



WOMEN'S FEDERATION FOR WORLD PEACE INTERNATIONAL

Editorial from Director of WFWPI UN Offices

Peace Zone in the DMZ and 5th UN Office in Asia



700 international women leaders gathered in Mt. Kumgang, North Korea for WFWPI's Convention in 2007

By Carolyn Handschin

Civil society initiative: preparing an environment for peace on the Korean peninsula

It is not only the negotiators who are getting impatient. Civil society, especially those engaged in successful cross-border initiatives, are tired of waiting for a signed paper so that they can get on with their peace building activities unhindered. Women-led NGOs engaged on the Korean peninsula met during the 38th and 39th Sessions of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva to share their best practices and develop an alternative to waiting. Two of WFWPI's HRC side events, both titled "Korean Women, South and North: Peace, Reconciliation, Rights and Development", provided a broad platform for relevant governments, UN bodies and civil society actors to discuss possibilities for peace.

Should the ultimate decision affecting positive change for the oppressed and sanction-weary citizens of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) depend solely on current governmental tensions and

fluctuations? Women's networks have been quietly building solid bridges of trust between north and south for decades by investing in reconciliation, peacebuilding and humanitarian projects. Is it not better to construct trust from the bottom up, until there is no other option but to come to a political agreement?



Mr. Tomas Ojea Quintana, the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in the DPRK, agreed in his message to one of these HRC side events, saying, "When I note that all these initiatives...advocate for the involvement of women of all ages for overcoming the challenges of division, and shifting the focus to peacebuilding and development cooperation, I feel that the destiny of the Korean people is in good hands."

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VISION

Women working together to realize one global family rooted in a culture of sustainable peace.

MISSION

Empowering women as peacebuilders and leaders in the family to transform the community, nation and world. Through education, advocacy, partnership, reconciliation and humanitarian service, WFWPI aims to create an environment of peace and wellbeing for future generations and people of all races, cultures and religious creeds.

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UN HQ in New York

70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Remembering Eleanor Roosevelt's Contribution to Peace

December 10, 2018 - FDR Presidential Library, Hyde Park



Eleanor Roosevelt holding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1949

By Alisha Prasia and Alexa Ward

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted this historic document as Resolution 217, at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris, France. It is the embodiment of universal values that transcends cultures, nations and regions, and proclaims the inalienable rights to which all human beings are inherently entitled.

In June 1946, in the wake of the deadliest conflict the world had ever seen, the newly created United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) established the Commission on Human Rights, which consisted of eighteen members. The Commission, a standing body of the United Nations, established a special Universal Declaration of Human Rights Drafting Committee, which was chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt. The committee

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Working Group on Girls

A World Organization for Girls

October 31, 2018 - UN HQ in New York



By Jeanne Carroll

The Working Group On Girls (WGG), an NGO committee connected to UN Women, helps elevate the voices and needs of girls globally through education and visibility on the local, national and international stage by allowing girls to advocate on their own behalf.

October 2018 saw a major effort by WGG marking the 7th anniversary of the International Day of the Girl with 11 days of action from

October 1st leading to a celebration at the UN in New York City on October 11. The event, "Girls Speak Out", filled the ECOSOC Chamber with girls from all over the world, where they took their position on the main dais of the Chamber.

Each girl, using only her first name, spoke about unique dilemmas confronting them and how they personally worked toward a solution. Selena, from the state of Georgia, addressed the need for middle school girls to feel confident in pursuing interest in STEM education by developing the "Girls First Junior Program". Selena said, "Don't try to be perfect, be brave enough to fail."

Shreeasi Ja worked with UNICEF, helping girls transition from the educational environment to work. She created support where girls feel confident to use their skills, emphasizing that the ideal world is where every person is included.

“ Don't try to be perfect, be brave enough to fail. ”

Nathalia, an urban girl from New York City, spoke on her passion for removing the stigma and shame of mental illness through support and education. She emphasized that while over 500 million girls are living with mental illness, only 2% of national budgets are allocated to serve them. Trinity also spoke on mental health and pleads with girls in her "Note to Self" workshops to use art as a method of coping with depression. She boldly proclaimed, "I am somebody, NOT some body" and encouraged

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UN at Geneva

38th Session of the UN Human Rights Council

“We Could Be Your Daughters” A New Mindset on Sexual Exploitation

June 22, 2018 - UN at Geneva

By *Natascha Schellen*

The thirty-eighth session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) was held from June 18 to July 6, 2018, at the United Nations at Geneva. The session covered a broad range of human rights issues and was attended by representatives of member and observer states of the HRC, as well as observers from UN entities, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations. According to the initial report published by the HRC, 20 resolutions were adopted during the 38th session, including the following pertaining to women's rights: eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and girls; accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls; preventing and responding to violence against women and girls in digital contexts; eliminating female genital mutilation.

Women continue to be discriminated against and abused in many settings, especially in the sex trade. The Permanent Missions of Sweden, France and Ireland to the UN co-sponsored a side event entitled “The Nordic Model: A

good practice to counter sexual exploitation and human trafficking” on June 22 to tackle this issue.

The Nordic model of dealing with prostitution was first adopted in Europe by Sweden. Ms. Karin Bolin, from the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the UN, explained that Swedish law punishes the buyers, not the sellers, of sex, as most prostitutes don't go into the business by choice and need help instead of prosecution in a criminal court. Bolin added that prostitution should be eliminated entirely from society, arguing that it impacted women “physically, mentally, [and] psychologically” and that it was “against human dignity.”

“**We could be your daughters. We women also have rights to freedom.**”

France adopted the model late in 2016, according to Francois Gave from the Permanent Mission of France, and has seen some success with the law, although it is too early to draw conclusions. Nevertheless, Gave agreed with Bolin that prostitutes are primarily victims, not criminals, and the traditional policy of going after the prostitutes themselves has not helped to mitigate the problem.

The most powerful voice at the event was a young woman from Nigeria who gave her testimony as a victim of human trafficking. Sonia (a pseudonym she used for the sake of anonymity) explained how she was lured to Italy by the prospect of an honest job after her parents fell into poverty, only to discover upon her arrival that she now had a 40,000 euro debt placed on her and the “honest” job she was promised turned out to be selling her body. It was a fate worse than death to her, as she painfully described it, and there was no escape, until one day, volunteers from the

Sexual exploitation continued on page 9

39th Session of the UN Human Rights Council Side Event on Women and Trade Policy

Empowering Women to Seize Economic Opportunities

September 24, 2018 - UN at Geneva



By *Jimin Millet and Carolyn Handschin*

“80% of policy makers are men. Gender balance should be a natural thing, but, to come to that understanding, we need to have a more equal representation,” said Mrs. Hulya Kurt, president of the Organization of Women in Trade (OWIT). Perspectives for Trade Policy & Women's Economic Empowerment was the title of the HRC side event organized by WFWPI and the Graduate Women's Institute (GWI) during the 39th Session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) on September 24, 2018. “Economic development drives growth and alleviates poverty. While negotiations of global trade policy have not been the defining profile of many women NGOs, the obstructions and remedy to advancing women's

economic empowerment at any level sound very familiar and are supported by the same UN conventions,” explained Carolyn Handschin, Director of the UN Offices of WFWPI, in opening the debate.

The event was designed based on a concept note prepared by the organizers together with the Women's Economic and Social Think Tank (WESTT) based in Brussels. Trade provides tremendous potential to sustain life, and develop prosperous, flourishing societies. Unethical trade, however, can have negative effects on human rights. Consumers, workers, and marginalized communities like women and those living in poverty, are disproportionately affected by unethical trade policies. Worse, it is the most marginalized communities that are often excluded from policy-negotiations. There has been a shift in perceptions by experts, who now recognize the importance of gender-based economic analyses and the importance of ensuring liberalisation policies do not negatively impact those with less of a voice.

Having the opportunity to sit together and discuss issues with the Chief of UNCTAD's Department on “Trade, Gender and Development” was very insightful and encouraging for all present. Simonetta Arrilli

explained that the interest in gender equality and women's economic development in trade is a relatively new development, but rapidly being taken more seriously. She stated that legal instruments are changing and links between women's empowerment and its impact on nations' financial health are clearer. The WTO “Declaration on Trade and Women's Empowerment” in Buenos Aires has focused attention. Sharing the results of research and best practices among regions has been very helpful, but more can be done. This is why UNCTAD has launched a Trade and Gender Toolbox as a methodology to better assess what the impact on women in trade could be and how to redress the imbalance.

Hulya Kurt from the Organization of Women in International Trade (OWIT) described the disadvantages women have, including lack of access to credits, lack of knowledge, skills and, especially, confidence. She proposed that platforms be created for better information sharing, skills training, trade-specific knowledge, opportunities for collaboration and mentoring. She summarized by saying that benefits to society would be much greater than expected if there was more commitment and certification

Trade policy continued on page 9

UN at Vienna

CCPCJ Side Event on Prevention

Video Game Helps Victims of Gender-based Violence

May 17, 2018 - UN at Vienna



UNODC Department Director and Project Coordinator with WFWPI UN Team

By Carolyn Handschin

Within the larger framework of the Global Programme for the Implementation of the

Doha Declaration: Promoting a Culture of Lawfulness, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), with the government of Mexico, sponsored a side event during the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) on May 17, 2018. The event, “Education as a powerful tool to prevent violence against children”, included the official launch of their joint initiative: a video game aimed at helping young girls to respond to psychological, physical and sexual violence. “Chuka” was designed by the renowned Mexico City-based, women-led developer firm Gagamel Estudio. A captivating game, it helps young girls (7-12) recognize and deal with aggressions.

The Crime Commission side event, also linked to the “Education for Justice (E4J)” initiative, was planned to bring together stakeholders to discuss how education can make a difference in schools and society. HE Ambassador Alicia Buenrostro Massieu of Mexico chaired the session, introducing the theme and her hopes for the new project. Speakers representing the sponsors included the Deputy Attorney General of Mexico, Sara Irene Herrias, Antonia Luigi Mazzitelli, Representative of the UNODC Liaison and Partnership Office in Mexico and Daniela Baptista, its National Program Officer. A detailed description of the project, its launching in Mexico and the actual psychological patterns

Video game continued on page 10

WFWPI Conference

Sustainable Peace through Reconciliation and Education

October 3, 2018 - Vienna International Centre, UN at Vienna



(left to right) H. Excellency Ms. Lourdes Gisela Antonia Victoria-Kruse, H. Excellency Solano Ortiz

By Renate Amesbauer, Elisabeth Cook, Gabriella Zoerer

The conference was opened by Mrs. Carolyn Handschin, Director, WFWPI UN Offices,

who warmly welcomed H. Excellency Solano Ortiz, Permanent Mission of Costa Rica, who stated in his address, “Our country is being led by the capacity and wisdom of women. In times of conflict our women are more focused on finding solutions than fighting.”

H. Excellency Ms. Lourdes Gisela Antonia Victoria-Kruse, Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic, said “world peace can only be achieved with the inclusion of women and that their role in reconciliation is vital.”

Session I was chaired by M. Mamadou Kone, M.E.S, Cons. Education, Health and Human Rights. The first speaker was Ms. Petra Bayr, MA MLS, Member of Parliament in Austria, who spoke on “The Roots of Genocide –

Early warning mechanisms”, exploring how to prevent ethnic cleansing by recognizing early signs and prevent further developments. She brought up the idea that we need a new approach to security; ensuring citizens’ safety from hunger and other daily disruptions.

“**World peace can only be achieved with the inclusion of women.**”

Sustainable peace continued on page 10

WFWPI Side Event during the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Education Works: Global Civic Education is Crime Prevention

May 15, 2018 - UN at Vienna



By Renate Amesbauer

H.E. Ms. Pilar Saborio de Rocafort, Ambassador of the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the UN at Vienna and co-sponsor of the CCPCJ side event organized by WFWPI,

the Academic Council on the UN System (ACUNS), the Universal Peace Federation and others, opened the Session with these words:

“Peace does not come by itself; peaceful behaviour is something to be learned and to strive for day by day...Civic education means to strengthen that feeling inside oneself that I am part of the whole, I am not only effected by my surroundings, but I can have an effect too and should also include learning skills for conflict resolution.”

Adopted at the conclusion of the 13th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), the Doha Declaration highlights the importance of education as a tool to prevent crime and corruption. It

emphasizes that education for children and youth is fundamental in promoting a culture that supports the rule of law, crime prevention and criminal justice.

In support of this, the Education for Justice (E4J) initiative has been developed to create and disseminate education materials in UNODC mandated areas of crime prevention and criminal justice across primary, secondary and tertiary education. Online tools and academic resources will be made available free of charge, while workshops, conferences and symposia will be organized for teachers and academics to learn and exchange ideas and research.

Education works continued on page 10

Editorial continued...

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WFWPI as a longtime member, and sometimes co-chair, of the North South Reconciliation Commission and initiator of humanitarian projects for the DPRK over two decades, took the initiative to organize these HRC meetings and briefings. Joining together with the Women's United Nations Research Network (WUNRN), we launched a proposal to strengthen confidence-building local solutions involving women, peace and development on the Korean peninsula. The premise being that the role of civil society is to anticipate the needs of governments and prepare the base so that they can make wise and sustainable decisions and later support implementation. Peace must be planned and realized with those who care about it most.



Assistant to the Special Rapporteur, WFWPI UN Office Director, Christine Ahn on screen (Director of Women Across the DMZ)

Peace Zone in the DMZ for women to prepare the peace process

In the spirit of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security", a civil society proposal was launched toward governments of North and South Korea to create a Peace Zone in the DMZ. A letter was sent to the Office of the Foreign Minister in the Republic of Korea as well as to the Ambassador of the DPRK at the United Nations, requesting a meeting place or refuge where women could come together to build and implement projects for peace and development. This would be a sanctuary for local needs, knowledge and resources, which might eventually include international expertise. Their actions would help build political and public will for social change and sustainable peace on the Korean Peninsula.

During the side event, it was clear just how much positive news there was to share. Speakers described the marches and international networking of "Women Across the DMZ". The dozens of meetings with women in the North, youth engagement and humanitarian projects (tree planting, emergency food, school supplies) of WFWPI were highlighted in a video. One representative of the government of the Republic of Korea (ROK) attending the event was not aware of these initiatives. He explained that while women's role is being



HRC side event partners, speakers, staff

promoted in the human rights system in general, it seems to not get as much attention in Korea.

The Director of the "Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative" in Geneva, a research body at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, was invited to supply analysis on the side event theme. She explained, "Making women count is not just counting them. Inclusion doesn't just happen in negotiation. There are different phases and levels of inclusion, where women's thoughts are essential. Mass action and change includes workshops and grass roots activities, and involving women's groups and their implementation of peace efforts."

“**Making women count is not just counting them.**”

5th UN Office in Asia

In a broader context, the final speaker, Heiner Handschin, Director of the UN Office in Geneva of the Universal Peace Federation, reported about an initiative launched by the organization's founder, Dr. Sun Myung Moon, in 2000 to create Peace Zones in contested conflict-ridden lands. "These peace zones would be havens that exist for the sake of peace, prosperity, and reconciliation," said Mr.



HRC38 briefing with governments, UN and NGOs

Handschin. "They would be free of racial and sexual discrimination, human rights violations, and war...[and] ecological and environmental havens for the entire natural world." A proposal was presented for such a project at the DMZ during a conference on disarmament organized

in 2009 by UPF, WFWPI and UNIDIR (Disarmament Research) at the UN at Geneva. Speakers included the then Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the Deputy Director of UNIDIR.

The proposal was further expanded to include establishing a major UN Office complex within the DMZ. This future 5th UN Office was foreseen as a hub for peace research, preventive diplomacy, disarmament, interreligious cooperation, and, potentially, an office for advancing the role of women in those fields. Currently, there are four main UN Offices in the world: New York, Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna. Despite two thirds of the world's population, over one third of the



Lois Herman, President WUNRN, event co-sponsor

world GDP and the birthplace of five major religions being in Asia, there is no main UN office located there.

In 2014, in co-sponsorship with the governor's office of Gyeonggi province in South Korea near the DMZ, the Segye Times, UPF, WFWPI and other NGOs organized a second conference at the UN in Geneva. Blueprints had been drawn up for a transformation of the DMZ and presented to the international audience from Gyeonggi Province. The ideas for a UN Peace Complex, Village and Peace Park included a proposal as to how it could all be financed using gravel from the Imjin river. A government representative from the Asian region hearing this proposal for the first time commented, "This would be a dream come true." Another said, "You are not even from our region. Why are you advocating this for us?"

In conclusion, institutional changes involving governments are usually not simple or quick. Yet most of what is worth fighting for isn't. But when civil society is informed, can unite and demonstrate a capacity to put aside narrow interests (a difficulty that states have), their power can and has nudged governments toward a higher good. The development goals are a case in point. In particular, women can translate their concerns and knowledge as mothers, daughters and sisters to broader social reform. They are often able to move more efficiently, inclusively and compassionately than governments. Advocacy campaigns from NGOs for these projects will continue, seeking partnership with member states in implementing them.



Chapter Highlight

WFWPI Co-Founder, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, is putting emphasis on nations with a potential for appreciable development. Regional and global support of these strategic chapters is essential for their continued growth. Over the next few editions, our newsletter will highlight these thirteen nations, hoping that from amongst our readers, there may be ideas for networking and resource-sharing with the national WFWP chapter. Contact details are listed and they would surely be delighted to hear from you.

Brazil

WFWP Brazil has focused on educating the population about female leadership to raise the standard of character from the individual, family, and society.

During its 26-year journey, WFWP Brazil has carried out several sisterhood ceremonies and social activities, including blood and food drives and donations of clothing and toys.

Education seminars in schools on AIDS, STDs, early pregnancy prevention, as well as the education of universally shared values and citizenship have been staples of their work.

Their “Festival of Nations” unites the diverse ethnic groups of Brazil in a day of cultural exchange, music and food. Last year, the City of Sao Paulo even declared the festival

a Municipal Feast and entered it into the city’s official commemorative agenda.

For more information, please contact **Ezzat Ferraboli** at ampmbrasil@gmail.com.



10th Festival of Nations in Sao Paulo



WFWP President, Yeon Ah Moon, speaking at Latin America GWPN Assembly in 2018



Bridge of Peace ceremony



Food drive



Blood drive



Education on universally shared values

Thailand

WFWP Thailand is bringing substantial results in eliminating poverty by helping families create sustainable income. Their “Livestock for Economic Development Project” provides training on how to raise milk goats for consumption and trade and buffalo for farming, while their broader vocational training gives practical skills training to disadvantaged women.

WFWP Thailand’s interest in youth includes scholarships for needy children through their “Foster Parent” program, character education and “Color My Heart With Peace,” an annual painting project for elementary school children that cultivates emotional intelligence and allows them to express their creativity.

Their high-level events include the Mother’s Heart Network, Bridge of Peace ceremonies,

International Leadership Workshop, Women Leaders Convention and International Seminar.

Their aim is to support women as the key component to creating peace.

For more information, please contact **Kamolthip Phattaratangmontri** at thaiwfwpa@gmail.com.

Brazil, Thailand, Zambia



Livestock for Economic Development Project



Agriproduct Processing Project



Foster Parent Project



Color My Heart With Peace art competition



Women Leaders for Bridge Nations of Peace at UN Bangkok



Sisterhood Ceremony between Japan and Thailand

Zambia

Since its launch in April 1992, WFPW Zambia's activities have been complimenting the efforts of the Zambian government to provide a decent living standard for its citizens, mostly in the areas of economic empowerment and nutrition.

WFPW Zambia donates High Energy Protein Supplement (HEPS), eggs and other food to undernourished children and disadvantaged persons, while educating the population on the importance of a nutritious, balanced diet. Their

free sewing lessons provide vulnerable women with malnourished children a skill to generate income and make visits to families' homes to assess their living conditions and help them with household requisites.

While a solid financial foundation and safe home environment are important, WFPW Zambia is also concerned with the character and scholastic education of the next generation. Their Foster Parent program pairs children and youth with a "parent" who gives them guidance

on making positive choices in life and assists them with clothing and school supplies. The organization gives scholarships to high school students so they can complete their education and runs campaigns in schools on how to prevent HIV/AIDS.

For more information, please contact **Sheila Mwenda** at sheila.mwenda60@gmail.com.



Giving food to malnourished children at local clinics



Sewing class for vulnerable women and girls



March for International Women's Day



Donation to Barlastone School children



Donation of shoes to David Kaunda Technical School



Interfaith Women's Seminar

New York continued...

Eleanor Roosevelt continued from page 2

met in two sessions over the course of two years.

The committee finished its work in May of 1948. The draft was further discussed by the Commission on Human Rights, ECOSOC, and the Third Committee of the General Assembly. Before being adopted, UN Member States made numerous amendments.

In 1948, before the General Assembly, Eleanor Roosevelt said, “We stand today at the threshold of a great event both in the life of the United Nations and in the life of mankind. This declaration may well become the international Magna Carta for all men everywhere.”

In her own words, Eleanor Roosevelt explained the essence of human rights, “Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. [...] Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.”

On Friday, December 10, 2018 a conference was held at the Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) Presidential Library in Hyde Park, New York, with the theme, “Universal Declaration of Human Rights: 70th Anniversary.” The conference was opened by Paul Sparrow, Director of the FDR Presidential Library and Museum.

“**Where after all do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world.**”

Manuela Roosevelt, Editorial Director of Callaway Arts and Entertainment, Chair of the Eleanor Roosevelt Val-Kill Partnership and wife of David Roosevelt, grandson of FDR and Eleanor, referred to the UDHR as a “beacon of light.” She went on to say, “It is remarkable that Eleanor was able to bring the nations together, remarkable that she had this vision and that she could do it.” On Eleanor as a person she stated, “She wasn’t about Eleanor Roosevelt. She was about serving the other.”

During a panel discussion, Dr. Ellen Chesler, Senior Fellow at the Roosevelt Institute, referred to the UN as a “brilliant institution

with a large capacity for civil society,” and “an institution that is close to the ground.” She referred to the UDHR as an “aspirational document that inspired civic conversation about human rights as a lived experience.” She reflected that women’s rights have become an important part of human rights over the past seventy years, and that the world is a “very different place because of this document.”

Dr. Rebecca Adami spoke of her new book, *Women and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which explores the non-Western women delegates who took part in the drafting of the UN Charter and the UDHR from 1945 to 1948. She is a Research Associate at the Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

A workshop was held that guided the participants to determine actionable items in four areas based on FDR’s Four Freedoms: Freedom of Expression; Freedom from Fear; Freedom from Want; and Freedom of Worship.

The keynote address, on the topic of “UN Efforts Internationally to Improve Human Rights in Crisis Zones,” was given by Ben Majekodunmi, UN Senior Human Rights and Political Affairs Officer, in the Executive Office of the UN Secretary General. He is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the Human Rights Up Front Initiative. He spoke about the status of human rights at the UN from four perspectives: personal; political; UN operations; and looking ahead.

On the “personal level,” he spoke of the courage of witnesses who are willing to take significant risk in speaking up about human rights violations, stating that “the strongest expressions of human rights that I have experienced are when rights have been violated.”

On the topic of “looking ahead,” he referred to three major challenges: migration; the environment; and peace and security. He simply stated that the human rights framework is in place, however, the politics aren’t working.

Before the conference closed, David Roosevelt thanked Ben for the very difficult work he was engaged in and encouraged all with “Please don’t give up.”

Alexa Fish Ward served as Executive Director of the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill in Hyde Park, New York from 1989 to 1992. She is currently an International Vice President for WFWP International and Deputy Director of the UN Office.



Girls continued from page 2

those present to “value our sacred sisterhood and own your own truth.”

14-year-old Shreeya traveled from a remote village in rural Nepal. At the age of 11, she saw her friend married to a much older man for her dowry and shared how many young girls face

the same fate, only to be tossed aside, maimed or killed once the dowry is paid in full. With the support of her parents, Shreeya began educating parents and girls with her program “Give education to the girls, not a dowry,” which convinced many parents to send their girls to school.

These are just a few of the girls and their stories that kept the audience spellbound for three hours in the halls of the UN. Other topics addressed were: climate change; human trafficking; natural disasters; poverty; and lack of supplies for menstruation. In closing, a girl from Cameroon, Blessing, said, “Girls have it so hard because the world is scared of them. We are all humans and love will set us free.”

“**Girls have it so hard because the world is scared of them.**”

WGG was established in support of girls worldwide in conjunction with efforts being made after the ratification of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for the empowerment of all women and girls. Originally a project of UNICEF, WGG then emerged as an NGO committee within UN Women.

Jeanne Carroll has served as a senior UN Representative for WFWP International for more than twelve years. She currently serves on the WGG Steering Committee and holds the position of Corresponding Secretary. Jeanne has also participated in a wide range of committees for the annual session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.



In Memoriam

Beth Adamson



On August 11, 2018, the Working Group on Girls lost a beloved champion, Beth Adamson. Her life’s mission was to fight for the betterment of all girls worldwide. Beth invested her love, support, and mentorship in girl activists. She was one of the bastions of the Working Group on Girls and her legacy will continue in honor of her life.



Geneva continued...

Sexual exploitation continued from page 3

organization Associazione Comunita Papa Giovanni XXIII rescued her. Free from her exploiters, the message that Sonia wanted to pass on to the clients of prostitutes was this: “We are not there by choice. Every time you buy us, it can be considered rape. We could be your daughters. We women also have rights to freedom.”

Millions of women like Sonia need to be protected and supported so that they can escape their traffickers and re-establish their lives with dignity.



Trade policy continued from page 3

from global trade institutions towards women in the financial sector.

Women in Economic Development (WIED+) is a coalition that has been promoting gender equality in trade policy for 20 years, explained its representative, Gea Meijers. The EU has a strong impact assessment policy and is seriously involved. She requested more data to show the engagement that the WTO has for women. It seems that policies have not changed much in two decades and called for a global reassessment that would evaluate country by country, context by context. Only then

could gaps be pinpointed and guidelines and recommendations made toward new policies.

The final speaker and co-organizer was Madi Sharma of the Women’s Economic and Social Think Tank (WESTT). A very strong speaker, she laid out several clear points. 1) Women need to be involved in policy development. 2) When you have profit, you have choices. 3) Gender equality is not about women, but is a social and economic imperative. 4) Policies are supposed to be preventive and protective but that is often not the case. 5) Solutions start by implementation. 6) Women must act together because it is our right and responsibility to do so.



39th Session of the UN Human Rights Council

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 70: Religion and Politics

September 20, 2018 - UN at Geneva



By Carolyn Handschin

70 years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Paris, it has become the most translated document in the world. Though not a legally binding document, it stands as a moral framework and standard to ensure the basic human dignity and worth of all humanity. Its vision and language have become a benchmark for the establishment of binding human rights conventions around the world. WFWPI, together with the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) and other partners, commemorated this anniversary by holding a panel at the 39th Session of the Human Rights Council on September 20, 2018, looking at the role of religion and politics together to promote and protect human rights.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Heiner Handschin, President of UPF in Switzerland, expressed the need for religious and political leaders to listen to one another. As a governmental organization, the UN had not fully endorsed religions as partners until September 11, 2001, when it became evident that religions ignored could become a serious threat. Mr. Handschin said that now is the time to discover that religions and religious leaders can be a tremendous asset to peace and stability.

Four speakers brought in very diverse but complementary elements to the debate, beginning with Mr. Iqbal Alimohamed, Nobel Laureate and longstanding functionary for UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) around the world. He said, “Currently over

72 million people are recognized as refugees, vulnerable people living in insecurity, streaming across borders due to war, conflicts, persecution and injustices.” He continued that responsibility lies not only with government to hold power accountable, but civil society, including religious leaders and NGOs. His closing quote was by Douglas MacArthur, who said, “I have known war as few men now living know it. Its very destructiveness on both friend and foe has rendered it useless as a means of settling international disputes.”

Prof. Peter Kirchscläger, Professor of Theological Ethics at the University of Lucerne, Switzerland, clearly described how religion can contribute to the implementation of human rights: translating the rights into language and imagery that is adaptable and contribute to human rights awareness. By justifying human rights with a religious perspective, it should also enhance their validity as well as spiritually codify humanity’s responsibility to implement. The 1948 document was an implicit invitation to religions, worldviews and cultures, and still needs further application and engagement.

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I firmly believe in the power of faith leaders to shape our world for good.

- Antonio Guterres

Dr. Astrid Stuckelberger, Professor Faculty of Medicine, UNIGE, spoke of the recent changes in global working alliances. An expert on aging at the UN, she is also very active in the Geneva Spiritual Appeal, which was created in 1999 by religious and political leaders in the wake of the crash of the SR111 airliner over Halifax. The founding document declared that

religion should never be used to divide or justify violence. It is hopeful to engage across religious borders sharing a theme of a “common humanity under God.” Language has been an obstacle between the political sphere and religious or other civil society communities, but that is solvable when there is a will to do so.

Dr. Elmar Kuhn, Dean of World Religions at the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, spoke about the UDHR as an enlightenment and hope for humankind, while highlighting three concerns: be grateful for the work of predecessors; beware of the current violations in spite of the document (with many involving Christians); and reflect seriously on how to achieve higher implementation rates. He called for a “renewal” of the UDHR with new instruments to connect more to the religious and cultural roots of human rights and integration of interreligious dialogue and as a preventive measure against intolerance and hate crimes. He made frequent references to the situation in Europe and of the important responsibility of Christianity. He announced the creation of the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD) to facilitate interreligious cooperation in substance.

The final presentation was given by Mrs. Carolyn Handschin, Director, WFWPI UN Office, who referred to the words of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, “I firmly believe in the power of faith leaders to shape our world for good.” Promoting the idea of a high-level Interreligious Council within the UN system, she described some of the historic prods or correctives toward a more inclusive involvement of religious voices in the UN. A Model UN “Interreligious Council Program” created in 2008 in Geneva by the governments of Indonesia, Philippines and UPF and WFWPI and others has been demonstrating how (young) minds, set within a religious framework, can discover new and creative solutions for the UN’s global agenda.



Vienna continued...

Video game continued from page 4

that are affected through game use were provided. The audience seemed to hope for a live demonstration.

Carolyn Handschin, Director of the UN Offices for WFPWI, was invited to bring in the voice of civil society engaged in early childhood education programs. She addressed the theme “Educating Children for Resiliency and Prevention of Conflict”, concurring with UNODC that the current burden on costly correctional social justice systems can be shifted if preventive education already begins at a young age.

Mrs. Handschin praised the work of the UNODC to strengthen prevention through programs and institutions that promote a healthy lifestyle, such as this video game and their “Strong Families” program in South America. She explained how WFPW educational programs and curricula often promote family as an institution critical to peace culture and “conscience” as an important and underestimated tool to instill values and identify “goodness” as a basis for value to the larger whole.

As explained by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Violence Against Children (SRSG-VAC), Marta Santos Pais, “We see less recidivism where there is a focus on prevention rather than imprisonment... Children’s exposure to violence often leads to a dramatic vicious circle. Child victims of sexual abuse are up to five times as likely to suffer post-traumatic stress disorder, to be dependent on drugs and alcohol, and also to commit criminal offences later in life. Child neglect increases the likelihood of arrest as a juvenile and emotional maltreatment...leads to an increased risk of involvement in violent crime.”

Cultivated in early childhood and youth, the development of conscience or a sense of “dignity for all” should be incubated in the relationship between parents and children. By responding to a parent’s nurturing, forgiveness and discipline, a child learns the principle of “giving back”. It shapes a paradigm for future social relations, which translates to an innate sense of regard and concern for others: the “Golden Rule”. Resilience is a natural byproduct because it is easier to revert to a healthy lifestyle if already experienced and, even more, if children are made to understand what the building blocks of “community” are.



Sustainable peace continued from page 4

The second speaker, Mr. Billy Batware, spoke on “Young People as Agents of Reconciliation”. A native of Rwanda, he experienced the genocide firsthand. He said

that in order for young people to positively influence the world, we need to ensure safe spaces and proper education, especially for young women and girls. He noted that while we will always have conflicts, we must learn to resolve them without violence. Young people have to claim their place at the table because they are the potential foot soldiers of war.

The UN has been a leader in supporting youth. In 2013, they nominated the first Youth Envoy, and “Youth 2030”, an umbrella organization for youth activities across the UN, was founded this past September.

Ms. Mahda Tewolde and Ms. Yohanna P. Teklu, Eritrean Women’s Association UK, both shared on the topic of “Engaging and Empowering Women for Sustainable Peace”.

Ms. Tewolde took the audience through the social changes that took place for and because of Eritrean women during and after the liberation of their country.

Also, the National Union of Eritrean Women worked in towns and villages to educate the people, especially the women and children. Forced marriage and child marriage were banned.

Ms. Yohanna P. Teklu continued that in the course of the liberation, women could own land, more women were in Parliament, local courts were instituted with at least one female judge, and female genital mutilation (FGM) was made illegal, among many other initiatives for and with the help of women. Because of these rapid developments, Eritrea received an award from UNICEF. Ms. Teklu mentioned that if a society doesn’t respect the rights and the equality of women, it is not a liberated society.

Mrs. Etenesh Hadis, Founder and Head of the African Womens’ organization in Austria spoke next on “The Role of the Peace Process in the Horn of Africa to bring Stability and Economic Development”.

She shared how Eritrea and Ethiopia were at war for two decades and how the leaders of both countries met and started the reconciliation process two months ago. She also stated the importance of quality leaders. If they use their power to suppress their people suffer, but if they use their position righteously, than they are a good example for their people.

Session 2 “The Role of Education in Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation” opened with Mr. Fred Ohenhen, born in Nigeria, introducing “Interkulturelle Bildungsarbeit in Kindergärten und Schulen” (IKU) ISOP, Innovative Social Projects, in Graz, an organization that is countering prejudice and racism at an early age by bringing together children of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds through an exchange program. ISOP received the Intercultural Achievement Award 2018 by the Ministry of External Affairs.

Mr. Mamadou Kone, born in Mali, spoke about “Education, a Path to Prevent

Conflicts and Promote Peace”. He mainly referred to character education starting in the family, pointed out that the media has a big responsibility in reporting more uplifting news, that social injustice and exclusion lead to conflict and that a political agenda is needed.

Dr. Maria Riehl spoke on “Forgive, Love and Unite”, sharing how she had to remain in Vienna as a refugee and couldn’t return to Slovakia after the Walshaw Pact troops marched on the capital of Prague. She stated that reconciliation starts with understanding that all of us are human beings.

Dr. Riehl then explained the “Bridge of Peace Ceremony”, a rite that has been used by WFPW many times since 1995 (50 years after the end of WWII) for the healing of inner wounds and resentment caused by conflict and war. Women of former enemy countries walk over a symbolic bridge from both ends towards each other, asking for and offering forgiveness and reconciliation by bowing and embracing each other.

Once we can see each other as brothers and sisters, differences will not matter so much any more.



Education works continued from page 4

Dir. Izabella Gorczyca explained that while we are developing intellectually and technologically, adults and children alike are far behind in their emotional intelligence; something she is working hard to remedy.

Ms. Zita Kiedler, a middle school teacher, shared her experience teaching about “Schulfach Glück” (“Happiness”), a subject that promotes life skills and happiness by helping adolescents create an active and self-reliant lifestyle through key experiences that trigger personal growth and self-awareness.

Dr. Maria Riehl reminded the audience that we are created beings, coming from two origins: our parents. She also commented on that fact that contrary to animals who need to be able to move by themselves right after birth, every human being is born completely dependent on a caregiver and family.

She also portrayed from her perspective as a grandmother just how much of an impact the everyday life in the family has on a child, especially with siblings growing up together.

Dr. Riehl referred to the “four realms of love” that can be learned in a family. The first is the love of a helpless child towards their parent, then the shared love among siblings, which grows to the exclusive love between committed partners, which may eventually develop into the love of parents toward their children.

After the official program ended, discussion among participants continued for almost two hours outside the conference room over coffee.



WFWP is raising the next generation of peace leaders through our internships. Students have the opportunity to put their unique talents and interests to use in a tailored experience, be it in the field or working with high-level contacts. The following are some reflections on their time with WFWP.

Maryam Farooq Internship pushed me out of my comfort zone

UN Office in New York



Maryam acting as emcee for WFWPI's CSW62 Side Event

When I first began my internship at the Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) UN Office in New York, I was not sure what to expect from the experience. I had done my research and was familiar with the purpose of the NGO, but I was not sure what kind of activities I would be able to assist with. I had just assumed that I would not be playing a major role in the team, since I was only a student with a limited skill set, but I was quickly proven wrong. I was so pleased to meet Mrs. Ward, Deputy Director, her staff members, and the other student interns who all welcomed me and allowed me to contribute to their team.

“**An opportunity for me to grow and learn.**”

In one of my very first meetings with Mrs. Ward, she shared how this experience is not just an opportunity for their staff to have another intern, but also an opportunity for me to grow and learn. She made it very clear that I can share what my future goals are so that my tasks can help me explore my interests further.

I was so surprised to hear this because many internships aren't primarily concerned with the desires of the intern but instead on the needs of the organization. The very beginning of my internship started off with me sharing my interests, which allowed my internship to be tailored specifically to me.

What I am grateful about is the fact that my internship allowed me to learn from so many different people and institutions. Not only was WFWPI and their diverse group of members a wonderful place to learn, but their relationship to the UN only added to my experience. With a grounds pass to the UN, I was given the opportunity to attend certain events in and around the UN that many people may not have



Maryam and Dr. Sakena Yacoobi, Founder and CEO of the Afghan Institute of Learning

access to. Things like this not only increase your knowledge about the world but allows you to connect with and learn from people of all backgrounds. By attending events at the UN, such as the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Sakena Yacoobi, the founder of an NGO that provides many services in Afghanistan. This relationship has not only developed into a friendship but also an opportunity to learn from an expert who is actively involved in making a change in the world.

One of the experiences I will always remember is getting the opportunity to connect with the Permanent Missions of the countries I am from: Pakistan and Afghanistan. Having the opportunity to reach out, set meetings, and speak with them individually as a representative of WFWPI was such an incredible experience. It pushed me outside of my comfort zone by giving me the chance to do something I would have never had the platform to do before. Another experience that pushed me outside of my comfort zone was moderating a side event we organized for CSW. It was nerve-racking at first but showed me that all it takes is trying something new to realize you can conquer any fear.

“**All it takes is trying something new to realize you can conquer any fear.**”

My experience with WFWPI thus far is quite difficult for me to summarize in such few words. From co-chairing a parallel event for CSW62 to meeting with the representatives from the Permanent Missions of Afghanistan and Pakistan, I have had many incredible experiences.

I am so fortunate to have had the opportunity to work so closely with WFWPI, Mrs. Ward, and the other members of the team. These experiences have played an important role in my life and helped solidify my passion for education, which is why I am currently applying to master's programs to study International Education Development.

I hope to gain the skills necessary to conduct quality research to help guide education reform and policy in underdeveloped countries.



Young Voices continued...

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Natascha Schellen

Bringing Women's Federation into the Social Era

UN Office in Geneva



Natascha (left) acted as WFWP's media liaison during the 38th Session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva

Thanks to Carolyn Handschin and the support of the Wonmo Pyeongae Scholarship Foundation, I had the opportunity to participate in the 38th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva as a WFWP intern from June 18 to 29, 2018.

In his final reflections as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein spoke at the opening session of the HRC, saying "I am convinced that the human rights ideal has been the most constructive movement of ideas in our era – and among the most successful." He added that since the dawn of the UN, many countries were able to achieve "sustained peace" and conflicts ended through respect and law.

I would argue that a focus on human rights and respect for the law is not enough to bring peace to the world and put an end to all conflict, and this is where the ideals of WFWP are much needed.

We must bring our revolutionary ideas to the High Commissioner and before the assembly of government and NGO representatives around the world, who all gather at this Human Rights Council in Geneva year after year.

Special rapporteurs write their reports and resolutions are passed, but these bureaucratic moves are not always taken into account by the addressed nations.

Clearly, different tactics need to be employed to reach these countries' leaders. Embracing them with a mother's heart and teaching them the value of true love in practice is what WFWP can bring to the table.

“**I managed to get a couple of posts into the top trending tweets of the week on...the HRC.**”

I think that WFWP needs to make its voice heard through bold written and oral statements prepared ahead of the sessions and organize more side events promoting our ideals.

As an intern, I supported a WFWP side event on June 20 on the topic of peace on the Korean Peninsula, where a proposal was made

for creating a meeting place for women from the north and south to work together for peace. The event was well attended, with more than 40 people present, but this proposal needs to be disseminated on a higher level.

Networking is an important part of WFWP's work with the UN, as is media and public relations. When I was asked to be the media liaison during my time as an intern, I discovered that WFWP in Geneva had no social media identity of its own. To get things going, I set up a Twitter account with the name of "WFWP UN Office Geneva" and started tweeting daily about the Human Rights Council sessions I attended and, of course, about our own side event. Although I had very limited experience, to my surprise, I managed to get a couple of posts into the top trending tweets of the week on the topic of the HRC.

My hope is that this social media activity will be continued by future interns so that it can help spread the news of WFWP's involvement at the UN and to aid with networking with other organizations (a number of NGO business cards I received had their social media accounts included). Ideally, there should be someone to manage social media in Geneva fulltime, but in the meantime, it is a project the interns can continue.

