

# Women's Federation for World Peace International



United Nations Office Newsletter

Autumn 2014

## Family Values and their Link to Economic Well-Being and Social Outcomes

Commemorating 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family

June 30 - July 1, 2014 - UN Geneva



By Carolyn Handschin

In commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, the Women's Federation for World Peace, International (WFWPI) and the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) - together with the support of the Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe (FAFCE) and the Fondation L'entreconnaissance jointly sponsored a 2-day Conference at the United Nations' Palais des Nations. The conference aimed at showing the significance of Family Values as a remedy, as preventative and as a guideline for a healthy and prosperous Europe and world. The conference brought together experts from European nations and the United States in order to build capacities among allies in civil society and government, to work upon a proactive and convincing strategy and to regain momentum in reversing the current trends.

**Day One: June 30**

**Heiner Handschin**, Director, UPF Office for UN Relations in Geneva opened the conference, referring to the Human Rights Council Resolution on "Protection of the Family" that was passed



just a few days before (June 26, 2014), calling for a new era of family mainstreaming. The internationally agreed re-affirmation of the value of the natural family to society and to peaceful development was the result of a hard-fought battle within the UN Human Rights Council over more than one year and many consultations, led courageously and persistently by a coalition of 16 governments. "We greatly appreciate the information and the engagement on this important topic" read a letter from the Office of the Director General of the UN in Geneva.

Welcoming remarks were delivered by Mr. **Paul An**, Chairman of UPF in Europe. "The institutions (marriage and family) have been increasingly weakened, especially in Europe and the United States, due to a whole variety of social trends and forces. These include, of course, the decline of organized religion and of traditional morality, the increasing number of couples who decide to live together without getting married and the advocacy of various diverse forms of family and alternative morality that have increasingly gained legitimacy."



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### Session I: Sustainable Family Values as a Means to Create a Stable and Prosperous Society and Nation

The first presentation was given by Ms. **Lynn Walsh**, Office for Marriage & Family of UPF and co-chair of UN NGO Committee on the Family in New York. She mentioned the consistent failure to include the family in policy at the UN. Even international wars can be traced back to a lack of empathy and a properly developed conscience in individuals. Marriage and family are the very cells for nurturing individual character and building trusting relationships in society. We need to address the lack of human attachment.



Mr. **Richard Kane**, founder and CEO of Marriage Week International, spoke about his NGO's work to make couples' relationships "intentional" through the instrument of marriage. It is the best relationship to raise a child. Although we must be compassionate of those who live together, they have fallen for a counterfeit- unintentionally.



*Family Values, contd. on pg. 10*



## Statement of Purpose

The Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) supports a network of National WFWPI Chapters in over 120 nations that are dedicated to empower women with "the knowledge, the tools and the support needed to create peace at home, peace in our communities, our nations and throughout the world".

Programs, designed according to local needs and capacities, include: leadership training for women and girls, education for peace and reconciliation, skills development and advocacy at major UN Offices and various regional and national institutions. In support of United Nation Development Goals, WFWPI maintains over one hundred service projects in fifty nations, in the areas of education, vocational training, microcredit, AIDS prevention education, technical support, medical assistance and nutrition guidance.

WFWPI Chapters adhere to the principle that women, working together, taking initiative and empowering one another across traditional lines of age, race, culture and religion to create healthy families, are resolving the complex problems of our 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. From there, Peace will naturally expand.

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## At the UN in New York...

### Every Drop of Water Counts

DPI/NGO Briefing: June 19, 2014 - UNHQ New York

*Roshan D'Souza, WFWPI UN Representative  
for Sustainable Development*

One of today's greatest global challenges is access to clean water. Incredibly 1.2 billion people do not have access to this precious resource. UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, in his address at the UN World Water Day on March 22, 2014, in New York, stated that water is at the core of sustainable development.

"This year's observance of World Water Day focuses on the links between water and energy. Both are critical for eradicating poverty. And they interact with each other in ways that can help – or hinder – our efforts to build stable societies and lives of dignity for all. Climate change driven in great part by the unsustainable use of energy will exacerbate water stress and scarcity in many regions. Efforts to provide

universal access to water and energy will be undermined if the current warming trend continues. The many strong links between water and energy demand coherent, integrated policies and innovative strategies. Water must be used -- and electricity must be generated and distributed -- equitably and efficiently, so all users get a fair share."

Looking at our planet earth from a bird's eye view, one of the most striking features is the water, in both liquid and frozen forms, that covers approximately seventy-five percent of the Earth's surface. Geologic evidence suggests that large amounts of water have likely flowed on Earth for the past 3.8 billion years – most of its existence. Believed to have initially arrived on the earth's surface through the emissions of ancient volcanoes, water is a vital substance that

*Water, contd. on pg. 9*

### International Day of Happiness

DPI/NGO Briefing: March 20, 2014 - UNHQ New York

*By Youngsoo Quinn,  
DPI Intern with WFWPI UN Office NY*

The International Day of Happiness was proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on July 12, 2012. On March 14, 2014, the UN Department of Public Information, DPI, held a briefing that focused on the International Day of Happiness. This briefing included several keynote speakers, Ambassador Dr. T. Hamid Al-Bayati, Permanent Representative of Iraq to the UN, and Professor of Political Science at Rutgers University; Ambassador Ib Petersen, Permanent Representative of Denmark to the UN; Ms. Consolee Nishimwe, author and survivor of the 1994 Rwanda genocide; Ms. Kaylen Larson, young woman and youth advocate to South Dakota; Dr. Kaiping Peng, Professor of Psychology, Tsinghua University,

in China; and Ambassador Carlos Enrique Garcia Gonzalez, Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the UN. Each speaker shared about some of their accomplishments toward achieving their goals for peace, as well as making the people around them and the world a better, and happier place.

As a young man in Iraq, Ambassador Dr. Hamid Al-Bayati was tortured and experienced a great deal of suffering. However, despite his negative experiences, he believes that to accomplish world peace and happiness, it is important to work together with people and help them as much as possible. He also emphasized that happiness is achieved when we unconditionally give more than we take, because when we help others then we will begin

*Happiness, contd. on pg. 8*

### Creating an International Platform on Femicide

*By Dr. Karen Judd Smith, Vice Chair and  
Webmaster for the Alliance of NGOs on  
Crime Prevention & Criminal Justice*

Since 1955, the United Nations congresses on crime prevention and criminal justice have brought together high-level representatives of governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and criminal justice professionals and scholars, to discuss common concerns, share experiences and seek viable solutions to problems related to crime prevention and criminal justice.

The next Crime Congress will be held in April 2015 in Doha, Qatar and, being held in the midst of the Arab world, civil society and some member states are hoping it will provide an opportunity to strengthen civil society's

role. Some of the issues that remain deeply problematic and challenging.

As we all know, change, even to those historical practices that seem so blatantly problematic to some, are complex, resilient and surprisingly difficult to effect.

Nevertheless, the continuing efforts of activists in all areas of society continue to strive to help bring the cultures and traditions that have historically "protected" these practices to new levels of reflection and action. At international conferences such as these, gradual shifts in perspective and possibility can take place in the minds and hearts of men and women as they re-consider how they might newly address deeply embedded social practices

*Alliance, contd. on pg. 9*

## 65th DPI NGO Conference 2015 and Beyond: Our Action Agenda August 27-29, 2014

By Alexa Ward

The 65th DPI NGO Conference returned to the UN Headquarters in New York, August 27–29, 2014, after a period of seven years. While the UN Headquarters was being renovated, the DPI NGO conference was held in other parts of the world.

The Department of Public Information (DPI) was established in 1946 by General Assembly Resolution 13 (1). As the public voice of the UN, DPI promotes global awareness and greater understanding of the work of the UN, using various communication tools, including radio, television, print, the internet, video conferencing and increasingly, other new information technology.

With the theme, “2015 and Beyond: Our Action Agenda,” the conference was organized by the UN DPI and the NGO DPI Executive Committee, and focused on the role of civil society in the post 2015 development agenda.

### The Opening Session

The Opening Session was held on August 27th in the Trusteeship Council Chamber of the UN Headquarters in New York. Mr. Jeffrey Huffines, conference co-chair and member of the NGO DPI Executive Committee, welcomed the more than 2,000 registered participants from all over the world who had traveled to New York to attend the eight

roundtables and sixty workshops. He stated that issues of human rights would be closely monitored by members of civil society, and that civil society was demanding accountability frameworks, not only for the member states, but also for the private sector.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon and H.E. Mr. John Ashe, President of the General Assembly, made brief remarks via video messages. The Secretary General said, “We are delighted to have a record number of participants in this conference. All of you are raising your voices for our common values. You have grass roots influence which must influence elected officials. I depend on NGOs to push world leaders along the right path.” Mr. Ashe stated, “You members of the civil society represent some of the poorest and most vulnerable people. My goal has been to influence global development for the benefit of all. It is you who will be responsible for holding governments to account. Let me thank you for your many contributions and encourage you to keep up the high spirit and momentum as we enter the next phase of this important process.”

The Keynote address was given by Ambassador Samantha Powers, the Permanent Representative of the USA to the UN. She made two recommendations. The first recommendation referred to the need to



Amina Mohammed, Special Adv. to SG on Beyond 2015



include goals on peace and good governance in the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as in the post 2015 development agenda. In the second recommendation, she asked the leaders and conference participants to focus their agenda on a narrow set of goals, each with concrete and measurable goals, stating “You and we must prioritize to be effective. We must measure our impact.” She went on to say that

65th DPI/NGO, *contd. on pg. 8*

## Are Parents Important for Human Development?

June 17, 2014 - Forum at UNHQ New York

By Lynn Walsh, Director, UPF Office of Marriage & Family Education and Alexa Ward, Deputy Director, WFWP UN Office

In commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family and the Global Day of Parents, UPF and the WFWP UN Office partnered to host a forum entitled, “The Significance of Parents in Human and Societal Development”. This event was sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Grenada to the UN, and UPE, and was co-sponsored by the Permanent Representatives of Egypt, El Salvador, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Romania.

The first session, chaired by Taj Hamad, secretary general of UPF, opened with H.E. Denis G. Antoine, permanent representative of Grenada to the UN, sharing about the challenges parents face with many social changes and stresses such as social media and mentioned the anguish of parents in Nigeria with the recent abduction. The ambassador stated, “parents are indispensable” and without parental love, guidance and values, children have little sense of belonging or moral guides for their decisions; therefore, it is essential to reflect on and strengthen the role of parents for the sake of building strong societies.

Ms. Amira Fahmy, counselor at the Permanent Mission of Egypt, spoke with great emphasis on children’s natural need of parenting from both a mother and father for their optimum development in becoming contributing members of society. Mr. Masni Eriza, counselor at the Permanent Mission of Indonesia, emphasized parents’ unique role in giving children stability and love and teaching responsibility and values, stating that because “parents unlock the maximum potential for children,” we need to take seriously the inclusion of the family in the Sustainable Development Goals. Ambassador Noel Sinclair, deputy chef de cabinet of the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly, shared how his parents taught him about coexisting cooperatively with others, caring for and respecting others, and living for the common good. As his family of nine was poor and he had to share a pair of sneakers with his sister, they had to alternate going to school week by week. He said being poor surely has significant disadvantages, but the security and love of his parents was far more important to him and made all the difference.

The second session was moderated by Ms. Alexa Ward, deputy director of the UN Office for the Women’s Federation for World Peace International. Fernando Vial, advocacy



Forum Panel

fellow at the World Youth Alliance, shared a striking personal story of how his mother’s small but sacrificial act had a lifetime impact on his learning the value of integrity. Next, the keynote speaker, Dr. Catherine Panter-Brick, professor of anthropology, health and global affairs at Yale University, gave an informative PowerPoint presentation on, “Effective Parenting: Promoting Health, Development, and Peace” based on her years of research done around the world. Dr. Panter-Brick summarized from her research into both disadvantaged and middle-class populations by saying “to prevent mental health disorders, we need to prevent childhood adversities, and for this we need family-focused policies that strengthen the capabilities of parents to reduce violence, illness, and poor functioning.” She said that unless we strengthen parents, both rich and poor, so that they can raise their children

Parents, *contd. on pg. 8*

## At the UN in Geneva ...

### WFPW Internship Program

Sessions at the Human Rights Council

January - October 2014

By *Jimin Park Millet (Age 23)*

I feel sincerely blessed to do the internship at the UN. I want to share my experience at the UN and what I learned during my internship with others as much as possible. Few months earlier, when Mrs. Carolyn Handschin suggested to do the internship at UN for the Human Rights Council session, I was very excited because it was my dream to work at the UN since I was little. So I gladly accepted her offer.

In March, the event began. The first day was unforgettable because I could encounter many high-level leaders from the UN and from all around the world. I saw Ban Ki-moon and High Commissioner Navi Pillay as well as the presidents of each nation. As if I had taken a picture with them, it remains in my imagination. It was also a big day to explore and find out about every corner of UN. With a highly motivated spirit, I felt a strong urge to make my internship experience as productive and valuable as possible. So I set a goal to engage myself seriously. I took notes, wrote daily reports and articles, made a video project, etc.

As days passed by, I learned more and more about problems and the consequent work

*Jimin Park Millet, contd. on pg. 12*

By *Noemie Komagata (Age 24)*

At the beginning of this year, I had the great privilege to be an intern at the Human Rights Council (HRC) for 4 weeks. I'm studying medicine at the University of Geneva so I could coordinate my schedule with the sessions held at the UN.

It was really nice to see people coming from different cultures, talking in different languages, gathered in the beautiful big room of the Human Rights Council, under the famous painted ceiling. I felt very "small" sitting next to the representatives of the countries, who were talking about actual important topics and making decision on a world wide level.

At the beginning of the session, it was pretty hard for me to follow the talks because I didn't have the basic knowledge of how the Human Rights Council was working. With time and with the supervision of Carolyn Handschin, I got used to the technical terms used during the HRC and could better understand the content.

Topics were varied, going from access to health, education, the freedom of religion or belief, right to food, etc. Since I'm in the medical field, I could connect well especially

*Noemie Komagata, contd. on pg. 12*



Jimin Millet and Je-ok Gravrand with UN Office Director

By *Kristine Swarts (Age 21)*

Beginning on June 10, 2014 and ending June 27, the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland held the 26th Human Rights Council. During these weekday sessions, UN member states gather together to discuss, propose, and vote on resolutions about human rights issues around the world such as women's rights, freedom of assembly, and protection of the family. But this is not all that happens during this time. Many Non-Governmental Organizations hold side events focused on issues concerning them. Such events stressed using more women in politics to help the situation in Syria or another about development changes in China.

One such event, held on June 25th, was about combating racism via the Internet and put together by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance. The moderator, M. Ruteere, began by speaking on how racism

*Kristine Swarts, contd. on pg. 12*

## Towards Sustainable Peace and Reconciliation in the Democratic Republic of Congo: The role of Religion, Women and Civil Society

March 26, 2014 - UNHQ Geneva

By *Chantal Komagata*

In commemoration of Africa Day and to contribute to a peaceful settlement of the crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Women's Federation for World Peace, Int. (WFWPI), in partnership with members of the Congolese diaspora in Switzerland, the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) and the Fribourg Peace Forum organized this conference, attracting over 100 participants, reflecting the broad interest of governments, the UN and civil society for the topic.

The Chief of Staff of the Office of the Director General at the United Nations in Geneva, Mr. David A. Chikvaдзе, expressed the Director-General's encouragement in a letter concerning the objective of the conference -and hope for "prospective exchange of statements to overcome this challenge."

### **Session I: Towards a lasting peace in the DRC - Effects of peace and stability in the Great Lakes region**

A recorded presentation of the message of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for DRC and Head of the UN Stabilization Mission in the DRC, Martin Kobler, was broadcast. He congratulated the organizers and emphasized the need for women's participation in politics and the economy at all levels as

actors who introduce two essential aspects: security and stability as well as the importance of education for their sons and daughters. He commended the introduction of quotas by the government. He has been working with two Federal Councillors to combat sexual violence and impunity, especially in armed conflicts east of the country. They are also advocating to eliminate the employment of pregnant women and children in mines. He urged the participants to visit the DRC to encourage people on site.

Erika Laubacher, Deputy Head of Staff of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) spoke about the role of the Congolese diaspora in securing the peace process in the DRC. As a significant representation of the Congolese Diaspora in Switzerland and Europe were present, her presentation highlighted the potential impact that the Diaspora could have, as well as in the development of democratic and viable economic structures. She confirmed that the first condition for peace and sustainable development was the cessation of armed conflict in the eastern DRC. She encouraged migrants who received a high quality education abroad to return home and contribute to the prosperity of their nation as a form of circular migration.

Manda Kizabi, Permanent Delegate of UNESCO to DRC, began by stating that the whole Great Lakes region was affected by the conflict in the DRC, and that despite all the meetings and conferences during the past 19 years, there were no lasting results. He recommended the implementation of the more than one hundred agreements of Addis Ababa, in particular referring to the corruption of government officials, media openness, and protection of children and women.

### **Session II: Women and peace efforts in the DRC: Justice and Reconciliation**

Noémie Komagata, a medical student, read the text sent by Dr. Denis Mukwege, a gynecologist and Alternative Nobel Prize winner - who has since won the 2014 European Union's Sakharov Prize. He expressed his dismay that half a million women had been raped and 6 million have died due to the conflict. He asked for political will and courage of the international community to assist in putting an end to these horrors.

Véronique Mbwebwe, a lawyer, spoke about the participation of women in the Diaspora in the peace process and decision-making. She mentioned the lack of female participation in the various negotiations, the violation of their

*Peace in Congo, contd. on pg. 5*

# At the UN in Vienna ...

## The Long Road to Freedom: Time of Remembrance and Reconciliation

For those who lost their lives during the Second World War - May 8, 2014

Prepared by Elisabeth Riedl and

Edited by Ann Schaffner

WFWPI cosponsored together with ACUNS, the Criminal Court of Vienna, and ten other NGOs this event. Michael Platzer, ACUNS Vienna Liaison Office, gave the organizers' introduction. Next, Friedrich Forsthuber, President of the Vienna State Criminal Court, offered a few words.

The first morning session started with the topic: **"Austria towards Independence" (Austrian Treaty 1955)** moderated by Friedrich Forsthuber. On the panel were Herbert Grubmayr and Nikolaus Scherk, both retired Ambassadors, together with Ursula Schwarz, who works in the documentations archive of the Austrian Resistance.

The Austrian State Treaty, governing the re-establishment of an independent and democratic Austria, was signed between the Allied Powers of the USSR, Great Britain and Northern Ireland, USA, and France on the one hand and Austria on the other. It was signed by the foreign ministers of the signatory states, V. M. Molotov, J. F. Dulles, H. Macmillan and A. Pinay and the Austrian Foreign Minister L. Figl, at Belvedere in Vienna on May 15, 1955. The Austrian State Treaty, which was agreed upon in the 354th session of the delegations of the Allied Powers, became effective on July 27, 1955. This was twelve years after the Moscow Declaration of October 30, 1943, in which Great Britain, the USSR and the USA sought to liberate Austria from German rule, since Austria was considered the first victim of Hitler's policy of aggression.

Closely linked with this above mentioned State Treaty is the Federal Constitutional Law

governing Austrian Neutrality, designed after the Swiss model. This was enacted by the Austrian Parliament on October 26, 1955, when the occupying forces had withdrawn from Austria. When the Soviet Union had stopped insisting on linking the German question with Austria, all points at issue between the Soviet Union and Austria were settled in the Moscow Memorandum of April 15, 1955, allowing the Treaty to be signed.<sup>1</sup>

WFWPI UN Vienna sponsored a forum on the **"End of Eastern Block"** with HE Jan Schechter, Czech Ambassador to Vienna as moderator. The contributing members of the panel were Dr. Claus Neukirch, Deputy Director for Operations Service, OSCE<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Alena Heribanova, Director of the Slovakian Institute in Vienna, Jana Starek, Historian at the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust-Studies, and Heinz Gärtner, Director OIIP<sup>3</sup>.

They discussed the Eastern countries' move away from socialist principles due to the unmistakable demand for a democratic system, including citizens' rights. Several countries made notable steps towards the end of the East Bloc:

1. Glasnost and the rejection of censorship.
2. Perestroika, the restructuring – an end to inefficiency and corruption with Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985 in the Soviet Union.
3. Poland's Solidarity Labour Union struck actively against the unfair working conditions from the 1970's until the Communist Government dissolved on January 29th 1990.
4. The German Berlin Wall was opened on November 9, 1989 after years of quiet resistance. March 18, 1990 the East

assistance, which at times violates effective local development. He stressed the need to identify and adhere to shared values.

Charlotte Tocchio, representative of the Department of Principles and Values of the Int'l Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Society spoke of women and youth as powerful agents of change in a country that has a majority of the population under the age of 20. She referred to the targeted projects of IFRC, particularly in the creation of educational platforms, and under the perspective that education with principles and values has an impact on the establishment of lasting peace.

To conclude the session, Carolyn Handschin, Director of the United Nations Office for Women's Federation for World Peace International, spoke on "Creating an Enabling Environment for Peace and Development," calling on women to claim their places as leaders in peacemaking and reconciliation in their families and communities and asking government to provide them with the tools and

Germans voted the Communists out of office and East Germany became the first member to leave the Warsaw Pact. Soviet Troops retreated December 1994.

The first session in the afternoon was entitled **"Refuge seekers assistance from a historical point of view: Between heroism and criminal activity"**. Martin Nesirky, Director, UNOV Information Services moderated this session. Among the six panelists was Hofrat Marco Feingold, 101 years of age, President of the Israeli Cultural community in Salzburg. The discussion concentrated on Hitler's occupation of Austria and how a secret Jewish assistance organization called Bricha was established. Furthermore this session also highlighted the Hungarian Revolt in 1956, the Prague Spring of 1968, and the German Democratic Republic from 1961-1989.

The final session on **"Smuggling versus flight assistance in different parts of the world"** was moderated by Sonja Fercher, a well-known moderator and journalist, with six panelists including a diplomat from the Philippines embassy.

The early evening included a visit to the Vienna State Criminal Court.

### Footnotes

1. Literature: H. Portisch and S. Riff, Oesterreich II, vol. 2: Der lange Weg zur Freiheit, 1986; G. Stourzh, Um Einheit und Freiheit. Staatsvertrag, Neutralitaet und das Ende der O-W-Besetzung Oesterreichs 1945-1955, 41998. This is from a translation 1995 taken from an Austrian Lexikon, R. u. M. Bamberger, E. Bruckmüller, K. Gutkas, Verlagsgemeinschaft Österreich-Lexikon, 1995 (2 Bde.).

2. OSCE stands for Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

3. OIIP stands for Austrian Institute for International Politics.



### Peace in Congo, contd from pg. 4

rights and the problem of illiteracy. She urged women in the diaspora to fulfill five conditions to support their sisters in the DRC.

Séverine Mukunay, a high school teacher, spoke of the rape of women as a tool to destroy Congolese society by preventing the woman to pass on values to the society. She demanded of the government to organize rapid and independent trials and of the international community to support it and to promote the reintegration of victims into their communities.

The only male representative of the session, Emmanuel Kabengele, professor at the Institute for Global Health at the University of Geneva, stressed that it is necessary to analyse the conflict in order to talk about peace in the DRC. An incorrect diagnosis could only lead to inadequate solutions. He also referred to history, reflecting about what has changed in the people. He said that peace can not be realized unless women can develop. He also questioned the continued international



support to do so. "Peace can only be designed and implemented sustainably by those who know the value of living in peace." A mother's role is critical to ending cycles of enmity. She proposed a paradigm of "famiarchy" as an alternative to existing patriarchal systems, whereby an "enabling environment for peace" can be experienced and rooted from early childhood.

See website for complete report, including: *Session III: Geopolitical Perspectives and strategic developments in the Great Lakes Region, and Session IV: The specific contribution of civil society, including faith-based organizations for peace and reconciliation in the DRC*



# Activities Around the World - Russia & Austria

## Intercultural Understanding for Peace

June 2014 - Austria

The Women's Federation for World Peace hosted the "Angels of Peace," a Russian children's troupe, on a cultural exchange tour in Austria June 22-29, 2014.

A musical "Bride of Peace" program between Austria/Europe and Russia/Eurasia took place in five Austrian cities: Graz, Linz, Salzburg, Vienna and Neckenmarkt, with a total of more than 600 guests.

This project began in 2007 in Moscow, initiated by the Russian chapter of the Women's

Federation for World Peace (WFWP), with social dance performances of children between the ages of 9-14 years old at senior citizens' residences and other establishments.

The Angels of Peace Tour with Russia-Austria partnership was one more step towards reconciliation, exactly 100 years after the beginning of World War I, due to the tragic assassination on June 28, 1914 of Crown Prince Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie, who had attempted to restore Austro-Russian relations

while maintaining an alliance with Germany.

World War I brought devastation throughout Europe: 59 million troops were mobilized, more than 8 million died, and more than 29 million were injured. In addition, June 22 was the 100th anniversary of Berta von Suttner, an internationally respected Austrian pacifist and author of "Lay down Your Weapons" - and first woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, in 1905.

Complete Report at [www.wfwp.org](http://www.wfwp.org)



# Global Women's Peace Network

## Annual World Summit and WFWPI Conference

August 2014 - Seoul, Korea

Photo: First Ladies and other influential women participants joined for an evening informal meeting with WFWPI President, Professor Yeon-ah Choi Moon and WFWPI Vice presidents. The discussions focused on the very personal concerns that each had in their country and region related to the empowerment of girls and women, strengthening communities and nation building.



## Women's Partnership in Achieving Peace and Harmony in the Middle East and the World

18th WFWPI Women's Conference for Peace in the Middle East

May 9-12, 2014 - Amman, Jordan

By Carolyn Handschin

The Eighteenth WFWPI Women's Conference for Peace in the Middle East was held in Amman Jordan from May 9-12, 2014. This small country of nearly 8 million inhabitants, which has given a home to 1 million refugees, also welcomed us generously.

May 2014 marked the 10-year anniversary of the WFWPI Middle East Peace Initiative in 2004 that brought 600 women to Palestine and Israel to support women's peace and reconciliation efforts. This year, 160 women leaders from 26 nations, including Europe, the Americas, Asia and the South Pacific and representatives from 17 MENA countries attended. The theme, "Women's Partnership in achieving peace and harmony in the Middle East and the world" provided an opportunity to examine and create awareness about the way that women are significant partners in governance, peace-making, conflict resolution- and sustainable community building.

What are the strategies that will allow both women and men to bring their capacities and qualities to the table and collectively solve the pressing problems preventing the region -and all of humankind- from enjoying lasting peace? The set of sub-themes focused on were: Mothers raising children in dignity and peace; Women empowering women in the community, and Women's role in securing a peaceful and prosperous nation.

At the welcoming banquet, participants heard former Jordanian Foreign Minister, H.E. Kamel Abu Jaber speak about the seriousness of his mother in educating her children for character and for excellence. Dr. Hamdi Murad, respected Islamic scholar, added that "peace without women and girls, can never be peace".

The next morning at the Opening Plenary, Dr. Zoe Bennett, WFWPI IVP for the



Middle East, welcomed an overflowing room with a few thoughts about women's boldness in expressing their desire for peace and their perseverance. All conflicts share a similar pain, which is important for us to remember as we listen to each other. Dr. Lan Young Moon, President of WFWPI addressed her remarks about global villages becoming one community. "When one village is suffering, mothers need to take the lead with compassion, sacrifice and service. As one global family, peace in the ME concerns 'me'. We will go on to Jerusalem with the same message in 5 days. We all yearn for our 'original' hometown because in some ways, we are all like orphans."

Ms. Reem Najar, President of The YWCA in Jordan described the situation of women in the region. They have access to education, stand as members of parliament and hold other positions, but sustainable peace cannot be achieved alone. We need partners. The uprising in the Arab world began with a desire to instil democracy, but has become complicated with other groups coming in to seek their form of power. We need to have a plan how we can join forces to continue our cooperation throughout the year.



Ms. Zena Ali Ahmad, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Country Co-ordinator for Jordan, explained how studies have shown that conflicts are born by women although they are not usually the ones who start them, nor asked to resolve them formally. UNDP issued a framework

*Middle East Women, contd. on pg. 11*

### Parents, contd from pg. 3

without the toxic stress of violence, neglect and family dysfunction, we are turning “gold into lead” or “turning normal children with great potential into mentally diseased adults.”

Showing graphs of the cost effectiveness of different interventions including job training



and school programs, **Dr. Panter-Brick** made clear that the earliest programs that strengthen parenting abilities are by far the most effective for child well-being. She stressed that secure attachment to both the mother and father are predictive of the child’s success on all levels of development throughout life, since the parent-child relationship “sets the stage for the chemical and structural changes in the brain that govern emotional, social and physical behavior throughout life.” Emphasizing that the father’s role cannot be underestimated, she said “the benefits of being securely attached to a father are paramount when children enter their period of adolescence.”

Dr. Panter-Brick discussed recent research answering the question, “With effecting parenting, can we raise our children in ways that reduce violence inside and outside the home?” with a resounding, “yes.” These research findings will be discussed this September at the UN in the launching of the Early Childhood Peace Consortium and the publication, *Pathways to Peace*. In her conclusion, she pointed out that policies and investments for social development are amiss if they exclude the family. Instead she argues for early childhood investments and parenting education, especially ones that engage fathers, as “the key to boost adult health, to reduce crime, to raise earnings, and to promote education and global citizens... because the scientific evidence links substantial family investments to real boosts in adult health, social and economic development and a disposition to peace.”

After Dr. Panter’s presentation, respondent, Dr. Thomas Walsh, president of UPF, praised the presentation for making clear the essential role of parents, the importance of engaging fathers and the need for early intervention. We must create family-focused policies and programs, because mothers and fathers are the best resource we have for raising children to their full potential, or “gold into gold for life.”

Special thanks to the WFWP UN team in New York, and to WFWP leaders from abroad as well as from the greater New York area, for their attendance as well as for their support.



### 65th DPI/NGO, contd from pg. 3

“Nobody has a greater stake in this agenda than the lives of the people it will affect.”

Mr. Gerald Casey, Founder and CEO of MBAs across America, followed Ambassador Powers. He emphasized the need for “spiritual healing of the world,” stating that “our real power comes from who we are.” He went on to say that the “real task is to find the courage to forgive” and to “push beyond passing laws to love.” He closed with the comments, “We can turn our missions into a ministry” and “put this spiritual awakening at the very core of our development agenda.” He received the strongest show of support and appreciation for his remarks.

Other speakers in the Opening Session included, Mr. Maher Nasser, Acting Head of the United Nations Department of Public Information; Ms. Maryanne Diamond, Chair of the International Disability Alliance; Ms. Andrea Carmen, Executive Director, International Indian Treaty Council; Dr. Anne Marie Carlson, Chair of the NGO DPI Executive Committee; and Mr. Cyril Ritchie, President of CONGO, the Conference of NGOs.

#### The Closing Session

The Closing Session was held on August 29th in the Trusteeship Council Chamber.

Closing remarks were presented by United Nations officials and by civil society leaders. Ms. Amina Mohammed, Special Advisor on Post 2015 Development Planning for the UN Secretary General, stated, “All the key elements are there in our agenda, which responds to the complexities and challenges of our world today. With just under 500 days to go with the MDGs, there is still much to do in education, health, reducing poverty. Our job now is to keep the momentum of these goals and move forward with this ambitious new agenda. One of them is jobs; and really looking at stemming forced migration so people will have lives of dignity at home. Also, building infrastructure in the poorest nations, and helping fragile economies respond to climate change.”

The Declaration, or outcome document, from the 65th Annual DPI NGO Conference was presented in draft form. It contains three sections, including, Vision, Monitoring and Accountability, and Recommendations around the SDGs. This document will be presented to the General Assembly for consideration.

Special recognition goes to WFWPI UN Team members Joy Theriot, Youngsoon Quinn, and Jennifer Theriot for representing WFWP well on the DPI Planning Committee and serving as monitors for several of the workshops. Youngsoon and Jennifer have been serving as DPI interns for WFWP in 2014. The DPI annual conference was attended by ten UN Team members and their guests.



### Happiness, contd from pg. 2

to feel happiness.

Ambassador Ib Peterson spoke about some ongoing efforts in Denmark, including an institute dedicated to studying and researching happiness. Ambassador Peterson proclaimed some factors that promote happiness in people’s lives, which include, having freedom, social security, work and social relations, as well as participation in volunteer work, sports, and being in social settings.

Ms. Conslee Nishimwe conveyed her experience in the 1994 Rwanda genocide where she witnessed family members and friends being killed, raped, as well as many other unimaginable sufferings. Despite her dreadful experience, Conslee doesn’t carry any anger with her, and is grateful for still being alive. She says that she only carries positive thoughts and goals.

Ms. Kaylen Larson is a young woman and a youth advocate to South Dakota. In her presentation, she talked of service and the power it has in making people happy. She said that happiness comes from helping other people. Kaylen was convinced that the world will become more peaceful and happy simply by being a good friend, neighbor, or citizen.

Dr. Kaiping Peng stated that studies are being done in China to research more about happiness and what makes it happen. So far, he said that rapid industrialization and economic growth do not promote happiness, and that to attain happiness, one needs to be caring and respectful towards other people.

The last speaker, Ambassador Carlos Enrique Garcia Gonzalez, stated that art is an excellent medium to promote peace and happiness. In his speech he used the phrase, ‘Art Inspiration Action.’ By promoting art in communities, it allows for a critical mass of good thinking among people, and also empowers them to change the world.

The speakers for the International Day of Happiness briefing were truly inspirational and instilled inside the hearts of everyone attending a desire to strive toward becoming caring, global citizens. Each speaker had sincerity in his and her voice, and conveyed what they had to say about happiness with passion. Based upon the presentations at the briefing, one can be assured that there are institutes, organizations as well as people who are concerned about the well being and happiness of others.

*Ms. Youngsoon Quinn is a DPI intern with the WFWPI UN Office in New York, as well as a student at the Unification Theological Institute.*



## *Alliance, contd from pg. 2*

as nations upholding the rule of law.

Due to significant cooperative efforts of activists, NGOs and member states, femicide is now being addressed formally in the international community and was introduced through General Assembly Resolution 48/104.

The next step in the development of the UN work on this issues is a Bangkok, 11- 13 November 2014, meeting of the Femicide Working Group. It is not an open meeting of the UNODC and only a few NGO representatives key to this work will be invited.

To support the growing efforts on this and other challenging issues such as trafficking, drugs etc., the Alliance has been creating an online platform that may become the pre-eminent “go-to” resource for documents and contributions by civil society on various aspects of Femicide at: <http://www.cpcjalliance.org> Please be warned, some of the reports will shock and disturb you.

Some of the most difficult challenges remain. For many their cultural traditions remain a barrier to spiritual and social development. How are we to address the invisible yet powerful taboos of culture, religion and social practices that have been in place for centuries — and in some cases result in obviously horrendous human rights violations and yet are today perpetuated even by the most educated?

Do a little research on the use of acid on women in India and you will be stunned. You can start here, but there is plenty of additional information online in addition to the growing resource the Alliance is establishing.

Admittedly many undesirable social practices are nowhere near as malevolent as these depicted here. However as we dig more deeply into the issue of femicide in search of solutions, we soon discover that a great many practices blossom in the shadows of the greatest religions precisely because of the challenges of teasing apart the unhealthy threads of cultural practice and our religious aspirations.

Further, the illegal practices revealed in these reports show not only a significant bias against women, but one that is very often perpetuated by women themselves. It behooves us all to reflect even more incisively—for the sake of our own daughters and granddaughters—upon our own assumptions, words and actions, and especially to what we quietly acquiesce in our own families and communities.



## *Water, contd from pg. 2*

sets the Earth apart from the rest of the planets in our solar system. In particular, water is a necessary ingredient for the development and nourishment of life.

At the June 19 briefing, organized by the UN Department of Information (DPI), on the topic of Water and Sanitation in the Post 2015 Development agenda, a panel of experts provided vital information on the critical issue of water management and sustainability. With a particular focus on water issues in arid countries, topics covered included water management in the Middle East, recycling techniques including new technological advancements, managing potable water in areas of increased population and agricultural use, new developments in increasing water supply, and leveraging local philanthropies for high impact.

The panel was moderated by Mr. Joseph Hess, Jewish National Fund (JNF), Vice President for Government Relations. Many years of drought in Israel, coupled with an increased demand from a rapidly growing population, have overexploited the country's limited natural water resources. Over the past three decades, the Jewish National Fund (JNF) has worked to alleviate Israel's chronic water shortage.

The speakers included Ms. Sharon B. Megdal, Director, Water Resources Research Center, at the University of Arizona; Mr. Clive Lipchin, Director, Center for Transboundary Water Management, Arava Institute for Environmental Studies; and Mr. Seth M. Siegel, Co-founder of Beanstalk, Sixpoint Partners and Vringo.

Mr. Joseph Hess opened by referring to the UN Millennium Development Goal of ensuring environmental sustainability, which states that much of the world still does not have access to clean, safe water. He quoted HRH Prince El Hassan Bin Tale of Jordan, a former chair of the UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation, who emphasized that “only by leveraging innovation and the cooperation required to develop solutions that are both cross-sector and regional, can such challenges be overcome.”

Ms. Sharon B. Megdal stated that there were worldwide concerns about water quality and quantity, surface water and groundwater, governance approaches and management, as well as the imbalance between water supply and demand. She noted that even though solutions take many different forms, ranging from treatment plants and dams to conveyance systems, solving the water supply-demand gap was not only about water technology or conservation, but about overarching cooperative frameworks. Ms. Megdal emphasized the importance of interaction between collaborators and clear communication channels among the decision makers, experts and with the civil society in order to ensure that we can meet the human and environmental needs for water. (Regarding co-operation she mentioned Prince

El Hasan proposal for UN International Water Year).

She detailed how waste water from showers and washing machines, not necessarily from toilets and sinks can be used to supplement and extend water supply. Pilot rainwater systems can be designed adjacent to planting fields and storage areas to reduce the amount of water going into cesspools. She used the restoration of Agamon Lake as an example where environmental degradation was addressed by sparingly using treated water to prevent extinction of a certain species of birds for their survival.

Mr. Clive Lipchin stated that Israel has been facing the issue of water scarcity and has been able to address this problem through the development of an efficient centralized water grid. He noted that the ability to integrate desalination into the existing water grid, both for potable water and wastewater, allows for the economics of desalination to work. Mr. Lipchin emphasized that Israel is the world leader in the amount of waste water going to agriculture (1996 technology). The second challenge Israel is facing is the reality of the Dead Sea shrinking. Solving this environmental dilemma requires transboundary cooperation between the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea, Palestine and Jordan. Mr. Lipchin also emphasized the value of looking at localized solutions to treat and re-use grey water via recycling.

Mr. Seth Siegel emphasized the high degree of the integration and comprehensiveness about Israel's water solutions for its growing population. He focused on the area of agriculture and drip irrigation. Drip irrigation can be an important tool in changing the global water profile because it addresses food security, water scarcity and gender issues, as well as lowering the carbon footprint. Mr. Siegel stated that Israel achieved these advancements through having a sophisticated legal structure and governance: all drilling is under rigorous government control, every amount of water has to be metered, and local utilities are regulated to enhance water infrastructure spending, reduce leaks and encourage innovation. We learned that 35% of water loss in the United States occurs due to fire hydrants and leakages and were encouraged to put a stop to subsidizing special groups. He encouraged adopting Israel's proven techniques and expressed that market mechanics do work. He said that consumption dropped by 16% when treated water was used for parks and fields and water has no boundaries. He believed that hope, happiness and prosperity can be gained by sharing this around the world.

The Zero Draft Declaration of the 65th Annual UN DPI conference states the goal, “By 2020 to ensure the human right to water and sanitation by providing universal access to sufficient, safe and affordable potable water, sanitation and hygiene, including in households, schools, health facilities,

*Water, contd. on pg. 12*

## Family Values, contd from pg. 1

Although the West boasts its human rights, we need to re-consider the unlimited exportation of western irresponsible morality that seems to be fuelling discontent and reactionary agenda among more conservative peoples in the world.

Director of the WFWPI UN Offices, Mrs. **Carolyn Handschin** explained that the mere existence of Human Rights, or a universally agreed Declaration on them, will not automatically bring a culture rooted in the values and behaviour described within. A built-in incentive towards empathy and “Human Responsibility” that overrides the need for an elaborate system of enforcement is necessary.



Weakened families disrupt gender roles, as seen in the impact on children in cases of domestic violence, and have sparked “trends” in the definition of family. It is important to maintain an awareness of the optimal norm/form for family while identifying causes of breakdown (prevention), similar to the way that the medical field handles sickness of the body. A healthy body is always the reference point.

### Session II: Family Breakdown and the Weakening of Marriage and Family through current Family Policies

This session brought to the attention of the audience facts and figures from experts about the price of the failure of marriage and family, costs that are a huge burden to states and governments. Mr. Mark Brann, Secretary General of UPF Europe chaired the session. The first presenter, Mr. **Harry Benson**, Research Director of the Marriage Foundation-UK asked, “has government made the problem worse?” What does the data tell us about marriage?” The overwhelming majority of the families that stay intact are ‘married’ families, compared to ‘co-habiting’. (Data: 69% to 15 %). Marriage is an ultimate act of dedication and commitment for the future, building a history and memories. Families break down when couples move in together too quickly, adding constraints before establishing dedication. It is unlikely that governments can influence the breakdown of families through their laws, signals or money. But, the question remains, “can government help couples to stay together?”



Mrs. **Maria Hildingsson**, SG of the Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe (FAFCE) based in Brussels, spoke about the value of marriage to society. She presented some factors related to family and marriage in the European situation; individualism, ageing population, low birth rates, divorces, poverty and social exclusion. Family policy in Europe is more



of a preventive one, without great expertise available on the issue. There are demographic concerns. High unemployment among youth makes it difficult to establish a home. This will affect the future dramatically. Young people are connected, but not related.

Although sexual education has been compulsory since 1970s, what the youth actually ask is “how can we make lasting relationships?” Statistics show that currently young people have respect for the adults who stay intact as couples and keep their family.

The next speaker, Mr. **Stephen Stacey**, Educator and Marital-family Policy Specialist from Finland asked the question, “Is a parent’s right to happiness more important than a child’s right to get a good start in life?” States have redefined the social understanding of marriage to being an institution that cements sexual attraction. Marriage, in essence, is about aligning human beings with nature’s cycle of conception and birth, with children being cared for about 20 years by two opposite-sex adults.



**Dr. Anna Zaborska**, member of the European Parliament from Slovakia drove from a European Union meeting in Strassbourg just to speak at the conference. She spoke about commitment to the needs of children. She expressed her concern about the recent discussions on maternal leave at the European Parliament. The role of the mother at home is not being taken into consideration anymore. Is that really what the constituents want of their representatives at the EU? The terms are changing, degrading. It is no longer about pregnant women, but about pregnant workers. At the expense of giving in to “politically correct”, we are sacrificing our future generation. We need to know our statistics better. We need fair family politics in Europe!



### Session III :“Marriage and Family Policies in the West – where do we go from here?”

This session brought together some very compelling testimonies of efforts from the side of the civil society. This included reports from the popular demonstration just held in Stuttgart, Germany that was organised in joint collaboration with “La Manif-pour-tous”, organizers of a series of very large demonstrations in France against the government’s policies and promoting the natural family. Other civil society initiatives were acknowledged, countering some of the family un-friendly public policies being advanced by local and national governments in Europe.

The Chair of the session, Mr. Dieter Schmidt, Chairman of UPF Germany, invited Mr. **Karl-Christian Hausmann**, Vice-President of the Christian Democratic Union of Stuttgart



to report on the demonstration of June 28. Mr. Hausmann explained that unfortunately the pro family activists are always presented very derisively. It is known that some of the proposed new school curricula being developed by LGBT lobby groups is funded by governments. Local citizens spoke out. Based upon the professional and unified counterproposals launched from civil society, several of the proposals were changed, including one that demanded sexual diversity among teaching staff in primary schools.

The very striking testimony of Mr. **Drazen Vukotic**, Vice-President, In the Name of the Family-Croatia, showed the power of civil society that brought about the Referendum in Croatia to protect marriage and family in the National Constitution through a constitutional amendment. It began with obligatory sex education for young children. Fearing that the new laws would lead to parents forfeiting their rights of family and adoption, parents responded. With an extremely well coordinated campaign, 6000 young volunteers were mobilized, 50 reports were written and 750,000 signatures (20% of 3.8 million) collected in 15 days. The referendum demanded the inclusion of the wording “marriage is a lifetime union between a man and a woman” in the Constitution.



Finally, Ms. **Josie Hauer**, US Department of Health and Social Services, brought a very factual presentation of what the US Government is doing to cope with increased family breakdown, asking, what government can and should do. Children living in two-parent, married households statistically do better in school, have fewer behavioural problems and are more likely to have successful marriages of their own. Responsible Fatherhood programs were very effective because female headed households have been a big problem-especially in some sectors of the society. There is a treasure of webinars and resources that have been collected by these programs that can be accessed at [www.twoofus.org](http://www.twoofus.org).



### Session IV: “The Unique Contribution of Civil Society and Faith based Organizations in strengthening Marriage and Family in the 21st Century”

This session brought together three faith communities and their best practices and vision for strengthening marriage and family.

Ms. Brigitte Wada, President of WFWPI-France chaired the session. The first speaker, representing Islam, was Mr. **Hafid Ouairi**, co-founder of the Islamic Center of Geneva and President of the “Fondation de l’Entreconnaissance”. It is not necessary to be an expert to see that the family isn’t doing well. Individuals have to learn



“we”. Family allows humanity to regenerate. Democracy cannot twist the definition of family. A family begins with two beings who must be aware of their role and responsibility. They conceive their children with love and raise them with that affection to share that love and concern beyond their own family. The love of the mother will protect her children. It is very important that girls can be educated so they can guide their children towards a better future.

Christianity was represented by **Dr. Nancy Lyon Sonntag**, former US Legislator from Utah and current UN representative of LDS Charities. According to her faith's teachings, each of us are brothers and sisters.



Reaching out hand in hand is putting our faith in action. No other success can compensate failure at home. Their three pillars are faith, family and freedom, which serve as a guide through life. Marriage is a great engine of the economy. Every person represents the creative potential which is the real wealth of the nation.

### *Middle East Women, contd from pg. 7*

on women in times of conflict that identifies means to support women's participation in peace making and ensure women's protection from all forms of violence during times of conflict and emergency. Tantamount is the call to develop civil society action plans on women, peace and security in the region and to facilitate interaction between government and civil society.

The speech of Ms. Jane Connors, Chief of Special Procedures Branch, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Geneva, was read to the audience. “The exercise of freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly and association, and participation in public life is fundamental to fostering dialogue, tolerance, upholding the rule of law and realizing good governance. Inclusive and participatory societies are the foundations for democracy. This is underpinned by the participation of women in decision-making processes within the family, local community, as well as in national and global arenas.” She spoke about it being a time of critical reflection and OHCHR's strategy for “Widening the Democratic Space” 2014-2017 to address the challenges relating to the exercise of these freedoms, especially by women.

WFWPI UN Office Director, Ms. Carolyn Handschin, chaired Session One, “Mother's raising children in dignity and peace”. She reminded the participants that in order to generate solidarity among women and to sharpen our skills in dialogue and advocacy, women need to have confidence in their “local knowledge” and expertise as leaders/parents, mediators, nurturers and managers. But they need to understand some of the dynamics of the larger picture (governments and UN) in order to realize the global demand for those talents and experiences. Amb. Mervat Tallawy,

Representing the civil society at large, Mr. **Josef Missethon**, CEO Institute for Education and Human Resource Management in Linz, Austria, expressed the views of the current, perhaps less religious citizens in Europe who nevertheless attach a great importance to Marriage and Family. At a time when traditional values are declining, it is important to the Austrian people to become more insistent to search for deeper meaning in their lives- and this is good.



Finally Mr. **Timothy Miller** representing the Unificationist perspective as a Vice-President of FFWPI Europe, explained about his personal experience as part of Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Moon's Cross Cultural Marriage Wedding/Blessing and the vision of “World Peace through Ideal Families”. He described in detail the need for a “True” Family movement in order to create a new



President of the National Council for Women in Egypt and former Under Secretary General for the United Nations took on exactly that broader view of the session theme. She thanked WFWPI for persevering over 18 years for the sake of peace in the Middle East. With a call to advocacy to women participants, she explained that it took the UN 60 years to discover SCRes 1325 and 14 years later, only 36 countries have national action plans. “As if we do not have brains, to share negotiation, mediation, governance.” Her recommendations included: 1) Policies and projects should benefit from gains made by women during wartime; 2) More inclusion and gender balanced social, political power relations in post conflict societies; and 3) Effective conflict prevention and management strategies that are inclusive of women.

The next speaker, a member of the Jordanian Ministry provided an opportunity for the audience to ask specific questions related to the situation of women and girls in Jordan. Having worked as a lawyer and rising to influence in an Arab country, she explained how it was possible to be a good mother as well as pursue her professional life, albeit with difficulty at times. The care that women learn as mothers needs to be transferred to the larger society. She stressed the commitment of Jordan to gender equality, referring to the Queen herself. Questions were asked about the concept of “honour crimes” and why the term refers only to girls. The idea was raised for the change of the term from “honour crimes” to “shame or dishonour” crimes, because the term now used almost excuses the perpetrators. She expressed her conviction that these are ways that policy and norms can change through the active participation of civil society. These crimes are not condoned by Islam. Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish, renowned medical doctor from Palestine who lost his three beloved teenage daughters to rockets fired into his

culture of commitment, that is sorely missing today and causing a dangerous de-stabilization. Religion cannot have credibility if it cannot go beyond faith and denomination. If we cannot put deeds to practice, cannot live for others as an individual, unlikely that we can make a good marriage. One cannot underestimate the contribution of religion to peace and prosperity. We need to swing the pendulum back to rethink values such as purity and fidelity.

### **Day Two: July 1**

The morning sessions were designed to discuss proposals and recommendations for follow-up with governments, international and national institutions, NGOs and civil society. Each presenter provided their best practices and talking points with the intention of building momentum and solidarity among family policy advocates in Europe. In commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, RECOMMENDATIONS and ACTION STEPS were agreed upon by consensus.



home and created an organization, “Daughters for Life” that provides scholarships for young women, spoke from the floor saying, “There is nothing honourable in those acts!”

The conference continued over four more sessions, each extremely insightful and interactive.



### **“Global Women's Peace Network” 18th Women's Conference for Peace in the Middle East Declaration**

Today, May 11, 2014, 120 women from 26 nations are gathered in Amman, Jordan for the Eighteenth Annual WFWPI Women's Conference for Peace in the Middle East with the theme “Women's Partnership in Achieving Peace and Harmony in the Middle East and the World”.

Commemorating the 10th year Anniversary of the Women's Federation for World Peace International's campaign that brought over 600 women to the Middle East, focusing on Jerusalem in 2004, to create an enabling environment for peace and express solidarity with all women worldwide engaged for peace and conciliation.

Representing governments, international institutions and civil society, we acknowledge that women are significant and necessary partners in preventing and resolving conflict and commit ourselves to take the lead in realizing a world of peace by organizing a peace network of individuals, organizations and agencies committed to protecting human dignity, human rights, the recognition of shared responsibility and universal values.

#### **As such, we declare our determination**

**One:** To value women's unique position and responsibilities within families, the starting place of a world of peace and the place for learning and living peace.

**Two:** To take the lead in pioneering the path of resolute women peace leaders through education, cooperation and solidarity, ending historic cycles of victimization and perpetuation of violence.

**Three:** To overcome barriers and misunderstanding between races, religions, cultures and nationalities as men and women work together in partnership to promote the paradigm for peace: One Human Family under One Creator.

**Agreed Upon Action Steps & Recommendations**  
Full text available on our website [www.wfwp.org](http://www.wfwp.org)

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## WFWP Internship Program at the UN in Geneva Sessions at the Human Rights Council - continued

### *Jimin Park Millet, contd from pg. 4*

required for the betterment of the people globally. Listening to different opinions from many different people who represent diverse organizations with various goals and purposes, I could broaden my thoughts and ideas and also change some of my opinions that I had in mind for a long time. For example, I used to be more inclined to pro-death penalty but there was one speaker who kind of tilted my opinion towards anti-death penalty. It was a life story of one American man whose name is Kirk Bloodsworth. He was guilty of murdering a 9 year old girl and was imprisoned for 9 years and meanwhile sentenced to death row twice. After 9 years of imprisonment, he was exonerated because of DNA testing. He said, "It happened to me, it can happen to anyone in this world". His last words were somewhat scary to think about and they awakened me how unjust the practice is for innocent people to be sentenced to death. Furthermore, the High Commissioner Navi Pillay mentioned that there is no evidence that death penalty deters criminals. The panel on the death penalty changed my viewpoint and made me think how unjust it is to the innocent victims. I learned something very important: to think twice and listen to different opinions before concluding my own judgement and making decisions.

Before the internship, I wasn't aware of many of the issues discussed at the HRC session. But, as I learn about them, I realize that it is very important to raise awareness -something anyone can and should do. The problems continue to exist because people are not aware of them. Thereafter, I made a resolution to teach people around me about the issues I learned at UN as much as possible. I think that ignorance leads to pain, pain leads to disaster and disaster leads to the ignorance. In order to break such a vicious circle, we need genuine attention from every single person. Indeed, every big change starts from a small action we do.

### *Water, contd from pg. 9*

workplaces and refugee camps, progressively eliminating inequalities in access including inequality based on gender, age and disability."

The focus of this event stemmed from MDG 7, integrating principles of sustainable development into country policies and reversing the loss of environmental resources. On the agenda was the reduction of biodiversity loss, achieved by 2010, substantially reducing the population who were without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015 and achieving by 2020, an ambitious goal of improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers. It is being understood that in order to bring this about, we need to work together with local, national, civil society and government and foster international cooperation.



### *Noemie Komagata, contd from pg. 4*

with the topics of health and education. I could better understand the significance and the role of the HRC in those fields. Needs like health care and education that seem so natural to have and constitute the Human Rights Declaration, are missing in some parts of the world. I could really feel grateful to live in a country like Switzerland, where we have access to a very high quality health system and we're able to receive a good academic education.

Sometimes it was internally painful to listen for several hours about the difficult situations that some countries are facing. They are going through poverty, hunger, lack of education, etc., that it seemed to me that there were no chances to break the vicious circle they are in. Nevertheless, thanks to the "rapporteurs" who are visiting different countries and reporting about the situation there and to the measures taken by the Human Rights Council, organisations, representatives, etc., we can see improvements and advancement in making a world where people can see their rights being recognized.

Though we are making steps forward, the most important change that should be made is not the politics or the economic situation of a country but it is the heart of the people. If we can see our neighbors as our brothers and sisters and love each other like in a family, we can establish a peaceful world and that solution will bring sustainable results. So values in the family, of education of heart, forgiveness, etc. should be taught in the different countries, starting with the governments. To see results, we need time, patience, perseverance and will.

In conclusion, this internship at the HRC was a very enriching experience. I could learn a great deal about the technical aspect of the UN but it also broaden my mind to the topics that were discussed. I didn't have much knowledge in international relations and I still lack a lot of understanding but I could connect the topics

on health and Human Rights with my studies in medicine and it opened new doors for me.



WFWPI Internship Graduation; center: Noemie Komagata

### *Kristine Swarts, contd from pg. 4*

on the Internet needs to be combatted through restricting racist content and censoring. Likewise, the best way to combat racism is to advocate counter-speech on the Internet. The next speaker from Switzerland continued this idea by suggesting prevention to start in schools and youth movements, such as the 'No Hate Speech Movement', and with websites that are educational tools battling racism. Another speaker explained how this was addressed at the Council of Europe and how it was a separate protocol because it is very controversial. He called for the need of people to monitor the Internet for racist speech and impose fines on websites that engage in racism.

As mentioned by the speaker, this is a very controversial topic. Most people would agree, hate speech and racism is horrible. However, arguably, censorship is not ending the problem in society, just restricting where it is. Educating people is an actual way to remove racism from society, and the family most directly does this. Actual social change does not come from forcing policies but from a change in the self.



## Upcoming Events

- ❖ Oct 17 International Day of Eradication of Poverty
- ❖ Oct 24 United Nations Day
- ❖ Nov 20 Universal Children's Day
- ❖ Nov 25 Int'l Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
- ❖ Dec 1 World AIDS Day
- ❖ Dec 10 Human Rights Day
- ❖ Mar 1- 14 59th Commission on the Status of Women
- ❖ Mar 2-27 28th Human Rights Council
- ❖ Mar 8 International Women's Day
- ❖ April 10 WFWP 23rd Anniversary
- ❖ TBA WFWP 15th Int'l Leaders Workshop