



Toward Interdependence and Mutual Prosperity: The Role of Religious Leaders and Parliamentarians

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WFWP Session: Brief Report

*Session IV: Beyond Coexistence:
Dealing with the Challenges of
Interdependence*

*Values Education and Healthy
Families – Fostering an Environment
for Prosperity, Citizenship and
Interreligious Harmony*

Building a peaceful world of co-prosperity and shared values has long been the goal of religion, politics and educational institutions. In a stable, loving family, individuals may naturally develop capacities for love, respect, communication, cooperation, service, conflict resolution, forgiveness and other social skills that are relevant to life in the wider society. How can this universal principle be applied and extended to encourage harmonious social relations and partnerships for peace in our communities and in the family of nations?

The Moderator, Ms. Carolyn Handschin, UN Office Director, Women's Federation for World Peace International welcomed a full room, describing the session's theme as being the critical component in all discussions on peace. Professor Yeon Ah Choi Moon, Chairwoman, WFWPI spoke of creating a culture of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universally shared values, as espoused by the Founders of WFWPI. To make our peace culture sustainable at a time

when the selfishness of nations pushes harmony away, we must look to family as the basic unit of all human organizations. While the participation of women is needed everywhere, the highest priority is educating our society with a righteous value system and love to motivate.

Hon. Dr. Vasilika Hysi, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament, Albania focused her statement on the responsibility of parliamentarians in strengthening inter-religious harmony. Albania has a tradition of religious coexistence. In these times of radicalization, preserving it requires

continuous effort. Dr. Hysi defined six areas where MP's must be vigilant. These include, defending non-discrimination laws, promote inter religious /cultural understanding and cooperation, adopt measure that reduce inequalities and poor education, encourage self regulation to prevent hate language in media, lawmakers and faith leaders need to work together to prevent extremism and promote good models.

Hon. Nina Nováková, Member of Parliament (2013-2017), Czech



Republic is currently working with civil society in search of solutions to current threats. Three worlds, “pragmatism” with its uncritical belief in technology to society, “hedonism” that is and denial of time honored values and instant gratification - and “bureaucracy” a dehumanized system of regulation. All three ignore ethical consideration. If society is ecosystem, family is basic structure. Need to understand and respect it. It is a place to learn virtue. Our society lacks fidelity, which cultivates empathy. Pragmatic criteria wants to claim objectivity, but the safe environment of family is only breeding ground for healthy conscience, commitment and true freedom to love deeply and live virtuously. No society, as no family can survive without fidelity at its core.

Rev. Ivo Sasek, President, Organische Christus Generation (OCG),

Switzerland, is a pastor, writer and founder of a media network. He values family and the role of women. It was women who remained with Jesus to the end, he said. Speaking in metaphor and parable, he referred to humanity’s need to live together in harmony referring to the life cycle of ants and their need for community for survival. When people change from self-absorption to concern for others, quality of life and breadth of accomplishment changes dramatically. But we have to learn to live together. Only with God as our center, that can be done. Incredible insight comes to solve problems with this connection, not through ideology, but by recognizing our innate common core. Annemarie Sasek, wife and mother of Rev. Sasek’s 11 children added a few words from the audience in closing.

Ms. Tahirih Danesh, Senior Programme Consultant, Ward and Brown Foundation, United Kingdom,

is also a human rights researcher and activist and member of the Bahai faith. This day is the celebration of the founding of her religion. Having suffered torture as a child, smuggled to freedom, she turned to human rights. While education is critical to human rights, legislation is equally so. We need to form families that last. Millennial generation is different from their parents. The internet has transitioned the younger generation to the intangible, accumulating experiences (metaphysical). Living in a time where spirituality is priority, search for authenticity, becoming true self. That is first function of parents in a family, loving and letting go- love is also the creative force for civilization building.

Almost 20 minutes of discussion with the audience provided opportunity for many views to be shared.

Speech of Prof. Yeon Ah Moon

Your Excellencies, distinguished speakers, and honored guests!

It is my sincere pleasure to participate in the panel discussion here at the Parkhotel Schonbrunn in Vienna. I am also bringing the greetings and appreciation on behalf of Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, Co-Founder of WFWP, who wishes to encourage and convey her love to all of you for your great endeavors for empowering women and promoting peace in your own fields.

Peace-loving leaders,

The theme of the discussion today is “Values Education and Healthy Families - Fostering and Environment for Prosperity, Citizenship and Interreligious Harmony.” To be effective, this debate must be taken seriously on many fronts: in early childhood education in families, in school curricula and in broader socio-cultural relations.

Ever since WFWP’s establishment in 1992 in Seoul, Korea, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and her late husband, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, as co-founder and the biggest supporter of empowering women’s rights, worked to promote an ideal of “One Global Family under God,” and the culture of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universally shared values.

Their efforts through various volunteer and educational programs brought closer to the realization of an era of peace, harmony and coexistence. Moreover, they have created dozens of peace and education based organizations touching many issues

and concerns of the today’s world. One of the most recent is the Hyo-jeong Academy, an institution that develops academic curricula and training programs for youth with the intention to cultivate global citizens and future leaders of integrity and compassion.

Distinguished leaders,

This is the critical question, how to make peace culture sustainable, from generation to generation, in this time, when the selfishness of nations, in pursuing only their own interest has pushed harmony and unity further away.

To counter this ongoing plight, WFWP emphasizes that the real cement of a Culture of Peace has more to do with true love, which is the implementation

of the lifestyle of living for the sake of others and responsibility for creating the better environment for the future generation. Even the SDG Preamble got it right, “No one will be left behind”.

Beloved global citizens,

I would like to remind you the founder’s vision on the role of family, especially women, in creating the sustainable harmonious world as the peace-maker of the 21st century.

“Peace must first be realized in the individual and in the family because these form the basic unit for all human organizations and systems. When true parents, a true husband and wife, and true children all attend God and form a true family of peace, and when that



family expands to form a clan, nation and world, a true world of peace will be realized. The role of the mother and wife in creating peace in the family is an absolute and eternal one.

Thus, participation by women is needed in all aspects of society, from diplomacy and politics to the economy and legal system reform. Women also need to be active in education and culture, in sports and the arts, not to mention the diverse activities of NGOs.

However, I want to emphasize that before all these things, the highest priority for our activity needs to be education of our society with a righteous value system, plus the True Love and True Family movement. We need to encourage and foster the practice of living for the sake of others.” (from “World Peace and the Role of Women”; April 10, 2002, Tenth Anniversary of the Women’s Federation for World Peace)

Beloved peace-loving leaders,

While I would have more to say on this pivotal topic, I also look forward to listening to your thoughts, activities and proposals. We cannot bring the changes we want to see, alone.



Beginning with link-minded leaders and practitioners, especially in the fields of education, law, media, religion and culture, who are working together for the common purpose can bring the true culture of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universally shared values.

This in fact is the vision behind the inauguration of the Inter-religious Association for Peace and

Development (IAPD) today. It is a vast network of people and associations, ultimately interlinked through our desire to secure a world where children can really grow up free to develop their goodness and unique contribution to a flourishing peace culture.

We look forward working together with you.

Thank you.

