



# Women's

## Federation for World Peace International

United Nations Office Newsletter

Spring 2012

### Growing Sustainable Projects in Rural Communities, Women to Women WFWP Parallel Events Workshop and 56th CSW

February 27, 2012 ~ UNHQ, New York City



*By Melissa Gontijo, Student at Worcester State College, MA*

Speakers: Ms. Susan Bradbury, Founder, The Sound Essence Project in Mongolia; Ms. Evelyn Drake, Coordinator, WFWP-USA Relief Project for Haiti; Ms. Merly Barlaan, Founder, Center for Wisdom and Character Excellence, Philippines; Dr. Nessie Ndivi-Hill, Professor, Essex County Community College, Cameroon. Moderator: Ms. Bonnie Berry, UN Representative, WFWP International.

In the heart of New York City, the United Nations Headquarters welcomed official delegations to the 56th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and NGO representatives, the UN Church Center and the Salvation Army headquarters opened its doors to women from all parts of the country and world to attend the 56th Commission on the Status of Women to participate in NGO sponsored parallel events. WFWPI's event took stage on the morning of opening day, February 27th, 2012 addressing the theme: Growing Sustainable Projects in Rural Communities, Women to Women. This topic supported the priority theme of this year's CSW: The

empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges. While outside it was turning into a beautiful sunny day in the middle of what should be the winter season, inside, the meeting room overflowed with people making their way to the side walls and stuffy corners. The audience respectfully listened to four talented women, Ms. Susan Bradbury, Ms. Evelyn Drake, Ms. Merly Barlaan, and Dr. Nessie Ndivi-Hill, speak on behalf of rural communities in Haiti, Cameroon, Mongolia and the Phillipines. Their practical strategies, personal stories and engaging visuals showcased their passion and energy for the projects they have conceived of, created and nurtured. Many of these projects started at the grassroots level, which gave insight into the planning and sustainment of each project. The panelists offered proven ways to eradicate poverty in small steps through education and love. The event only lasted two hours, but transformed the way people understood how to dissolve poverty even on a small and personal scale.

With an inspirational message by Dr. Nessie Ndivi-Hill on Cameroon's impoverished villages, she set the stage by defining the rural woman as someone who is hard working, family

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oriented and essentially a super woman. **Dr. Ndivi-Hill** promotes self reliance through certain strategies: food banks, food preservation methods, and educational resources to help women farmers improve product marketing. One major

staple crop is the cassava vegetable, which could feed everyone in a village with its many uses if people know how to preserve it well. She feels strongly that knowledge will protect and enhance the environment. However, women in these rural villages lack marketing tools, government support, and technology, which slows progress.

**Ms. Merly Barlaan's** energetic personality lit up the room as she spoke from her 21 year experience working through grass root projects to support marginalized women and children. Her most recent activities



**56th CSW, contd. on pg. 11**



## 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

## Getting to Zero: Youth and HIV/AIDS

In Observance of World AIDS Day  
December 1, 2011 - UNHQ, New York

*By Jeanne Carroll*

Maria-Luisa Chavez- Chief of NGO Relations at the UN Department of Public Information (DPI) Moderator

Since December 1st was declared World Aids Day by the World Health Organization in 1988 this day has become a rallying point to remind the world to address the pandemic. Governments, agencies and civil society use the commemoration to share information regarding spread of the disease, inform and educate regarding recent advances and hold campaigns specific to the disease. Out of the estimated thirty four million people living with HIV, over five million are young people between the ages of 15 and 24, living primarily in sub-Saharan Africa.

Young people are at the center of this epidemic "in terms of rates of infection, vulnerability, impact and potential for change." It is estimated that approximately 3,000 people between the ages of 15 and 24 contract the virus daily, with 40% of all new HIV infections being in this age group. UNAIDS reports state that this age group is taking initiative to educate and prevent the spread of HIV/Aids through the "Prevention Revolution".

Even though 2.7 million new infections were reported during 2010 and 2.8 million people died of AIDS in that year the rate of new infections has dropped and deaths from HIV/AIDS have decreased. Progress has been made as incidence of the infection has declined by

*Youth & HIV/AIDS, contd. on pg. 10*

## Culture of Peace: Amplifying Unseen & Unheard Voices of Peace

January 12, 2012 - UNHQ, New York City

*By Keifuku Sugiyama,*

*Youth UN Representative*

The DPI/NGO Briefing on "Culture of Peace: Amplifying the Unseen and Unheard Voices of Peace" was moderated by Ms. Maria-Luisa Chavez, Chief of the NGO Relations at DPI. The briefing tackled an important yet difficult issue for the whole human race.

After the devastation of World War II, the drive and yearning for a culture of peace has developed. The culture of peace is defined by the United Nations as "a set of values, attitudes, modes of behavior and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their

root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiations among individuals, groups, and nations." In other words, the culture of peace installs the mindset of conflict resolution without violence.

A short film on war and peace introduced the briefing. The film showed the devastating consequences of war and the enriching possibilities of peace. It showed some of the renowned quotes from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Mohandas Gandhi.

After the film, Mr. Anwarul K. Chowdhury, Former UN Under Secretary General spoke

*Culture of Peace, contd. on pg. 10*

### Reports from Special Events

## NGO Working Group on Girls

Leadership Workshop on Advocacy  
November 17, 2011 - UN Church Center, New York

*By Jeanne Carroll*

Gaynel Curry, Gender and Women's Right advisor, Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights assured that her office remains committed to women's rights and awareness raising on CEDAW convention and committee. One of the core conventions of the 187 state partners is to establish an international standard of human rights, particularly for women, in both public and private spheres, gender roles, advancement of women, equality and non-discrimination in ALL aspects of what they do. In addition they introduce protocols which states should follow to assure there is no discrimination in any member state.

Article 17- Twenty three member states report on how they are implementing CEDAW. Specific recommendations are then made to each state regarding direction for implementation of human rights specific to race, country, group etc. Recommendations are submitted to the High Commissioner for Human Rights to address leadership of the member states. In particular, women's rights are attended to through the Secretary General and the High Commissioner.

Article 2- Non-discrimination is collaborative among the UN entities regarding the rights of women during conflict and post-conflict situations, access to justice by all individuals,

*Girls, continued on pg. 10*

## Prevention and Control of Non Communicable Diseases

2011 High Level Meeting

September 19-20, 2011 ~ GA Hall UNHQ, New York

By Dr. Karen Judd Smith

On June 16, 2011 WFWP joined other civil society actors in the UN General Assembly Hall to open the informal interactive hearing on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs.) The two days of hearings were part of preparations for the High-Level Meeting on NCDs planned for the 19th and 20th of September. This high-level meeting of the General Assembly was timed when heads of state were in town to give it top priority during the opening of the 66th session of the General Assembly.

A major concern about NCDs, (the four main ones being cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic lung diseases and diabetes) is that they already kill three in five people worldwide,



and cause great socioeconomic harm within all countries, particularly developing nations, yet they do not get the political or media attention that statistically lesser impacting communicable diseases get. The simple fact remains that the cost of life from NCDs is going to be far greater in coming years in all nations, than those that currently have media and political traction.

Because WFWP participated in the June forum, we had an exclusive opportunity to attend the high level meetings on the 19th and 20th September. The reason this was so is precisely the issue that the high level meeting was attempting to address: lack of awareness across all sections of society about the impending impact of NCDs and the lack of interest in them.

**Diseases, contd. on pg. 9**

## Protection of Children from Violence

Role of Regional Organizations and Institutions

October 11, 2011 ~ UN, New York

By Cynthia Shibuya

The Roundtable, organized by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children builds upon follow-up to the UN study on Violence against Children.

Moderator, Pamela Falk, Prof. of International Relations and Law and CBS News Correspondent introduced Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children. Ms. Pais explained the purpose of the session, "In this session we'll have challenges, share strategic vision and discuss how regional organizations can proceed to strengthen cross-regional work."

Anthony Lake, UNICEF Executive Director thanked everyone for their support and stressed that the moral obligation to protect children

from violence is at the heart of UNICEF's work. He cited chilling statistics of girls victimized by sexual violence, child labor, child soldiers, trafficking, etc. Abuse occurs everywhere. Statements were heard from representatives from all over the world

Africa – There is a strong historical element to be considered. Work is concentrated in local communities. Children's laws in Angola are being over-hauled. Female mutilation in Senegal is down. Namibia is working on insuring access to services. Prevention and safety net programs are being developed in Ethiopia.

League of Arab States – Now focusing on education, prevention, improving partnerships and building resources. At the local level, creation of stronger child protection policies

**Protection of Children, contd. on pg. 10**

## The Social Protection Floor Initiative - Bridging the Gap to Poverty Eradication

Civil Society Forum, Commission for Social Development

January 31, 2012 ~ UN HQ, New York City

By Merly Barlaan

The Civil Society Forum was organized by the NGO Committee for Social Development in joint sponsorship with UN DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development and the Friedrich-Ebert- Stiftung. The forum prepares civil society for the 50th Session of Commission for Social Development (Feb1-10, 2012 at UNHQ NY) and the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (June 20-22, 2012 in Rio de Janeiro). The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) formed the Social Protection Floor Initiative (SPF-I) to create a global coalition supporting countries to

build national social protection floors for their citizens. Guarantees of universal access to essential services (such as health, education, housing, water and sanitation and other services as nationally defined) and Social Transfers in cash or in kind to guarantee income security, food security, adequate nutrition and access to essential services are elements of these protections.

Ms. Winifred Doherty, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd; Chair NGO Committee Social Development; Co-Chair, Working Group on Girls opened the forum by delivering signatures from the Million Signature Campaign. H.E. Mr. Miloš Koterec, Sixty-eighth President of ECOSOC, Permanent

## Forum@Four Marks

### Int'l Anti-Corruption Day 201

Nov. 8, 2011 ~ UNHQ, New York City

By Dr. Karen Judd Smith

The International Anti-Corruption Day is held annually November 9th. To mark the occasion in 2011, the Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice organized a Forum@Four. It was supported by the Mission of Morocco to the UN and was honored to have a top UN staff responsible for issues of corruption in development, Roberto Villarreal, Chief, Development Management Branch.

This event contributed to efforts of UNODC and UNDP to promote actions that undermine corruption and support the 2011 joint international campaign ACT (Against Corruption Today) focusing on how corruption hinders efforts to achieve the internationally agreed upon MDGs, undermines democracy and the rule of law, leads to human rights violations, distorts markets, erodes quality of life and allows other threats to human security to flourish.

The speakers were invited to bring into focus both the "face" of the issues at hand as well as the do-able changes that make a difference in combating corruption. The speakers' experiences helped put the larger work in perspective:

- How the engagement of citizens and civil society can enhance public sector accountability and counter corruption
- The reality of corruption in post conflict Kosovo
- The challenges (and successes) in the ongoing work to reduce corruption in police departments in the USA and beyond.

The expert panel kept everyone so engaged, participants stayed well past the scheduled close

**Forum@Four, contd. on pg. 9**

Representative, Permanent Mission of Slovakia to the United Nations received the signatures.

According to panelists, universal access to social justice and social security systems is crucial to break the cycle of poverty and inequality. Empowerment increases capacity of poor people to benefit from and contribute to social and economic growth, and participate fully in society. H.E. Mr. Ambassador Jorge Valero stressed increase of social investment. Controls on financial speculation are crucial. Ms. Daniela Bas highlighted the following critical points: People's empowerment is key to enhancing the dignity, self-respect, and self

**Poverty Eradication contd. on pg. 12**

## At the UN in Geneva ...

### Human Rights for Irregular Migrants

December 1, 2011 - Geneva, Switzerland



By Aline Afazali,  
UN Representative

The UN High Commission for Human Rights and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung held a parallel event at the conclusion of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD). Panelists were Mr. Bacre Ndiaye, Director of Human Rights Council and Special Procedures Division, Mr. Abdelhamid El Jamri, Chairperson of the UN Committee on Migrant Workers, Mr. Francois Crepeau, UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants and Ms. Michele Levoy, Director of Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM) and moderator, Mr. Matthes Buhbe, Director of Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung of Geneva. The discussion examined the Human Rights Based Approach for irregular migration and promoted understanding of the International Convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families.

Panelist Abdelhamid El Jamri emphasized institutionalisation of irregular migrant labour and called for demystification of irregular migrants. (Please note: "Irregular migrant" refers to those who have migrated without completing the legal or administrative requirements of migration.) He argued that migration contributes to development and economic vitality of nations. Migrants are often driven out of their own society by lack

of opportunity but they help maintain the competitiveness of the society they adopt. Too few rules exist to protect rights of irregular migrants. An example is the UN Convention on Migrant Workers which lacks protection for irregular migrants from collective expulsion from a country. Following institutionalisation of irregular labor, Mr. Crepeau explained, states often neglect rights of irregular migrants while benefiting from migrant labor. He argued that enforcing all labour standards increases the price of employing irregular migrants and contributes to elimination of the irregular labour work force.

Bacre Ndiaye outlined the Human Rights Based Approach to irregular migrants. Irregular migrants are protected by international Human Rights Law, but are vulnerable to criminal traffickers and exploitative employers. He stressed that International Human Rights Law covers vulnerability, marginalization, exclusion of irregular migrants and focuses on empowerment. He recommends all states respect and enforce laws that allow irregular migrants access to housing, education for their children, the right to challenge xenophobic violence and domestic violence, a common plight of irregular migrant women. He explained that states are obligated to act against private actors who abuse vulnerability of irregular migrants.

Michele Levoy affirmed progress in international law on initiatives within European Union on International Human Rights legislation covering protection of irregular migrants rights:



- European Social Charter currently includes the fundamental rights on irregular migration.
- Polish National Contact Point to European Migration Network conference on irregular migration: responses focused gaps between Human Rights vs. fundamental rights for migrants.
- Two reports published by the European Agency for Fundamental Rights on rights of migrants in irregular situations and health care access within EU
- The new Legal Migrant worker's Committee has the mission to increase juris prudence under irregular migrant's rights.

Levoy explained Trade Unions' important role in protection for migrants workers. A process for engagement of national Trade Unions is needed. Ms. Levoy suggested EU's anti-discriminatory directives could be a platform for lobbying for irregular migrants' rights.

Panelists agreed that high level progress has occurred. However enforcement of human rights laws against mistreatment of irregular migrants needs strengthening.

(WFWPI joint written statement to HRC: [http://www.wfwp.org/wfwp/library/WFWPI\\_JointStatement\\_19thHRC-2012.pdf](http://www.wfwp.org/wfwp/library/WFWPI_JointStatement_19thHRC-2012.pdf)) 

### Reports from Special Events *continued...*

#### NGO CSW Forum Consultation Day

February 26, 2011 - The Salvation Army

By Merly Barlaan

The NGO CSW Forum Consultation Day prepares participants for the 56th UN CSW. Warm welcome remarks by Ms. Young Yoon, Chair, NGO/CSW/New York began the day. Highlights included a message from Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women, keynote address by Ms. Mirna Cunningham Kain, Chair, UN Indigenous Peoples' Forum, and a special guest address by Ms. Leymah Gbowee, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.

Ms. Bachelet highlighted UN Women's achievements during its first year and its priorities for 2012. This is a summary of Ms. Bachelet's report: UN Women provided support to more than 25 countries to ensure more women were able to vote, run for office and get elected. \$4.8 million in grants through the Gender Equality Fund advanced women's empowerment in the Arab world.

UN Women also championed adoption of a new UN GA resolution to increase women's political participation and leadership. UN Women worked on adoption of the ILO Convention Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers, secured the commitment of 257 CEOs to the Women's Empowerment Principles to advance decent working conditions and equal opportunities for women; initiated a partnership with the UN FAO, IFAD and the WFP to empower rural women. UN Women launched 16 policy steps to end violence against women, and began an initiative to provide essential services to survivors. In 2011, UN Women issued the first flagship report on progress for the world's women, *In Pursuit of Justice - increasing the number of women police and judges, and supporting women's legal groups, which can make justice work for women.* By end of 2011, the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women had a portfolio

of 96 active grants, covering 86 countries and reaching over 6 million people, with a total value of over US\$61 million. UN Women worked in more than 50 countries to build capacity in gender analysis and budgeting, using sex disaggregated data for more equitable public policies and budgets. In 2011, contributions to UN Women totaled \$235 million. Top priority for 2012 will be to make a renewed push for women's economic empowerment and political participation. In 2012, UN Women will make a major global push with partners worldwide for women's economic empowerment to put women on equal footing with men. For full text version of Dr. Bachelet's speech, please follow the link: <http://www.unwomen.org/2012/02/the-56th-session-of-the-commission-on-the-status-of-women-is-an-opportunity-for-rural-womens-voices-to-be-heard-by-policy-makers/>

**Consultation Day, contd. on pg. 12**

# Multiculturalism - A Contribution to Peace?

September 2011 - Geneva, Switzerland

By Carolyn Handschin

Marking International Peace Day, WFWPI as a lead organizer, and seven partner NGOs held a conference at the UN and the University of Geneva on the theme: "Multiculturalism: A Contribution to Peace?" Conference co-sponsors were the Permanent Missions to the UN in Geneva of Republic of Indonesia, and Republic of the Philippines, International Organization for Migration (IOM), ASEAN Foundation, Universal Peace Federation (UPF), Geneva Interfaith Intercultural Alliance (GIIA) and Fribourg Peace Forum (FPF). The topic, multiculturalism was triggered by words of several European Leaders, including Germany's Chancellor, Angela Merkel who stated in Potsdam earlier this year that Germany's attempt to create a multicultural society has "utterly failed." In Munich, in a speech attended by world leaders, British Prime Minister David Cameron criticized his country's longstanding policy of multiculturalism. "Under the doctrine of state multiculturalism, we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and the mainstream," adding later, "We have failed to provide a vision of society to which they (citizens) feel they want to belong".

## Government and Migration

The Opening session began with a young Philippino/Swiss singer, Ms. Lica de Guzman, who sang "All I Want to Be", expressing the hope of young people to realize great ideals in this globalized world. Speakers included former head of ECOSOC and of the Human Rights Commission, Dr. Makarim Wibisono. As Executive Director of the ASEAN Foundation, he emphasized interreligious and intercultural dialogue, cooperation and respect of human rights as prerequisites for facing the huge influx of migrants throughout the world. Dr. Yong Cheon Song, UPF's Chair in Europe explained that today's world cultures grew from religious roots. Any strategy for peace must include fostering dialogue and cooperation among religions and cultures. Ambassador Evan P. Garcia of the Philippines, expressed appreciation for WFWPI's work including in Geneva with the Model UN "Interreligious Council". "We consider ourselves as one of the primary movers in interreligious dialogue and cooperation for peace in the world."

Ambassador Robert Vandemeulebroucke of Belgium noted ongoing scare mongering about migrants taking health care, taking jobs, depressing wages and threatening demographic balance. The attitude of many migrants in Europe that "you can come here and remain the same", faces increased criticism and has given rise to many narrow minded populist parties. But many migrants are productive and economically active contributors to the wellbeing of their host nation.

Ms. Monica Malek, Office for Integration, Dept Ministry of Justice and Police, Switzerland conveyed greetings from the Hon. Simonetta Sommaruga, Federal Councilor and Minister of the Department of Justice and Police of Switzerland. She described Switzerland's 1.7 million immigrants, 22% of the population. A third of marriages are bi-national. Co-existence between Swiss nationals and immigrants generally works well. A fruit of the Swiss immigration act from 2004 is general mutual respect and tolerance. Migrants must learn one Swiss language. This creates equal access to education and jobs. Recent troubles arose when populist parties launched an initiative against building minarets. The government underestimated fear of "islamisation" of the country, especially by radical groups. The vote outcome showed people deciding against the government in this matter.

Former Minister of Defense in Netherlands, Dr. Willem Van Eekelen, commented that "greying" Europe badly needs migrant workers. He offered a vision of cooperation between as many nations and civil society organizations (NGOs) as possible. The current UN is an inter-governmental organization that reflects post world war II when governments and states primary duty was to protect their own people. Nevertheless the EU has transformed relations among European nations. No one thinks of war between European nations any more. "Our most cherished freedom has its limit where we infringe on our neighbor's freedom. Migrants also need to respect the society that receives and hosts them."

## Multiculturalism, Women and Development

Minister for Disarmament and Humanitarian Affairs of the Philippines Mission, Dr. Jesus Domingo, chaired the session. Ms Blandine Mollard -( IOM Gender Issues Coordinator) explained that female migrants face unique difficulty because their lives are often controlled by harmful practices that violate rights: forced marriage, genital mutilation etc. These women are often invisible. The media focuses on negative aspects of migrants, but the great economic and social contribution that women make should not be forgotten. The money sent home can raise entire communities out of poverty, while they forego their own comfort. This affects the view of women in their communities of origin and children who benefit from the generosity of their extended family members.

Ms. Nicole Heydari from USA, of Mexican and Iranian parentage, a Masters student in International Development at the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna was in Afghanistan for development work, building bridges between US forces and the Afghan people. Afghans easily expressed complaints to her, allowing her to



find solutions. Identifying shared values forms the basis for intercultural and interpersonal cooperation. In Afghanistan, a third of the National Assembly are now women. A quota created this transformation but proper training to ensure qualification is also crucial.

Ms Carolyn Handschin, WFWP-Europe President and Deputy Director of the WFWPI UN Office described WFWPI founding and Japanese volunteer teams appointed to over one hundred countries, twenty years ago. These volunteers supported local women's development initiatives, believing that women's innate talents and life experiences are needed to create community cohesion and peacebuilding. After identifying local needs, available resources and innovative leadership, volunteers developed projects and programs. Many were institutionalized. The WFWPI "Bridge of Peace" programs focus on reconciling historic enmity (political, ethnic, religious) and forged hundreds of peacebuilding projects that counter the forces of disintegration in our societies. In Europe, WFWPI "Dignity of Women" campaigns and "Human Rights and Dignity" educational tools that empower women as leaders and policy influencers have been developed and implemented. This brings women of different cultures and life experiences together in solidarity. A recent focus is young women's leadership training. WFWPI chapters have activities in support of UN MDGs, Poverty Eradication, and a Culture of Peace to resolve pressing problems and provide girls and women of grassroots areas opportunities to think, act and influence globally.



## Youth Special Model UN Session on Multiculturalism and other Sessions

At the Model UN session, young women played roles of UN Secretary General, IOM Director General, UNESCO Director General. A mock session of a hypothetical "UN Interreligious Council" was played by youth representing their faiths. They debated solutions to multiculturalism's image crisis and gave recommendations. Ms. Handschin, coordinator of the youth program, ensured

**Multiculturalism, contd. on pg. 12**

# Activities Around the World in 2012



## WFPW Iceland

Monthly Multicultural Events at City Service Center Mjodd



## WFPW Slovakia

Evening Program in Support of Tsunami Victims  
October 18, 2011



## WFPW Finland

Program to Celebrate International Day of Families  
May 15, 2011



## WFPW United Kingdom

Bridge of Peace Celebration in Walford - 150 Participants  
May 30, 2011



## WFPW Europe

Dignity Campaign Seminar  
November 2010



## WFPW Albania

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women Campaign - November 12-25, 2011



## WFPW Albania

Session with Government Members during Campaign  
November 2011



## WFPW Italy

3rd Bridge of Peace Ceremony in Turin between Italy, Austria and Slovenia - 120 Guests  
March 25, 2011



## WFPW France

International Mother Earth's Day  
"Heaven, Humankind & Earth: The Big Housework"  
April 2011



## WFPW Austria

Hirumbi School Water Project in Kenya  
Austrian WFPW project with Peace Ambassador Dorkas Akwabi



## WFPW Austria

International Day of Peace Celebration in Salzburg  
September 21, 2011



## WFPW Europe

Human Rights Day Event at UK Parliament in London  
250 Guests - December 10, 2011



# Europe

# Europe



### WFWP Europe

European Youth Leadership Conference Commemorating Human Rights Day 2011 in London  
November 8-10 2011



### WFWP Europe

Seminar in Madrid, Spain: "Educations for a Culture of Peace"  
90 Participants  
May 26, 2011



### WFWP Netherlands

International Day of Peace Seminar  
35 Participants  
September 21, 2011



### WFWP Portugal

Publication of an article about the current WFWP President  
August 2010



### WFWP Ireland

Conversation with Writer Lorna Byrne  
Interview led by WFWP President



### WFWP Switzerland

International Day of Peace Celebration in Zurich  
160 Participants - September 17, 2011



### WFWP Europe

At the UN in Vienna: Youth Perspectives on Peace  
250 Participants - June 2011



### WFWP France

International Day of Peace Celebration: Presentations by Mrs. Hamida Namane, Mr. Laurent Ladouce; Reflections on Multiculturalism - September 17, 2011



### WFWP United Kingdom

International Day of Elimination of Violence Against Women  
Speakers: Baroness Verma, Lord King and Host Mr. V Sherma  
House of Commons, Westminster - November 23, 2011

## 12th International WFWP Leaders Workshop - South Korea, October 2011



## Global Interview...

### Sun of Mozambique

Interview with a Graduate of WFPW's School in Mozambique

By Akiko Hozan,  
Project Director in Mozambique

#### History of School

In July 1994, about two years after Mozambique's civil war ended, called the most disastrous war in Africa, ten Japanese women arrived in Mozambique. They had been dispatched through WFPW. The team found the country overflowing with repatriated refugees. UN Peacekeeping Forces were constantly stationed and busily on the move to prevent a recurrence of the civil war and to help the country deal with post-war challenges and procedures. International election monitoring groups were also arriving one after another to monitor the first general election to be held in October that year.



The team visited a public school, while researching what type of project to create. All the windows in the school had been broken. There was not a single desk or chair left. The walls were covered with graffiti and drawings of Che Guevara, a communist revolutionary. The devastating condition of the school was one example of the extent of destruction in the nation.

In an effort to conduct a needs analysis, the team began to learn Portuguese. Repeating the same questions, the team took questionnaires from more than 800 citizens in Maputo, the nation's capital, as well as in Beira, the second largest city. From the results, we understood the serious and urgent need for a school construction project.

In March, 1995, we built a junior high school named "The Sun of Mozambique School" with a shabby straw-thatched roof in the second city Beira. We started with just two classrooms and 44 students in total. The teachers were hired on a part-time basis from the nearby public school. No one complained about this humble school as the local people had a strong desire to have any school, even under a tree, as soon as possible. One student enrolled at this early stage later entered and graduated from the Architecture Department at Eduardo Mondlane University, the toughest, most prestigious university in the country.

In 1997, the construction of an iron reinforced school building began. The small school building of only 5 classrooms, cost \$40,000 and was completed in 1998.

At that time, building something starting from the foundation was big news. TV reporters covered the story repeatedly. The team of volunteers sold 2,000 T-shirts in Japan to help raise funds to cover construction costs. The shirts had a unique design: a sketch of daily life in Mozambique drawn by Mr. Malangatana, the most famous painter in Mozambique. He honored our request to create this original design to support the school project.

In 2001, many years of additional planning and fundraising by the WFPW volunteers culminated in the opening of a high school. The number of graduates who enter the National University has increased steadily since 2004. As of this writing, more than 250 students have successfully entered the National University. Six students are studying under government scholarships in undergraduate and graduate courses in other countries, such as Malaysia and India.

The number of students enrolled in our schools has increased from 44 students since the inauguration in 1995 to 607 students in 2012.

#### Introducing an Exceptional Student

Mataraje Agostinho Bernardo, a second-year high school student in the science program, achieved the best academic results of any student since the school opened in 1995. His average grade for the seven subjects he is taking is 17 points. The average grade at the school is around 10 points. Mataraje's academic performance has been astounding. His grades are 18 points in Physics, chemistry and biology, 17 points in mathematics, 16 in national language (Portuguese), English 15, and philosophy, 16 points. Twenty points is a perfect score. His academic performance has reached the highest level in the nation. He achieved this academic excellence despite an environment where high school textbooks and study books are in extremely short supply. The only academic resource for students is the content teachers provide in the classroom. This is a testament to the focus, determination and strong effort of Mataraje.

In January, Mataraje won admission into the Electronic Engineering, Engineering Faculty program, at Eduardo Mondlane University.

#### Interview

Interview of Mataraje Bernardo by Akiko Hozan (AH).

**AH:** Congratulations! You graduated from high school with outstanding academic results? Could you tell us about your study habits?

**Mataraje:** I studied biology, national language (Portuguese), English and philosophy for two hours at the library starting at 8:00 AM every day. These four subjects require readings,



but I could not read at home as our home is dark at night due to insufficient electricity. So I decided to study in the morning. At 10:00 AM I returned home to prepare for classes that began at 1:00 PM. (In our school, all the classrooms operate on a rotating system, i.e. classes for junior high school are in the morning and for senior high school in the afternoon.) After I got home from school, I studied math, physics and chemistry from 8:00 PM to 10:00 PM.

**AH:** So you studied four hours a day in addition to classes at school, is that right? It must have taken a lot of self-discipline for you to keep this daily routine.

**Mataraje:** I wake up at 7:00 AM and I become very sleepy around 10:00 PM



**AH:** I see. When you need rest, you rest well; and when you study, you focus on studying wholeheartedly. How did you prepare yourself for the university entrance exams? The two required subjects for exams by the Electronic Engineering, Engineering Faculty, Eduardo Mondlane University are math and physics, right?"

**Mataraje:** I studied math from 7:00AM until 10:00AM, and physics from 2:00 PM to 5:00PM. I copied the entire Brazilian study books that have abundant exercise problems, and made it a rule to solve them on a daily basis. "

**AH:** You copied the entire 450 pages of the study books? The copy fees must have been pretty hefty. And you made several copies. This shows your extraordinary efforts to prepare well for the entrance exams. (Since I came to Africa, I have seen many students who study with books borrowed from the library, but he is the first one I encountered, who made his own study book by entirely copying the books. The monthly salary for Mataraje's father is US \$ 150, and Mataraje is the oldest of six brothers and sisters. It must have been very hard for his

family to squeeze money for the copy fee. We have decided to keep duplicates of his copied study books at the school library. He happily lent them to us to copy them. When I thought of it, this was my first experience of borrowing books from a student and copying them.) By the way, why did you change from the public school of more than 2,000 students you attended in your first year of high school to Sun of Mozambique school for your second year?

**Mataraje:** In the public high school I used to attend, there were 90 students assigned to a class. Only half of the students had desks and chairs. The rest sat on the cement floor to study. This created inconveniences. For instance, even if I secured my desk by going to class very early in the morning, if I left my classroom for even a brief moment, someone else would take my seat and I was unable to use it any longer. I thought tuition for Sun of Mozambique School would be expensive as it was a private high school. But I found the tuition was actually affordable even for our family. Also, library books at Sun of Mozambique School are more abundant. So I decided to move to this school. Since then, I am liberated from my constant worries that someone will take away my desk. I appreciate the sense of security brought by having my own desk at school.

**AH:** You were studying hard during vacations between the semesters, weren't you?

**Mataraje:** I put lots of energy into prep work and reviews. I tried to study all the contents of what I would learn during an upcoming semester before the semester began. That way I was hoping to ask questions in class on what I could not comprehend.

**AH:** The chemistry and math teachers said to me, "We have to prepare very well for classes we teach, since Mataraje will throw such sharp questions at us. They are tough to answer if we come to classes unprepared. The teachers also said, "Mataraje studies lecture contents beforehand more than we do." The biology teacher showed me your academic results from second semester. I saw a list of 20 points, perfect scores for the small tests. The teacher also said, "Mataraje is a genius. I have never seen such an outstanding student of academic excellence in my life." He said with great disappointment, "I was wishing he would go to the Medical Department, but he said he preferred the Electronic Engineering Department. It's too bad!"

What made you decide to go to the Electronic Engineering Department?

**Mataraje:** My real dream is to study astronomy. But there is no university in Mozambique that has an Astronomy Department. So, I decided on the Electronic Engineering Department as an alternative.

**AH:** I do hope you'll realize your dream by all means. A college professor in Japan told me that math, physics and English are prerequisites for a major in astronomy.

**Mataraje:** I would like to study these three subjects hard as an undergraduate, as I am

very interested in them. I also want to learn astronomy at a graduate school in a foreign country. However, I am worried that there may be no place that will accept me after I return to Mozambique.

**AH:** It would be 7 or 8 years later when you return from a graduate school in a foreign country, wouldn't it? Astronomy may be needed in Mozambique around that time. So why don't you pioneer a path of astronomy?

**Mataraje:** I will try not to give up my dream.

Mataraje entered elementary school in 2000 at age nine. At that time, students had to pay tuition even at the public school. His father was unemployed and could not send his son to the elementary school. But later the school became free of tuitions, so he was able to go to school. Since then, he has achieved the most outstanding academic results of any other students in the public elementary, junior and senior high schools among several thousand students. Mataraje will be 21 years old soon. During the interview, he responded to the questions as sharply as a sword point. As a student, he listened well with full attention. If what he heard was unclear, he raised questions and kept asking until he understood fully. More than 8,000 students have studied at Sun of Mozambique School so far. Among them, Mataraje stands out as one of the best. We sincerely wish him a fruitful life at the university. We will watch him warmly until his dream of studying astronomy comes true.



### *Diseases, contd from pg. 3*

It occurred to me that if the June meeting had focused on human rights, trafficking or war, it would have attracted many of the NY NGO "diplomats." Now appropriately, the June meeting was populated by medical practitioners and those directly linked with the issue. But sadly very few NY NGO representatives were also there. For it is often the NGOs who carry the message of these meetings. So the challenge remains for NCDs to garner the interest of the NGO community at UNHQ. It remains a challenge to generate attention and focus on the prevention of NCDs today but crucial for appropriate planning for physical and economic health of individuals and nations.

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of United Nations considered "the summit in September in New York as our chance to broker an international commitment that puts non-communicable diseases high on the development agenda, where they belong." The high-level meeting began that process, but NCDs still have a long way to go.

The General Assembly meeting was attended by more than 30 heads of State and at least 100 senior ministers and experts. They adopted a declaration calling for a multi-pronged campaign by governments, industry and civil society to set up by 2013 the plans needed to curb the risk factors behind the four groups of NCDs.

Steps range from price and tax measures to reduce tobacco consumption to curbing extensive marketing to children, particularly on television, of foods and beverages high in saturated fats, trans-fatty acids, sugars, or salt. Other measures seek to cut the harmful consumption of alcohol, promote overall healthy diets and increase physical activity. The overall toll of NCDs is estimated at 36 million out of a total of 57 million annually.

"This will be a massive effort, but I am convinced we can succeed," Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told the opening session of the landmark summit, only the second ever to deal with health (the first was HIV/AIDS), noting that over a quarter of all people who die from NCDs succumb in the prime of their lives, the vast majority of them in developing countries.

"Our collaboration is more than a public health necessity. Non-communicable diseases are a threat to development. NCDs hit the poor and vulnerable particularly hard, and drive them deeper into poverty," he said, with millions of families pushed into poverty each year when a member becomes too weak to work or when the costs of medicines and treatments overwhelm the family budget.

"The prognosis is grim. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), deaths from NCDs will increase by 17 per cent in the next decade. In Africa, that number will jump by 24 per cent."

### **A Call To Action**

This meeting is now many months in the past, but the message and concerns raised will be with us all increasingly. Do take ten minutes now to inform yourself of why NCDs are such an emerging issue. Review some of the facts, some of the actions already being taken and even bring NCDs to the attention of WFWP chapters and meetings. You can find information about this on the UN website at: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/ncdmeeting2011/>



### *Forum@Four, contd from pg. 3*

of the session and most of the food at the back of the room!

You can hear the presentations and download powerpoints from the presentations on Alliance website: [www.CPCJAlliance.org](http://www.CPCJAlliance.org)

NOTE: Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice is one of the CoNGO committees in which WFWP is very active at UNHQ New York. One of WFWP's representatives to the UN, Dr. Karen Judd Smith, was recently elected as the new Chair of the Alliance and will hold that post until January 2014.



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### *Girls, contd from pg. 2*

rights of rural women and rights of the child. Awareness is increased through conferences and workshops.

Capacity building activities help prepare officials for the presentation before the body. Mock sessions are held at the regional level to prepare states to come before the committee. These sessions also serve to identify bottle necks and how to get around them. NGO representatives present to the committee on specific issues such as women's rights, newly emerging trafficking issues, sale of women and children, and violence against women. Social media is very effective in promoting awareness of human rights violations.

Sister Mary Jo Toll- Chair, Working Group on Girls Advocacy Task Force is working to raise the visibility of girls through advocacy and putting girls' issues in the forefront. UN Missions are happy to meet with the task force because they are committed to improving the situation of women and girls. NGOs, governments, G77, EU, SADC all need awareness of the issues so they can be at the table when decisions affecting them are made.

Joan Libby Hawk, Special Advisor, Women's Empowerment Principles, UN Women and UN Global Compact, works with the world outside the UN to foster awareness, pull together a circle of change, particularly to empower women. The UN Global Compact promotes ten principles of corporate accountability advocating corporations invest responsibly. The private sector and NGOs could develop a collaborative plan and take action for empowerment of women and girls in many places throughout the world.

This meeting was held in the evening at the request of members, in an effort to draw younger working women and others unavailable during the day.



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### *Youth & HIV/AIDS, contd from pg. 2*

16 to 24 percent. UNAIDS takes the offensive to empower civil society through the internet initiative, Crowd out AIDS. This effort seeks to empower young people to take responsibility for their own destiny and behavior. Youth from around the world are rising to answer this call.

Eric Sawyer, Civil Society Partnership Advisor at UNAIDS, delineated practical steps AIDS advocates can take in order to get to zero.

David Hoos, Assistant Professor of Epidemiology at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health emphasized that young women are at a higher risk of contracting AIDS. There are fewer children born HIV positive due to increased availability of antiretroviral treatments (ART). The incidence of children with the infection was 30% lower in 2010 than in 2002.

Mr. Lawrence Stallworth II of the AIDS Task Force of Greater Cleveland, Ohio was upbeat and stated that, "as young people we hold the

biggest stake in the future.... We are the agents of change ...after thirty long years the battle may finally be coming to its end."

Allen Frimpong, of the NGO, Youth R.I.S.E. is a key online community organizer working to Crowd out AIDS. He reported that 5.4 million young people are infected with HIV/AIDS. Each person has a story. We have to heal—harm reduction- minimize transmission of HIV/AIDS through high risk behaviors by advocating one use, no questions asked programs supplying syringes for drug users. Another main component to his program is to educate youth through connecting and empowering their peers about the spread of AIDS.

A question and Answer session followed the panel. Video presentations of case histories showed the reality of children's lives affected by AIDS. The program made it apparent that the prospect of Zero Growth of HIV/AIDS is within our grasp, making the day memorable for all.



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### *Culture of Peace, contd from pg. 2*

on UN initiatives to advance a Culture of Peace globally. He explained that as the 20th century came to end, there was a shift in the world structure towards peace and reconciliation. In 1997, the UN General Assembly declared the year 2000 to be the International Year of Culture of Peace. In 1998, the General Assembly declared 2001 to 2010 as the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World. In order to bring substance to the initiative, in 1999, the General Assembly adopted the Declaration and Program of Action on a Culture of Peace. It has been eleven years since the adoption of the Program of Action on a Culture of Peace. Mr. Chowdhury stated that civil societies have often take the lead in fostering a culture of peace. He pressed the point that young people are the key factor to the culture of peace, and peace education is necessary.

Dr. Dorothy J. Maver, President of the National Peace Academy in the U.S. and Executive Director of the River Phoenix Center for Peace building, was the next speaker. She was excited to say that peace is sweeping around the world. She encouraged a break down in the system of competition and birth of cooperation and unity. Dr. Maver emphasized the importance of peace education and introduced the concept of institutions providing education on the peace system. She mentioned PhD programs on peace education and peace building. She also stated that global networking reveals many groups working for peace.

Mr. Mike O'Malley, a Program Associate at the United Nations Liaison Office of the Soka Gakkai International, an international Buddhist organization sees a culture of peace as a vision to achieve peace and foster a

culture that values peace. He defines culture as collective attitude and belief. He believes that the world culture should be a culture of peace. He stated that not only governments but NGOs, journalists, and educators should work side by side in achieving the culture of peace globally. Individual families can spread a culture of peace by teaching children non-violence. He would like to see a global network of NGOs and civil society groups united for a culture of peace.

Ms. Cora Weiss, UN representative for the International Peace Bureau and President of the Hague Appeal for Peace was the final speaker. The Hague Appeal for Peace produced a 50 point agenda for moving from a culture of violence to a culture of peace, known as the Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice for the 21st Century. Ms. Weiss sees the presence of human security justice, and the culture of violence turning into culture of peace. She was happy to see that during the occupy Wall Street protest, there was a joint movement in New York and Moscow for no more nuclear weapons. She also encouraged systematic education for peace, which does not glorify war but educates on nonviolence. This should include conflict resolution. Participation of women in peace making is important, especially by women who have been invisible, silent victims of violence. She introduced the Santiago Declaration for Peace, an important initiative drafted by civil society that ensures the human right to peace. The Human Rights Council is now debating about adoption of the declaration.



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### *Protection of Children, contd from pg. 3*

and education for children in life skills is the focus.

Tanzania conducted a survey of NGOs, Ministers of Education and Health, faith-based org., etc. The challenges are two-fold: overcoming social pressure, which inhibits children from reporting abuse and insuring that when children seek help, they will be received positively. This has not been the case in the past. It's a taboo that has to be changed. Poverty is not the main challenge, it's the cultural mindset. A national response plan that involves all sectors is needed.

Canada – Changing the cultural mindset is a long process. Local activity is the key to creating a protective environment.

China – Is focusing on inter- country policy systems for child rights and protection for the next ten years.

Further statements were offered from Egypt, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, and Brazil supporting and committing to protect children from all forms of violence. It was a hopeful and inspiring session.



## WFWP Workshop, contd from pg. 1

include the Hope Program, a project of the NGO she and her husband cofounded, the Center for Wisdom and Character Excellence. This program helps cross barriers of poverty in the small village of Montesunting in the Philippines. With the addition of the library and learning center, 2000 Moringa trees and a vegetable garden being planted, and leadership programs for women, the results are transformational. Household income increased on average, more tourism opportunities were invited and more scholarships became available for students looking to pursue their dreams.



**Ms. Evelyn Drake** spoke on her efforts through her program, the Haiti Relief Project, created in 2008, to help the Haiti community move forward through education. Planting over 1000 seeds of the Moringa tree helped reduce poverty and sustained the community with its medicinal uses. Women in rural areas practice natural healing methods to cure headaches and other common ailments using the Moringa tree, because of minimal access to doctors. In 2011, she initiated a summer service project that included health education on diabetes, hypertension, and anemia. Midwifery lessons were taught in a seminar to promote women to women networking and support. She believes that by living for the sake of others, change will come for women in Haiti and all over the world.



Brilliant storyteller, **Susan Bradbury** weaves together dreams and real life testimonies that reflect on the potential of Mongolia's rural women through her sustainable projects. She established five essential points on making these dreams into realities: envisioning the design, trusting yourself and others, working across boundaries, respect and having courage. For seven years now, The Sound Essence Project has led the Mongolian Student Scholarship Program in efforts to provide a four year college education to young women; they have successfully helped 20 young women into college. Ms. Bradbury's micro-lending project that empowered five women to start and own a local bakery with a \$500 loan, helped stabilize and feed a whole community, including supporting 50 other people in their extended families. Expanding into two bakeries eradicated poverty in their entire community. Susan ended her presentation with a three minute movie showcasing the beautiful landscapes, people and projects in Mongolia.

As moderator, Bonnie Berry, closed the afternoon's event with a small question and

answer session. Women from the audience chose topics that addressed farming and farmland being replaced by industries, higher education for women and using better energy solutions that protect the environment. An overwhelming applause following the conclusion of the questions was directed at the panel of women who presented their tremendous efforts in the process of fighting poverty. People then made their way around and congratulated the panel of women and conversed among each other for insight and guidance. The event was a huge success. Most women left with resources and new faces to access on their way to build new projects around the world.

### Fellowship Luncheon

Following the panel, WFWPI UN Office hosted a fellowship luncheon to celebrate the parallel event success and network among the members of our delegation, some of who had traveled from as far away as Geneva. Continued renovations at UN Headquarters prevented the luncheon from being held in the UN Delegates dining room but this did not dampen the spirit of the dialog within the group.

### CSW Conference Summary

Daily briefings were organized and facilitated by the NGO/CSW Committee, not just from NY, but representatives from Vienna and Geneva presided, including WFWPI's UN Office Deputy Director, Carolyn Handschin, who also cofacilitated one of the newly formed conversation circles, on the theme of Human Rights. Staffers from UN Women reported each day on the formal proceedings at CSW, and progress on the agreed conclusions outcome document.

Formal sessions focused on national reports about the progress and challenges faced by rural women, in both the developing and the developed worlds. Concerns were expressed from many member state delegations and ngo representatives alike, such as lack of land rights for women, violence against women, particularly domestic violence, lack of education, men and boys are given preference for tools and resources for agriculture, the main source of income in rural areas. Yet women and girls perform a significant portion of agricultural work and produce a significant percentage of crops as well. Another significant issue is the impact of climate change on rural women and girls, who often are not warned about pending natural disasters and are ill equipped to face the aftermath. This issue will receive much more attention at the upcoming Rio+ 20 Conference on Sustainable Development to be held in June 2012.

Regional Caucuses met to brainstorm about the outcome document and gaps in the language that articulates the issues for rural women and the commitments by member state delegations to address these gaps. This year, the Europe and North America caucuses were combined, which lent focus and allowed North American NGO representatives to gain



exposure to the very organized and inclusive European NGOs. Caucuses focused not only on input to the outcome document, but also on identifying representatives to attend a meeting at the invitation of UN Women, now one year old, to discuss how NGOs would interface with the organization as it develops its organizational and outreach structures.

NGOs organized and presented a wide array of parallel events that ranged from the UN Foundation's panel on its newly released report: Girls Grow to Femme's Africa's Solidaire panel informing on the predicament, both progress and challenges of rural women and girls in Africa; to panels on Women's Leadership Development. Opportunities to learn, network

56th CSW contd. on pg. 12

# EMPOWER TO ERADICATE POVERTY

Since 1994 WFWP has dispatched volunteers worldwide, to implement development assistance projects based on local needs.

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For more information about projects, see Biennial Reports at [www.wfwp.org](http://www.wfwp.org)

## Poverty Eradication, contd from pg. 3

reliance of vulnerable social groups- Citizens need to be empowered to become part of the solution to their own challenges rather than the "challenge". Ms. Bas emphasized that empowerment can unleash human capital and creativity, which in turn can transform vulnerable groups from being passive recipients of hand-outs to active and dynamic partners in social development.

After the panels, a "From Passion to Action" session followed, offering attendees opportunities to discuss relevant UN programs of action pertaining to persons with disabilities, youth, aging and the family. As stated in the signature campaign, "75 % of people in the world do not have adequate social security. This lack of protection undermines social cohesion and economic performance and creates political and institutional instability." Therefore the SPF is a necessary tool for eradicating poverty. The Commission and NGO Forum were opportunities for governments and civil society to engage on effective policies and practices via the SPFI as an essential and universal solution to break the cycle of poverty toward achievement of MDGs, 2015.

## Consultation Day, contd from pg. 4

Ms. Mirna Cunningham Kain was awarded the 2012 NGO/CSW/NY Woman of Distinction. She is an inspiration to the world for her leadership in the struggle for gender equality and women's empowerment. According to Ms. Kain, although there have been important advancements in women's political participation in Latin America, access to political decision making is still a challenge for rural and indigenous women in particular. Special guest, Ms. Leymah Gbowee, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate addressed the forum. She is a champion for women's rights and a peace activist. Ms. Gbowee shared details of her crusade and activism leading the women of Liberia and throughout Africa to keep the peace in times of war and political tension especially during elections. She quantified the role of rural women as analysts and experts in keeping peace and stability in order to achieve peaceful elections.

The Forum also held sessions allowing dialogue between the UN, governments and NGOs, a panel from regional perspectives moderated by Ilona Graenitz, Chair, NGO/CSW/Vienna; a video message by Ms. Bineta Diop, Founder and Chair, Board of Directors, Femmes Africa Solidarite; a panel of Rural Women moderated by Ms. Nyaradzai Gumbonzvanda, Chair, NGO/CSW Geneva. The afternoon sessions included orientation for new participants to the CSW, Advocacy Training, and Training for Rural Women Leaders: Speak-out.

## Multiculturalism, contd from pg. 5

that over half the Council members were young women. Neelam Rose, representing Islam, who leads a youth NGO, "Say No to Racism" in UK, described how, against a background of soaring youth unemployment and mistrust of police and state, people of faith stood together to defend their businesses and places of worship during the riots in UK. Many young people reaped havoc, but many youth also cleaned up the streets. The funeral of three young Muslim men who died protecting shared communities, attracted 20,000 people of all races, religions and ages. Facilitating dialogue between races and religions and investing in young people are important lessons learned. See report at [www.gjia.ch](http://www.gjia.ch).

The final session was on Educational Programs and Institutions. An insightful presentation from IOM, 's Christiane Aghazarm, informed on vast misinformation about migration that often places responsibility for problems on migrants rather than on inadequate policies. IOM is cooperating with media, to create education tool kits that provide the human face to migration, training community and religious leaders to help navigate issues people face. Mr. Jack Corley, Chairman of UPF in UK, reported on over twenty years of experience in Russia and China, with UPF's Character Education programs. He shared his experience on identifying common values in societies recovering from breakdown of their previous value systems, without hurting people's sensitivities. Ending the session, Ms Ruveni Wijesekera from the Swiss Academy for

Development (SAD), reported on Sport and Play programs in Sri Lanka that include inter-ethnic dialogue to build trust and empathy among two struggling communities.

## 56th CSW, contd from pg. 11

and expand one's horizons abound. WFWPI's delegation took full advantage of opportunities to attend the formal proceedings of CSW, parallel events sponsored by Member States and UN Agencies as well as the NGO sponsored parallel events. The presence of UN Women staffers also added an educative focus to daily briefings which lent focus to the advocacy and interventions of the NGO representatives, including WFWPI's delegation.

The ongoing renovations at the UN Headquarters continued to challenge NGO participation due to the severely limited access to the meeting rooms where the official events and Member State parallel events were held. WFWPI sincerely hopes that the UN CSW organizers will show good faith following renovation completions and provide the open access that NGOs in Consultative Status need to fulfill their responsibilities to be active observers and participants in the formal CSW process.

(Additional CSW summary content and editing support provided by Bonnie Berry.)

## Upcoming Events

- ❖ Mar. 25-28 WFWP 20th Anniversary Events in South Korea\*
- ❖ April 10 20th WFWP Anniversary
- ❖ May 15 Int'l Day of Families
- ❖ July 2-28 ECOSOC Substantive Session in New York
- ❖ Aug. 12 International Youth Day
- ❖ TBA WFWP 13th Int'l Leaders Workshop
- ❖ TBA 65th DPI/NGO Conference

\*Two congratulatory messages from the UN for WFWP 20th Anniversary: <http://www.wfwp.org/wfwp/library/AndreiAbramov2012.pdf> and <http://www.wfwp.org/wfwp/library/CheickSidiDiarra2012.pdf>