



WFWP Germany Annual Meeting

Frankfurt am Main, Germany, March 30, 2019

By Magda Haugen

On Saturday, 30.03.19 Women's Federation Germany held its national meeting in the Family Federation building in Frankfurt am Main. There were more than 40 participants from all over Germany and from other countries as well. Numerous members, friends from other organizations and some new guests found their way to us! The Frankfurt Org. Team with Tea Sun

provided beautiful decorations in the room and also for drinks, snacks, fruit, and cake. Stefan Kunde provided professional technical support, so that all PowerPoint presentations and speakers functioned optimally. We were filmed and photographed by Benjamin Rauschert, who also deserves a big thank you, because he "spontaneously" made sure that we even appeared in the EUME "News from around our region."



The 1st presentation by **Nicole La Hogue** (2nd chair of the Women's Federation Germany) was a report on her recent stay in New York at the UN, from early to mid-March, at the CSW 63 (Commission on the Status of Women). She showed us through pictures how many important subjects regarding "Family and Social Security" were covered in various lectures and events around the UN. More than 1,000 women from all over the world participated very actively in the Commission.

Nicole reported on encounters with important influential personalities, women from various networks and very current topics and questions. Many serious women from all over the world are wondering how a culture of peace be can developed!





After this presentation, **Bettina Kircher** (Consultant Conflict and Development Management) reported about her work with peacekeeping missions around the world! With the Red Cross, UNO Blue Helmets, the Farc in Colombia, or between rivaling ethnic groups in the Congo, she was able to experience different problems that exist for women and children. She discussed how dramatically gender roles in conflict regions can change. By reporting on a variety of frontlines and crisis situations, she explained that most of the victims of wars are not soldiers, but the civilian population, especially the women. We were shown how women in wars play roles as fighters and soldiers in equal positions of power as men, but also how they can very easily become victims, such as sex slaves and suicide bombers. In rich Europe, we often find it difficult to understand what it means to live or to survive as a woman in these crisis regions. Above all, the transition from "male" positions of power back to subordinate positions in village life, with a family, as a wife and mother, is not easy. Bettina was able to show us very impressively through her field report how hard it is, for example, to resocialize child soldiers, to bring them back to their mothers in their village, and to do reconciliation work as a woman in crisis regions. Her experience in de-escalation, conflict and development management on many front lines has enabled her to lecture nationwide as well as at the Hamburger Bundeswehr University and in police trainings. She also signaled the importance of education, positive experiences in the family, and non-violent communication, as building blocks for a stable mental development. After all, early experiences of violence have a very significant and stressful effect on children, who then become victims first and then often become perpetrators themselves. Using the example of her own personal inner work for reconciliation and forgiveness, she pointed out that the beginning of peace is in one's own heart: "Peace starts with me" is also her personal mantra and connection to the Women's Federation, with whom she feels warmly attached. It was a lecture that really touched me and obviously many others in the room as well!



Next spoke **Carolyn Handschin**, (WFWPI-UN Office, WFWP-Europe-Pres.), who had come specially from Switzerland to present us her work with the UN International and in Europe. She discussed how successful the work of the International Women's Federation has become, how much esteem is now being placed on the worldwide deployment of women in the Women's Federation, and above all about the founder, Dr. HakJaHan Moon. Carolyn reported on her recent work with the UN in New York, as well as various UN events in Europe, for example in Geneva and Vienna. Using the example of Waris Dirie (a model and author from Somalia) who recently accepted the SunHak Peace Prize from the founder, Dr. HakJaHan Moon, Carolyn showed how such important initiatives worldwide can help to prevent cruelty to girls! Fighting together for the dignity of women and girls has united many strong, internationally-recognized women with the Women's Federation for World Peace and its founder. Again, there was a lot of applause and great interest.



After the lunch break there was an introduction to energy work by **Monika Waldenmaier**. She led us first in a breathing exercise for inner relaxation, so that we became calm, felt our heart, and allowed our energy flow to reopen. Then she touched us all through the testimony of how her own past and her later work as a healer and energy therapist were related! Her description of her hard childhood, her experiences with illness, her near-death experiences as well as her work as a healer, alternative practitioner, and energy therapist was very authentic. She was able to share with us very vividly because of her deep experiences as a trainer in these professions, by lecturing and in her own practice. Through her presentation she deepened our knowledge of our inner powers and pointed out what robs energy and what gives energy! She also explained very clearly how we can access energy sources.

This "bundle of energy" called Monika inspired us very much and in the subsequent division into working groups many participants wanted to deepen their understanding of this topic "energy work" even more. The working groups "Conflict Management" with Bettina and "Women in the UN" with Carolyn were also very well attended and everyone worked intensively on the respective topics (and did not want to stop...). The brainstorming regarding "Future projects" with Nicole La Hogue was also well received!

In the concluding assembly, the spokespersons of the respective groups presented a summary,

so that everyone could benefit from the results. Rita Seewald also reported on the "Bagandou" initiative, which is regularly financially supported by the Women's Federation Germany. The collected donations will be divided for the newly founded WFWP in Cameroon (initiative of Gudrun Mobo) and for enlargement of the "Bagandou projects" - Education for Central Africa (Matthias Monzebe). The latest project that we want to support as Women's Federation: microcredit for women!

Before the coffee break there was also a gift for the "birthday girl" Monika Waldenmaier, including birthday cake. At the end there were also presents for the other speakers. Much applause and many thanks to all who helped and contributed to the success of this conference, in front of and behind the scenes!

Also from me at this point many thanks to all who participated, it was a great pleasure to prepare this conference and to experience it with all of you!

Here are a few excerpts from the reflections:

"I was very happy to come and was not disappointed. It was a very nice reception and reunion.

Each lecture was good and in some way instructive, valuable and expanded horizons.

Monika was very impressive with many useful tips and endless experiences that can be very helpful! "

"The reports provided a good insight into the work of the Women's Federation in the UN

and this is much more concrete for me now! "

"Intelligent and well-founded knowledge and authentic heart in the lectures. Everything was organized well. I felt like everyone is part of me, and will participate more in the future. In the future, possibly be more diplomatic in time management ... "

"The guest lecture by Bettina Kircher was exciting and nice - it was great to hear from someone who has

experience on the front lines.
There were valuable insights into energy work by Monika as well.

Altogether a very nice and interesting day with a very good organization."

"I felt very well, there were such good presentations. I'm inspired and go home fueled with energy. Maybe we should offer something like this for other women."

"From Bettina's lecture I remembered the term "Abunzi" from Rwanda: that means the special ability of women to have a reconciling heart in mediation."

