

WFWP Youth UK marked International Women's Day in the Houses of Parliament in London

Keishin Hoshiko
March 12, 2015



International Women's Day 2015, House of Commons, Committee Room 6 6-8pm

On the 12th of March 2015, approximately 50 individuals gathered together at the House of Commons to commemorate International Women's Day. The day was focused on female empowerment and celebrating women's achievements. Women's Federation for World Peace Youth UK (WFWP Youth UK) invited four female speakers to share their own experiences and advice.



The leading MC Asmah Anis first introduced Salma Chebbah who began the conference with some interactive icebreakers to encourage our audience to share their thoughts on female empowerment and what this meant for them. Every group was asked to think of a tagline, which would best suit our agenda as an NGO. This was a huge success and many people participated vibrantly, we then voted our favourite

tagline, and this was adopted by WFP Youth UK to encompass, “United for Change”. Many people also took this opportunity to provide us with their own opinion of female empowerment (please take a look at some of the Videos below).



Following this, Keishin Hoshiko, Youth co-ordinator of WFP Youth UK; Introduced the three main areas supported by WFP. 1. Education 2. Peace & reconciliation and 3. Service/Humanitarian Aid. Keishin gave thanks for everyone's attendance whilst reminding everyone of the importance surrounding issues of gender inequality and the role of women, on both; familial, educational and international levels.

The first speaker was Usha Aryal who is the national winner of the Biotechnological YES competition. At only 20 years of age Usha was offered a scholarship to do a PhD in Genetics at the University of Leicester and despite much scepticism regarding her age took this opportunity vivaciously. This young researcher in science, who is a big advocate of gender equality due to the concerning gender gap within the scientific sector, spoke about the unconscious gender bias not only to do with how men see women but how also women see themselves. Usha exemplified this issue by illustrating the limited number of female role models within the scientific field.



Following Usha, the Founder of both the London based model agency for Editorial, Runway and Commercial Models (GTM Models) and the TG Foundation UK, Tatiana Giroud. Tatiana discussed her passion to heighten people's awareness surrounding the issues of victims of sexual violence within the Democratic Republic of Congo. Wanting to bring sexual assault to an end and with the suffering of thousands of refugees, Tatiana expressed her shock at the lack of media coverage on such a horrendous situation throughout this region. Tatiana also showed great compassion for these women who regardless of age, are repeatedly violated up to the point where they are economically destitute from fear, whilst having no access to justice, escape routes or basic human rights.



Following Tatiana we were introduced to the creative businesswoman and designer; Lisa Tse, also known as founder to a variety of business ventures, including one of the top 5 women organisations in the world (rated by CNN) 'The sorority'. A pioneering and influential society of leading women ranging from business leaders to royalty. Amongst Lisa's many achievements; one of which was being appointed the Creative Director of the Winter Wonderland Gala hosted at Kensington Palace by HRH The Duke of Cambridge in aid of Centrepoin, Lisa was also one of the youngest ever females to ever go on a trade mission to China with Boris Johnson during the Beijing Olympics as well as being a member of the British governments UK-China Task Force.

Despite the stigma surrounding 'the arts', Lisa shared her entrepreneurial journey throughout art college, and how at the young age of 26 she managed to establish her own creative enterprise starting from just her student overdraft. The listeners were lead through her experiences as a working mother and of particular gender bias' she experienced as a women within a predominantly male working environment. Lisa brought everyone's attention to how hard women work without taking credit for their own achievements and questioned the limitations to our successful female role models, whilst asking if we measure success only in money, fame and beauty? Lisa finally left everyone to ponder the Sorority Motto: 'What belongs to you will come to you when you create the capacity to receive it.'

Finally the music and talent Director Arfa Butt shared her passion to help young people progress particularly within the arts sector. Arfa explained how her passion began especially due to the lack of role models within this Artistic field. Despite gender stereotypes Arfa's passion for music began at the young age of 7 and by just 19 years of age she managed to get a role managing one of MTV's newest TV projects. After launching a new project which was accessible to the whole of the African continent, Arfa eventually became a consultant across the network whilst liaising with various international artists. Arfa shared her passion to not only motivate young people but to also help young women, particularly those involved in gangs. At this point Arfa decided to manage a programme to support these women, many of which were from ethnic minority backgrounds, through one of the most innovative, personal and developmental training programmes called 'Gangology'.

The evening was ended with a small discussion and left everyone to take away new thoughts from the occasion.