

International Women's Day 2017 celebrated in the UK

Robin Marsh
March 23, 2017



We were very sad that people lost their lives or were seriously injured yesterday, particularly the unarmed Police Officer who was killed at a gate I have passed by many times. Those hurt were from many nations including the US, France, Romania, South Korea as well as the UK. The incident happened just before 3 pm. We were to have the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) International Women's Day (IWD) event at 5.30 in Parliament passing through security from 5 pm. Some of our guests went early to Parliament and were held inside Parliament for several hours in lock down with all the Parliamentarians and their staff. We had to change our event to Lancaster Gate and catch as many people as possible very quickly when we heard the news. We had a wonderful programme commemorating International Women's Day.

The forty or so people who came were very happy to not have lost the chance to mark International Women's Day and all the preparations they had made to come. One person came from Ireland and another flew from Norway to introduce her London-based friend to UPF.

The Parliamentarians on the programme Rt. Hon. Tom Brake MP and Baroness Sandip Verma were held in Parliament in lock down and therefore could not join us. Tom Brake MP sent a message offering to reschedule the programme for another time. #IWD #UPF

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Those speaking last night included:

Ms. Rhian Sherrington: Founder, Women in Sustainability

Rhian is fascinated by what enables people to make choices that boost their well-being and benefit the planet. She became Executive & Career Coach later becoming an International Coach Federation. She set up her own company in 2012. Rhian has recognised the challenges that women face in male-dominated workplace serious environmental challenges that must be addressed, and knowing the central role that women can play in creating a better world, Rhian is passionate about expanding Women in Sustainability into a vibrant global network. She is the author of books, award-winning 'Alchemy for the Mind: Create Your Confident Core', and Amazon No.1 best-seller 'Choose to Flourish: How to Change Career and Thrive in Life'. She converted an office block into award winning building, where they now live with their two children in Bristol.

Ms. Gulrukh Khan: Chair of All Ladies League

Gulrukh has been a fully qualified Holistic Specialist, dealing with Mind, Body and Spirit for 20 years. She is a natural 'Empath and Intuitive' and is able to work on subtle as well as physical levels. Gulrukh is also an award-winning International film maker. She has directed, produced and scripted a diverse range of short films, education videos and documentaries. She is currently in post-production for a documentary

feature called 'Spirit2Power' featuring many highly acclaimed World Champions, Masters and Celebrities. The film is due for release in 2017. www.spirit2power.com

In addition, she is currently also in production on a documentary feature 'Unknown Journey' about the mystery of the Bosnian Pyramids. Robert Watts, the Producer of the Star Wars Series, Indiana Jones series and Who Framed Roger Rabbit? Is Executive Producer for this documentary feature - to be finished in 2017. Her 4 part documentary series on dolphins won Documentary Feature Award at the Moondance Film Festival in NY in 2012. She is a public speaker and Chair of ALL Ladies League London.



Dr. Shola Mos-Shogbamimu:

Founder & Editor Women in Leadership Publication (www.legaldistinction.com and www.wilpublication.com)

Shola is a dual qualified lawyer with broad corporate and commercial experience in the financial services industry with key focus on corporate investment banking and asset management. She is also an author, public speaker and Huffington Post contributor. She is the founder & editor of the Women in Leadership publication and driven to inspire personal leadership journeys of women. She uses the publication as a platform for positively driving impact for social change on topical issues that impact women globally. She is a consultant solicitor at law firm Richard Nelson LLP and founded the legal consultancy company, Legal Distinction, to provide strategic legal risk management to SMEs. She has experience in facilitating effective decision making to deliver key mandates; brokering strong alliances and cultivating productive relationships to influence outcomes; and demonstrating leadership and mentoring qualities.

Rana Halaby-Cooper

Intercultural mediator/facilitator/NGO advocate for migrant and refugee community/human rights advocate: Rana has combined her passion for human rights with her language and mediation skills to assist lawyers in family reunification cases on the ground in Calais and beyond.

Sadly not able to join us because of the sudden change - Lady Yemi Akinola: Founder Voice of Hope Women Foundation. Voiceless Woman

A Television and Radio Broadcaster, she is the Presenter and Producer of People and Places a Tourism documentary on 182, she is also the Producer of Feminine Mattarz a radio show aimed at showcasing female Issues. Lady Yemi initiated the Voice of Hope Women Foundation a few. It has also showcased issues around Women Trafficking, VVF, Female Genital Mutilation as well as Teen age Pregnancy and Mental Health issues. Since inception, the Voice of Hope Foundation has supported the Salvation Army in Essex to help the homeless persons in their vicinity. An award winner including the Nigerian Centenary Awards, Beftaa, & Women Appreciating Women Lady Yemi is passionate to break the conspiracy of silence on matters women with the aim of empowering them.

Margaret Ali - International Women's Day Speech:

UPF principles uphold the dignity of women in equal status with men both representing their unique value and nature. Everyone loses if women are not in this position because the qualities that women can offer are not brought to bear on the tasks at hand. There are qualities such as reconciling, nurturing, demonstrating compassion in times of need, utilising motherly nature of affection and opting or

negotiation when necessary and finally the famous, multitasking which are on average more available to women. It is not necessary to become more masculine than men to become leaders, as some women leaders have forged themselves.



The global economy is also losing out because of this.

The study in 2015 by market index provider MSCI, looked at more than 4,000 public companies around the world and found those with boardrooms featuring "strong female leadership" saw a 36.4% greater return on equity since the study began in 2009: 10.1% vs. a 7.4% return for the companies with a more male-dominated leadership. MSCI defines a company as having "strong female leadership" if its board has at least three female members, or if the percentage of female directors is higher than average in the country where that company is based.

State Street Global Advisors Hedge Fund, on March 8th 2017, which has roughly \$2.5 trillion under management, announced Tuesday that it would pressure 3,500 companies worth \$30 trillion in market cap to aim for gender parity on their boards. Company boards represent shareholders and vet executives' actions.

"Today, we are calling on companies to take concrete steps to increase gender diversity on their boards and have issued clear guidance to help them begin to take action," Ron O'Hanley, CEO of SSGA said in a statement.

Investors are looking for the better results more balanced Company boards provide.

Women try to resolve things more by finding a middle way or by getting people together to dialogue. A range of studies illustrate that economies are missing out on the substantial opportunities for added growth and development.

'The World Economic Forum Gender Gap Report shows that where the gender gap is smaller in a range of areas-including access to education, health survivability, economic participation, and political participation-countries and economies are more competitive and prosperous. A Goldman Sachs paper notes that a reduction in barriers to female labour force participation would increase the size of America's gross domestic product (GDP) by 9 percent, the Euro Zone's by 13 percent, and Japan's by 16 percent.'

The Co-Founder of UPF, Father Moon described this time as the 'age of women' to take their rightful place in partnership with men. He called for the creation of a 'women's peace corps' to support the efforts to resolve conflicts and promote peace. I found it interesting that later the ground breaking United Nations Resolution 1325 called for the same dynamic of the inclusion of those qualities in peace-making efforts. 'The Security Council adopted resolution (S/RES/1325) on women and peace and security on 31 October 2000. The resolution reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.'

We need to do this together with men, involving them in the process, in order to obtain women's rightful position. This will demonstrate the mutual benefit of working together and complementing one another's qualities. This is the principle of the basis for all relationships between men and women, that we need one another. (Including in the most essential of all partnerships, in marriage.) This attitude will also allow men to take their position in partnership with women for the benefit of all.

From a recent speech by the other Co-Founder of UPF, Mother Hak Ja Han Moon, on the relationship of men and women:

“Beloved woman leaders who seek peace! What is the path that humankind should take today? In the end, the problems afflicting humanity can only be resolved through the logic of love and the understanding that we are all one family under God. This is the teaching of true love with God at the center that my husband and I, as the True Parents, received from Heaven. We have championed and taught this precious truth throughout our lives. This ideal represents the path that will lead humanity to a world of everlasting peace and happiness.

We women were not put on earth merely to help, or to be protected by, men. We are independent individuals who, as representatives of the feminine aspect of God's nature, are meant to help men become more complete.

Through true love, women are to be men's precious partners in love. Men and women are absolutely equal in terms of value.

Men and women who unite through the true love that is inherent in the original ideal share the same position and have equal worth. Also, they attain the right to be with each other, wherever they may be. Thus, a man and woman who are brought into oneness through the original love in God's ideal of true love have been created as equal beings, sharing not only the same status and the right of participation, but also their possessions with each other.

Men and women do not need to struggle with each other, because they do not need to imitate the characteristics, dispositions or roles of the other. It is not necessary to confront, compete or covet the things of the other, or take them by force. Instead, by giving what one has to the other, with true love, and by completing the other, they can become united as a greater whole and share in a relationship of joint ownership.

Now women and men should play a major role in world history, by serving alongside each other like the wheels of a great engine pulling the construction of a peaceful world forward. Today I invite women to accept an important role and become the turning point in building a new century characterized by a loving, peaceful culture.

I sincerely ask you to follow the path of a true mother, the path of a true wife, the path of a true daughter and true sister, and the path of a true woman leader, who will build a unified world where freedom, peace, and happiness overflow. Begin in your family your church, your community.”



Father Moon always urged us to live without casting any shadow, which he called a "life set at high noon." If every one of us lives like a brightly shining lamp, no shadows will be cast. No places of darkness will be created. If we only receive things, they become our debts. Please repay your debts by living a life of true love, of living for others, spreading light throughout the world and wiping away the tears of those less fortunate.