


Report WFP Bridge of Peace Ceremony Africa Museum, Tervuren, Belgium – 23rd June 2019

Michael Balcomb


On Sunday 23rd June WFP-Belgium put on an event under the theme '**Fostering Bonds of Peace and Respect**' between Belgium and its former colony of Congo at the Africa Museum in Tervuren just south of Brussels.



Women's Federation for World Peace

Visit of the Africa Museum:
fostering bonds of peace
and respect between
Africa & Europe

Sunday 23rd June 2019
At 13:30PM
Address:
Levensesteeweg 13, 3080 Tervuren
8 euros, including a guided tour



In the morning prior to the visit of the museum which illustrates the richness of Congolese culture, both Belgian and Congolese participants could offer prayers and pay their respects by laying flowers at the tombs of seven Congolese who together with two hundred other Congolese were brought to Belgium to live in the African village at the World Trade Fair exhibition in 1897. While in Belgium they died of unfavourable conditions and pneumonia. Their tombs are found just outside the main wall of the local Catholic church in Tervuren. This solemn moment presented and led by our Belgian brother Yvo Bruffaerts, touching to both Belgians and Congolese alike, set the tone for the second part of the after-lunch programme which was the **Bridge of Peace and Reconciliation Ceremony** between women from Belgium & Europe and Congo & Africa.



Under a very bright and warm sunshine, this ceremony led by the WFWP President took place on the main entrance plaza of the Africa Museum. How beautiful it was to see the participants walking on the red carpet together exchanging flowers, embraces, hugs and contact details, all in a great and warm spirit of pardon, love and respect for each other's countries. A very beautiful positive and future oriented spirit descended around us during this moment.





After this beautiful heart-warming ceremony, our group of around forty-five participants was led on an excellent guided tour of the splendid Africa Museum. Indeed, it was a very educational and moving experience for both young and old about the unfortunate and unjust realities of what actually happened during the Belgian colonisation of the Congo. However, in contrast to those dark years, the wonderful artefacts on display coupled with the explanations of our competent guides provided us with a wonderful and beautiful artistic insight into the real heart, soul and beauty of the Congolese people and Africa itself as a whole.

For many of us it was beautiful to share this experience with several Congolese brothers and sisters we have known for years and it surely brought us closer in love, respect and admiration. This event was successful in presenting WFP activities to new guests and in reaching out to other persons present at the museum. The Bridge of Peace Ceremony and the overall programme really helped us as members in Europe to connect with True Mother's heart of love and care towards Africa at this special time in the Providence.



