

WFWP International 's 24th Annual Women's Conference for Peace in Middle East

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Under the theme, "The Path to Reconciliation and Rebuilding Peace," the 24th Annual Women's Conference for Peace in the Middle East (MEW) was organized through the efforts and sponsorship of WFWP Japan and WFWP Middle East. The conference was held on October 1- 2 in the historic city of Berlin, and was attended by approximately 80 participants. This included 30 women leaders from the Middle East, representing 14 countries, all of whom were concerned about issues involving the Middle East. WFWPI's Senior Vice President, Dr. Sun Jin Moon and her husband, Mr. In Sup Alexander Park attended and actively participated in the conference.

The women leaders, coming from the ranks of the government and civil society, presented their challenges and success stories in advancing the establishment of peace in their countries. One of the senators from Jordan explained the efforts of their government to preserve peace inside the country, as well as being the peace mediators among their warring neighbors. A representative of the royal family of Kuwait expressed the importance of investing in efforts for peace, although war and conflict seem to be an easier way to respond to disagreements. The representative also explained how war costs lives and damages the environment, while the pursuit of peace promotes the wellbeing of all people.

The former Minister of Social Affairs of Egypt and senior advisor of this year's conference, highlighted the importance of the family. Families are in the position to educate about the values of peace and good character. The former MP from Cyprus passionately explained about her experiences as an internally displaced person in her youth. She also expressed how she can understand the suffering of the refugees from Syria and Palestine.

WFWP's Director of UN Relations and International Vice President for Europe, Carolyn Handschin, gave a presentation during the conference about the relationship of WFWP and the UN and how the youth have been involved.

Each session ended with a time for questions and answers. This created a vivid exchange where everyone felt safe enough to express their opinions and listen to others.

A landmark presentation came from an Israeli participant, who spoke about several Israeli NGOs that are defending human rights and are caring for the wellbeing of the Palestinians. Participants discovered that these efforts remain unknown to the wider public and to the international community. For this reason, the idea of using the electronic media to inform those about lesser known initiatives and ideas were discussed.

After one and a half days of deliberations, there was a unanimous consensus to set up a joint media platform to capture the voices of youth and women in their quests for peace. Video clips will be posted and accessible on that platform and can be shared over the internet throughout the world. It was agreed that the group will follow-up on the media project by mid-January 2020.