share the tasks.” That means a collective response.

Although the EU has one border, migration and asylum policies remain national. Refugees are supposed to seek asylum in the EU countries where they first set foot, and usually that is Italy or Greece. But these countries are overwhelmed and these refugees want to go further northward to Germany, Austria or Scandinavia. That is not difficult thanks to the dismantling of passport controls at the EU border (Schengen).

Disagreement among the Eastern European countries has made the movements of the refugees more difficult. Germany expects to register up to 800,000 asylum seekers this year, which is far more than any other country in the EU. This extra-ordinary leadership is not appreciated by everybody in the country, but it stands out as a shining example. It is to be hoped that what ultimately may contribute to an increased awareness of European values will eventually bring something positive, not only the influx of refugees, but a renewal of the European spirit.

The hope must remain with a successful peace process leading to a stable and lasting peace.

Upcoming Events

- ❖ Oct 17 International Day of Eradication of Poverty
- ❖ Oct 24 United Nations Day
- ❖ Nov 20 Universal Children's Day
- ❖ Nov 25 Int'l Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
- ❖ Dec 1 World AIDS Day
- ❖ Dec 10 Human Rights Day
- ❖ Mar 2016 31st Human Rights Council
- ❖ Mar 8 International Women's Day
- ❖ Mar 14-24 60th Commission on the Status of Women
- ❖ April 10 WFWPI 24th Anniversary