

WFWP International at the United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women

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The Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) participated in the annual sessions of the United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) for the past thirteen years, its mission being the advancement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. This year, 59th annual session of CSW runs from March 9 until March 20, 2015 and includes more than 450 parallel events. The theme is "Implementing the Beijing Platform for Action," referring to the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995.

As a young organization of only three years, WFWPI was fortunate to participate in this conference, along with a delegation of several hundred WFWPI leaders and members from around the world. WFWPI's delegation was led by Ms. Maureen Reagan, the daughter of US President Ronald Reagan.



WFWPI's delegation for CSW 59 was led by Prof. Yeon Ah Moon, President of WFWPI, and Ms. Carolyn Handschin, Director of the WFWPI UN Office, and included close to seventy WFWPI leaders, members and guests from ten countries. WFWPI leaders included international vice presidents, secretary generals, national chapter presidents, WFWPI UN representatives, interns and staff.

FWWPI participated in CSW 59 on a number of levels, beginning with the NGO CSW New York Consultation Day which was held in the historic Apollo Theater in Harlem on Sunday, March 8. One highlight of this event was a heartwarming presentation by the Honorable, respectfully referred to as Mama, Gertrude Mongella, Under-secretary General from 1996 to 1997, and the first president of the Pan-African Parliament.



On Monday, March 9, Prof. Yeon Ah (Choi) Moon, President of WFWP, International, attended the Opening Session of CSW 59 representing WFWPI. Speakers included Secretary General Ban Ki Moon and UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

FWWPI held a parallel event at the Armenian Convention Center with the theme, “Young Women and Leadership: Education, Opportunities, and Obstacles,” from 12:30PM – 2:00PM, on March 9, which was attended by 270 guests, which included student delegations, from six schools in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey. It was co-sponsored by Montage Initiative, WFWP, USA and the World Youth Alliance.



On the following day, WFWPI hosted a luncheon in the UN Headquarters in New York, which was attended by over 100 leaders, members and friends of WFWPI. The keynote speaker was Ms. Patience W. Stephens, Special Advisor for Education, from UN Women. President Yeon Ah Moon presented the vision of WFWPI’s founder, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon.

Ms. Carolyn Handschin, Director of the WFWPI UN Office, gave a presentation entitled “WFWPI and the Beijing Platform for Action.” Ms. Tokuko Sato, a Tsugaru Kite artist from Japan, presented gifts of custom made kites to the speakers, high level guests, and WFWPI leaders. Gifts were presented to the speakers, as well as to the parallel event panelists and moderators, by President Yeon Ah Moon, Ms. Carolyn Handschin, and Ms. Alexa Ward, Deputy Director of the WFWPI UN Office.



WFWPI was pleased to be among the participants who attended the Planet 5050 event which was held in the Manhattan Center on Tuesday evening, March 10, and featured UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, the Honorable Hillary Clinton, and the Honorable Bill de Blasio, Mayor of New York City.

The WFWPI delegation attended dozens of side events which are sponsored by governments and UN entities in the UN headquarters, as well as parallel events organized by NGOs which were held in the UN Church Center, Salvation Army, and Armenian Convention Center. A group of six WFWPI young adults attended an advocacy training session, which helped them to better understand the process afforded by CSW to influence governments and policies in the area of women. Both the side events and the parallel events offer an extraordinary opportunity for greeting and meeting the highest level leaders in the organizations sponsoring CSW, as well as networking opportunities with NGOs throughout the two week period.

One of the highlight of this week was the opportunity to spend time with Prof. Yeon Ah Moon. Throughout the week in informal settings, as well as dinner meetings which she hosted on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, Prof. Moon shared deeply about the Founder's vision, lifestyle, and how it applies to WFWPI. Leaders had the opportunity to gather and assess WFWPI's current status as an organization and to consider how to develop to the next level.

WFWPI would like to acknowledge the hard work of UN team members and the growing involvement of young adults in its work. They are looking forward to participating in CSW 60 and are planning for greater impact and involvement.