

Women's

Federation for World Peace International



United Nations Office Newsletter

Spring 2014

WFWPI CSW58 Parallel Event and Commemorative Luncheon

March 18, 2014 - UN HQ New York City



Commemorative Luncheon Presenters (left to right): Carolyn Handschin, WFWPI; Andrei Abramov, Chief, NGO Branch, DESA; Dr. Lan Young Moon, WFWPI; UN Ambassador Libran Cabactulan, CSW58 Chairman; Dr. Susan O'Malley, Vice-chair, NGOCSW/NY; Alexa Ward, WFWPI;

WFWPI Commemorative Luncheon

By *Melissa Gontijo*

WFWPI sponsored a luncheon to commemorate and celebrate the Commission on the Status of Women. The beautiful lunch held in the UN Delegates Dining Room was attended by more than ninety guests, from seven countries, including Canada, Japan, Korea, Philippines, Switzerland, Netherlands, Taiwan, and the US.

The luncheon was hosted by Dr. Lan Young Moon, President of WFWPI. She welcomed participants and the speakers from diverse backgrounds who commented on current affairs with regard to gender equality. Professor Moon introduced the founders of WFWPI, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and her husband, the Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon. She introduced the founding spirit of WFWPI, highlighting the unique role of women as mothers, and emphasizing that the inherent nature of women is needed in every level of decision making. She emphasized the importance of achievement of women's rights in society so that peace can be achieved. In conclusion, she reflected on the spirituality and power women have within, and shared her favorite saying, "God created mothers because he could not be present everywhere".

The second speaker was HE Ambassador Libran Cabactulan, Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations and chairman of CSW 58. In this role he guided the development of the two week session, and chaired major plenaries at the opening. Ambassador Cabactulan spoke of the importance of women's leadership, outlined the process the UN is following to advance gender equality for all women, and emphasized the significant role that NGOs play in this process. He insisted passionately on gender equality; and the necessity of achieving women's empowerment and women's rights.

Alexa Ward, Deputy Director of WFWPI UN Office and Mistress of Ceremonies returned to the podium and was joined by Dr. Lan Young Moon to present an award to Mr. Andrei Abramov, Chief of the NGO Branch, DESA, for his outstanding service, and work with NGOs in consultative status with the UN. WFWPI has enjoyed a close working relationship with Mr. Abramov. He will be retiring this coming July after thirty three years of service to the UN. Mr. Abramov commented on sustainable development being impossible without women's empowerment and gender equality. He also praised WFWPI for its

Luncheon, contd. on pg. 10

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WFWPI Parallel Event

Stories of Women's Leadership

By *Melissa Gontijo*

Once the luncheon program finished, people made their way to the United Nation's Church Center Hardin Room for the parallel event organized by WFWPI International, and cosponsored by The Sound Essence Project and WFWPI USA.

Speakers were Carolyn Handschin, Director UN Office, WFWPI; Sachiko Kimura, Project Director and Overseas Volunteer for Zambia, WFWPI, Japan; Arceli Hernando, Ph. D, Director of Student Affairs, Bohol Island University, Philippines; and Greta Anderson, young adult volunteer. Alexa Ward served as moderator.



Presenting in a standing room only crowd of close to one hundred people, **Ms. Carolyn Handschin** brought the audience into the heart of human rights issues with her candid story of a mother in Saudi Arabia saving her son from a life of terrorist activities. She spoke about the importance of family and parenthood in the

Parallel Event, contd. on pg. 10



Statement of Purpose

The Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) supports a network of National WFWPI Chapters in over 120 nations that are dedicated to empower women with "the knowledge, the tools and the support needed to create peace at home, peace in our communities, our nations and throughout the world".

Programs, designed according to local needs and capacities, include: leadership training for women and girls, education for peace and reconciliation, skills development and advocacy at major UN Offices and various regional and national institutions. In support of United Nation Development Goals, WFWPI maintains over one hundred service projects in fifty nations, in the areas of education, vocational training, microcredit, AIDS prevention education, technical support, medical assistance and nutrition guidance.

WFWPI Chapters adhere to the principle that women, working together, taking initiative and empowering one another across traditional lines of age, race, culture and religion to create healthy families, are resolving the complex problems of our world. Ultimately "solutions" come as true partnerships between men and women are established in all levels of society. The beginning point is within society's most elemental level—the family. From there, Peace will naturally expand.

Carolyn Handschin

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This newsletter is published by the
United Nation's Office of the
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At the UN in New York...

Special Reports

NGO CSW58 Consultation Day

March 9, 2014 - The Great Hall, Cooper Union, New York

By Jeanne Carroll

The morning of NGO CSW Consultation Day was more pleasant than it had been in New York City for a very long time, giving everyone hope that this would be a wonderful kick-off for CSW 58. We were not disappointed. The Umuada Igbo Dancers of Massachusetts got us going with the beat of their drums and dynamic dance. Chair of NGO CSW Soon-Young Yoon graciously offered her opening comments emphasizing the need for equality, development and peace. She reminded us that without all three of these components our final objectives cannot be realized.

Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Nguka, Under Secretary General and Executive Director of UN Women addressed the gathering of more than 800 women, reminding us that even though we have come a long way we still have a long way to go to achieve all the goals we had laid out. Some examples of our gains are the fact that extreme hunger was reduced by 55% and infant mortality will have been reduced by two thirds by 2015.

When Ms. Mlambo-Nguka mentioned that in Rwanda, women have 68.3% of the positions in the government and that it is the only country in the world with such a majority, she received raucous applause. She also noted that we must be diligent in striving for the elimination of violence against women. In doing that we allow children to be children, free from premature and forced marriage, FGM and other abuses as well as the lack of education.

The first panel of the day, Cities for Sustainable Development and Women's Human Rights enriched those present with presentations from H.E. Carlos Enrique Garcia Gonzalez, Permanent Representative of El Salvador; Ms. Nicole Ameline, Chair CEDAW; Ms. Eleanor Blomstrom, Programme Director WEDO, and Ms. Jamina Djacta, Director UN Habitat/New York. The primary discussion was regarding the meaning of human rights. The speakers focused their presentations on urbanization, disabilities, age, gender, the rural

CSW58 NGO Consultation, contd. on pg. 8

Millennium Development Goals & Post-2015 Agenda

September 25, 2013 - UN HQ, New York

By Alexa Ward and Laura Hornbeck

To the casual observer, the United Nations can appear as a labyrinthine organization with countless activities, not to mention multiple acronyms and abbreviations for all the programs (currently more than 2000 acronyms are listed on the internet). But with the responsibility of a world-level organization trying to bring all nations and peoples together, the task of the UN is not simple. It is truly complicated and challenging. As stated on the website www.un.org: "...the Organization can take action on a wide range of issues, and provide a forum for its 193 Member States to express their views, through the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and other bodies and committees."

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is the UN forum through which WFWPI and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) come together on humanitarian issues like education, poverty, and healthcare. WFWPI has been an NGO in general consultative status since 1997, and as such is allowed to participate in activities and offer written statements to ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies.

In September 2000, United Nations leaders endorsed the Millennium Declaration, a commitment to work together to build a safer and more prosperous world for all people by the year 2015. They outlined eight measurable goals, known as the Millennium

Development Goals (MDGs), including 1) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; 2) Achieve universal primary education; 3) Promote gender equality and empower women; 4) Reduce child mortality; 5) Improve maternal health; 6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; 7) Ensure environmental sustainability; 8) Develop a global partnership for development.

Since then, the achievement of these goals has been regularly evaluated. On September 25, 2013, a special event in New York brought together more than thirty world leaders to discuss how close they were to achieving the MDGs. These leaders included Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary General; Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan; John Kerry, United States Secretary of State; Evo Morales, President of Bolivia; Wang Yi, Foreign Minister of China; and many others.

Only a select group of established and active NGOs were invited to attend this one-day program. Alexa Ward, WFWPI UN Office Deputy Director, was present to hear the messages of the world leaders. After opening remarks by Mr. John Ashe, President of the 68th session of the General Assembly, and Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, brief speeches were made by 19 dignitaries about their nations' commitment to the MDGs and proximity to achievement. Then participants attended round

Post-2015 Agenda, contd. on pg. 10

Challenges & Achievements Implementing MDGs for Women and Girls UN Women Stakeholders' Forum: The Road Ahead

December 4-5, 2013 - UN HQ, New York

By *Jeanne Carroll*

The forum attracted stakeholders from Member States, women's rights organizations, a variety of women NGOs, youth initiatives and academia. The two day forum included panels with outstanding representatives in a variety of fields with particular focus on the past implementation of MDGs and the implementation beyond 2015.

In her opening remarks, UN Women Deputy Executive Director Lakshmi Puri emphasized the role MDGs have in focusing world attention on the issue of women's empowerment and gender balance. "There

are many lessons from implementation of the MDGs but one thing is certain, partnerships and full engagement of all stakeholders are essential to success. We can accomplish great things when we join forces and come together." She added that while some progress had been made it was not adequate for many women. There are gaps in progress toward women's development across the board. Even though there has been a reduction in poverty worldwide, still, women are most affected by effects of long term, abject poverty. Ms. Puri added that future focus should be on a transformative stand-alone

UN Women-Road Ahead, contd. on pg. 7

Civil Society - Putting a Human Face on the Work of the UN

December 5, 2013 - UN HQ, New York

By *Cynthia Shibuya*

The Communications Workshop on Storytelling focused on how NGOs can use storytelling to disseminate the advocacy messages of the UN. Stories were traditionally told through the spoken or written word. In today's era of technology storytelling has evolved to include forums such as film, videos and social media. Combating current global issues requires new models of collaboration.

Daniel Dickinson, Acting Chief of the NGO Relations Section, DPI Outreach Division began by introducing the value of using social media, UN Radio and website, skype, texts, audio and video mediums, etc., and how to use it to the best advantage for advocacy. "Real people's stories "sell" the best. Connecting emotionally with people through the issues is a very powerful way to move people to action. Good quality videos are especially powerful.

Jeffrey Brez, Chief of Advocacy and Special Events explained that Ban Ki Moon realizes we need help to get the word out. Aiming to communicate UN issues through storytelling, he sees potential in partnerships with documentary filmmakers, independent filmmakers, television producers etc. For example, the TV show, "Law and Order" did a segment on children in armed conflict and what the UN did to address this issue. There were nine million viewers. "Ugly Betty" did a show about UN efforts to fight malaria. There were five million viewers. These are creative ways to educate the general population about what the UN does.

Andi Gitow, Acting Chief of Partnerships, News and Media Division, DPI, a film producer, is using film for advocacy. She showed a particularly chilling video interview with a

Storytelling, contd. on pg. 12

High Level Event: Take Action Against Gender Related Killings of Women & Girls

November 2, 2013 - UN HQ, New York

By *Joy Theriot*

The Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations sponsored the High Level event to draw attention to the problem of femicide. This 2 hour event was aligned with the General Assembly's 22nd session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice's resolution fighting against impunity for gender related killings of women and girls or femicide. Femicide is the ultimate form of violence against women and girls. In addition to the Crime Commission, the Commission on the Status of Women (at its 57th session) and the Human Rights Council (at its 23rd session) stressed that all states exercise due diligence to end femicide with impunity by providing protection for women and punishing the perpetrators of these heinous acts.

The event was moderated by HRH Princess Bajrakitiyabha Mahidol of Thailand. Welcoming remarks were given by Madam Ban Soon-Taek, wife of UN Secretary General, HE Mr. Ban Ki Moon. In her remarks, Mrs. Ban mentioned the need for a grassroots campaign and encouraged individuals and communities to speak out and stand up to any traditional practices that condone violence against women. She stated unequivocally that, "My husband is committed to zero tolerance of discrimination against women."

The event included a dinner and a panel discussion that drew attention to effective programs to stop femicides including: improved methods of investigation, prosecution, and punishment of the perpetrators, awareness

Femicide, contd. on pg. 8

The Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

March 2014 - Summary Report

By *Karen Judd Smith*

The UN Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is a key department of ECOSOC dealing with major areas of crime prevention and criminal justice. Since 1999, WFPW has continued to support this area of work at NYHQ and also in Vienna where the UNODC is headquartered.

As one of WFPW's representatives to the UN in New York, Dr. Karen Judd Smith, has been active in various roles with the Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at UNHQ for these past fifteen years. During the last 2 years, in her role as Chair, the Alliance has consistently created opportunities for new thinking about existing challenges and fostered dialogue on the tough questions for governments and civil society. This work

is done through the Forum@Four, online webinars, international consultations and local discussions.

Topics have included the delicate, yet needed, closer look at the relationship between religion and terrorism, the concept of less law and more order and the role of community activism in the prevention of crime in communities, strengthening the rights of victims, and more.

February 14th 2014, the Alliance held its bi-annual elections and welcomed Dr. Afaf Mahfouz (a former President of CONGO) as its new Chair. Even though Karen relocated to California in 2013, she agreed to continue to support the Alliance as one of its Vice Chairs and is especially active facilitating online consultations and meetings that are becoming a natural part of the Alliance scope of work. She

also maintains Alliance's website and its email communications: <http://CPCJAlliance.org>.

Throughout 2014, the Alliance is focusing on supporting NGO participation and preparations for the 13th Crime Congress that will take place in Doha, Qatar, from 12 to 19 April 2015. That will be done largely through the sharing of information and preparatory consultations that take place online. These consultations link organizational leaders and members in New York, California, Australia, Bangkok, Vienna and Germany, to name a few.

If you have a specific interest or background in crime prevention and criminal justice and would like to be more involved in this work of the Economic and Social Council, you can subscribe to the Alliance's updates here: <http://cpcjalliance.org/contact/updates/>



At the UN in Geneva ...

Where are the Women in the Syrian Peace Process?

UN Women & Civil Society Call for Inclusion of Syrian Women's Voices in Geneva Talks
Date - Location

By Carolyn Handschin

Mairead Maguire, Nobel Peace Prize winner and Northern Ireland peace activist was one of several women Laureates invited by UN Women to meet with Syrian women who gathered in Geneva to discuss and consolidate their recommendations to political peace negotiations being held there. Also invited as a panelist at a parallel conference at the UN, *Toward Peace and Reconciliation in Syria: The Role of Religion, Faith-based Organizations and Civil Society*, Ms. Maguire drew on her experiences in 1976, her country on the brink of war, she led thousands of women into the streets of Belfast to call for an end to violence. The conference was organized by Universal Peace Federation with support of WFWPI, Geneva Interfaith Intercultural Alliance, the Inter-Knowing Foundation, Association of Syrian Women for Democracy, the Jasmine Collective, Union of Syrian Medical Relief Organizations and UNICEF-based Interagency Child Protection Working Group for Syria.

"There's an arrogance in killing to assert one's viewpoint", Mrs. Maguire said. "Today we have to ask those who refuse to sit down, How many children will die in Syria today? In Northern Ireland we had to create a system to

get women to the negotiating table. Once we were there, we stayed. When this side or that side walked out, we didn't. We said: We can't leave because when we do people die. Religions have a message here: "Talk! Talk to your enemy! Talk to the human spirit in that person!" It is a great step that dialogue has begun.



Conference Organizers with Nobel Laureate, Mairead Maguire

Chairing the session on Women's Role in Peace in Syria, Carolyn Handschin, Director of the WFWPI UN Office, pointed out, "we need to decide on the definition of the peace we are seeking. If it is peaceful, thriving communities that we want, where children are safe and free to grow and learn, we'd better invite those who know and have a stake in that outcome to the table."

Syrian Women, contd. on pg. 9

Exhibition: TOO YOUNG To WED

International Women's Day - Palais des Nations, UN HQ, Geneva

By Ms. Joelle Coutuma, Intern WFWPI



TOO YOUNG to WED is a photography exhibition highlighting child marriage through moving photographs of child brides by U.S. photojournalist Stephanie Sonclair and a video by U.S. documentary photojournalist Jessica Dimmock telling personal stories of child brides.

According to United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), over the next ten years, fifty million girls are at risk of being married before age fifteen. There are currently 39,000 child marriages every day, equal to 14.2 million annually. Between 2011 and 2020, more than 140 million girls are estimated to become child brides.

At the opening of the 25th session of the Human Rights Council on March 3rd, OHCHR, UNFPA and NGO Plan International organized a high-level debate focusing on this issue, also coinciding with International Women's Day commemoration in Geneva.

The large panel included Michael Møller, Acting Director-General of UN Office in Geneva; Navi Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; Babatunde Osotimehin,

Executive Director of UNFPA; Enerstrida Mirriam Michelo, Former child bride and human rights activist in Zambia; Her Royal Highness Mabel van Oranje, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Girls Not Brides; Emma Bonino, Minister of Foreign Affairs in Italy; Hooria Mashhour, Minister of Human Rights in Yemen; Lynne Yelich, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in Canada and Ellen Løj, Chairwoman of Plan International. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Honduras, Mireya Agüero de Corrales moderated the discussion.

Navy Pillay opened, "the exhibition shows that child marriage remains widespread in many countries, despite adoption of domestic and regional laws forbidding the practice."

In Zambia, at 12-years-old, Enerstrida Mirriam Michelo was to be married without her consent. "My parents said I had no choice", she explains. She dreamed of becoming a nurse so she longed to stay in school. Thankfully, she was spared this fate, when a friend revealed to her teacher the unfolding tragedy. Her teacher informed the World Young Women's Christian Association (WYWCA), who retrieved her before it was too late. She expressed gratitude

Too Young, contd. on pg. 12

Europe & Eurasia: Cooperating for a Culture of Peace

Commemorating Human Rights Day
December 2-3, 2013 - Paris

By Carolyn Handschin

Drawing from a UNESCO program of the same theme, the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022) was launched in August 2013 in Kazakhstan. With this in mind, the European Leadership Conference (ELC) series held a conference in cooperation with WFWPI and the Universal Peace Federation of Europe and Russia as a follow-up to an event held in October 2012. Noting the special need to build trust between these two regions, this second program of cultural and academic exchange was held in Paris near UNESCO's Headquarters. Other sponsors included representatives of UNESCO delegations, expert NGOs and other civil society actors based in both regions.

The goal is to strengthen and develop a culture of peace paradigm as a source of cohesion among individuals, communities, ethnicities, races and religions within the two regions. With shared common values as a bridge, the event's eight panel discussions explored thought leadership and best practices in the areas of: the role of women, cultural cooperation,



character education, the family, volunteerism and intercultural and interreligious exchange.

Approximately two hundred people attended the sessions including high level representatives from Eurasia and many European nations, representing government and international organizations, academia, youth, educators, business, faith and cultural organizations. Former UNESCO Director General Frederiko Mayor Zaragoza, one of the most prominent architects of the Culture of Peace Program, delivered opening remarks by video. He highlighted essential components in the Culture of Peace framework. There was an excellent spirit of dialogue, creativity and engaged concern to find ways to build mutual trust and strengthen cooperation between the regions.

Dr. Rafiq Aliyev, former minister of religion of Azerbaijan, commented on the valuable work done in this conference series: "Relations between Europe and Eurasia are so bad and the cultural and other differences are so complicated that no one really wants to undertake a real dialogue or make an attempt

Human Rights, contd. on pg. 8

At the UN in Vienna ...

Forced Marriages & Violence Against Women in the Migrant Community

November 25, 2013 - VIC

By Simona Domazetoska, ACUNS



The Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS) held this international Symposium. Representatives from the Austrian National Committee of UN Women, UNFPA, OHCHR, UNODC as well as high-ranking diplomats were present. Officials from the Council of Europe, the Austrian Parliament, the Austrian Ministry of Justice and the Austrian Federal Chancellery also participated. In addition, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, the Austrian Committee for UNICEF, the Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI), Renner Institute, Organization of Families of Asia-Pacific (OFAP), and the Vienna Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice participated.

The meeting was opened by Barbara Prammer, President of Austrian Parliament, and Alternate Ambassador Gilka Melendez of the Dominican Republic, who highlighted the history behind the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. The symposium was also addressed via video by Executive Director of UN Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. Ms. Ines Stilling, Head of Section Women & Equality, Austrian Ministry of Women and the Civil Rights delivered the keynote speech.

The Symposium included four panels:

1. Child Marriages – Key Findings and Implications for Policy
2. Violence against Migrant Women – Dimensions in Europe
3. The Istanbul Convention – Objectives and Implementation
4. The Dissemination of the Istanbul Convention among Members of the Council of Europe and Beyond

Panel discussions were chaired by Ambassador Dubravka Simonovic (Croatia), Ambassador Ayob Erfani (Afghanistan), and Charlie Manangan, Deputy Chief of Mission (Philippines). The Symposium also focused on the Human Rights Council Resolution on Strengthening Efforts to Prevent and Eliminate Child, Early and Forced Marriage: Challenges, Achievements, Best Practices and Implementation Gaps (A/HRC/RES/24/23), the General Assembly's Resolution on Taking Action Against Gender Related Killings of Women and Girls (A/C.3/68/L.8) as well as the Agreed Conclusions of the 57th CSW.

The first Panel highlighted that child marriage is a severe human rights violation, constituting a threat to young girls' lives, health and future prospects. Marrying young often leads to childhood pregnancy, and in developing countries, this often leads to a series of health-related problems. Edilberto Loazia presented UNFPA's recent report on the current scope, prevalence and inequities of



child and forced marriage. During the period 2000-2011, over one third of women aged 20-24 in developing countries were married or in union before their eighteenth birthday, over 67 million women in 2010. In addition, approximately 105 million international migrant women worldwide (UN DESA, 2009) experience violence and discrimination at the beginning of the migration process, while en route, or at their point of destination. Migrant women who experience violence are less likely to have access to basic and essential services, or may face discriminatory treatment and are less likely to be able to hold perpetrators accountable.

The Symposium made the following recommendations:

Child and Forced Marriages:

- Empower girls, developing their skills and enhancing their social skills;
- Improve girls' access to quality formal education;
- Mobilize communities to transform detrimental social and cultural norms;

Eliminate Violence, *contd. on pg. 12*

Education in the 21st Century: Towards Global Citizenship

September 5, 2013 - UN HQ, Vienna

By Dr. Shantu Watt

This informal capacity building session was open to all UN Ambassadors, NGOs and UN staff and was based on a call by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in September 2013: "Education is much more than an entry to the job market. It has the power to shape a sustainable future and better world. Education policies should promote peace, mutual respect and environmental care. I call on world leaders and all involved with education to join this initiative and fulfill the promise to make quality education available to all children, young people and adults. Together, we can empower individuals to transform our world."

Dr. S. Watt served as chair. Participants were welcomed by Dr. Maria Riel, honorary president of WFWP Austria. Dr. Watt reminded the audience that education for all was an unknown concept until 250 years ago. According to UNESCO, more people will receive formal education in the next thirty years than in all of human history. Today, thanks to instant global connectivity via internet,

even those in the most remote areas have a low or no cost opportunity to learn through distance learning. One key question has not changed: education for what? Individual empowerment is important but it cannot be the sole purpose of education. Nor can preparing people for the job market be the main aim. To make society harmonious and peaceful, it is critical that education contribute to character development and to strengthening solidarity between individuals, groups and societies. Dr. Watt emphasized intellectual development and development toward responsible citizenship.

Dr. Christine Wehringer, Vice-President of Children's Liga in Vienna, discussed the Austrian government's role in education; outlining policies, practices and implementation. Ms. Zuzana Jezerka was unable to attend but in her place, a Slovakian colleague spoke about strategies to improve the lives of ethnic Kyrgyz in Afghanistan. Ms. Marion Hopfgartner, who runs a project on Kindergarten and adult education introduced the ideas of Maria Montessori and Rudolf Steiner. She reminded

the audience that we need to train parents and teachers to be proper role models to the new generation. Dr. Zhannat Kosmukhamedova, UNODC, informed about the latest guidelines on gender and HIV-awareness education in Africa. Aleksandar Rudic spoke about the work of the NGO, United for Education and Sustainable Futures. He serves as Executive Secretary of USEF. Dr. Nelli Holler presented her experiences teaching linguistics in St. Petersburg and Vienna and emphasized the importance of learning languages at an early age.

Participants formed working groups to discuss: The role of the family as a place for values education; The role of pre-school education for all; Education as a partnership of parents, teachers and civil society; The role of government in education; Education for a sustainable future. The groups, each led by one of the panelists, reported to the plenary and made recommendations for future activities.



Activities Around the World - Republic of Korea

'1% Love Share Project to Eradicate poverty

Beginning in 2002, WFWP members put aside \$1 a month (origin of the name: 1% Project) to help needy North Korean women and children. From this fund, supplies such as children's innerwear, bedding, floor paper are sent to the Kim Jeong Sook Nursery in Pyongyang. In recent years, monetary donations, medicine and food aid have been sent from the 1% Share Project to several countries, starting in Asia.



Walkathon Fundraiser for North Korea



Fundraising for Philippines' Typhoon Victims



1% Love Share Project - Support for Kim Jong-suk Nursery School in Pyongyang

Global Women Network for Peace

The Global Women's Peace Network (GWPN) was established to help build a world of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universally shared values. With the motto, One Family under God, women from around the world are coming together to build a network, share wisdom and information, and put these ideals into action.



1st GWPN Assembly 2012



2nd GWPN Assembly 2013



WFWP International Leadership Conference

Visit to UN Secretary General Ban ki Moon's Official Residence

In 1997, WFWP was approved as an NGO in General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Since then, volunteer members have been working hard throughout the world to help realize the UN MDGs. In 2012, UN Secretary General Ban ki Moon invited WFWP Founder, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon to his official residence.



Education for Empowering Women

WFWP Korea organizes and presents the Women's Peace Academy, a twelve week course to help women awaken their potential and participate in social service activities. Some of the topics of study are International Relations, North-South Korea Relations, and Ideals of Peace. WFWP also holds the 21st Century Women Leaders Forum each month, to share its activities and enhance empowerment of women.



The WFWP Korea Peace Unification Camp is aimed at helping children realize the importance of Peace and Unification of the Korean Peninsula, and help them participate in the peacebuilding process. WFWP has organized the camps which are sponsored by Korea's Ministry of Unification, for the last ten years. Camps are held during summer vacation.

Women Peace Academy Service Projects

Global Women's Peace Network

13th WFPW International Leader's Workshop

Finding the Vision & Way Forward to Transform Ourselves, Protect Our Families and Build a Culture of Peace

October 7-10, 2013 - London



Yoshiko Pammer, WFPW Youth Coordinator Europe



Group Meetings led by Young Women



Merly Barlaan - WFPW Philippines Report



Session at House of Commons / UK Parliament



13th WFPWI Leader's Workshop - Group Photo

[Read complete article about London Conference at www.wfpw.org](http://www.wfpw.org)

UN Women-Road Ahead, contd from pg. 3

goal that concentrates on three major areas: prevention of violence against women and girls, equal access to resources and opportunities, and strengthening women's voices, presence and leadership in all public institutions at all levels. A decade later the MDGs have left women with quite a distance to go but we cannot deny progress has been made.

Panel 1 - Setting the Stage: Challenges for Achieving the MDGs for Women and Girls.

Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations, Lana Zaki Nusseibeh acknowledged significant lessons her region learned regarding gender equality. The primary one is a need to close the gap between legislation and its implementation. A vital point is to create critical mass with more women in government positions. James Heintz, Research Professor, University of Massachusetts in Amherst noted that while gains were significant in the elementary education of girls, the numbers were notably lower for girls in secondary school. Various cultural, domestic and financial responsibilities of the older girl child inhibit their attendance to school.

Panel 2 - Achieving Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment through a comprehensive approach grounded in the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on

the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the vision of the Millennium Declaration - Panelist Nicole Ameline, Chair, CEDAW emphasized that women's rights are an investment. Moderator Desra Percaya, Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the UN, noted that education and opportunity are vital for significant gains. **Panel 3 - Participatory Approach to Gender Equality that Champions Women's Voices, Leadership and Rights**

This panel focused on the need to see more women taking an active role in government. Valentina Leskaj, MP, Parliamentary Committee on Education and Media in Albania emphasized that countries with good governance and equality are those in which women's voices are heard. Functional democracy is impossible without women's voices. Moderator Paul Seger, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the UN rallied the gathering with the question, "Why do we come here all the time? The examples that we see here are an inspiration and we can see affirmative action fulfilling goals as well as women's rights and participation becoming a significant part of good governance".

Panel 4 - Accelerating Progress & Investing in Gender Equality

Lorena Cruz Sánchez, President, National Institute of Women (INMUJERES), México

made passionate and specific statements. She cited the need for gender equality to be placed at the crosshairs of culture. Geir Pedersen, Permanent Representative of Norway to the UN mentioned that gender equality is good economics. For women to remain in the workforce, considerations are needed including one year parental leave for mothers, four weeks for fathers, accommodations for sick children, breast feeding and providing day care and elder care.

Panel 5 - What do the MDGs mean to me? Voices of girls and women, heard passionate stories of girls and women.

Seventeen year old Christina Selby of the Working Group on Girls (WGG), USA was deeply affected by stories of sex trafficking, child marriages, and lack of educational opportunities. "I am so hurt that so many girls can't attend any school at all. I especially remember the day the news about Malala Yusufzai broke. I remember the shock and outrage I felt. The two of us have experienced extremely different lives. But we are united by girlhood and the common struggle of girls everywhere, no matter where we live." Testimonies from civil society put a face on the struggles of girls and women around the world. Panelists from Kenya, Afghanistan and Sri

UN Women-Road Ahead, contd. on pg. 8

UN Women-Road Ahead, contd from pg. 7

Lanka emphasized the need for the support of men, public policy and education to strengthen equality for women. Charlotte Bunch, UN Women Global Civil Society Advisory Group, USA emphasized that issues of non-traditional families and older women have been completely left out of the MDGs.

During the closing panel, Implementing the Platform for Action and ensuring a transformative approach to the post-2015 development agenda: key actions and commitments towards CSW58 and beyond, Gérard Araud, Permanent Representative of France to the UN stated that the MDGs have made goals and work measurable and visible. He commissioned women not to be victims but vectors in recognition of women's concerns worldwide.

In closing Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director, UN Women reminded us that it is our responsibility to keep these issues at the forefront of world attention in order to end the mistreatment of women and girls in all cultures, countries and situations. "Perhaps one of the most important insights from the MDG experience is that gender equality cannot be achieved with a narrow or partial focus on particular aspects. If we are to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, we must work on a comprehensive approach, at all levels."



CSW58 NGO Consultation, contd from pg. 2

setting, education, and sexual discrimination as taking a toll on human rights.

The Woman of Distinction awardee, Ms. Sharon Bhagwan Rolls, gave an inspiring presentation on the use of media in promoting human rights and women's issues. She recounted her journey to find a platform to shed light on human rights issues in her native Fiji. She concluded with introducing the organization she founded, femLINKPACIFIC, which exists to empower women, the disabled and the underserved communities in Fiji by creating an enabling environment for their voices to be heard.

After the lunch break we welcomed Ramya Ramana, 2014 NYC Youth Poet Laureate. She quickly stunned the gathering with her impassioned and extraordinary poem, "A letter to my future Daughter." The atmosphere reflected the seriousness of the bond between mother and daughter, not in a flowery and blithe fashion but rather in a solemn and urgent voice.

The afternoon included two panels. The first was Legacy of the 1990's UN Conferences with Ms. Bandana Rana, Executive Director, Nepal SATHI foundation; Ms. Charlotte Bunch, Founder and Senior Scholar, Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL) at Rutgers University; and Moderator/Panelist: Ms. Mallika Dutt, CEO and President,

Breakthrough Speaking. The theme of the second panel was What do we want from Beijing +20? Panelists included Ms. Jeni Klugman, Director of Gender and Development at the World Bank Group; Ms. Analisa Balares, CEO, Womensphere; Ms. Lakshmi Puri, Assistant Secretary-General for Intergovernmental Support and Strategic Partnerships, UN Women; Anita, Advocate for Working Group on Girls; and Moderator/Panelist: Bani Dugal, Principal Representative of the Baha'i International Community to the UN. The forceful message from these panels was that women should no longer be content to just sit at the table, but rather they should articulate that sitting at the table has not produced results that are satisfactory to women. Since poverty is still rife, equality far from a reality, as well as numerous other deficiencies, women need to rise up as a group, to be proactive and not complacent with what we have so far. In order to effectively foster these changes, we are responsible to focus on the mindset of men. In order to put an end to violence and establish equality, women must work to end violence and inequality and at the same time encourage women to take an active part in government. Without a legislative voice women's equality is only a distant dream.

The final speaker, Mr. Asi Burak, CEO of Games for Change/Half the Sky Movement is taking advantage of the explosion of cell phone use. Of the 3.5 billion cell phones in use, 65% are in third world countries. He developed three games that instill vital messages to the youth.

As the day ended and the participants joined arms and sang, the feeling of victory was in the air. Even though we have a long way to go it is reassuring to know there are such powerful women walking along side us. This was really a marvelous way to kick off CSW 58.



Femicide, contd from pg. 3

raising, and the introduction of new legislation. Panelists included: Mr. Ivan Šimonovi, Assistant of UN Secretary-General for Human Rights; H.E. Mr. Martin Sajdik, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Austria to the UN; and H.E. Ms. Maria Cristina Perceval, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Argentina to the UN.

The panel highlighted new legislation and public campaigns in Asia and Latin America which deal with the preference for boys and the targeted killing of girl infants. The promising illustrations presented by the panel inspired the participants with confidence that femicides can be prevented. The panelists also focused on the 2012 Vienna Declaration on Femicide, published for an ACUNS Vienna organized symposium on femicide during last year's commemoration in Vienna of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (November 26).

According to the panelists, femicides take place in every country. Its causes are rooted in

historically unequal power relations between men and women and in systemic gender based discrimination. They also pointed out the need for better statistics as data on femicide has been highly unreliable. The estimated numbers of women who have been victims of femicide are under reported. Typically, the crime is not classified as femicide because local law enforcement agencies are not prioritizing the connection between the gender relationship and the crime. In order for the case to be considered femicide, there must be evidence of gender related intention to carry out the murder and a demonstrated connection between the crime and the female gender of the victim. The greatest concern of the panel was the need to bring awareness to the problem as these murders continue to be accepted, tolerated and justified in many cultures. Ultimately, the focus of the panel was on efforts to eliminate discrimination through public campaigns to change attitudes towards women.



Human Rights, contd from pg. 4

for a real cooperation between the two."

There was also appreciation for the session on Marriage and Family as a Vehicle for Cultural Rapprochement. Speakers included Mr. Harry Benson of the Marriage Foundation in London and Mrs. Maria Hildingsson, Secretary General of the Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe. Very startling statistics were provided related to the detrimental impact of co-habiting couples, on avoidance of long-term commitments, especially on children. Intercultural marriages, as promoted by the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), are very effective means of creating deep bonds between cultures, according to Joseph Gundacker of FFWPU Austria, but these marriages require hard work and a vision. As an outcome of these exchanges, commitments to strengthen the network of information between the regions so as to build upon one another's successes in the area of influencing policy on family.

One notable panel was dedicated to Women's Role in Cultural Rapprochement. Ms. Brigitte Wada, President of WFWP France opened the session with a description of how WFWP empowers women through breaking down barriers between them. It begins with sharing leadership for peace at home and within communities. She explained that most European and Eurasian countries have chapters of WFWP that, while having a shared vision and principles for peacebuilding have developed according to local needs and situations.

Ms. Wada introduced, H.E. Margareta Timovti, the First Lady of Moldova, who spoke of looking beyond one's own borders for solutions to common problems. Yet, she insisted it is important to preserve deep-rooted values and culture, adopting measures from others (Europe, in this case) as they apply. Women do not always have equal rights and equal

Human Rights, contd. on pg. 9

Human Rights, contd from pg. 8

empowerment de facto. Moldova has women mayors, police and legislators. Yet women have the additional and important role of mother and nurturers in their families. Many women have gone abroad to find work and the distance has sometimes ended in divorce. This has meant children have grown up without mothers. Many social problems have roots in the breakdown of marriage and family. Mrs. Tomovti stressed the importance of couples sharing joys and burdens with one another. In the process of Moldova's integration into Europe; steps are being taken toward fulfillment of women's rights, and stopping domestic violence and trafficking. It is critical for spiritual values to be passed down.

The next speaker, Ms. Carolyn Handschin, President of WFWPI in Europe, described challenges to trust between nations and cultures as being similar to the challenges to trust within local communities and families. Concern for the other must be sincere and must be demonstrated over and over again, especially when trust has repeatedly been broken. Peace Culture is a frame for the flourishing of culture. All leaders, beginning with mothers, have the greatest responsibility to elevate expectations for peaceful engagement. Ms. Handschin described dozens of reconciliation efforts between historic enemies in Europe and Eurasia, initiated by WFWPI, that have brought women together to listen, to discover the depth of pain, betrayal and resentment that remained under the surface, even decades and sometimes centuries later. "It isn't just a cosmetic rapprochement that we want."

Dr. Zhannat Kosmukhamedova coordinates prevention programs in education and harm reduction for vulnerable groups in Eastern Europe, south Eastern Europe and Central Asia for fifteen years at the United Nations in Vienna. We are well equipped with mechanisms and institutions to preserve culture, tradition. But the basics of culture rest with the role of women to keep and transfer culture between generations. Our laws are based on cultures. Now traditions are changing, cultures cohabit. People have multiple identities. They need that to live. In this conflict of identities, the role of women plays an ever more prominent role in the safeguarding of peace. Why women? They have a capacity for adaptation. As a collective, they have a synergistic role.

UN Office on Drug and Crime Prevention has found that providing parenting skills to drug offenders can help to prevent violence significantly. A marked increase in the academic interest of children has also been noted through these parenting skills. The last slide of her PowerPoint had the entire audience smiling. Showing a list of 15 questions that a child hypothetically, but very realistically, might pose to her mother on one side of the slide, it displayed only one question to dad on the other side, "Where is mom?"

The fourth speaker was Mrs. L. Sfeih, a social activist and founder of the Lebanese

NGO, Call of Society. She is the sister of the current President of Lebanon.

Exposed to the many undercurrents of culture and religion, she insisted that Lebanese have lived harmoniously in spite of their differences, unless falsely incited towards enmity. Through her projects, she discovered that almost everyone wants to contribute to the betterment of their environment, their communities and are frustrated when unable to do so. One element of her social programs is to give hope through engagement.

The final speaker, Mrs. Patricia Lalonde is the Director of the NGO MEWA (Mobilization for Elected Women in Afghanistan). Her work over the years has placed her in a mediator role between Europe and Eurasia, with differences of culture, religion, experience and expectation. Although Ukraine stepped back from Europe last week, she mentioned, there was dissent from civil society- including many female voices. She has written several books about her experience in helping women in Western Europe and Central Asia to claim their right to political participation and to make contributions to nation building. She described her personal experience in Georgia in 2012, and of a courageous 28 year-old woman police chief, who led her precinct in a firm, but maternal way. In programs in Azerbaijan, a very patriarchal society, she discovered women want to be like Europeans, but also want to keep their culture and religion. Women's rights serve both women and men. Exchanges between our cultures are learning experiences. Women need encouragement to make their way in their own societies. In many ways, women are more effective than men in resolving conflict, sustainably.



Syrian Women, contd from pg. 4

"There is a glaring absence of women" in these deliberations, explained Madeleine Rees, former Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, even though they account for the millions of people displaced by the conflict and are clearly necessary to any post-conflict reconstruction plan. Formal negotiations are being strongly criticized for male-only delegations on both sides.

Meetings were held throughout Geneva leading up to formal talks. A Syrian Women's Peace Charter was drawn up with support from UN Women Executive Director, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Netherlands government and intl. NGOs during a two day meeting of Syrian women. The Syrian Women's Forum for Peace, Karama and other Syrian NGOs met earlier to discuss priorities to lay groundwork.

This concise, thoughtful document seeks to prevent movement of more armed combatants into Syria, a tenet strongly emphasized by another Nobel Laureate present at the parallel meeting, Shihan Elbadi of Iran. The Charter postulates a framework for peace that is broader than ending combat, demands an end to recruitment of child soldiers. It outlines a

plan to meet needs of refugees and internally displaced persons, 80% of whom are women and children. It insists on including women's voices in political policy making and nation-building debates.

Security Council Resolution 1325 calls for equal participation of women in all stages of peace processes and all efforts for maintenance of peace and security. So far, few governments have negotiated national action plans. Between 2000 and 2011, out of twenty four peace negotiations, nine had no women present during the talks. On a positive note, the recent reversal in Yemen after months of struggle to include women in the National Dialogue Conference resulted in an encouraging joint recommendation to adopt a 30% quota for women.

Another Security Council Resolution adopted in October 2013, (SCRes 2122) following a progress review requested by Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, was meant to provide a systematic approach to implementation of Resolution 1325. These and other decisions raised expectations for more balanced participation in Syria talks, boosted by the shared Nobel Peace Prizes winners in 2011; Ellen Sirleaf Johnson and Leahm Gbowee of Liberia and Tawakkul Karman of Yemen. Yet, this has not been the case.

Women had been very vocal and engaged in Syria during early stages of peaceful protests, but as violence increased, it became impossible to continue. Daily life was life and death. Women were displaced and were needed to hold their families together. Syrian women activists in Geneva for the consultations told us women are taking up the banner again. Networks of women's organizations are slowly re-emerging and are more organized than anyone realized, albeit in very dangerous circumstances. "These women worked day and night to identify solutions to bring back security, rights and dignity to the suffering Syrian people", Mrs. Mlambo-Ngcuka said. "Women have a critical role to play in creating foundations for sustainable peace and a pluralistic Syria based on democracy and respect for human rights. UN Women will be a strong partner for Syrian women, supporting their collective voice and peace initiatives in the political process," she summarized in closing the two-day meeting.



Related article available at www.wfwp.org:

Toward Peace and Reconciliation in Syria: The Significance of Religion, Faith-Based Organizations and Civil Society - By David Frazier Harris

Luncheon, contd from pg. 1

consistent efforts to support the priorities of the United Nations, stated that because of this, WFWPI is one of the most significant NGOs in Consultative Status with the UN.

The final speaker of the luncheon, Dr. Susan O'Malley, Vice Chair of the Executive Committee for the NGO CSW, New York, began her talk by stating proudly that she is a mother and grandmother. She rallied the audience to pay close attention to the fifth area of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action, women and armed conflict. She is excited to talk more in depth on these topics for next year because it will allow for discussions on the methods that have worked and others that have failed. She also spoke of the ongoing effort to ratify the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.



Parallel Event, contd from pg. 1

development of women; as well as about the importance of helping women see themselves as agents of change in their families. She coined the term "familiarity", where parents, children and extended family members cooperate to enhance each other's value, expanding naturally to an inclusive system of government in which men and women share responsibility equally. To help in sustaining the MDG goals she hopes that these practices enhance everyone's values, empower families and lead to children learning leadership skills.



Ms. Sachiko Kimura, project director and overseas volunteer for Zambia, graciously reflected on her experiences initiating and sustaining service work in Zambia, Africa. Her passion focuses on a food program she created to provide nutritional guidance for mothers. She has been able to share with the local mothers the importance and nutritional value of soybeans and its substantial protein content. She held classes to hand out soy powder, to weigh the children, to teach mothers how to cook and also how to feed. As a result, most kids gained weight and the mothers felt empowered to teach other mothers. Challenges faced included students not always graduating and mothers not being able to find transportation to get to class. At the core of her experience Ms. Kimura felt that leadership from mothers is vital to replicating sustainable projects.

Arceli Hernando, Ph.D. commented on disruptive issues that sometimes plague university environments. As Student Affairs Director at a university with 14,000 students, Dr. Hernando is like a mother to thousands of students on her campus. She has come to realize that the issue is fear; this can only be conquered through



Award for Andrei Abramov, Chief of NGO Branch, DESA



Commemorative Luncheon

education and empowerment. She decided to mobilize a project called Town Organizations. Students in their groups, organized by their home origin, went back to their communities and began by contributing in small ways to make a difference. Through this initiative the project is building leaders among girls and boys, creating bonds between people and encouraging student development. She was also emboldened by the idea of the Mother's Hearts Network, a project of WFWP, Philippines to connect and reach out to 20 million women around the world in efforts to raise their children to be patriots and for women to be the standard bearers of truth, beauty and goodness.

The final speaker was **Ms. Greta Anderson**, a young woman in her mid-twenties, raised in Minnesota, spoke on her travels through Israel, Palestine and Uganda. Greta captivated the audience with her passion for serving others. Leaving her job in New York to travel the world while trying to discover what and where peace is, she became humbled by her experiences. She joined several small organizations in these countries to see through the lives of the people she met. Greta was involved with peace keeping, justice, and education. She came to understand the importance of developing bonds of trust with those being served. She encouraged the audience to commit to being of service by starting with small achievements that can lead to bigger ones, maximize our resources, and share our ideas to see hope and peace.



Ms. Ward concluded the event by thanking the speakers for sharing their stories of leadership and providing valuable insights as the UN community continues to deliberate on the development agenda for the period following that of the MDGs, known as the post 2015 agenda.



Parallel Event Audience



Joint Parallel Event of WFWPI & Sound Essence Project



Speakers with Dr. Lan Young Moon

Post-2015 Agenda, contd from pg. 2

table discussions where more information was exchanged. Summaries of each round table discussion were given to the entire assembly at the end of the day. With just two years to go, the Post-2015 Agenda was another important aspect of these discussions.

In his presentation, Bill Gates, founder of Microsoft Corporation and co-founder of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, praised the UN for choosing eight simple, yet "boldly ambitious and deeply pragmatic," goals to be achieved. His wife, Melinda, stated that while so much seems to be wrong in the world, "The MDGs are something the world has done right."

Substantial progress has been made toward achievement of the MDGs but success varies widely according to region. As SG Ban Ki-Moon stated, "More than 1 billion people still live in extreme poverty. Far too many people face serious deprivations in health, education, and access to sanitation and clean water." Furthermore, in discussing an agenda for post-2015, he said, "Guided by this far-reaching vision, we can define a concise set of goals that will capture the imagination and mobilize the world – just as the MDGs have done."



CSW58: Challenges & Achievements Implementing MDGs for Women and Girls

March 10-21, 2014 - UN HQ New York

By Bonnie Berry

To set the stage for this year's CSW, it is important to understand its history. The following introduction, available at <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/brief-history> sets the stage to understand current activities: "The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) first met at Lake Success, New York, in February 1947, soon after the founding of the United Nations. All 15 government representatives were women. From its inception, the Commission was supported by a unit of the United Nations that later became the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) in the UN Secretariat. The CSW forged a close relationship with non-governmental organizations, with those in consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) invited to participate as observers. From 1947 to 1962, the Commission focused on setting standards and formulating international conventions to change discriminatory legislation and foster global awareness of women's issues. In contributing to the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the CSW successfully argued against references to "men" as a synonym for humanity, and succeeded in introducing new, more inclusive language."

In 2011, the four parts of the UN system that served women: DAW, INSTRAW, OSAGI and UNIFEM—merged to become UN Women, now the Secretariat of the Commission on the Status of Women. Formation of UN Women began a new phase in advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment around the world by consolidating the women serving agencies at the UN and housing UN Women leadership within the UN Secretariat. This focus has accelerated and strengthened coordination, advocacy and education for NGO representatives toward advancement of women's rights.

The priority theme of CSW 58 was Challenges and Achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls. Achievement of a strong outcome document at CSW58 was very critical this year as a foundation for next year's Beijing +20 review and to impact the Post 2015 process, currently underway as the Open Working Group, appointed by the General Assembly has established an initial list of focus areas for inclusion in the Post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

While the CSW proceeded, one of the important venues for collaboration and building consensus on desired outcome document language are the regional caucuses. In recent years, these caucuses have been gaining steam and staying in communication throughout the year. The African caucus meeting was educative for the women present. Coordinators of the caucus reminded the

women of the two main reasons to attend CSW, networking and advocacy, and surmised that the women do not need to be taught how to network. But advocacy can be strengthened. Learning to articulate the issues, concerns and priorities of the caucus members to the delegates from member states is a critical priority for NGO representatives. The North American/European regional caucus had a different flavor. Sometimes heated discussions ensued about positions in a policy document that the group had been working on. It was inspiring to have a young woman speak up and diffuse tension with an astute point that all could agree on, the right to safety for all women.

Morning briefings held jointly by NGO CSW NY and UN Women offer crucial updates and insights. Ambassador Libran Cabactulan, Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations and chairman of CSW 58 attended the first briefing. He worked hard on agreement among CSW delegates to allow improved access to proceedings for NGO representatives. Unable to achieve this, he made a point to attend the first briefing and commit to attendance of each briefing by a member of the CSW Secretariat. Ms. Lopa Banarjee, UN Women Civil Society Director emphasized the importance of a strong outcome document as the foundation for the post 2015 process. She also educated attendees about the post 2015 process and avenues for participation.

Parallel events brought rich, diverse knowledge, experiences and best practices. For example, Higher Education to Women's Leadership presented by the Open a Door Foundation that provides college scholarships in the U.S. and holistic support including group mentoring, leadership modeling and aftercare with job placement services for young women from Rwanda and Afghanistan. Following graduation, these women return to their home countries to invest in and provide leadership for development and women's empowerment. The young women panelists testified that higher education enabled them to have a place at the leadership table. Higher education for women gives a credential to be credible. It builds critical thinking skills that help women stand up to men on matters that are critical to advancement of women. Learning networking skills and creating a network are very important skills also. It is now that laws are being rewritten. Women's voices are crucial in this process.

The Center for Global Women's Leadership presented: Making Unpaid Care work Count. Women and girls bear the majority responsibility for this unpaid work that includes everything from gathering wood and water to preparing food and other homemaking responsibilities, caring for children and elderly. Important work but it keeps women out of the decision making processes disproportionately. In undeveloped or developing communities, environmental

risks increase for these women and girls. Recommendations were made that unpaid care work be discussed prominently in the CSW outcome document and be a prominent part of the post 2015 agenda. The importance of measuring unpaid care work was stressed.

A highlight among parallel events was the presentation, Young Women Leaders from Africa, graduates of the Moremi Initiative for Women's Leadership in Africa. Nine young women in their early twenties from different countries in Africa presented their experiences and outcomes of participation in the Moremi Initiative. The women left their homes for a period of training in leadership, empowerment, critical thinking, problem solving and action. Each woman then returned to their homes, conducted needs assessment and began grassroots projects to improve the wellbeing of their communities. These young women exuded confidence, determination and passion in their areas of interest. They each articulated concrete achievements as a result of their participation in the initiative.

The second week of CSW, negotiation of the outcome document began in earnest. There was a push by a block of countries that pushed for regressive language for women's rights and empowerment. Fortunately, though an outcome document was agreed upon in the wee hours of Saturday morning, March 23 that did represent a firm commitment to inclusion of a stand-alone gender equality goal in the post 2015 agenda, affirming the important foundational agreements including CEDAW, the Beijing Platform of Action, Security Council Resolution 1325, et al. In addition the document affirmed the critical role of UN Women.

NGO participation and action at the CSW and within the processes that lead up to the CSW are important, in fact critical to creating the world we hope and long for.

(CSW58 Outcome Document can be found here: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw58-2014>).



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Eliminate Violence, contd from pg. 5


- Enhance the economic situation of girls and their families;
- Generate and strengthen an enabling legal and policy environment;
- Provide effective remedies, and access to medical, psychological, and other assistance to those who are at risk of being forcefully married or who have already been forced to marry;

Violence against Migrant Women:

- Provide appropriate, effective protection measures to migrant women experiencing violence, abuse and discrimination, enforcing restraint orders, referring women to comprehensive social services including shelters and safe houses;
- Strengthen legal mechanisms that support migrant women rights and their integration into society, allowing them to live with dignity;
- Remove barriers preventing migrant women from accessing basic and essential services, including language lessons, social assistance, information on their rights, skills based training and employment opportunities, medical and psychosocial support and emergency assistance;

Ratification and implementation of the Istanbul Convention:


The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (i.e. the Istanbul Convention) was highlighted as an excellent and ground-breaking treaty and a milestone in the Council of Europe's efforts to prevent and combat gender-based violence and promote gender equality. The Istanbul Convention makes it clear that violence against women and domestic violence can no longer be considered a private matter but a state's obligation to prevent violence, protect victims and prosecute perpetrators. The Convention significantly reinforces action to prevent, investigate, prosecute, punish, provide integrated policies and protect women who are subjected to violence and abuse, including

migrant women, irrespective of their legal status. The Convention also establishes a number of important criminal offences: physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence, stalking, sexual harassment, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, and forced abortion and forced sterilization. In order to improve the policies and legislation protecting women from violence, it is necessary to combine forces and resources, and ensure that the Istanbul Convention is ratified and implemented. 

Storytelling, contd from pg. 3

Bosnian rape survivor. Ms. Gito filmed her visiting the place she was held, explaining what happened, and her emotional reaction. This video was used to advocate for better laws and policies. The video is being shown in schools, at agencies and for NGOs. As a result, funds were set up for survivor counseling and help and new laws were passed.

In her work to protect children from trafficking, Carol Smolenski, Executive Director of ECPAT-USA (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking) stressed the importance of using official documents for advocacy. The US Government signed a declaration document that any US citizen exploiting a child in another country can be prosecuted by ECPAT. This is a big deterrent for sex tourism in foreign countries. It is a powerful document to bring to legislators, policy makers, agencies, etc. Air France shows a video to its passengers that it is against the law to exploit children. US airlines declined the video saying they needed proof. After shown the government document they felt comfortable to show the video. Use those documents!

The Briefing ended with Q&As, many about recovery and victim care. Ms. Smolenski distributed lists of resources and explained that many victims are now spokespeople and advocates. She closed on a positive note stating that there are many inspiring statistics of recovery and advancements in child protection policies worldwide due to the ongoing efforts of NGOs, governments, and the UN. 


Too Young, contd from pg. 4

for how this NGO took time to talk with her parents and convince them that Mirriam had a wealth of opportunities if only she was not subjugated to the physical and emotional torture of being a child bride. They focused on the importance of education for girls and emphasized the risk for her health if she would become pregnant too young. Mirriam's parents were following a traditional cultural practice and did not realize the harmful impacts it would have on her. Now, Mirriam is a 22-year-old activist for women's rights, fighting to protect young girls who cannot defend themselves.

After Mirriam's testimony, panelists highlighted factors impacting the issue. The main factor is the cultural belief that formal education is not for girls. H.E. Mr. Benedetto

della Vedova, explained, "men have to be educated on the issue". There should be no impunity for this illegal act. Governments should educate boys and men about laws, sanctions and the rights girls should be able to enjoy. Parents need to be counseled to support their daughters.

Poverty and lack of financial resources is also a factor. H.E. Hooria Mashhour shared a good practice against child marriage in Yemen. Activists, government and NGOs launched a food program in schools to provide food to families only if children were attending classes, deterring poor families from forcing their child for marriage due to financial strain. This practice allowed many girls to escape forced marriage.

The last important factor is implementation of laws forbidding child marriage. As Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin and Ellen Log both highlighted, states must set up laws to protect girls' rights. Many States are part of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) or Regional Conventions on Human Rights. In spite of strong commitment from governments, enforcement is lacking, especially in rural areas. "Child marriage is an appalling violation of human rights and robs girls of their education, health and long-term prospects," says Batatunde Osotimehin, M.D, Executive Director, UNFPA. Her Royal Highness Mabel van Oranje stressed that child, early and forced marriage constitutes a continuous series of violations. Society has to make sure that rights are enjoyed. Cultural barriers used to prevent this issue from coming to the forefront. The international community acknowledges progress. 

Upcoming Events

- ❖ April 10 WFWP 22nd Anniversary
- ❖ May 8-12 WFWPI 18th Women's Conference for Peace in the Middle East, Amman, Jordan
- ❖ May 13-16 WFWPI 10 Year Anniversary Conference & Pilgrimage "Women for Peace" Jerusalem, Israel
- ❖ May 15 Int'l Day of Families
- ❖ June 30 - July 9 ECOSOC Substantive Session in Geneva
- ❖ Aug. 12 International Youth Day
- ❖ Aug. 28-29 UN DPI/NGO Conference, New York
- ❖ Sep. 16-29 69th Session of UN General Assembly
- ❖ Oct. 16 World Food Day
- ❖ Oct. 17 Int'l Day of Eradication of Poverty
- ❖ Oct. 24 United Nations Day
- ❖ TBA WFWP 14th Int'l Leaders Workshop