

WFWPI in the UN 62nd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

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Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) International welcomed its largest delegation to date for the 62nd session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women ([CSW62](#)). Over 90 guests from across the globe joined WFWPI, and 8,000 registered CSW participants, in New York City from March 11 to 18, 2018 for events all over the city. WFWPI hosted several public events, along with a number of leaders meetings with WFWPI President, Prof. Yeon Ah Moon, and internal gatherings for participants.

WFWPI ORIENTATION



The week kicked off with an orientation for WFWPI's participants at the the Wyndham New Yorker Hotel in the Gramercy Park room. Guests were greeted by the smiling faces of WFWPI's staff and found a surprise bag on their chairs containing their welcome packet. WFWPI UN Office in New York's Administrator, Christina Lange, made the participants feel at ease for the busy week ahead, walking them through the schedule of events and logistics.

FOSTERING HOPE FOR WOMEN



One of WFWPI's several events was a CSW62 [side event](#)2 titled, "Fostering Hope for Rural Women and Girls through Integration and Education: Challenges and Impact," and co-sponsored by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Office to the United Nations. The event was held on Wednesday, March 14 at the Japan Society, with approximately 150 people in attendance.

The program opened with welcoming remarks from Mr. Ashraf El Nour, Director of IOM Office to the UN, and WFP International President, Prof. Yeon Ah Moon. A diverse panel of speakers shared their insights on creating a hopeful future for rural women and girls: Dr. Sakena Yacoobi, Founder and CEO of Afghan Institute of Learning, and Sunhak Peace Prize Recipient, on "Afghan Refugees: Searching for a Better Life through Education;" Dr. Catherine Panter-Brick, Professor of Anthropology and Global Health at Yale University, on "Integration, Resilience, and Partnership-Building;" and Ms. Moriko Hori, President of WFP Japan, on "Educational Support for Girls of Karen Tribes in Thailand."

On the evening of March 14, WFWPI invited VIP guests to a reception with Prof. Yeon Ah Moon inside the UN premises. Prof. Moon personally greeted each guest representing UN Permanent Missions and NGOs active at the UN in New York. The atmosphere was pleasant, with a stunning view of the New York skyline and a delicious array of hors d'oeuvres being served.

ENGAGING THE RURAL FAMILY



WFWPI's next public event took place on Friday, March 16, at the Church Center for the United Nations, with 135 guests in attendance. Upon the request of WFWPI President, Prof. Yeon Ah Moon, a team of young adults came together to plan every aspect this year's [parallel event](#)³, "Engaging the Rural Family: The Vital Role of Education."

Ambassador Isaiah Chabala, former Permanent Representative of Zambia to the UN, gave opening remarks and shared a profound message emphasizing the importance of action above words. The first panelist, Ms. Meera Khanna, Executive Vice President of the Guild of Service, shared about the struggles of India and several projects that are making incredible progress. Dr. Bishnu Maya Pariyar, founding President of the Association for Dalit Women Advancement of Nepal, spoke about her own experience of overcoming the caste system in Nepal and her organization's work toward educating Dalit women and children. Dr. Sandra Barrueco, Director of the Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program and Latin American and Latino Studies at the Catholic University of America, explained about her research on migrant families in the U.S. who struggle to maintain education for their children. The final panelist was a young professional who is a doctoral candidate at Yale University, Ms. Maile T. Phillips, who shared her experience about educating girls in Sierra Leone during her service in the Peace Corps.

After a rich question and answer session, the event was followed by an immediate outpouring of interest from the audience, with many guests rushing to the front of the room to meet the speakers.

HORIZON SUMMIT



The week's schedule concluded with the two-day Horizon Summit, which took place on Saturday, March 17, and Sunday, March 18, at 4 W 43rd St. The event was co-sponsored by WFP International and WFP USA. Krista Smith, Horizon Summit Project Manager, and Kiyomi Schmidt, Administrator and Social Media Coordinator for WFP USA, served as MCs, representing WFP International and WFP USA respectively.

The theme of the Horizon Summit was "Rising Side by Side," to symbolize moving forward together regardless of nationality, religion, or age. Saturday consisted of an opening plenary, an award ceremony to present the 2018 Global Women's Peace Award, a presentation on the WFWPI UN Office internship program, and six capacity building sessions. These sessions offered skills, strategies, and insights to be used in the participants' personal and professional lives.

The program began with opening remarks from Prof. Yeon Ah Moon and Ms. Angelika Selle, President of WFP USA, followed by an introductory video on WFWPI. The Global Women's Peace Award was then presented to Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and former President of the UN Security Council, under whose leadership the groundbreaking UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security was adopted. Ms. Carolyn Handschin, Director of the WFWPI UN Office worldwide, read Ambassador Chowdhury's biographical note. Ms. Alexa Ward, Director of the WFWPI UN Office in New York, read the citation while Professor Yeon Ah Moon presented the beautiful crystal award to Ambassador Chowdhury. During the Ambassador's acceptance speech, he shared his conviction that world peace is inextricably tied to women in leadership.

The award ceremony was followed by a panel on Peace Leadership with Dr. Sakena Yacoobi, Founder and CEO of the Afghan Institute of Learning; Ms. Carolyn Handschin; Ms. Prativa Khanal, Cora Weiss Peacebuilding Fellow at the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders; and Ambassador Suzan Johnson

Cook, former U.S. Ambassador for International Religious Freedom. The panel was followed by an engaging question and answer session.

After lunch, Ms. Alexa Ward spoke on the flexible and mutually beneficial nature of a UN Office internship with WFWPI and the scope of different activities in which an intern can participate. Former interns Krista Smith, Maryam Farooq, and Sandy Javanasundara then shared about their internship experiences. Ms. Katarina Connery, Vice President of WFWP USA, introduced the internship and potential job opportunities with WFWP USA.

The MCs then introduced the leaders of the Capacity Building Sessions, starting with the speakers in the first time slot: Ambassador Suzan Johnson Cook on “Women Brokering Peace with Protocol, Professionalism, and Power”; Dr. Thomas J. Ward on “Looking at ‘the Korea Nuclear Question’ through the Prism of Conflict Analysis and Transformation”; and Ms. Margaret Williams on “Advocacy: Building out a Strategy.” They then introduced the speakers in the next time slot: Ms. Angelika Selle and Ms. Katarina Connery on “Discovering the Leader Within”; Ms. Iris Dotan Katz on “Mindful Social Action”; and Dr. Sakena Yacoobi on “What Works” through the lens of education in Afghanistan.

After this full day of content, the program closed with reflections from participants. They shared about how the capacity building sessions related to their personal and professional lives and what skills, strategies, and insights they gained.

CONNECTING IN HEART



On Sunday, March 18, the participants were able to choose from four different tours: the FDR Presidential Library and Val-Kill National Historic Site; East Garden; the Metropolitan Museum of Art; and the American Natural History Museum. They all gathered back at 4 W 43rd St. for the closing program and a Korean dinner.

The participants’ reflections included a heart-warming emphasis on the power of connecting with the heart of the founders of WFWP at East Garden. Participants of the FDR tour were grateful to learn about the central role of the Roosevelt family in the founding of the UN and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

After these reflections, Ms. Ward and Ms. Selle closed the program together, thanking the guests for their participation and sharing their hope that the Horizon Summit offered an opportunity for growth and learning in the participants’ journeys as peace leaders.

In addition to the events held in conjunction with CSW62, Prof. Yeon Ah Moon met with each region’s WFWP leaders throughout the week.

WFWPI's involvement with CSW reached a new level this year, with more young adults involved on all levels, outreach to higher-level contacts and growing respect of [NGO CSW/NY](#)⁴. WFWPI is hopeful that the organization can build on this success for greater impact and influence.

The WFWPI UN Office is grateful for True Mother's vision, encouragement and love. It is an honor to make a meaningful contribution to the providence through True Mother's organization.



ENDNOTES

1 The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

2A side event is sponsored by Permanent Missions to the UN, which represent governments, as well as UN entities and UN-related organizations. These sponsored events are held under the leadership of UN Women and usually take place within the UN premises.

3A parallel event is sponsored by NGOs and is held under the leadership of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women (NGO CSW/NY). Parallel events take place in venues outside of the UN premises.

4The NGO Committee on the Status of Women (NGO CSW/NY) supports the work of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and UN Women.

