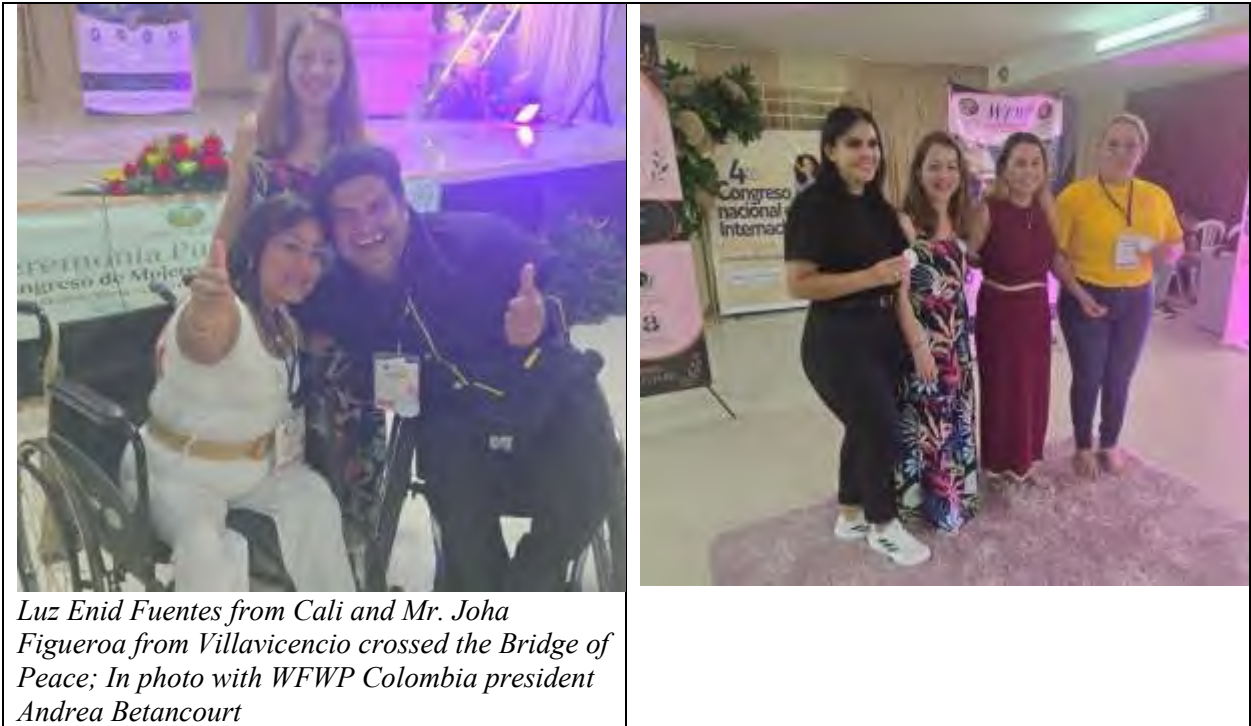


WFWP Colombia: Bridge of Peace Reminding Is that Peace is Personal and Public

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WFWP Colombia held a Bridge of Peace Ceremony as part of its commitment to fostering reconciliation, strengthening women's leadership, and promoting a culture of peace rooted in the heart on June 27, 2026 during its 4th National and International Women Leaders Congress in Maicao, La Guajira, Colombia.



About 200 participants of the Women's Congress were reminded that peace is not only a public goal, but also a personal decision: to forgive, to respect, to take responsibility, and to commit ourselves to building a more united and compassionate society. The ceremony, led by WFWP President Andrea M. Fayad Betancourt, became a deeply moving moment of reflection, reconciliation, and commitment to peace.

Betancourt shared the history and meaning of the Bridge of Peace ceremonies which has been carried out by WFWP around the world for more than 30 years. She emphasized that the ceremony is not only a symbolic act, but also a personal and social commitment to heal wounds, overcome resentment, and build new relationships based on love, responsibility, and service.

Dr. Karina Álvarez presented the four essential pillars of the Bridge of Peace: Responsibility, Respect, Repentance and Personal Ceasefire, and Commitment. These pillars invited participants to reflect on the inner attitudes needed to resolve conflict and become true peacebuilders in their families, communities, and nation.

During the ceremony, representative pairs were invited to cross the bridge with Colombia in their hearts. Each pair represented a different dimension of reconciliation, unity, and peacebuilding.



The first Bridge of Peace represented unity between regions of Colombia. Mr. José Maldonado, representing the Eastern Region, known as the Llanos Orientales, and Mr. Leonardo Flórez, representing the Santanderes Region, crossed the bridge together. Both participants shared meaningful words and expressed their commitment to promote unity and strengthen activities between their regions.

The second bridge represented reconciliation beyond political differences. Ms. Mélida Hernández and Ms. Leidy Buitrago crossed the Bridge of Peace as representatives of different political views. Through this symbolic act, they expressed the importance of moving from rivalry to the power of service, recognizing that leadership must be centered on the common good and the

dignity of every person.

The third bridge was a generational bridge, uniting the wisdom and experience of older women leaders with the creativity and energy of younger leaders. Ms. Olga Arenas, a leader from Bucaramanga, and Ms. María Paula Navarro, Secretary of FENAEDILCO, crossed the bridge together. Their participation beautifully represented mutual respect, learning, and cooperation between generations.



The fourth bridge represented cooperation between government institutions and local community leaders. Ms. Loana de la Cruz, representative of the Mayor's Office, and Ms. Carmen González, a local woman leader from Maicao, crossed the bridge together. Their gesture symbolized the importance of strengthening support, dialogue, and conflict resolution between public institutions and grassroots leadership.

The fifth bridge represented sisterhood beyond competition. Ms. Claudia Ruiz from

Villavicencio and Ms. Gloria Quintana from Armenia crossed the bridge as women who may compete to achieve certain goals, yet recognize that human relationships, kindness, and sisterly love must always remain a priority. Their bridge reminded participants that competition should never destroy respect, compassion, or the bonds that unite women as peace leaders.

The final bridge was especially meaningful. It honored community leaders who, despite physical challenges, continue to overcome difficulties and serve their communities. Ms. Luz Enid Fuentes from Cali and Mr. Joha Figueroa from Villavicencio crossed the Bridge of Peace in recognition of the lives they have touched and transformed through their leadership and service. Their participation inspired the audience and showed that peacebuilding is also born from resilience, courage, and the determination to serve others despite adversity.

The ceremony concluded with a powerful atmosphere of inspiration and unity. All participants were invited to take the four pillars of the Bridge of Peace into their own lives and to become bridge builders in their families, communities, and territories.