

WFWP UK Women in Peacemaking: The Roadmap to Reconciliation Series 2.

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The second conference Women in Peacemaking: The Roadmap to Reconciliation series was hosted on Tuesday, 6 April 2021. This segment continued our previous conference on the theme of "Women in International Peacemaking and Reconciliation Processes" and we invited our distinguished speakers – Dr. Naoko Kumagai, Mr. David Fraser Harris and Mrs. Carolyn Handschin-Moser – to continue the conversation.

Taking a meaningful participation approach, Dr. Naoko Kumagai outlined three areas which represent a gap between policy and practice in women's participation in peace processes. These areas included (1) healing of trauma, (2) legal and political protection and (3) economic empowerment for women. She concluded by saying that recognition of these gaps will promote male respect for women and help increase women's participation in major peace processes around the world.

Our second speaker, Mr. David Harris, spoke on the theme of simple solutions to serious problems. He discussed viewing the world through someone else's eyes. He argued that, for peace and reconciliation to be successful, participants must go beyond their differences and "see God in the other person." He concluded by saying that strengthening trust and continuing to open the door to broach peace helps to promote an "Abrahamic" universal mentality towards reconciliation.

Lastly, Mrs. Carolyn Handschin-Moser spoke about her work on the Project for the Korean Peninsular. Based on the concept of "peace zones", which were introduced to promote peace in Jerusalem in 1947, the project is working towards establishing a fifth UN office in the demilitarised zone between North and South Korea. She stressed that by waiting for political will to change, we have no control over the desired outcome. This presentation left us with some intriguing questions not only about the status of men's involvement in local peacebuilding initiatives but also the symbiotic nature of formal and informal peacebuilding initiatives and women's role in promoting reconciliation.

This conference was moderated by Louise Widfeldt Lomås and the QandA session addressed a number of questions on peace education. Our panel were asked questions including: 1) What is the one thing you want people interested in reconciliation process you want them to take away from processes? 2) What light can we shed on the dichotomy between victimhood and societal change through violence? And 3) Why are those in a position of leadership in the Middle East not making space for women and how could that change? The answers given highlighted the importance of listening and understanding others and their cultural norms through self-respect and self-dignity.

This second conference achieved:
83% capacity tickets sold,
Strong engagement with social media promotion,
800 individual engagements with the Facebook livestream in real time and
Over 240 views of the livestream on Facebook after the event.

WFWP Women in Peacemaking: The Roadmap to Reconciliation series 3, "The Role of Women in Community Peacebuilding" will be held on 13 April 2021, 6.30pm (BST) or 7.30pm (CET) with our selected speakers and will be moderated by Ms. Sherifa Carr.