

Report on the 63rd Commission on the Status of Women CSW - March 2019

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Each year the United Nations organize a huge two-week-long program with hundreds of events inside and outside the UN about women rights and the Sustainable Development goals. It's called The Commission on the Status of Women and this year (2019) was the 63rd time, thus CSW63.

www.ngocsw.org WFPW Europe - Women's Federation for World Peace www.kvinneforum.org
www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw63-2019

For me going to the CSW63 in New York was a crazy decision, because I had no good arguments for going there. I just felt like it was the right thing to do. I did not know what to expect of CSW, and assumed it would be lots of penal speeches with far too short Q and A in the end. Well, that's pretty much what it turned out to be. BUT I was surprised how much these speeches SHAPED me. I thought I knew about the suffering of the world, but realized quickly that the world was so much more messed up than I thought. Everything I heard and saw molded me, impressed me, taught me; and I claim that I have become a better person through the CSW - in the meaning of more valuable to the world, because my awareness and determination has been increased.

One could choose which events to go to, so this is a summary of and reflections about the events that I have attended, and I sometimes missed parts of an event or couldn't take notes while standing.

10.3.

Consultation Day

- Let's keep making noise with [#metoo](https://twitter.com/metoo)
- "I am tired of hearing the word culture or tradition when it's really oppression. "

Gharsanay Ibnul Ameen

- She received an award on stage: Woman of Distinction 2019
- She talked to many people face to face to convince them that girls should receive Education, also higher Education. To parents and teenagers mainly.
- She loves Afghanistan and dreams about a peaceful Afghanistan
- She loves islam and believes that a country with liberal islam can be equal to developed countries.
- "Creativity is the antidote to destruction. "
- Diversity, education

Nadia Daar

- poor women's work makes millionaires rich
- extreme gaps between rich and poor
- rich people hide taxes, legally or illegal, which results in worse public health care for the poor.
- workers need rights! Companies have to be accountable for their workers, not only their customers!
- The 26 richest people in the World own more than the bottom half of the world population

- We need: universal public service standard, fair taxes, protection
- there is the international tax level and the domestic (national) tax level
- not good to have tax havens: rich people can legally avoid paying taxes through loopholes in the law. That is often perceived as "smart", but harmful for the public health care. We have to close these loopholes!
- We need wealth tax that does not harm poor people, not sales tax on products that poor people need



Crystal Simeon

- case: big organisations helped a poor country with building a new hospital. One of the organisations was responsible for the legal part, but they made a mistake. They did not notice that the contract said that once the hospital had reached a certain financial level, it would have to pay much more and per patient. So after a few years, it became too expensive to run the hospital.
- African economy has to include women
- African countries want to attract big countries by promising them that they would have to pay less taxes (tax holiday). But big companies actually don't care so much about taxes, they look at how stable the country is.
- Dignity before development.
- If you are not at the table, you are at the table.

Rosa (Iceland)

- In Iceland women collectively stop working 8 times so far to claim their rights.
- Ireland is now launching a new law for equal payment where the companies have to prove that they have equal pay.

Tania Goossens - "Zero Hunger" "World Food Program" (Peru) www1.wfp.org/zero-hunger

- Fight against malnutrition (lack of iron etc) by serving healthy food, teaching how to cook healthy food, educating about healthy eating habits
- documentary with many episodes on national TV, mainly showing people's stories and cooking classes
- Paradox: Peru is rich of resources and has excellent gourmet experiences to offer for tourists. But many people have serious malnutrition.

Sarita - SAMATA Foundation for Social Justice (Nepal) www.samatafoundation.org

- Dalit is a people that is being discriminated against in Nepal and the whole world
- Dalit are considered "untouchable" in cast system, discriminated by people from many religions
- Violence against Dali has to stop!
- Engage with Dali in a friendly way, but not out of pity, but as friends

Heather Ibrahim - Global Fund for Widows (Namibia, Kenya, India) globalfundforwidows.org

- Many women who have lost their husband can't prove that they have become widows: the husband is missing and not proven dead OR they were not legally married OR they don't know how to ask for financial support
- Many widows get no or too little support and have an extremely difficult life, see slides

Angela Mwai - Gender Equality Unit Programme Division (Egypt)

- Public Transportation is insufficient for women: too dangerous (sexual harassment, violence), too few busses, not the right routes, high competition between customers
- they map how women travel: not A - B, but multiple stops, not during rush hour, with heavy bags

(grocery)

Sean Southy - PCI Media (Bangladesh) www.pcimedia.org

- campaigns against child marriage
- Child marriage (before 18) leads often to school-drop-out, poverty and misery
- Parents often think that it's best for their children
- TV advertisement fits to the culture and different clips speak to different types of people: fathers, husband candidates etc.
- it took 8 months until the government gave them a government-phone number that anyone can call to report child marriage



Asa Regner - Deputy Executive Director of UN Women

- Sweden is very successful in many ways
- There is a circle of a) public services (nursery schools, parental leave), b) both genders work (mothers can work) c) more people pay taxes which again leads to a) more money for public services
- Best to choose a system where both parents can work or receive money, seeing the individual as the smallest unit and not the family

Climbing Poe Tree www.climbingpoetree.com

- beautiful and deep poetry
- youtu.be/uzGNqp5l3_U

I was both shocked by the terrible state that our world is in, and inspired by the many initiatives taken. I was most moved by the advertisement clips that Sean Southy showed, against forced child marriage. Seeing the love when all surrounding people stand up and protect the girl moves my heart. I was most shocked by the story of a rape survivor who founded performed with "Angel Band Project".

Sorry for the low quality of my photos, I should have brought a camera. And a laptop. There were lots of professional cameras everywhere, so I'm sure you can find better photos of everything.

11.3.

"Building a safe and empowering digital space for women and girls" in the UN building

Caren Marks

- cyber violence or digital violence is connected to physical violence
- every country should have help phone lines

Dubrovka Smonovic

- some forms of cybe violence are similar to offline violence, but some forms are new
- we have to "upload" Human Rights into digital space: privacy, freedom from violence etc
- some companies of digital spaces think that certain behavior is not okay, but they don't think of/use the term Human Rights yet
- all parts need to be responsible

Caterina Bolognese

- study to map cyber violence
- cyber bullying (amon children) and cyber harassment are most common forms of cyber violence
- it's not enough considered in the penalty that one act (post) generates further suffering, because it's still

"out there"

- victims don't know where to report to, and often get rejected and not taken seriously
- several conventions against cyber violence: Istanbul convention, Cybercrime convention, UN pseudo convention
- women are in an inferior position both offline and online
- need to share evidence across borders
- need to raise awareness



Alia El-Yassir

- need to increase the good points about the cyber realm
- too many women are marginalised and silenced
- there is more harassment against women/girls than men/boys
- need digital government, digital safe guards

Marusa Gortnar www.odklikni.enakostspolov.siv

- ClickOff works with police, youth counsellors, media, teachers, judges, prosecutors etc
- boys bully more than girls, girls are more bullied than boys, and girls experience worse consequences when bullied (more depressed, more likely to self-damage)

My Hellberg

- working for girl's rights in Sweden
- against honor based violence
- Safe Houses have to be aware of the danger of low digital skills: women in Safe Houses often start using social media for the first time and don't know how to protect themselves online, can be lured back into abusive relationship

Safe Houses need professional teaching in digital competence

Ana Sofie Fernandes "Her Net Her Rights" wpmu.mah.se/nmict172grou.../10/16/her-net-her-rights/

- partner with Google
- found 12 types of profiles of perpetrators (the troll, the masculine etc)
- female politicians are afraid to speak up because of cyber harassment
- get a safer profile through: 2 step verification on Google, Trace My Shadow, Security Planner
- activist action: "take back the tech" www.takebackthetech.net

Q and A

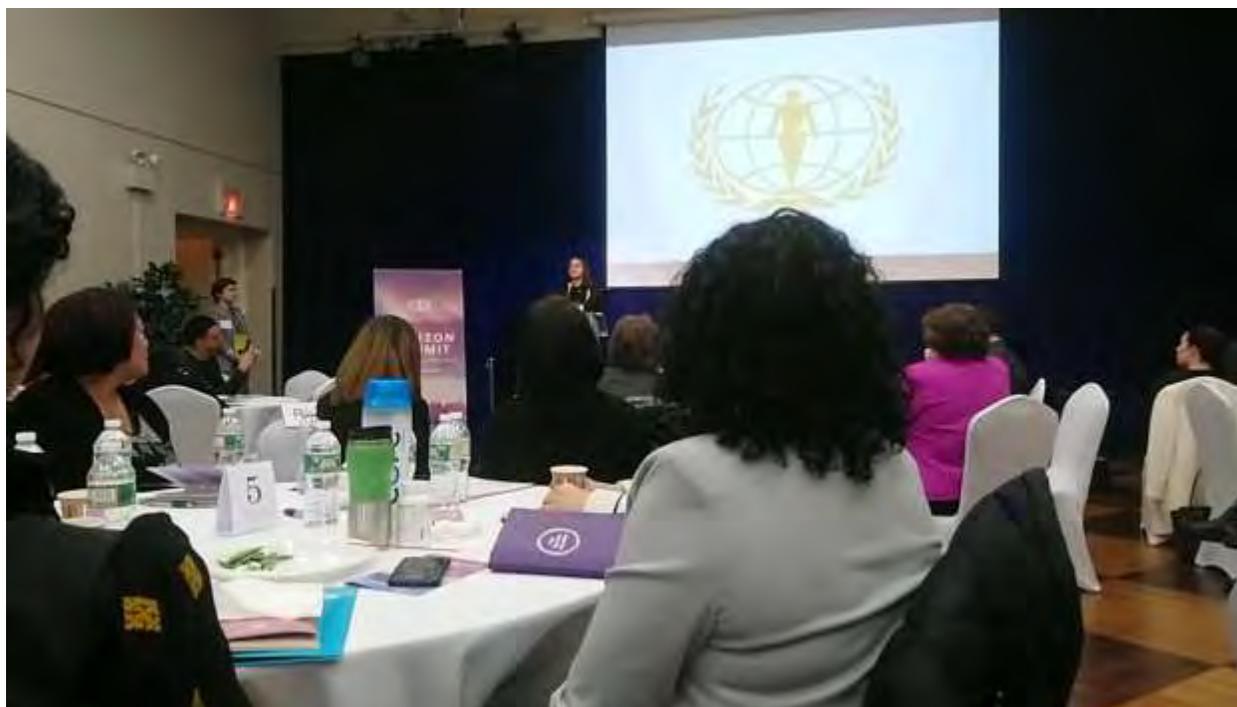
- know what your country promised
- know how to get help

It's good that Norwegian schools have to teach the children how to use the internet well and carefully. Though I am not sure if giving first graders iPads for school work is the best way to start.

"Building a culture of Peace " hosted by "Pathways to Peace"

- "A culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behavior and ways of life. "
- shifting mindset and behavior: from force to reason, from violence to dialog

- "Peace is both an innate state of being and a dynamic, transformative and evolutionary process. "
- need to act, not only meditate
- "An enemy is one whose story we have not heard. "
- traditional female qualities are seen as more efficient today: compassion, teamwork, dialog



Georgie Chapman: "Journey to your heart"

- forgive! It's about them, not you
- How to build self-love:
 1. Respect and respectability
 2. Responsible and responsibility
 3. Truth and honesty
 4. Love and caring
- "We can never obtain peace in the our world until we make peace with ourselves. " -(Dalai Lama)
- "Love begins the moment you decide not to take offense. " (Paul Ferreni)

Irene Kai and David "Ashland Culture of Peace Commission "

- The greatest gift you can give to a person is your full attention with compassionate listening.
- They talk to political candidates for office about VALUES
- World Peace Flame Monument: eternal flame that came from all continents, taken care of by middle school children
- "Live a moment" App for Peace
- use technology rather than let it use you
- "step" into a country with a peaceful nature clip
- click on the emotion you feel, and see how others feel
- in a class room you can see "5 people in this class are sad like me"
- there is more love than hate

Elizabeth Sheridan (High School Student)

- the teacher asked the class what they can do to help refugees, they brainstormed
- her class decided to make a difference and created a tool kit www.prep4peace.org
- take what you know, bring it together and unite on a common goal
- as long as one person is working for peace, there is a change
- powering with, not over

theribboninternational.org

"Tackling Mental Health and Sexual Violence Trauma - The Silenced Connection"

hosted by World Jewish Congress and Enosh the Israeli Mental Health Organisation

- victims need a personal recovery plan
- victims have a list of phone numbers to call to get help next to the phone
- peer support: ex-ptients become trained supporters (recovery champions)
- family to family support
- "No Shame On You" organisation
- also High School students need to know how to get help
- it has to become okay to talk about mental health problems, just like physical health problems
- it's counter-productive to treat different problems of one person in different places (one institution for Addiction, another for depression etc)
- need to treat the whole person

Need to treat those who hurt others
- immigrants have big needs



12.3.

Young Women's leadership for inclusive social protection Systems'' hosted by Gakkai International

Gharsanay IbnulAmeen www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/962629567277466/

Mary Fatiya www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/490176831513358/

Kasha Sequoia Slavner www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/336941543607467/ and
www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/585870168597371/

Chantal Umuhoza www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/341683153139814/

Kristen Egliton www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/362174707964775/

Katarina LeClerc www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/271096127170024/

Roslenny Ubiñas www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/1056619011192633/

I really liked this session, because some of the speakers were fiery, and because it showed clearly that and how teenagers can already make a difference. Age is no excuse to not step up and invest into world peace.

Women, Business and the Law'' In UN building

UN Women, World Bank
data collecting, question Aires, CEDAW convention
indicator measures 4 key areas
overarching legal framework and public life
violence against women
employment and economic benefits
marriage and family
work together with national data collecting organisations, validate all data
Score each country: percentage of achievement of that country in that area
Germany on it, not Norway
difficult to access data, laws in the way
Only about how the laws are, not how they are implemented
Averages are not exact
Need quota of female parliamentarians
Need antidiscrimination laws
71% do not criminalize rape, and it has to be easy to get those rights (not ask the victim too much)
In many countries it's possible to escape jail
Provide child care
We have to do most in marriage and family, change the norms - some countries score 0. Minimum age 18.

Lebanon

Women can be elected now both where she lives, and where she lived before she got married

Family compensation, maternity leave in Lebanon

deleted some articles, if a man who rapes marries the victims will clear the crime. Definition of seduction

Women can get bank account and passport for their children with also family name of mother or maiden name

Children of Lebanese mothers can now attend schools

Challenge: 18 religions with different religious laws, and women discriminate against each other based on religion

Need to broaden definition of violence



Advocacy Training hosted by NGO CSW

This session was the most interactive, because it was literally a training. They explained how the UN, NGOs and individuals can influence the paper that is written during the CSW. We practiced presenting our issues (like that we need better public transportation in USA) to delegates to the CSW from our countries, in case we meet them.

Implementing the SDG's by Women's Empowerment - Kuwait (country, look it up) in UN building

Dr Habit (man) about government in Kuwait:

- Participation of women is crucial

12% of decision making leaders on the country are female. That's not enough! 15% in the private sectors

- Challenge: culture, mind set, believe

- Improve through: economic Empowerment, capacity building individually and institutionally

- Good social safety net

- Support youth entrepreneur financially

- Nudge the private sector to include more qualified women

Dr Lubna (woman) WRSC Women Research and Studies Center

- Political empowerment + economical empowerment + fighting violence against women

- Government asked who wanted to take on political positions, gave them intensive training, 60 completed

- Exchange of best practices of female politicians in different arab countries

- watch and train media to cover gender issues in a rational way, not against women

- Government supports WRSC

- Approached private companies to hire women and raise them up. 10 major companies signed, others get inspired.

- Studies on how female entrepreneurs need to be supported, help us help them be more productive

- "Ring the bell for women's empowerment"

- Survey "Understanding violence against women" gathered data from 2000 households, about attitudes and behavior, asking if they saw/experienced violence during childhood. Also asked how they would like women as politicians or bosses. People like women as politicians, but not as bosses.

- "Kuwait's distinguished women's award" soon for the first time, one for each sector

Q and A

Kuwait has a democracy without parties, and women have a hard time fundraising to finance an election campaign. WRSC trains such women. It's easier for women to be appointed.

6 months with pay + 6 months without pay is the maternity leave, and the father can leave work for the birth of the Baby. Dr Lubna says that these are very good maternity leave laws



Actions to raise female political candidates has several stages: working with female candidates or for example public speaking and resilience, working with media so that they don't despise female candidates too shallow, working with the voters

- Dr Mahdi: Getting Women in decision making positions is not a cultural struggle, but a power struggle
- Kuwait started with an academic project/perspective, that works better than from a governmental Strukturen, because academia is neutral
- We have to slowly and gradually build a momentum
- Women don't vote for women, that's another issue
- Some men feel like they had a mother as their Boss, then a wife as a boss. They should accept women in politics as bosses.

Dr Mahdi: The women-bosses in my life (wife, Minister Alaqeel) do a much better job in managing my life than me.

- Courses at university on how to tackle women's issues, change the way young men look at women, not that women threaten them but as partners, teamwork
- Kuwait is building centers for women who are threatened to be violence, but those centers need improvement

13.3.

Widowhood - What happens to me after they take everything?

Malawi (country) organisation: Widowhood

- 17 million people in Malawi, 1.2 million widows
- Discrimination against girl and women
- When the husband dies, his family members take everything away from the widow, they make decisions
- The land does not belong to the widow
- Children of widows don't have enough money to go to school, resulting in prostitution or child marriage
- Even if the man wrote his will, it is not honored
- Culture and tradition harmful to widows, they "cleanse" the woman of the soul of the dead husband: she has to have sex with a brother or cousin of the dead husband, even though laws forbid to a certain degree
- Woman is property of her in-laws, they own her
- Organisations fight for laws that protect women and widows, but laws are often not known and not followed
- organisations inform women on what to do in case they get widowed
- In some cultures widows are considered witches and blamed for the death of her husband
- Refugees: lack documentation, their governments have collapsed

See the two Live videos of two speakers that Kvinneforum posted:

www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/291401675087650/ "Come together Widows and Orphans" organisation in Kenya, by a young widow who wants to change the narrative

www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/314506555875140/ against child marriage and discrimination of widows



First Lady who is also a widow

- Was a cabinet minister before she got married to the president
- He died suddenly after 2 years of marriage
- She got her property grabbed, his will got stolen
- Property grabbing can happen at any Level, by people on any level
- Important that husband writes the will and tells the wife where it is
- Important to keep important documents (will, marriage certificate) safe and bring them with you when the husband has died, before anyone steals them

I found it hard to grasp that laws and cultures can cause such unnecessary suffering. Even the wife of the president got robbed everything when he died, shocking!

"The Family and Social Protection" hosted by Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI)

1. speaker Ms Renata Kaczmarek from Department of Economic and Social Affairs

www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/157882361814832/

2. speaker Mr Alex Vazquez from the International Federation for Family Development

www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/334053557082946/

3. speaker Ms Shova Gyawali from Nepal Republic Media and People Welfare Media Concern and Federation for Woman Entrepreneurs' Association of Nepal

www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/1020644944794043/

4. speaker Ms Jeanne Carroll, UN representative of WFWPI and member of the NGO Commission on the Status of Women New York, Master of Divinity from Unificationist Theological Seminary

www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/566858470480614/

5. part: Q and A

www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/2119357961512023/

Meeting with Yeon Ah Moon

Yeon Ah Moon has been the international president of WFWPI, but recently been replaced by Julia (Hoon Suk) Moon. At this planning meeting, Yeon Ah and WFWPI leaders down to the national level reflected about the past year, the vision, discussed structural changes, and planned the coming year.



14.3.

Delegates from 6 nations gave a voluntary report on the development in their countries. Inspiring context, but presented in a very boring way.

Community Media Models for Disaster Preparedness and Risk Management Hosted by: International Association of Women in Radio and Television (IAWRT)

When there were huge fires in America, many areas had no phone-, internet- and electricity access. That's why it is crucial that people have RADIOS and that radio stations do their best to separate fact from fiction and inform correctly through Radio waves.

In some areas of Uganda, people have no phones etc. They use a traditional medium: drums. It is important to know the culture. People who live in areas where there are dangerous mud slides every year, don't want to move, because moving means losing your identity or someone else could grab the land.

Sometimes media and authorities give people wrong advice and they should not have listened.

Philippines: They did not know that "Number 5" meant a storm that dangerous. Radios try to explain people.

After a disaster, radio stations should not be shut down, but turned into community stations. Unfortunately that is difficult, it easily happens that a private person takes over and lets those who pay come on air.

I have to get a radio!

Girls' Political Empowerment

Host: GLI A program of the feminist majority foundation

All panel speakers look like high school students

Simran Shrestha, Women LEAD Nepal

- collected photos of female politicians and made an art exhibition out of it
- learn from life lessons of female politicians
- the social barriers are hard, but not unpassable
 - 1) be clear of your ideology and beliefs
 - 2) collect facts
 - 3) practice talking skills
 - 4) perseverance
- "I get out of my comfort zone as often as I can."
- awaring girls/young women of their power
- involve girls/young women in political discussions

Sara Blau , Girls Learn, founded Game Changers New York

- collects sports equipment for kids in need
- very few girls played sports during school breaks, so she encouraged girls at her school to engage in sports
- 50 volunteers + doners
- www.gamechangersnewyork.org



Samantha Bastien, Girls Learn

- leader/members of feministic school clubs
- discuss with other girls court hearings, politics etc

May Li, Girls Learn

- her school has more girls than boys in leader positions, inspiring younger students
- was disrespected by male peers, even though she was the committee chair
- she is often seen as bossy, but has to be strong and self-confidence, especially as a woman of colour (chinese)
- Art for Action is painting to engage local community and give girls a voice
- "We as society need to normalize female leadership. "

Sagoon Bhetwal, Women LEAD Nepal

- local elections in 2017 result
- women are not considered to run for election directly, people think they need quota
- right now quota is temporarily needed
- because of quota, some women who are not trained at all, are put into Office. Not ideal.

Magdalena Tesha, The Grail

- in her community in Africa, many cannot afford school, and schools can not afford sanitations
- need free education for girls and boys
- teachers have to pay more attention to girls
- teenage pregnancy
- need good and safe infrastructure
- need bathrooms so that girls can go to school even during menstruation
- debate club at her school
- she organizes clubs and meetings for girls

Julia Bintz, Girls Learn

- political experience makes her see how to improve the system
- when she was as an intern in an political office, she was deeply disappointed of the pointlessness of campaigning
- organizes discussion sessions with students and politics
- when a person decides to not speak up, it makes a big negative difference
- every difference matters, need to teach girls tht these differences matter

Irina Sandoval, Girls learn

- became aware of institutionalized sexualism at her school
- comment from a teacher: "sweety, you are so pretty, but that short denim skirt ruined it. "
- strict dress code forbids immodest clothes for girls

- she wrote a provoking article on dress code, but the principal censored and forbid it, so she spread it herself

Jamila Pitre, Girls Learn

- Ku Klux Klan in her area (Washington CD?) protested killed someone
- she felt that she could not change anything, but through committee meetings and political discussions and about issues, she found ways to change
- She was scared, but some adults supported her, so she took actions
- actions can lead to real change



Q and A

Any doubts or feeling nerves?

- yes, because a lot of people say discouraging words. But try to be strong and vocal.
- yes, self-doubt. She saw many strong girl activists and thought she was not got enough, but then thought that there can never be enough activists
- yes, people at her school are very sexist, strong culture, both teachers and Boys. But hold on to those who support you. You have to break the cycle, before those sexist boys will grow up and have Kids.

Have you seen positive change?

- mindsets change
- there were lots of robotic clubs (STEM), but she wanted to have even more clubs for handicapped and female students
- girls softball team is now the biggest in her school
- assistant principal said: "Models look good in short clothing, because they are skinny. If you don't have the figure, don't wear it. " That's hurting and sexist

What do your parents think about your activism?

- In many parts of the world, girls interests are not prioritized. Her parents said "Why do you have this?" (She starts crying). Women's interests should be prioritized, especially when they volunteer in politics. She dealt with the lack of support by knowing/doing what's right and not listening to her parents.
- parents thought politics were dangerous, but that's even more reason to change, speak up for freedom of speech

How do you imagine the future?

- they educate the youth who come after them
- some difficult topics can only be addressed with girls at the table
- last week the national soccer team sued because they got less payed than the male team, even though they played better last year
- need to understand how individuals are connected to politics
- the future is now

How about voting from 16 years old?

- students are very inspired an encourage others to vote, so it would be great if they could
- they also need to be educated about the parties and laws and "insane complications connected to each bill"

- there are many adults who have no clue about politics either, and they have a right to vote
- important to vote
- it's allowed to get driver's license at age 16, so why not vote?

Are you talking about climate change at your school?

- big problem: many climate change deniers
- she asked political candidates about climate change, they get quite dumb answers sometimes
- yes, very active against pollution

How about choosing High School student leaders randomly?

- risk getting unqualified leaders
- rather change culture an ideology so that there is no more bias and prejudice towards candidates



15.3.

Women investing in peace" - hosted by Sri Lanka and Kenya

Kenya

- dangerous groups (AlQaida), corruption
- extreme violence, shooting, death
- made an action plan for peace in 2016
- wives of politicians are active for peace

Afghanistan

- Afghan women have always raised their voice for the country
- Women's national consensus on peace 6 months ago, need to go to provinces and districts, involve those women
- need sustainable peace
- 1500 women in Kabul talked about peace, what it meant to them and where they find themselves in the peace process
- survey on political awareness of Afghan women, 4 questions about peace. Result: diversity
- those who had experienced armed conflict said that peace means end of war, but those who did not experience war, said that peace meant justice, education and women in leading position
- women are victims of war, not initiators
- for any peace talks we need to include the most vulnerable groups of society: women, youth, victims of war
- nation was surprised when this organisation asked victims of war for their opinion. They are willing to accept nearly any peace, but also have opinions on the best way to make peace, would appreciate apologies
- peace deals does not mean that Afghans give up what they have achieved in the last 18 years: constitution, political system based on human rights. Otherwise the peace would not be sustainable.
- Women try to not let their children and husbands become part of violent groups
- Afghan women are becoming a key partner to the government, international communication. They do not only talk about their own rights, but those of others.
- Terrorism does not know race, religion or gender. It's creeping into all our societies.

Sri Lanka

- long history of women building peace
- first genocide committee



Roots of Peace rootsofpeace.org/

- old land mines kill innocent people and animals. Turning mines to vines!
- Vietnam still has dangerous land mines from the vietnam war
- organisation is helping small farms, especially women
- teamwork of different types of organisations, governments, farmers etc

I wonder if presentations are less honest when representatives from a country's government speak. It seems like they stress the positive achievements of the country while not addressing the challenges so much, nearly justifying themselves. Civil society and organisations show more desperation about the violence, and call to action.

"Women and Customary and Informal Justice System: A Global Consultation on Navigating Complex Pathways to Justice" in the UN building

Hosted by IDLO - Creating a Culture of Justice

en.wikipedia.org/.../International_Development_Law_Or..., Landesa (Rural Development Institute) www.landesa.org/, Federation of Women Lawyers www.fidakenya.org/

Dr Gina Alvarado

- "We can not be neutral on a moving train." International organisations have to intervene!
- her NGO partners with government and civil society about land law
- It's about whether you have rights or not, and many women have no rights. They are owned by their husband/father. Or women have less rights than men. Or women have rights in theory, but not in reality.
- we need to analyse laws and improve them
- we need to raise awareness

Kenya

- in the process of revising the system
- 80% of disputes are solved through an informal justice system (not in courts, not in front of official judges), problematic!
- her organisations has sent 1500 cases to mediation
- train women to engage with tribe elders and claim their rights
- need to get women into the - so far male - tribal elders council

Ria Aciro- Uganda Women's Network

- Feminism has been saying that everything about patriasm is negative. But there is also a lot of good to it.
- even with good laws, women would not experience justice
- We have to ask ourselves: Is there only negative thoughts towards girls/women in the traditional culture?
- They have been successful with working together with the traditional customary system, making use of the good and changing the bad
- write it in their native languages

- build confidence of the survivors (of for example sexual violence), teach them when to refine, how to use the system
- women have to take leadership on all levels, not just political
- we have to inform people

Dr Omaira Bola

- analysis report on regions, how the legal system defines the rights of women
- Latin America is advancing in rights for women, but implementation is difficult
- women are members of communities, but women do not take part in decision making in for example land laws

Indigenous woman from South America

- getting women into decision making by changing the local norms on the community level



Q and A

- changing the culture and the law is essential
- Tunisia: most often tribe council, no official judges. And they don't respect children, and many widows are children, thus not given rights or inheritance
- need to help youth access justice, find advocats or law experts
- women into politics is not enough, they have to support positive development
- law schools have to study the social aspects, too, so that they can apply their law fair and just
- consider: what is happening every Day?
- law is often a men's issue, but affects women much more and more negatively

"Breaking Stereotypes: Muslim Women as Agents of Change"

Hosted by Pakistan, Turkey, Iran and Indonesia, in UN building at CSW63

H. E. Maleeha Lodhi, permanent representative/ambassador of Pakistan to the UN

- Islamophobia, stereotypes, miss-characterization are harmful
- people often assume that her male assistant is the ambassador, because they assume that the ambassador is male

Ms Khawar Mumtaz: Chairperson, National Commission on Status of Women, Pakistan

- We have seen the breaking of stereotypes from time to time (gives examples)
- two ways that women break stereotypes:
 - 1) Emerge of the systems that were established with hard work
 - 2) Bravely stand up against the system, challenge it

Minister of Indonesia

- more than 200 million muslims in Indonesia
- some verses of the Qur'an are lifted up, and others down-prioritized, depending on the person's agenda
- islam is enabling women's participation

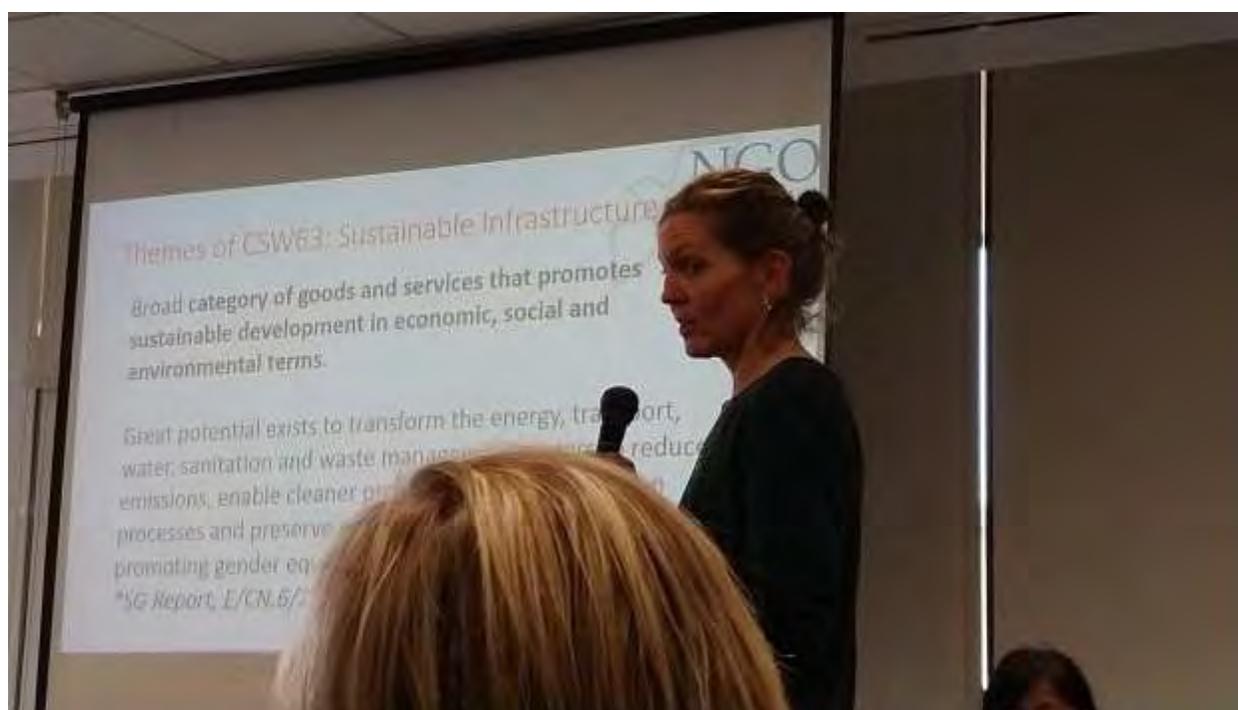
Male political leader from Iran

- women are and have to be also in areas like science and medicine

- today's attacks against mosques in New Zealand was motivated by Islamophobia, so we have to destroy negative stereotypes
- Muslim women are a huge, diverse group with many different cultural practices
- need to distinguish between cultural and religious practices and opinions
- Turkey has many female politicians and academics, but still a lot to do
- leadership program for young Muslim women (55 women from 45 countries participated)

Female political leader from Pakistan

- she believed in Pakistan's leadership and vision, but negotiated with them
- first female prime minister
- women parliamentarians have to unite across the borders of political parties
- take Islam as a source of strength
- many Muslim women to look up to
- now revising inheritance laws in Pakistan
- "Lack of knowledge of Islam is keeping women from success, not Islam itself."
- political parties are women's gate keepers to leadership
- We must condemn terrorism
- was accused of being a terrorist, just because she was a Muslim with a hijab
- we have to take the lead in changing, but we need support



Q and A

- Pakistan is developing well, but media focuses on the negative
- need economic empowering of women
- need to get Muslim men and women on board of feminism, they have to vote for women
- racism and islamophobia are increasing, has to be stopped
- boys, girls, religious leaders, everyone has to be part of this change towards gender equality
- Access to education (also religious education) is critical, but not only
- need women from all social classes
- Islam is actually encouraging gender equality

I was hoping for more answers to the questions: How can Islam contribute to peace? How is a Muslim person better equipped to establish peace than a non-Muslim person? My personal statement is that religions can help people to invest into world peace. But what they said was more that many great people or great projects were part of Muslim countries, without saying that their faith supported and benefitted them.

16.3.

Horizon Summit hosted by Women's Federation for World Peace International and USA

Four women were given the Ambassador For Peace Award by WFWP, and shared about their investments and passions:

1) Mamie Thompson: international diversity and education consultant

A lovely old lady!

- As a child, there was one water for coloured people and one for white people. In protest she, an African-

American girl, drank from the white water and said out loud that it tastes the same.

- She has worked with Youth about tolerance. Many Jews and Coloured people had problems with each other, and within a year she turned them into marvellous people who understood that we are all valuable humans who deserve love and respect from everyone.



2) Jean Kelly: executive director of the Interfaith Nutrition Network (INN)

- "We are here to be of service of this planet, of each other. But many are of service only to themselves."

- Jean was ignorant before she got to know the soup kitchen problems. She heard on TV about starvation and poverty, that is real violence!

- "We are going to have to account for every dollar that was put in our hand and not used to help others. "

- We often feel poor, because we are lacking Love.

- "People on the street are maybe serving you, because you can help them."

- Get people off the street and give them shelter.

- One homeless person who got a shelter, walked around with his key as a necklace and told everyone that he was "inside". He called his mom for the first time in a long time and said that he was inside. He was invited to Christmas by his mother and sister, and finally a tearful reunification.

- What do you need to be able to give love?

3) Meera Khanna: trustee and executive vice president of the Guild of Service in India

www.guild.org.in/index.php

- Love is a major ingredient to peace

- Help women lead a life of dignity: peace in herself, family, society.

- If women cannot reach their potential, it's not true peace

- The system should go to the widow, not the widow to the system.

- Training women, take exam and give certificate so that they can earn enough money

- Help women/children to recognize their potential and realize their dreams

4) Fumika Hasegawa: High School student

- Fumiko had to make an engineering project: didn't want to do software or wiring, but wanted to connect it to SDGs, meaningful, passionate

- In many communities menstruation is a reason for shaming, staying at home 12 weeks a year in total

- 1. Lack of education 2. Lack of resources

- Reusable cloth pads and information about the period

- Reached out to different NGOs, but only one responded positively: organisation "period" that fights period poverty www.period.org/

- Great movie: "Period is not the end of a sentence" www.youtube.com/watch?v=QdIKervJ0-Y

Three speakers followed by table discussion after each speech:

1) Sara Mwamlima: University Student, founder of nonprofit organisation Backpacks for Africa
www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/1212246295604594/

2) Nada Elattar: Early Childhood Development Specialist - Emergencies. UNICEF.

3) Kim Foulds: senior director of International Research and Evaluation at Sesame Workshop

Sesame Workshop is the non-profit behind Sesame Street www.sesameworkshop.org/

- creates local versions of Sesame Street, tackling the local problems
- against stigmatisation and ignorance, also about the period, mutual respect, hygiene
- use Sesame Street muppets
- refuges
- overcome diversity
- mass media (large scale) and direct service (physically meet children where they are)
- buffer against stress
- teach socio-emotional skills, make children resilient
- help caregivers re-establish nurturing relationships
- teach children how to play again
- research and assessment are important
- both adults and children should watch it together
- adults said that the academic content is the greatest need, but research showed that children's greatest need was emotional
- super important to learn vocabulary to express emotions (frustration, jealousy, guilt etc are too complex) and parents often don't have enough emotional vocabulary either (can only name sad, annoyed, angry etc)
- puppet Elmo learns in one episode to set healthy boundaries to his aunty (no cheek pinching!)
- they share their research with all other humanitarian organisations

The speeches about childhood development and Sesame Street moved me to tears. I have two small children myself and feel on one hand that I am not creating a peaceful enough environment for them, and on the other hand that so extremely many children have so much worse surroundings - heartbreaking! And I didn't even like Sesame Street until now... Seriously, we have to put an end to all this suffering!



Music Performances at dinner after Horizon Summit: Sarah Eide and Abe Deshotel

I liked the music and lyrics so much, that I had to record so many:

- www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/790113738027674/
- www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/843818895972332/
- www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/2173738859351757/
- www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/426971021457866/
- www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/527603671097740/
- www.facebook.com/Kvinneforum/videos/303042533704758/

17.3.

Tour to East Garden

East Garden is the property where the founder of WFWP, Hak Ja Han Moon, lived with her family in the 1970s and 80s. It was difficult for her to balance being a mother for her many children, and working for world peace together with her husband. Often the house was full of people who wanted to listen to them, and Hak Ja Han Moon did their best to take care of them with her motherly heart.

The tour through this museum made their life feel very close and real to me. Even though the house looks big and valuable, they used it for their work and not for their family. They invested so much into

humanity, and I could seriously feel that in the walls and trees there.



Concluding personal reflections:

Learning means changing, and the Commission on the Status of Women in New York has changed me a lot. So many presentations, people, conversations and experienced within those 8 days have molded me. I see the world with different eyes. The world (outside west Europe) is so much more messed up than I thought, but there are also many more people and organisations who try to improve it. I feel despair and hope at the same time. But most of all I feel determined, we have to stop this suffering now! Within 8 days I have heard so many heart breaking stories, made new friends, seen amazing African hairstyles, passed by so many homeless and mentally sick people, seen so much pollution and trash, and stared up at giant skyscrapers everywhere! I understand better how the UN during this annual conference tries to agree on suggestions to the countries on how to improve the life of women, while non-governmental organisations (NGO) try to influence the people in that UN committee, the paper, each other and the over 4000 participants of the 63rd CSW.

I am so lucky that I grew up in Germany and received so good education, learned that diversity is a blessing, to reflect critically about stigmas, and that men and women should have equal rights, equal freedom and equal responsibility. I am so lucky that I got married with a Norwegian who grew up with a similar mindset, and who is a loving and responsible father, housekeeper and husband.

The main statement of the commission was that we need more women in decision making in order to establish peace. But I would like to rephrase that: We need many different representatives from the involved parties at the discussion table, different ages, different races, different religions, different parties, and both men, women and youth. And I am going to be part of that, in my own ways.

