

# Panel Discussion and World Cafe in “Europa Haus” European House

A harmonious community life needs communication

Graz, Austria, 20. October 2014



Left to right: Mrs. Eibinger, MP Graz parliament - Mr. Hohensinner, city councillor – Mrs Suzuko Hirschmann, WFWP Styria

**W**FWP Styria and the European House co-organized this panel in Graz, Austria's second biggest city with a population of 272 000 and 18 % immigrants. As in many big cities, various conflicts between the local citizens and immigrants arise. Thus Graz and Styria State County sponsor events and innovative programs, which promote conflict resolution towards community stability. These events bring together members of the community with immigrants who have the opportunity to share their life experiences, and provides a base for discussing about a harmonious community .

Mrs Barbara Eibinger, MP Styria Parliament, Chair lady of the Styria Conservative Party club as well as the European House Representative, opened the occasion introducing this projects start with WFWP. After a musical presentation from Takatoshi Yano, music student; the City Councillor Mr. Kurt Hohensinner gave an Impulse lecture about Graz integration projects, which support both immigrants and handicapped citizens.



Four positively integrated immigrants shared their stories about start difficulties of living in another country and the necessity for successful integration. Starting with Dr. Maria Riehl, WFWP Austria Honorary President, and WFWPI UN Representative, who came to Austria from Slovakia to study medicine, introduced WFWP and founder Rev. Moon and his wife Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon.

## How this event with the European House came about?

I am living in a small, very catholic town, where people want to keep their tradition from generation to generation. The local people are afraid to change their tradition of the Catholic Church and to be converted. I have been thinking all the time, how to make a vibrant Home Town. I thought that it is important to give a good image about our church and True Parents. We started to make a News Letter with reports about the conferences in UN Vienna including international, intercultural, interreligious activities and invitations to our events in UN. Since one and a half years I have sent this Newsletter to contacts and 5 female politicians, who I randomly chose from the internet.

One day one of the politicians got an inspiration and send me an Email: “We could organize an event in the European House together.” At first I was very shocked and struggled a lot, whether I should say yes or no and whether we were capable for that or not. In Styria there are very few WFWP members. But then I thought that if we do not use this chance which God has given us, he would be very sad. So I decided to say yes.

### **Advice, financing, network (working together) and prayer condition**

To have a successfully organized event, four things came into my mind: advice, financing, network and prayer condition. First of all we asked one brother, who has much experience, for help. For the panel discussion we needed to find speakers and a moderator. We met one lady, who cares for Graz immigrants integration and she knows many chairpersons of other organizations. She helped us to find speakers and a moderator.

I felt very strongly that we would need Heavenly Parent`s guidance and support from Spirit World. So I asked some members to make a prayer condition for 21 days. I am very grateful that they took it very seriously. I was also very grateful for the effort of the Second Generation, who helped us to distribute the invitations for the event. We received 900 Euros sponsorship from Styria State. 80 People participated.

### **Facing negativities is a chance to give positive information about our activities and True Parents**

One day I visited the chairman of the immigration citizens' council. His name was Mr. Godswill Eyawo. He understood the purpose of this event and WFWP and he wanted to put our advertisement in the Newsletter of the immigration council. Additionally he

wanted to help me to find one speaker, with an Islamic background. He immediately called the chairwoman of an Islamic organization. Although she started to speak very negatively about WFWP to him, he finally said to her, " Nevertheless I will put the advertisement in our newsletter !" and he finished his call with her.

After that he asked me directly, "Is WFWP from the Moon sect?" This is a chance to testify about True Parents. I said to him "Well, WFWP is a NGO with UN ECOSOC General Consultative Status and we are working together with other organizations in order to support the goal of UN. Of course the founder of WFWP is the wife of Rev. Sun Myung Moon, who works with the world leaders from different fields and different religions to bring peace to the world. Is this the character of a sect?"

Then he said, "All right. It is clear" He really put our advertisement in the newsletter.

When I reflect about this event, I can say that we could succeed because of the support from different brothers and sisters prayer and God and spirit world guided us to meet the right people at the right time.

I am so grateful to Heavenly Parents and True Parents of Heaven and Earth.

*Reported by Suzuko Hirschmann.*