



# Women's

## Federation for World Peace International

United Nations Office Newsletter

Fall 2006

### Unfinished Business: Effective Partnerships for Human Security & Sustainable Development 59<sup>th</sup> Annual DPI/NGO Conference

September 6-8, 2006 - UN HQ, New York



Roundtable 4 Civil Society and Global Partnerships for Dev.: Ms. Shamina De Gonzaga, Special Advisor on NGO Relations, Office of the President of the GA; Mr. Jan Eliasson, President, 60<sup>th</sup> Session GA; Ms. Zoreh Tabatabai, Moderator, Director of Communications, Int'l Labor Org.; Ms. Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, President-Elect, 61<sup>st</sup> Session of the GA; Mr. Joe Donnelly, Caritas Intl. UN Representative.

By Bonnie Berry

Opening Program of the annual DPI/NGO Conference has traditionally been held in the expansive and majestic General Assembly Hall. This year, however, the hall was undergoing repairs to the ailing roof, underscoring the vital necessity of carrying out much needed renovations to UN HQ New York. Instead, the 59<sup>th</sup> DPI/NGO Conference opened in Conference Room 4 with overflow seating in Conference Room 3; rooms that were much too small to accommodate the almost 2000 participants representing 550 NGOs from nearly 70 nations.

General Assembly President, H.E. Jan Eliasson, with just a few days of his term left, welcomed us. Mr. Eliasson credits the NGO community for bringing the realities of hunger, poverty, oppression and other problems into the halls of the UN as well as the dreams and ideals for a better future. He emphasized that civil society is THE link between the UN and the people of the world. We, as the NGO community are partners with the UN in the great pillars of peace and security, sustainable development and respect for human rights. As he reached for the nearby glass of water, he announced this simple act was one that 1.2 billion people were unable

to do. They do not have access to clean water. He reminded us of the necessity to achieve access to basics like clean water for all people, and education for all girls. The establishment of the Human Rights Council, new Security Council and Peace Building Commission, the involvement of women in the PBC and its creation process were all cited by Eliasson as accomplishments that occurred during his GA presidency. He discussed the priority of the Secretariat for strengthening partnership with civil society, including the appointment of Shamina De Gonzaga, an NGO representative, serving as his special advisor on NGO relations. She will continue to serve the new GA president. He concluded that without passion, nothing happens and without COMPASSION, the wrong things happen. He encouraged us to engage passion, compassion and determination to face and overcome the suffering of humankind.

The keynote speech was a message from Pres. Evo Morales of Bolivia given via webcast by the Vice President of Bolivia. The essence of the message was that the old paradigm of the powerful nations dictating the path of development for developing nations and the minority benefiting from utilizing the majority

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of resources needs to be synthesized with a newer perspective and practice that involves allowing developing countries to assess and plan development in the way they see fit and according to cultural values appropriate to their communities. He stressed the lack of sustainability of the modern belief that more and more consumption is a good thing and indicates success. Concern about problems of corruption, colonialism and domination of the weaker by the stronger were articulated. Pres. Morales' message encouraged respect for new ways of measuring development, and a synthesis of the best of many approaches to development.

Mr. Katsutoshi Kaneda, Senior Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, Government of Japan gave a special message. He has been overseeing reconstruction assistance for both Afghanistan and Iraq on behalf of the Japanese government. He reminded us of the reality that transnational problems have necessitated new approaches to solutions. Looking at Human Security instead of State Security is a recent paradigm shift that suggests protections that enhance human freedoms and rights, safety, livelihood and dignity. He concluded by saying

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## Statement of Purpose

The Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) supports a network of National WFWPI Chapters worldwide. WFWPI Chapters adhere to the principle that women, working together, taking initiative and empowering one another across traditional lines of race, culture and religion to create healthy families, are resolving the complex problems of our societies and 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. Peace then expands into our communities, nation and world. Therefore, WFWPI works to provide women worldwide with: *the knowledge, tools and support needed to create peace at home, peace in our communities, our nations and our world.*

WFWPI International is a non-profit, non-governmental international organization in General Consultative Status of ECOSOC and DPI Associates with the United Nations

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## At the UN in New York...

Reports of NGO Briefings

### Changing Families: Challenges and Opportunities

In Observance of the International Day of Families  
May 11, 2006 - UN HQ, New York

*By Merly Barlaan*

**H.E. Erasmo Lara**, Permanent Representative of the Dominican Republic to the UN gave an overview of trends and changes in family dynamics in Dominican Republic. 72% of Dominican households are sustained by marriage and the average family has five members. The family structure has changed significantly. Many women have become household heads. The most successful families include the grandmother, at least one parent and the child. Multigenerational families are most likely to survive economically. Ambassador Lara explained the complex problem of young girls practicing prostitution in order to survive, causing irreparable damage to their well-being.

**Mr. Gary Knell**, President and CEO of Sesame Street Workshop, expressed his interest in creating interactive programs so that children can enjoy learning. Mr. Knell reflected that the family today has become nuclear, replacing the extended families of the past. Sesame Street has determined to make programs adaptable to native values of each country in order to serve the diverse audiences.

**Paul Amato**, Professor of Sociology, Demography and Family Studies, Pennsylvania State University pointed out statistics on divorce rates, doubling during the late 80s, and stabilizing in the 90s. The most alarming structural changes in families are in the western world. The US has the highest

*Changing Families, continued on pg. 4*

### World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue & Development

May 18, 2006 - UN HQ, New York

*By Motoko Sugiyama*

In November 2001, the General Assembly of the UN welcomed the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and its Action Plan. May 21 was proclaimed World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development (Resolution 57/249). This day provides an opportunity to deepen our understanding of the value of cultural diversity and to learn to live together more harmoniously. The briefing reviewed the five years of development and programs focused

on cultural diversity. Panelists discussed cultural diversity and the importance of cross-cultural information. Moderator, Mr. Juan Carlos Brandt, Chief of NGO Section of DPI opened the briefing by introducing a TV program of UN related issues to be shown on C-Span on May 19.

Ms. Visniga McMaster, a Croatian poet and intellectual, stressed the role of poetry in

*Cultural Diversity, continued on pg. 4*

### Five Year Review of UNGASS: Moving Forward with New Targets

May 31 - June 2, 2006 - UN HQ, New York

*By Hannah Alexander*

From May 31 through June 2, 2006 leaders from all sectors of the international community gathered for the follow-up meeting on the outcome of the 2001 UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on HIV/AIDS: Implementation of the *Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS* to assess progress made in combating HIV/AIDS and on commitments set out in the *Declaration*. Delegates focused on constraints and opportunities to full implementation of the Declaration, discussed recommendations on how the targets in the Declaration can be fulfilled, including "towards universal access processes", and called for renewed political commitment to fighting the scourge of AIDS.

UNGASS +5 marked a new level of engagement for civil society organizations. Michel Sidibe, director of the Department of Country and Regional Support at UNAIDS noted, "The strong voice of civil society [at

UNGASS 2006 was a] breakthrough" in establishing partnerships at the national level.

The meeting culminated in a declaration pledging to set ambitious national targets and develop improved drugs, diagnostics and prevention technologies such as vaccines and microbicides. Governments also committed themselves to promoting gender equality, empowerment of women, protection of girls and respect of the full rights of people living with HIV/AIDS. For many developing countries, these commitments are unachievable without aid. The Declaration recognizes that US\$20 billion to \$23 billion a year will be needed by 2010 to support HIV/AIDS responses. The true test of the "Declaration's worth will be the extent to which officials go back to their countries and implement it with a sense of urgency and purpose" said General Assembly President Jan Eliasson of Sweden.



## Education: A Catalyst for Change in Afghanistan

Luncheon Meeting

April 5, 2006 - UNICEF/US Fund, NY

By *Motoko Sugiyama*

Representatives of 20 NGOs were invited to the meeting, including WFWPI.

Dr. Sherad Sapra, UNICEF's Director of the Division of Communication and past UNICEF Representative in Afghanistan from February 2002 to April 2004 explained the implementation of the Afghanistan Back-to-School Program. This program enrolled over 3 million children in schools in Afghanistan. Tremendous progress has been made rebuilding the education sector in Afghanistan by UNICEF. The Afghanistan Ministry of Education is partnering with the international community, especially the US Fund and Japan Fund. Distinct achievements have been made such as: A tenfold increase in girls' primary school enrollment since 2001. A total of 3865 community based schools were established by 2005. Nine teacher-training colleges are near completion. Twenty thousand women's literacy textbooks were printed. Thirty-three women's

literacy centers were established. Many challenges remain such as: Only one out four teachers is a woman. Teacher qualifications vary from having university degrees to being primary school graduates. Less than ten percent of girls are enrolled in secondary school. Female illiteracy rate is still 85%. Dr. Sapra believes that education opens the door for and is the driving force to rebuild a country.

Ms. Masuda Sultan from Women for Afghanistan and the Initiative for Inclusive Security spoke about "Challenges Facing Women and Girls in Afghanistan". She was born in Afghanistan and moved to USA with her family at age five and grew up in USA. She visited Afghanistan under the Taliban regime before and after September 11, 2001. As an international human rights advocate with a master's degree in public administration

*Afghanistan, continued on pg. 10*

## International Year of Sports and Physical Education 2005


NGO Committee on the Status of Women  
April 6, 2006 - ECOSOC Chamber, UN HQ, New York City


By *Hannah Alexander*

Adolf Ogi, Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace along with dozens of diplomats including Heraldo Munoz of Chile and Guangya Wang of China welcomed more than 500 guests to a special event on the International Year of Sport and Physical Education 2005 (IYSPE). "Sport is a vital tool to make a better world," said Mr. Ogi. In addition to highlighting the power of sport to promote education, health and peace through bridging social, religious, and racial divides in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, the event called on governments to better integrate sport into their national social development agendas. Tunisia, Russia and Austria noted their efforts in initiating national sports programs and expanding sports facilities.

Achievements of IYSPE 2005 were announced:

- IYSPE 2005 launched new, strengthened existing programs using sport and physical education to achieve internationally recognized development goals.
- Unanimous adoption of the International Convention against Doping in Sport by the 33<sup>rd</sup> session of the UNESCO General Conference, 10/19/05.
- Sport was successfully used to raise funds for natural disasters such as the Tsunami in 2004 and the Pakistan Earthquake in 2005.
- IYSPE 2005 contributed to a better understanding of the value of sport and physical education for human development and a more systematic use of sport in development programs in accordance with ECOSOC Resolution 1980/67.

Tennis Champion, Roger Federer stirred excitement by his presence and commitment to grow the network of sport and physical education activities worldwide. Development and peace can be achieved through sport. "The momentum is there," said Mr. Ogi. 

Many questions were raised during the question and answer period. The role of the UN Program of Action was highlighted as well as the UN's role as negotiator. The responsibility of Member States to implement laws and create politically binding agreements was stressed. The Program of Action is a call for action, a beginning point. 

### Reports of NGO Briefings continued...

## Prevent, Combat & Eradicate Illicit Weapon Trade

June 8, 2006 - UN HQ, New York

By *Merly Barlaan*

A Preview of the 2006 Conference to Review the Progress of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

The DPI/NGO briefing focused on progress on implementation of the 2001 Program of Action to eradicate illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

Speakers were: H.E. Mr. Prasad Kariyawasam, Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations; Mr. Antonio Evora, Political Affairs Officer, Conventional Arms Branch, Department of Disarmament Affairs; and Mr. Mark Marge, UN Office Coordinator, International Action Network on Small Arms.

**Ambassador Kariyawasam** introduced The Program of Action and the Review Conference to take place from June 26 to July 7, 2006 in New York. The Program of Action is a politically binding agreement to curb illicit trade. It does not aim to curb legal arms trade. During regional meetings leading up to the Review Conference, diverse views among Member States on handling this issue made creation of a common outcome document very difficult. This document will provide the basis for negotiations on how to fully implement the Program of Action. The Ambassador stressed the importance of civil society involvement in this effort. Over 200 NGOs have registered for the meeting.

**Mr. Evora** reviewed negative impacts of the illegal trade of small arms. Small arms kill innocent people on a massive scale. Illegal trade of small arms hinders UN humanitarian assistance and interferes with commerce and banking by creating high-risk environments unattractive to foreign investors. He outlined measures from the Program of Action for Member States to take to combat the problem such as: collection and destruction of illicit weapons, adoption of regulations and legislation to control manufacturing and trade of weapons to prevent diversion into illegal markets, proper maintenance of weapons records, and cooperation of enforcement officers in tracing weapons.

**Mr. Marge** stressed that the human cost is very high. Up to 1,000 people are killed with small arms each day. The annual cost of gun violence in Latin America was USD140 billion (12 percent of the annual GDP of the region), while profit from gun trade was USD 4 billion (USD 1 billion of this profit comes from illicit trade). He explained that poor gun control laws in any region affect the global community. This is a global issue and must be addressed by all stakeholders. Mr. Marge pointed out a weakness of the Program of Action. Its focus on illicit arms trade only gives the impression that illicit guns need regulating.



## Least Developed Countries, International Migration & Development

Information Meeting on the Informal Interactive Hearings of the General Assembly (GA) with NGOs, Civil Society and the Private Sector  
May 10, 2005 - Conference Rm 3, UN HQ, New York

By *Motoko Sugiyama*

This meeting was held prior to the Informal Interactive Hearing of the GA on the Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Program of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 on June 26, 2006 at UN HQ, New York in accordance with GA resolution (60/228-1) which provide NGOs, civil society and the private sector an opportunity to make recommendations for consideration by the GA during its High Level Meeting on the Midterm Review on September 17-18, 2006.

The four presenters were: Ms. Hanifa Mezoui, Chief of NGO Section of DESA, Ms. Elisa Peter, Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS), Ms. Eva Richter, PGA Task Force for International Migration and Development Hearings and Mr. Fred Kirungi from OHRLLS.

Ms. Mezoui praised NGO participation in last year's GA Hearing. Statements from NGOs with ECOSOC affiliation were given to the GA. Through this, NGOs learned coordination, transparency and accountability. She feels this experience set precedents that open the door for more NGO input to the GA any time.

### *Changing Families, contd from pg. 2*

divorce rate of 50%. One third of all births are outside of marriage. Children brought up in this environment tend to have unstable attitudes towards marriage. Mr. Amato praised support systems in schools for families dealing with troubled children whose parents are divorced.

**Paulo Saad**, Population Affairs Officer, UN Population Division explained that in underdeveloped countries, an older person living with their children is associated with higher social and economic status. Among developing and developed countries, this association disappears. In the poorest countries, older people living alone are especially disadvantaged. The proportion of older persons living alone is relatively low in developing countries but is expected to increase in the future. This does not necessarily reflect an alarming trend. Disadvantages of living alone decrease or disappear as development occurs. He concluded that issues of older persons such as long-term care need attention. Mr. Saad recommended public policies aimed at providing incentives and means for family support.



Ms. Peter overviewed NGLS since its 1975 setup. NGLS has interacted with NGOs and civil society the longest. NGLS was central in both last year's and this year's GA Hearings. This year, the GA hearing focuses on International Migration and Development. 350 NGO reports were collected. Ten or eleven representatives will speak.

Ms. Richter stressed the goal of inclusion. Even though there are four roundtables, there is some exclusion. Each roundtable will have three speakers, for a total of twelve. They are committed to proper and balanced representation.

Mr. Kirungi explained that the Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries Land Locked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) was established in 2001, after the decade of the Least Developed Countries was created and resolved by the GA. There are fifty LDC. Thirty-four are in Africa, fifteen in South America and one in the Caribbean. OHRLLS tries to help create partnerships between LDCs and civil society. The most critical issues in LDCs are: good governance, improvement of human development and HIV/AIDS. Solving these depend on reducing poverty. Average income in LDCs is less than \$100.00 per month.

Moderator Ms. Shamina de Gonzaga, from OPGA stated that the GA Hearing is a good opportunity for dialogue between NGOs and Member States. Questions arose such as: How to provide access to those without internet, when communication by internet is the prevalent method. How can we bring reports of grass roots activities from LDCs to the GA? Without civil society representatives from LDCs, we do not know what needs to be done. Concerns were expressed about the lack of governmental representatives' commitment to attend the whole hearing. If only ten out of 350 speak, how will others be heard? No perfect answers arose for these questions. We all recognize huge gaps between North and South in internet access. There are also valid issues about the attitude of governmental representatives and limited NGO representation to the General Assembly. More time to solve problems and build toward the goal of the UN Universal Declaration is needed. We hope for a great outcome from the GA Hearing in September.



### *Cultural Diversity, contd from pg. 2*

communicating cultural identity. She learned as a teacher of students and a neighbor of parents dealing with trauma from the recent civil war, that kindness and compassion are not enough. Victims of trauma need to express their hearts. Poetry and haiku are helpful tools for this. She and other poets established "Poets United for Peace".

Mr. Joep de Koning, is president of the Tolerance Park Project, which he explained. (See [www.tolerancepark.org](http://www.tolerancepark.org)) He retraced the path of American history leading to freedom. Mr. de Koning identified the start of globalization in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Through time, the concept of cultural tolerance has been fundamentally contrary to religious belief systems. He emphasized that people should not be persecuted because of religion. Tolerance and liberty are the two elements that came together in America and led to Freedom.

Mr. Shamil Idriss, Deputy Director of UN Alliance of Civilization informed us that Secretary General Kofi Annan assigned 20 members to a High Level Panel focusing on cross-cultural exchange. In contrast to 10 years ago when the media was reluctant to cover the issue, more recent coverage and changes in lifestyle have had dynamic impact on opportunity for cross cultural exchange. For instance, current 15-18 years old are on the internet on average, over an hour a day. They are automatic participants in crosscultural exchange. Now, there are great opportunities for crosscultural exchange, particularly through the media.

Mr. Kenneth Goldsmith, Coordinator of Gallery Education for the Museum of Jewish Heritage explained museum displays on Jewish culture and history, including stories of Holocaust victims arriving in USA in 1945. The museum is popular with both Jewish and non-Jewish people. He emphasized two points. The first was never to forget the Holocaust so it will never happen again. Secondly, there is hope for the future, demonstrated by the many Christians and Muslims, who helped Jews despite danger, by hiding them during the Holocaust. There is hope that we will all learn to take care of each other as brothers and sisters of humankind.

The second part of the briefing was devoted to the 2006 issue of "Ten Stories the World should Hear More About" by Mr. Alex Taubatch, Chief, News Services Section of the DPI and "UN Yearbook" by Ms. Elisabeth Baldwin, Chief Editor, UN Yearbook. (For further information, please visit [www.un.org/event/tenstories](http://www.un.org/event/tenstories) or [www.un.org/news](http://www.un.org/news))

Through the panelists' excellent presentations, diverse experiences and wisdom, we gained hope and trust to guide us in being more respectful of diversity.



## At the UN in Geneva ... Perspectives on Sustainable Peace

Conference Sponsored by WFWPI and UPF  
April 21, 2006 - UNESCO HQ Paris, France

By Carolyn Handschin

WFWPI cosponsored an international conference at the UNESCO Headquarters, Paris that drew more than 180 Peace Ambassadors, United Nations representatives, religious leaders and diplomats. The conference included sessions on Human Rights and Responsibilities, Peace Building and Human Development, as well as Governance and Interreligious Dialogue. Success was made possible through well coordinated solidarity of the four diverse sponsoring organizations: WFWPI, Universal Peace Federation, Sorbonne Center for Strategic Studies and the Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues.

Dr. Valentine Moghadam, UNESCO Director of the Department on Human Rights, Equality and Development gave an insightful presentation on Women, Peace and Re-

conciliation. Her view is that women's record of peace-making and reconciliation at the local level should be acknowledged and translated into higher level participation.

Dr. Yvonne von Stedingk, WFWPI representative at the U.N. in Geneva and former representative of the Council of Europe to the Commission on Human Rights spoke about "Individual Rights and Responsibilities toward the Community: Article 29 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights". She outlined development of the concept of human rights, corresponding duties as well as civil society initiatives. Deputy Director for the WFWPI Office for U.N. Relations, Ms. Carolyn Handschin gave credit to a UNESCO program in her speech on "Dignity and Development: Building on the



Accomplishments of a Culture of Peace". She defined dignity as a life lived "for the sake of others". She also noted that establishing that lifestyle as a norm would be best served by greater attention to education in the family.

Other speakers included Ambassador Makarim Wibisono, former President of ECOSOC and of the Commission on Human Rights (2005), Ambassador Jean Pierre La France, Special Envoy of UNESCO to Afghanistan, Professor Jean-Paul Charnay, Director of Research and President of the Center of the Philosophy of Strategy at the Sorbonne and Rector Charles Zorgbibe, Director of the Center for International Politics also at the Sorbonne. Dr. Zia Rizvi, proposed a Resolution on the Promotion and Teaching of the Rights of Women in Developing Countries in their Native Languages which will be further considered. Plans are underway for a follow up conference.



## ECONOMIC & SOCIAL COUNCIL - High Level Segment

July 3-5, 2006 - UN HQ Geneva, Switzerland

By Carolyn Handschin

Conclusions of the General Assembly in New York last September acknowledged barriers for many states in reaching the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 without a good rethinking of policy regarding decent employment. The issue was taken up by ECOSOC this year at the High Level Segment held in Geneva from July 3-5, 2006, "Creating an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development". Employment is a key to eliminating poverty, yet nearly half the worlds employed remain below the poverty level of 2 US Dollars a day.

Thirty Ministers, including three Prime Ministers as well as heads of many UN Agencies and other international organizations participated in the sober but constructive

deliberations. A concluding Ministerial Declaration was adopted that included various practical measures to deal with the crisis of unemployment. It underlined the need for consistent use of a gender mainstreaming strategy to create an enabling environment for women's participation in development. Violence against women and girls was noted as a serious obstacle to the achievement of full and productive employment. The International Labour Organization (ILO) played a central role in the implementation of commitments for all at the major UN conferences and summits. To ensure significant progress in both policy and operational program, ILO was requested to "develop time-bound action plans to 2015, in collaboration with all relevant parties".

Roundtable discussions and breakfast meetings enabled significant interaction among Member States, UN Agency Directors

and civil society experts. Priorities were identified as well as a goal established of creating more effective partnerships. As part of its High-level Segment, the Council also held a high-level policy dialogue with the executive heads of international trade and finance institutions on current issues in the global economy. The Council's High-Level Panel on System wide Coherence dealt with the issue of consistency and called for a marked change "in the way the UN system operates and interacts with other actors in the field".

Concern about the gender issue was reflected in the agenda, which included the topic, Mainstreaming an Equal Perspective into all Policies and Programs of the UN Systems and gender-focused sub-items; Women and Development in Economic and Environmental Questions and Advancement of Women in Social and Human Rights Questions. The Council also held a panel during the Humanitarian Segment on Gender-based Violence in Humanitarian

ECOSOC Segment, continued on pg. 6

## Human Rights: A New Beginning

UN HQ Geneva, Switzerland

By Yvonne von Stedingk

The start of the new Millennium was an occasion for celebration and reflection all over the world. For the UN, it offered a welcome opportunity to address the role of the organization in the twenty first century. This was the purpose of the Millennium Summit, a convening of the General Assembly. From this summit emanated the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which was adopted by all Member States.

The Declaration foresaw a Plan of Action to achieve the Millennium Development Goals

by 2015. In the fall of 2005, the GA convened to evaluate Secretary General Kofi Annan's proposed UN reforms to streamline fulfillment of the MDGs. One of the outcomes of these negotiations was the decision to replace the Commission on Human Rights with the Human Rights Council.

The main UN body concerned with human rights was, until very recently, the Commission on Human Rights. With the old Commission largely discredited, and to some extent outdated, this change was both welcome and

necessary. Unlike the past Commission on Human Rights, member nations of the new Human Rights Council must submit evidence of their record regarding Human Rights in order to apply and be retained on the council.

It is up to the new Council to build on achievements like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, conventions and mechanisms, as well as address the implementation of General Assembly

Human Rights, continued on pg. 10

# Building a Culture of Peace in the Family: Educating for Peace in the World

## 10th Annual Women's Conference for Peace in the Middle East

June 20-21, 2006 - UN HQ Geneva, Switzerland

By Carolyn Handschin

The theme of WFWPI and WFWP Japan's tenth annual conference for peace in the Middle East was "Building a Culture of Peace in the Family; Educating for Peace in the World". It was chosen in parallel with the UN's 2001-2010 "International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World". Conference planners decided it was critical to look at existing methods and models of peace education, such as the family, as they relate to women in the Middle East. More than 100 women participants came from governments, academic institutions, international organizations, media, business and civil society leadership from nearly all countries of the Middle East and Japan. Speakers from Geneva-based U.N. Agencies, governments and international NGOs offered expertise and opportunities to strengthen partnerships.

The conference co-chair, H.E. In'am Al-Mufti, former Minister of Social Development and current Senator in Jordan quoted Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah of Jordan in her opening statement, "If you educate a woman you educate the family, if you educate the girls, you educate the future". Co-chair Dr. Lan Young Moon Park, President of WFWPI, stated that dedication of Korean mothers to their children's education has been the primary reason that Korea has advanced so rapidly over recent decades. Ms. Shaer-Bourbeau of the Swiss Mission to the United Nations welcomed conference participants on behalf of H.E. Micheline Calmy Rey and the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs.

In the Opening Panel, "Educating for Peace in the World", speakers included Ameena Payne, Director of Geneva-based United Nations University for Peace. She emphasized the need to address underlying currents of real or perceived injustice, rebuild bridges of trust and establish a clear and common purpose guided by innovative and wise leadership. The second speaker, Andres Guerrero, UNICEF Program Coordinator at the International Office for Public Partnerships stressed that exposure to injustices without means to improve leads to despair, apathy and violence in youth. Mr. Guerrero stated the need for education philosophies and strategies to address this. The next speaker, Zainab Al-Suwaij, Executive Director of the American Islamic conference in Iraq, reported on a recent project she facilitated in Iraq to train 36,000 teachers to move away from insidious and damaging wording used by the earlier regime in school textbooks. She spoke of the indelible effect that those schoolbooks had on her childhood. A new, forward-looking culture of peace curriculum is now being disseminated.

Tanya Gilly, a newly elected parliament member in Iraq gave vivid testimony on the situation of women. They are eager for education and training so they can better influence policy making and accelerate their country's reconciliation and transformation.

In Working Session 2, "Women as Educators for Peace in the Family: Principles and Practice", Maria Ioannou, a clinical psychologist working with women and children in Cyprus prisons explained that not having learned a lesson of peace in early childhood is prevalent among incarcerated women. Parents can play a primordial role in prevention by investing in their children and validating their goodness. Arezoo Khosravi (Iran), a human rights activist and Zainab Mirza Ghandour, a lecturer with the Lebanese Association for Human Rights both shared insights regarding women role models and family ethics in their country. H.E. May Abu Al Samen, a Senator in Jordan addressed women's role in the family in creating a culture of peace and efforts of the queen and government to design infrastructure that fosters peace.

Professor Arbia Ben Ammar, a University Professor in Tunisia spoke in Working Session 3, "Educating for Peace in the Middle East: Norms, Resources and Tools". She stressed that the family is the first resource in peace education and that character education starts at home, where women are of utmost importance. Dr. Hiba Othman, National Coordinator for World Safety Organization in Lebanon quoted Robert Fulghum's book "All I really need to know I learned in kindergarten". Share everything. Play Fair. Clean up your own mess. Say you are sorry when you hurt someone. These are simple concepts that constitute basic principles of a culture of peace. A good investment in peace is to pay special attention to the primary educator, the mother, so her role in family peace education is properly understood and exercised. When women participate in peace negotiations and in crafting of peace agreements, the future of societies, communities, and families are the focus. Dr. Fawziah Al Bakr, Associate Professor in Saudia Arabia, concluded the session.

Robert Bebee, Vice-director for Curriculum Development of the International Educational Foundation spoke at Working Sessions 5 and 6. His character education curriculum has influenced educational institutions in seventeen countries. Topics were "A Culture of Peace in the Family through Character Education" and "Causes and Resolution of Conflict".

Session 6 was "Future Plans and Recommendations". Oya Talat, President of the Patriotic Women's Union of Northern Cyprus, and co-founder of the Peace Village Project spoke of the model program of the desperate women of North Cyprus and Cyprus facilitating conflict resolution and peace building for youth. Carolyn Handschin, Deputy Director of the WFWPI Office for United Nations Relations reported on a recent jointly sponsored WFWPI conference at UNESCO. She discussed, "Dignity, Development, Building on a Culture of Peace", sharing her experience of finding dignity among Israeli and Palestinian women during a WFWPI outreach program, "Heart to Heart" in 2004. Programs creating solidarity among women in conflict situations can be a valuable source of empowerment for both sides. Training of girls and young women to take the lead in such practices is an excellent method of peace building.

A committed group of 15 to 20 women worked to create a conference outcome plan of action. A letter was drafted and delivered to the new President of the Human Rights Council outlining recommendations from the conference and participants' commitment to them. A long term project to translate and develop peace education curriculum suitable for the religious, cultural and gender needs in the Middle East was accepted. Pilot projects in three countries were proposed.

The consensus is that now, more than ever, with humankind at a crossroads between destruction and development, the transformative and educational mechanisms in a healthy family are the best paradigm for peace building and fostering human dignity. The recommendation is that women receive access to tools and resources for leadership towards a culture of peace and development. As Kofi Annan recently stated, without more equal input from women, we can never hope to achieve our goals.



### *ECOSOC Segment, contd from pg. 5*

Emergencies, concluding with a unanimous resolution (E/2006/L.13), Strengthening the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance by the UN. Jan Egeland, Emergency Relief Coordinator and UN Undersecretary for Humanitarian Affairs referred to shocking stories of gender-based violence and called upon "collective and individual responsibilities to prevent gender-based violence, give support to victims and bring about social change." (Carolyn Handschin acknowledges the "Geneva Advocacy Notes" as a supporting source.)



# Activities Around the World in 2006

## WFWP Korea and Activities for North-South Unification

WFWP HQ in Korea has made effort towards the reconciliation of North and South Korea, as well as in activities for unification as an affiliated corporation under the Ministry of National Unification, as a member of the Korean Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation, and as a board member group of The Korean Council for Unification Education.

### Activities in Preparation for Unification

#### Prayer for Unification of North and South Korea

Annual Prayer Ceremony for Unification of North and South Korea and for world peace has been held for 10 years since the establishment of WFWP, in the first month of the New Year



Aegibong (Mt. Aegi) of Kimpo, where the happiness and sadness of seeing the northern territory closely cross paths, is a place where people with ties to the north often visit. The Mt. Odu Observatory located in Imjingak or Tongilro and other places close to the northern border are sites for preparing altars, burning incense and praying for the north. All members participating in the WFWP visit each year wish prayers will safely reach our brothers and sisters who are separated and in deep agony. In 2006, refugees from the north and their children joined the ceremony to make wishes and flew kites for peace.

#### Concert for Unification with the Refugees

WFWP has held an event, including brother/sisterhood ceremonies with the refugees every December since 1998. In 2004, the event developed into a concert bringing hearts together especially through music and dance. Participants hear songs and poems for unification, and sing and pray for the grand day to come soon when South and North will become one. Several refugee students in college have been given scholarships annually.

WFWP has established a relationship over several years with the Refugee Federation



for Peaceful Unification (president Jang In Suk received the Kim Jong Il Award for designing the Pyongyang Juche Tower before defecting to the south.) As the refugee members were hoping for transportation to Yanggu, Gangwondo to grow vegetables, they were able to buy a van with the help of WFWP in spring, 2003. People often visit the office with farm products they have grown. This group participates in many events organized by WFWP.

#### 1% Love Share Project

The 1% Love Share Project is a project initiated by International President Lan Young Moon Park. Ten representatives of the Korean Women Leaders Association (President Kim Yoon Deok) visited Pyongyang in February



of 2001. Although the relationship between the participants seemed awkward in the beginning, anxiety gradually disappeared during the 8 days they spent together. They began to realize that they were people of the same race.



The 1% Love Share Project asks participants to set aside a small portion of one's earnings regularly for the needy, beginning with women and children of North Korea. The donations are used for humanitarian aid. Mrs. Lee Heeho, wife of ex-president Kim Dae Jung, attended the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of WFWP to deliver a congratulatory message and a contribution



for the 1% Love Share campaign. At present, not only members in Korea but also those from chapters abroad are sending in contributions as well. Part of the funds have been donated to reconstruct the Yongcheon elementary school, destroyed by an explosion in September of 2004. Funds have also gone to a joint project of planting pine trees for the north in April 2006.

#### Field Trips and Camps for Unification Education

The Dorandoran Field Trips held twice a year since 2003 is an on-site education program for women and children held at the actual sites of division such as the Panmunjeom, (38<sup>th</sup> parallel) and supported by the Korean Council for Unification Education. In 2005, the field trip became an annual camp. During the two days, people visit a town where residents suffering from landmine



damage live, near the civilian passage restriction line and attend talks. The education program helps the younger generation understand at least a small part of the pain of our divided nation.

WFWP Korea, *continued on pg. 8*

# Activities Around the World in 2006

## American Women's Conference for World Peace in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Montevideo, Uruguay April 2-4, 2006

By Kazue Maeda, Secretary General, WFWP Uruguay

The American Women's Conference, titled "Peace in the World through True Love and True Families" was held at Radisson Victoria Plaza Hotel. There were 120 participants from 18 countries. At the opening reception on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Mrs. Maria Albini Alvarez, president of WFWP Uruguay gave welcoming remarks. The next day, Mrs. Graciela Rompani Pacheco, former First Lady of Uruguay gave a congratulatory address.

Dr. Lan Young Moon Park, president of WFWP International was the keynote speaker. She explained how her personal experiences



taught her that true love and true families are essential for world peace. Through the Korean War, over one million families were separated in North Korea and South Korea. Many people lost their parents, brothers and sisters. She lost her father and brothers

but escaped from North Korea to South Korea. She had many grievous experiences during this time in her life. In spite of this, she testifies to the importance of having a heart of reconciliation.

Mr. Gustavo Giuliano, President of International Educational Foundation of Argentina and Mr. Jesus Gonzalez, President of International Educational Foundation Uruguay gave a presentation on Character Education. Dr. Ana Maria Molinari Espeche, President of ASEPROFAR Foundation (Argentina) spoke on The Important Role of Women in Politics. Prof. Elida Jimenez, of the University of Dominican Republic gave a response to the seminar on Character Education. Mrs. Lavia Floridos, NPO for street children (Peru) spoke about volunteer efforts to save street children in Lima, Peru.

A Bridge of Peace sisterhood ceremony was held on the evening of April 3<sup>rd</sup>. On the morning of April 4<sup>th</sup>, WFWP national leaders Mrs. Nancy Hanna, Republic of Panama, Mrs. Maria Cecilia Morel Montes, Republic of Chile and Mrs. Alexa Ward, United States of America

## WFWP Korea contd.

### Activities of the Korean Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation (KCRC) and Korean Council for Unification Education

WFWPI President L.Y. Moon Park, who is a joint representative of the KCRC, was nominated by the Council for an award from the



Minister of National Unification this year. She received the award on behalf of WFWP on March 9, 2006, for its continuous contribution to unification as a member association. WFWP representatives also participate in exchange and commemoration events such as the

annual 6.15 Joint Declaration, and 8.15 People's Festival for the North and South, as part of the South's executive committee. On January 16, 2006, vice president Choi Young Ja also received an award from

reported about WFWP activities in their respective nations. Participants then chose a small session to discuss one of the following topics: "Morals and Ethics Education for Youth", "Women's Role in Society", "the Role of Religion and Interreligious Dialogue", "Politics and the Family in Latin America", "Responsibility of the Media". In the final meeting, each session leader reported the findings from each discussion.



All participants attended the Uruguayan Women's Rally on the evening of April 4<sup>th</sup>. Twelve hundred people attended the rally. Former Uruguayan First Lady, Mrs. Pacheco was the mistress of ceremonies. Mrs. Maria Auxiliadora Delgado Vasquez, First Lady of Uruguay attended the rally

and listened carefully to the speeches. Dr. Park gave the rally's keynote address. She told us the WFWPI motto: "All human beings are one Global Family, beyond race, religion or culture. World Peace begins with me and my family". She questioned why, with all of the advances, does the world grow more distant from peace? Why does confusion seem to get worse? In Asia, there is a saying, "Only when there is

harmony in the home, can all things be accomplished." In order to realize happiness as individuals, we need the foundation of unity within the family. Dr. Park quoted the President of Princeton University; Dr. Shirley Tilghman from her Matriculation Ceremony speech of 2005 that the purpose of education is to enable students to acquire the qualities of a leader in diverse professions such as teacher, engineer, business manager, etc. Dr. Park emphasized that the role of parents should have been included in this list of leadership roles.



the Minister of National Unification for WFWP's contributions through her work as a director of the Korean Council for Unification Education.

Women have developed perseverance and wisdom while bearing the pressures and pains throughout history, particularly in patriarchal societies. Today, their potential strength and beautiful values are beginning to shine in this 'Era of Women' in all corners of the globe. Currently the peaceful unification of our nation is being pursued through 'political dialogue' based on the theory of power led by men. It is time for women to play vital roles, reflecting their approach based on understanding and forgiveness, of motherly reconciliation.





# Activities Around the World in 2006

## WFWP USA Focuses on the Middle East

*Alexa Fish Ward*

*President, WFWP USA*

*Vice President, WFWP International*

Beginning in 2004, WFWP USA members committed to focusing their attention on the Middle East, on both national and international levels. This commitment was born from an understanding of the pivotal role of the region; the conviction that women are uniquely suited to build lasting peace in the world; and a profound sadness concerning the ongoing suffering and loss of life in the region.

Key members drafted A Declaration for Peace in the Middle East. This document reflects the deep insight that women bring to peace building: "Determine to become exemplary women of deep forgiving love..."; "Commit to becoming peacemakers, because only through the selfless heart of women who deeply care for all children as their own..."

Over a period of eighteen months, ending in December of 2005, WFWP USA led an effort to collect more than ten million signatures worldwide from people who agree with the Declaration. This project was promoted in thirty eight nations and was introduced during international conferences in the United States, Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and the United Nations.



WFWP USA participated in the "Women of Peace" program in Jerusalem, May 2004, sponsored by the Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace and WFWP, International, which brought together 526 women from 41 nations. During this trip, WFWP USA organized a visit to Israeli and Palestinian victims of violence at Hadassah Hospital; a visit to the Yad be Yad Bilingual School, both with gifts and a financial donation. A Bridge of Peace Ceremony was also held that resulted in approximately 200 pairs of "sisters of peace." Each woman returned home deeply touched and renewed.

In January 2005, WFWP USA supported Iraqi women and their families living in the US, during their historic national election. In Washington DC, WFWP members provided transportation for Iraqis to travel to the polling



place in Maryland. At the polling place near Los Angeles, WFWP members partnered with Service for Peace youth and members of the Pacific-Los Angeles Chapter of the UNA-USA, to setup a hospitality tent. Over the three-day voting period, hundreds of Iraqi women and their families were provided refreshments, which were donated by ten area businesses.

In spring 2005, The Women's Peace Initiative for the Middle East and South Asia was founded as a project of WFWP USA. WPI is dedicated to helping women transcend boundaries of ethnicity, religion, and nationality to create bridges of peace in the Middle East and South Asia. This Initiative aims to expand the understanding of western women about the cultures, religions, history, and the status of women in the region, through public forums and the media; as well as empower women from the region with the knowledge, tools, and support to expand the culture of peace at home, in communities, and between nations.

The Women's Peace Initiative formed a panel of women from five countries. Each panelist developed a presentation on the status of women in their homeland. They also tell the story of how they have gone beyond their personal boundaries and come to build deep bonds of friendship through their work with WPI. This panel has presented in George Mason University, the University of Maryland,



in Oakland, California, and at the Capitol Hill Club in Washington DC.

In 2005 and 2006, WFWP USA sponsored programs that focused on the Middle East at the Capitol Hill Club in commemoration of International Women's Day. The 2005 program, entitled, "Women Creating Lasting Peace", brought Iraqi women leaders and American women leaders together. The WPI panel was the highlight of the 2006 program entitled, "The Essential Role of Women in Creating Peace".



WFWP USA is committed to continue its focus on the Middle East by bringing women from the west and women from the Middle



East together, using education, service, and friendship to help the region move toward a lasting peace.



# At the UN in Vienna ...

## United Nations Activities in Vienna

January - September 2006

By Lilly Gundacker and Elizabeth Riedl

The Austrian WFWP participates on the UN NGO Committee on Peace and the UN NGO Committee on the Status of Women (CSW). At the beginning of 2006, WFWP also joined the NGO Committee on Narcotic Drugs and the NGO Committee on Crime. There are five WFWP accredited UN Representatives in Vienna.

The Drugs Committee held an NGO Forum on Alternative Development. The terminology "alternative" refers to the coming away from crime, the word "development" relates to people, not plants or crops. Julia Ormond, UN Goodwill Ambassador noted the importance of skills training for parents and traffickers and education for victims. The best prevention for drug abuse is a strong family environment. Dr. Maria Riehl, Honorary President of WFWP Austria pointed out the necessity of maintaining our vision of the ideal while serving to help those addicted to drugs. One role of civil society is in shaping policy. The importance of developing prevention projects directly with families and local produce organizations was stressed as a

major step in combating drug abuse. These programs support legal and profitable agricultural development, which brings hope to poor families who have been relying on drug crops for survival. UNODC brought a government representative from Bolivia to Vienna to speak at the meeting. Families must first obtain additional income then later, alternative crops to coca production can be introduced. This technique has been successful in Bolivia.

The Austrian Government's Ministry of Women sponsored a number of preparation meetings prior to the CSW meeting in New York. In addition, various Women's Conferences and Women's Day activities were organized. Vienna NGOs including WFWP were invited to participate and network. WFWP is also a member of The Network of Peace and Non Violence in Austria. WFWP, in partnership with the thirty five Peace organizations in the Network, prepares a celebration each year in Vienna and Salzburg for the UN Day of Peace.



### Human Rights, contd from pg. 5

Resolution 60/251, which established the Council.

The new body is based in Geneva. It consists of 47 members, (formerly 53). It will hold three sessions a year (formerly one) for a total duration of ten weeks (formerly six). As a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, it will have higher status than the former Commission.

After formal opening of the Human Rights Council on June 19, 2006, newly elected President of the Council, Luis Alfonso de Alba, México's Ambassador to the UN in Geneva, and a four member Bureau tackled the most immediate tasks. The tasks included ensuring there would be no gap in human rights protection during the first transitional year, and completing some unfinished business of the Commission. In addition, the bureau set the path for future work as outlined in the GA Resolution. Accordingly, terms of mandate holders under the "Special Procedures" were extended for one year. This system includes Special Rapporteurs, Independent Experts, Special Representatives and Working Groups which stretch over thematic issues and human rights situations in specified countries. High on the list of unfinished business was the adoption of two important instruments; **The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances** defining, for the first time in history, this practice as a crime, and **The**

**UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.** Both instruments will be voted on by the GA in September.

Among the most important innovations of the new Council is the Universal Periodic Review. This review establishes the scrutiny of all UN Member States for fulfillment of their human rights obligations and commitments. Another important task for the Council is dealing with pressing issues such as the present crisis in the Middle East. This crisis and others that arise may necessitate holding extra sessions.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), also based in Geneva, has been affected by the UN reform activities. Under the leadership of High Commissioner Louise Arbour, and thanks to increased budget provisions, the Office will expand its activities in the areas of technical cooperation, advisory services, human rights education and capacity building.

NGOs' role is essential for the success of the entire human rights program. NGOs are involved in reporting human rights abuses, advocacy work, and acting as the voice of the voiceless. Fortunately, the President of the Council is well aware of this. Both the Human Rights Council and the OHCHR have indicated a commitment to work closely with the NGO community. Hopefully, NGOs will live up to expectations and make use of opportunities in the field offered by OHCHR such as participating in available training.



The Rotunda, C Building, Vienna International Centre, United Nations Headquarters, Austria



Adoption of the agenda and organization of work of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.

### Afghanistan, contd from pg. 3

from Harvard University, she and forty-five high level Afghan women worked on the process of creating Afghanistan's constitution. Sultan observed that empowerment of women is improving but adult women's illiteracy is 90%. Two million widows need education and training. Men must learn that education improves all people's lives, then they will let girls and women get an education. School is becoming the center of the community. Afghan people are wondering whether the US will stay or not. It is important for Afghanistan's future, that the US keep its commitment there.

The insightful presentations were followed by luncheon and dialogue. We learned there are so many aspects to rebuilding the country after so much destruction occurred. The most essential key is to recreate people through education. UNICEF deserves our thanks for efforts to achieve universal education in the international community.



The changes brought about through the establishment of the Human Rights Council and expansion of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights are a positive step toward holding nations accountable for the proper treatment of all people.



that we continue to strive for a world where goals of human security and sustainable development are realized.

DPI/NGO Executive Committee co-chairs, Ms. Joan Kirby and Ms. Michaela Walsh both expressed appreciation for the opportunity to gather and learn about world issues that do not get covered in daily media. Ms. Kirby was emphatic that communication within the NGO community must be strengthened and the reach of the DPI/NGO Executive Committee must be broadened. Ms. Walsh is particularly committed to giving more voice to young people active within the NGO community.

The conference consisted of morning and afternoon panels with midday workshops prepared by small groups of partnering NGOs. This year, Thursday afternoon and all day Friday were dedicated to six round table discussions on a variety of topics that provided opportunities for discussion. Topics included: Science and Technology for Education, Emerging Approaches to Healthcare including Gender-based HIV and AIDS, Human Security: Responsibility to Protect and the Peace Building Commission, Civil Society and Global Partnerships for Development, Commitment to Reducing Extreme Poverty and Hunger and Promoting Respect for Cultural Diversity in Conflict Resolution. (Archived webcast of main sessions is available at [www.undpingoconference.org](http://www.undpingoconference.org) )

The roundtable on Civil Society and Global Partnerships is of special note. Outgoing GA Pres. H.E. Jan Eliasson and incoming GA Pres. H.E. Haya Rashed Al Khalifa were both speakers. Ms. Khalifa was one of the first woman lawyers in Bahrain. She has served as ambassador to the UN and many countries. Ms. Khalifa will continue strengthening relations between the UN system and NGOs. She has seen the work of NGOs and knows NGOs have been a strong voice for nonviolent solutions in crisis. She is committed to exploring how partnership between civil society and the UN can be more effective in improving the lives of people. Ms. Khalifa concluded by encouraging us to value the contributions of all including the private sector, parliamentarians and civil society organizations.

Ms. Shamina de Gonzaga was the third panelist. She continues as an NGO representative as well as her role as Special Advisor to the GA President on NGO relations. This puts her in a unique position to serve and observe. She is in her mid-twenties. Shamina observed there are no rules of procedure governing GA-NGO relationships. Many members of the General Assembly feel threatened by allowing NGO participation in GA deliberations. Because there are experts among civil society who have an important contribution, according to Ms.



Panelists and Moderator of Midday Workshop at 59th DPI/NGO Conference, Sept. 6, 2006  
Education: A Key Element of Human Security and Sustainable Development;  
Cosponsors: WFWPI, WFWP Japan, IIFWP

De Gonzaga, government representatives need reassurance that participation by NGOs is not a threat. Shamina also praised outgoing GA President Eliasson. She confessed that she never imagined finding such integrity, sincerity and desire to get things done on this high level. In conclusion, she emphasized that the main point is not the relationships, but to SEE SOMETHING ACHIEVED.

Caritas Representative and former Co-Chair of the DPI/NGO Executive Committee, Joseph Donnelly also offered kudos to GA President Eliasson, commenting on his integrity, hospitality and his water analogy (mentioned earlier). Mr. Donnelly reminded us that the life of a good person is like a brook of good water flowing, creating a path to touch all. He also spoke about the qualities of a good partnership. "For a partnership to be real, it must be mutual and participatory. One side cannot own the other, but all sides must be in it together for the good of all." He encouraged us to be the partners we seek.

#### WFWPI Midday Workshop

#### Education, A Key Element of Human Security and Sustainable Development

September 6, 2006 1:15-2:45PM  
UN HQ NY Conference Room A

**Moderator:** Ms. Motoko Sugiyama,  
Director of WFWPI UN Office

#### Panelists:

George Ogurie-Field Director, IRFF Nigeria Advisor IIFWP HIV/AIDS Prevention Initiative, Nigeria, Harumi Kimura-Professor Emeritus at Kyorito Women's University, Essayist, Author Japan, Chieko Kuriki-Professor of Journalism at Chubu University, Journalist, Author Japan, Nancy Hinson-Educator, Member of Senior Mgmt team at Headstart/ECE, Spokane Community College, USA.

As the Midday workshop co-sponsored by WFWP Japan and IIFWP began, Conference Room A was full to capacity with nearly 100 people, demonstrating that education continues to be an area of concern for many conference attendees. Panelists were from an array of backgrounds and offered insights from their respective areas of expertise.

#### Mr. George Ogurie

explored the connection between HIV/AIDS prevention and advocacy and sustainable development. Historically, the concept of sustainable development implied development that respected and limited impact on the environment. Discussions over time gave rise to other definitions. Of many definitions, Ogurie concluded the bottom line is a dire need to strengthen consciousness through education. The behavior of each of us has consequences to the circumstances of many others in the entire world. He related this to what is known about HIV/AIDS, its prevention and treatment. HIV/AIDS is preventable but there are many philosophies for approaching the problem. He is dismayed that some in the field criticize other approaches. Ogurie stressed that HIV/AIDS prevention is a life and death matter. Maintaining abstinence prior to marriage and fidelity with in marriage is a sure way to prevent. He concludes that all approaches have a place in this fight and admonished partners not to undermine each other. There is a need for further education and short and long term approaches. He informed us of the trend for nations to spend less on HIV/AIDS education and prevention and more on treatment and stressed that consistent ongoing prevention education must be a key part of the strategy to combat HIV/AIDS.

#### Ms. Harumi Kimura

expressed particular concern about increased self-centeredness and individualism of Japanese young people. She attributed this to a trend away from educating about the value of the group and respect for tradition stemming from American influence following the Second World War. The Basic Education Law was enacted in Japan during reconstruction. The Americans would not allow the law to include



59th DPI/NGO, continued on pg. 12

any reference to teaching respect for tradition. The focus was respect for and rights of the individual. Ms. Kimura expressed concern that this has led to young people who have only a weak connection to their communities and little sense of responsibility to others. Now the educational community and government are rethinking and will work toward educating children and young people to understand themselves as individuals in the context of their community, their responsibility to others and in relation to traditions and the past. She believes this aspect of education is crucial for raising youth who will value peace and working together with one another.

**Ms. Chieko Kuriki**

spoke about the process of development of good journalists and the role they play to educate and inform the larger community about issues and situations. She stressed the importance of integrity among journalists and the sincere desire to penetrate the truth of a circumstance. Good listening skills are important. She said that an interviewer needs to be able to open the heart of the interviewee. This takes trustworthiness. She informed us that if an interviewee does not trust the interviewer, they will not tell the truth or reveal themselves deeply. She downplayed the show business and ego concepts about journalism. A good journalist is a good citizen, according to Ms. Kuriki. In fact, she said that it is crucial that journalists ask the hard questions and report about the difficult issues. If they are not reported about, it is as if they do not exist. She believes journalists need to tell the stories that need to be told. Doing so will help create a better, more peaceful world.



**Ms. Nancy Hinson**

guided us on the important role of Early Childhood Education to ensure the full potential of children. Her background in the field in Washington State, where early childhood education is a focus, armed her with knowledge of the most recent research on brain development. Because brain development begins in the womb and much development occurs before a child is three, she stressed that parents are key figures in meeting the developmental needs of small children. Research shows there are healthy types of stress that aid development, such as new situations for learning and meeting other children. There are tolerable types of stress for children like a one time catastrophic event i.e. death of a loved one, parent's divorce, going through a natural disaster like an earthquake or hurricane that kids can get through with the right



support. But there is toxic stress that can actually cause brain tissue to deteriorate such as neglect, starvation, living in war, etc. This demonstrates scientifically that children are affected detrimentally and permanently by not having their basic needs met in a consistent way. Ms. Hinson listed extensive resources for parents and early childhood educators with the hope that those in the field would utilize the materials to further their work and educate their legislators and parliamentarians about this issue so crucial to human security and sustainable development.

Perspectives of the panelists were diverse. One question that arose was how all these aspects tied together. Panelists agreed that the importance of education for human security and sustainable development was the theme at the core of each talk. Whether it is how to prevent HIV/AIDS, character development, journalism for social change, or raising and nurturing children so they get all they need to be the best and most that they can be, education is required for the sharing of knowledge and understanding.

**WFWPI Luncheon Meeting**

*UNHQ Delegates  
Dining Room 1  
Sept. 7, 2006 1PM*



WFWPI and WFWP Japan cosponsored a luncheon meeting for forty members of the Japanese delegation to the DPI/NGO Conference and guests from USA. Special guest, Ms. Michele Federoff, Deputy Chief of NGO Section DESA joined the luncheon and was delighted to see women she met during her trip to Japan with WFWP several years ago. She genuinely appreciates the many practical service projects in developing nations that WFWPI operates.

**Mr. Shoji Nishimoto**, Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Development Policy United Nations Development Program prepared a special presentation for the group entitled Partnering for Change: Realizing the MDGs together by 2015. He informed us of the ways UNDP is partnering with NGOs and civil society organizations. He gave a brief review of progress on the MDGs, capacity building of UNDP and the focus on empowerment of women and gender equality. Mr. Nishimoto informed us that UNDP encourages policy dialogs between governments, civil society organizations and donors, advocates for legal changes to allow civil society greater ability to participate in development. He emphasized that UNDP views civil society organizations as equal and vital partners in overcoming development challenges. He acknowledged that civil society plays multiple roles such as

advocacy, mediation, mobilization, research and analysis and project implementation. In conclusion, he stressed that particularly women's NGOs are vital partners in narrowing gender gaps which are large impediments to the development process. (Full text of Mr. Nishimoto's presentation available at [www.wfwpi.org/archives](http://www.wfwpi.org/archives))

At the Closing Session of the conference, Secretary General Kofi Annan and Mrs. Nane Annan gave their farewell to the NGO community, as this will be the last such conference during SG Annan's term. Once again, he showed deep appreciation to the NGO community. "You have made your voices heard and your influence felt," he told us. He reminded us of progress in UN and NGO relations, including the forums held jointly between the General Assembly and the NGO community, as well as critical NGO advocacy, surrounding establishment of the Human Rights Council. "You have the capacity to push the envelope and say things I cannot say and I often love you for it. Looking ahead, you will grow in influence, but use it responsibly. Strengthen alliances that maximize impact. We must share our knowledge and reinforce our actions. Have a dream and then give it a foundation." Mrs. Annan reminded us that we have only one world and we need to keep it in trust for future generations.



**Upcoming Events 2006**

- Oct 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> WFWP 7th International Leaders' Workshop Bangkok, Thailand
- Oct 16<sup>th</sup> International Day of Eradication of Poverty
- Oct 17<sup>th</sup> World Food Day
- Oct 24<sup>th</sup> United Nations Day
- Nov 20<sup>th</sup> Universal Children's Day
- Nov 25<sup>th</sup> International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
- Dec 1<sup>st</sup> World AIDS Day
- Dec 6<sup>th</sup> Human Rights Day
- Feb 26 - Mar 9, 07 51<sup>st</sup> Commission on the Status of Women