

## CSW61, 25th Anniversary of WFWP: Highlights

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### Overview

This year's annual CSW61 (Commission on the Status of Women) event was indeed very special in that WFWP International also celebrated our 25th Anniversary (founded in 1992) and the 20th Anniversary of our General Consultative Status as an NGO at the UN!

The week from March 12- 19, therefore, was chock full of programs, events, activities, and also meetings. We were especially grateful and blessed to have our WFWP International President, Professor Yeon Ah Choi Moon present with us during that entire week!

The events were put together mostly by the WFWP UN office and team under the leadership of Mrs. Alexa Ward, in collaboration with WFWP USA national headquarters and local chapters and chairwomen in the New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania area.

The main events were also greatly supported by Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, Continental Director (now International Vice-President) of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), and Dr. Michael Balcomb, President of FFWPU USA and the Family Federation media team as well as the Apple Heaven USA band.

Altogether there were eight public events and about seven additional WFWP meetings and gatherings with Professor Choi Moon, and the International Vice Presidents (IVPs) as well as national leaders from abroad, to discuss internal matters, strategy, and planning for vision 2020.



All programs and events were attended well, were rich in content, and provided opportunities for young

women to be educated and exposed to the UN and WFPW International History and current vision and mission.

**Sunday, March 12: Consultation Day – Opening Day of all CSW events: “Women’s’ Rights and Gender Equity in the Changing World of Work”**

Angelika Selle attended these very enlightening opening sessions with the chair of the NGO Committee Susan O’Malley opening the events at the Hunter College with about 400 women present. This year, for the first time since its inception, more than 8,000 women came to New York, and more than 1,100 organizations signed up to participate and have programs.

Right after the welcoming remarks a volunteer ensemble, United Nations Singers, sang four songs from different countries in the original language, truly setting the stage for international harmony. Two engaging panel discussions followed that set the tone for the topic; all interspersed with poetry and more songs. Together, this created the atmosphere and readied our mindset for the upcoming two-week marathon sessions in and around the UN. The special performer of the day was the Harlem Diva, LeeOlive Tucker, a singer from the Civil Rights Movement that I met personally after the performance.

I also attended a breakout session on Sex Trafficking, Child Labor in Africa and Forced Labor of Women. There, we met women from organizations addressing and battling with this insidious issue that no one seems to have gotten a handle on so far. For the first time the question was asked: What does it take to change mindsets and heart sets, for these serious problems to be resolved for good?



**Monday, March 13: WFWPI Parallel event – “Women Fostering Peace and Co-prosperity: Intergenerational Collaboration Sans Arrogance” at Assembly Hall, Community Church of New York**

This year’s panel consisted of both younger and older women, who shared their personal experience honestly in response to questions posed by the emcee, Ms Roudabeth Jamshid Eini. Questions included balancing work and career, how to relate with older and younger generations, and much more.



This year again, for the third time in a row, Dr. Bishop Gonzales’ Macademy Middle School students participated in the event to learn from the discussion and be exposed to this kind of setting. WFWP USA also invited friends and guests from the New York, New Jersey area as well as guests from other parts of

the country.

**Tuesday, March 14, 2017: Big SNOW BLIZZARD in New York and surrounding areas.**

All CSW events were cancelled on that day as well as the special first time WFWPI “Meet and Greet” Open Event for networking and relaxation which had been planned at 43rd Street. I spent the entire day with our guests and colleagues from Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and Chicago; discussing and sharing about WFWP more in depth, the WFWP Founders, vision in action, the goals for 2020, and so much more. It became an educational and informational personal seminar for the ladies who were able to understand WFWP more in depth as a result.



**Wednesday, March 13: WFWPI 25th Anniversary Celebration Dinner at the Diplomat Ballroom at the ONE UN New York Hotel located across the street from the UN.**

It was significant to celebrate this occasion with representatives of the UN, close associates, and friends of WFWP; most of the international vice-presidents as well as some of the early pioneers of WFWP. It was rather significant to hold this kind of occasion at this location, since WFWP International in a way represents nations working together in unity.

Three Global Women’s Peace Awards were given to Mrs. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Dr. Rima Salah, and the Nation of Japan, whose members were the very first pioneers worldwide to make the foundation for WFWP. Also, President Yeon Ah Moon received a special award from Founder and President of Active Intervention of Mothers, Inc., Amalle Daou. The award was for the organization’s 2017 Best Contribution to Women’s Empowerment.



**Thursday, March 14, 2017: Evening session for young women, Strategic Planning and Peace Studies as an Academic Discipline by Dr. Thomas Ward**

WFWP USA invited 10-15 young women from the local area who attended and were very pleased with the information given.

That evening, the news arrived of the sudden passing of two wonderful WFWP women leaders in Thailand and also Taiwan, who had faithfully invested themselves over many years for WFWP. President Yeon Ah Moon immediately called for a special spiritual reading followed by testimonies and a prayer circle for the sisters to surround them with love and comfort at their time of transition. We all felt the seriousness of that moment and for the work of empowering women worldwide.



**Friday, March 17, 2017: Special WFWP USA Meeting with Pr. Yeon Ah Moon**

Despite her grueling schedule, Pres. Yeon Ah Moon asked to meet with WFWP members and volunteers of WFWP USA from the area. In spite of the short notice, close to 20 women gathered to hear straight from her heart, the heart of Mother Moon, and guidance for this current time. Pres. Moon gave a special gift of a high-class pen to the ladies to say thank you for their great efforts.



**Saturday, March 18: Horizon Summit at East Garden**

This one day seminar provided an opportunity especially for young women to receive inspiration and education on WFWP, and how WFWP works in the UN as an NGO.

Mrs. Angelika Selle, WFWP USA President emceed for the day, opened up the morning by welcoming all women and sharing what inspires her to work with and for WFWP: Vision, Mission, Philosophy and Founders. She interjected many personal anecdotes and stories to show how WFWP puts the vision into practice.

Dr. Rima Sala then spoke on her experience in working at the UN for the last few decades; followed by a more intimate setting with the young women in a circle, encouraged to ask any kind of question.

Mrs. Karen Smith, long time former member of WFWP (for 20 years) elaborated on how to best work within the system of the UN while using a more “feminine” approach and how to get results. It seemed like a good marriage of putting the vision of WFWP into action at and with the UN.

After a delicious Korean lunch, Dr. Thomas Ward surprised most all with a very intricate group exercise to understand and own the reality of negotiating oil prices between two enemy countries such as Iraq and Iran. It brought to everyone the important lesson of seeking mutual prosperity and trying to satisfy each party’s interests rather than stubbornly holding on to your own position. It was very insightful and entertaining.

All participants had the opportunity to then take a tour of the East Garden, the former residence of the Founders, Dr. and Mrs. Moon. It is always a very uplifting experience to spend time in their residence, which is filled with a clear and beautiful spirit: “leaving all concerns and worries outside the door,” as the calligraphy sign says at the entrance of the house.



**Sunday, March 19, 2017: Horizon Summit- Educational Tour**

Those who were able to stay for one more day, were in for a special retreat to go on a field trip to visit the FDR home and tour of the museum. Through a special lecture they learned about the contributions of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt to the founding of the UN, had a great lunch and toured the Val-Kill historic site, where the former first lady had spent the latter years of her life.

