

UPF France Conference Advocates Women’s Role in Diplomacy

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Paris, France – In conjunction with International Women's Day, a conference and debate entitled "Women's Diplomacy: A Lever for Rights, Justice, and Action" was held at the Espace Barrault in Paris on March 21, 2026. The event was organized by UPF-France and Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) France.

Moderated by **Ms. Brigitte Wada**, president of WFWP France, the event brought together four experienced speakers to explore the role of women in peace processes and international relations.

The conference opened with a tribute to the Eid al-Adha festival and to the values championed by WFWP founder Dr. Hak Ja Han, based on unity, dignity, and intercultural dialogue. The four speakers then captivated a large audience with the quality and commitment of their presentations.



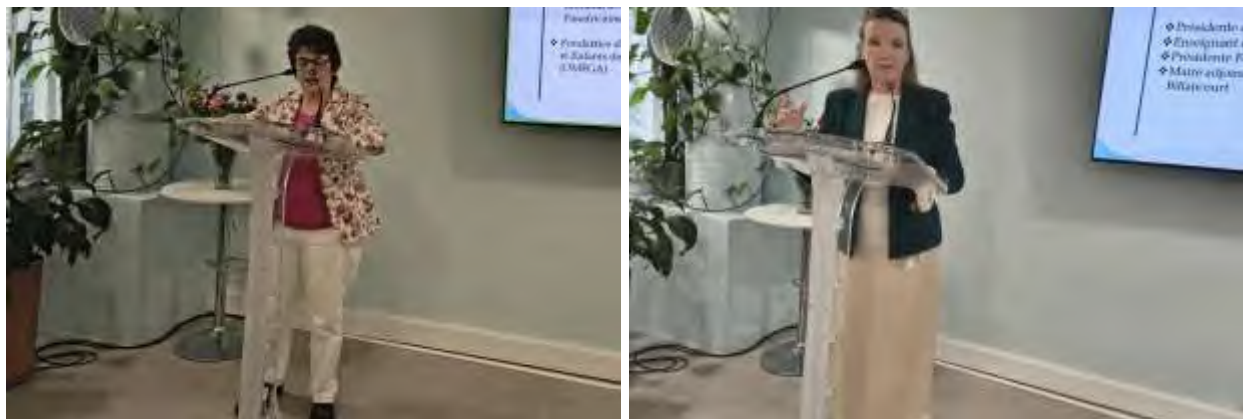
Ms. Marie-Claude Machon Honoré, permanent representative of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women to UNESCO and former chair of the UNESCO NGO Liaison Committee, addressed the evolution of feminist diplomacy in France.

By tracing the history of women's rights, particularly through the figure of Simone Veil and the struggles for gender parity, she emphasized the importance of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted in 2000, which affirms women’s role in peacebuilding. She also highlighted France's commitment, for the period 2025-2030, to making gender equality a pillar of democracy and a factor of international stability. She detailed the key areas of French feminist diplomacy: professional equality, women's health, and the fight against sexual violence.

Ms. Marthe Dèdè Kovoïgui, in remarks recorded from Guinea, presented a concrete approach through women's entrepreneurship and grassroots diplomacy. As the founder of the NGO OMEGA, she illustrated her points with concrete achievements, notably the creation of a food processing plant run by a women's cooperative. She identified three essential levers: women's economic empowerment; their participation in decision-making bodies; and the development of grassroots diplomacy involving the diaspora and local communities.



Ms. Christine Jouan Bruneau, president of the organization Femmes de Demain (Women of Tomorrow) and former deputy mayor of Boulogne-Billancourt, addressed challenges related to justice and women's rights. She noted that, although women represent 72% of judges in France, effective application of the law remains unequal internationally. She also drew attention to emerging challenges, such as climate security – women being the primary victims of forced displacement – and food insecurity. She concluded by emphasizing that peace is not decreed solely through treaties, but is built sustainably through education.



Ms. Guila Clara Kessous, UNESCO Artist for Peace, discussed the role of art and quotas in diplomacy. She presented her project Woman on Rope, which uses art as a therapeutic tool for survivors of genocide, particularly in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. She is committed to the Femina Pax resolution, which advocates for a minimum quota of 30% women in international peace negotiations. She also introduced the concept of "Economica Pax," aimed at promoting a culture of peace within businesses.

Following a question-and-answer session, the conference concluded with remarks by **Mr. Jacques Marion**, president of UPF-France and for Europe and the Middle East. He emphasized the need for spiritual diplomacy in the face of contemporary conflicts, often marked by religious dimensions. He mentioned several prominent women in recent peace processes, such as Miriam Coronel Ferrer in the Philippines, Leymah Gbowee in Liberia, as well as the Israeli and Palestinian activists of the Women

Wage Peace movement.



He stressed the importance of "education of the heart," particularly among women, as the foundation for lasting peace. His remarks concluded with a tribute to the pioneering Japanese women of WFWP and to its founder, Dr. Hak Ja Han, for her lifelong commitment to women's diplomacy.

