

## Mothers Heart Peace Network Kenya Project

Susan Kone  
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*Chairwoman Susan Kone, who provided the material below and whose "voice" begins the article, is in the green and wearing a traditional headdress.*

On the twenty-fourth anniversary of the founding of the Women's Federation for World Peace, the Kenyan chapter launched a new project, which the chairwoman of WFWP- Kenya, Mrs. Susan Kone, described in the following paragraphs.

Today is a special day for Kenyan women as we launch the Mothers Heart Peace Network Kenya Project, which is the vehicle to accomplish Vision 2020. The goal is to "uproot and eradicate ethnic and cultural divisions, gender inequality and poverty and create a conducive environment for peace, love and prosperity in the spirit of 'Forgive Love and Unite.'" This project includes educational, social and service programs in all the counties and sub-counties within Kenya. We will collaborate with all partners of goodwill to make Kenya number one as God's nation.

Kenya is now preparing for the 2017 General Elections. As mothers, we do not want a repeat of the post-election violence, which occurred in 2007–2008, when more than a thousand people lost their lives, rapists attacked women and children became separated from their families.

We need to create a conducive environment for peaceful elections and continuous peaceful coexistence and prosperity after the elections. The time has come for all women to use their God-given motherly hearts to nurture not only their families but also their communities and indeed their nations. Women are nurturers by nature and they have unconditional love in their DNA, so they need to believe in themselves and go to the front line. They need to take their rightful positions. They need to make their voices heard and use their God-given talents and skills to nurture and build peace in all levels of human existence.

Dr Hak Ja Han with her Mother's heart, which is overwhelmingly loving and kind toward humanity is our model of how to nurture and to love our communities. I believe the saying, "People who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do." Therefore, we need to unite as women with positive thinking and a positive mind-set and alongside our partners, families and communities to create and nurture a world of peace.

I welcome all women and men of goodwill to join forces with us in this wonderful project for the victory of Vision 2020. God bless you all.

### **First chairwoman of WFWP-Kenya**

The first woman to head WFWP, in Kenya, Mrs. Felister Kililo, also addressed the audience, which included ambassadors for peace, woman leaders from various non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, religious organizations, civil society and the county government. This is the bulk of what she said that day.

I am happy to be part of this organization and I sincerely thank our founders for their vision in establishing world peace through encouraging women to play their motherly role as nurturers and peace builders. Beloved women leaders from all over Kenya, we now carry the heavy responsibility to fulfill this vision and establish peaceful families, communities and nation. As our founder, Dr Hak Ja Han said, "The goal of WFWP is not to become another secular women's organization; it does not aim to be an external, political or combative women's rights movement targeting the misdeeds of men. Nor does it

exist just to advocate the expansion of women's rights, gender equality and the women's labor movement. Rather, it is a global peace movement on an entirely new level with the providential significance of realizing the ideal world that was God's vision at the time of the Creation."

WFWP inauguration came at a historic moment of providential significance. WFWP has engaged in diverse activities over the last twenty years, geared to realizing the vision and ideals of pure love, happy families and a peaceful world that transcends the barriers of race, religion, language and national boundaries. This we have carried out in the spirit of Rev. Moon's founding message, which urged us to expand a model movement of true love to the whole world based on living for sake of others. As women and as mothers, we are called upon to unite and join with all other partners to ensure sustainable peace in our nation Kenya. I am grateful to you for listening closely to me today. I pray that God's blessing will be with you, your families and with your work.

### **A male voice in praise of WFWP**

Professor Jared Onyari, a professor and university lecture, and an ambassador for peace, also spoke. The following paragraphs are excerpted from his message that day.

I consider this event as an important opportunity to strengthen the national movement and implementation of the program of action on the culture of peace. "A Culture of peace needs the participation of women," said Lakshmi Puri, assistant secretary-general of the United Nations. The developing world has six hundred million young girls, and the global population is experiencing a youth bulge. Yet, the role and contribution of women and youth to the culture of peace is not only important because women and youth represent majority of the global population but because the women and young people are key drivers of the radical change of mindset, of institutions and of the culture that we all seek.

Women and their empowerment are crucial in advancing the culture of peace in all its vectors: education, economic and social development, human rights and equality, democratic participation, advocacy based on true knowledge but also wisdom, tolerance and understanding at all levels in the family, community, nation, region and the world.

We must all work to increase investment in building the capacity of women's organizations and local civil society networks working in conflict and post-conflict settings in line with the Security Council Resolution 2122. There is the issue that a culture of peace requires the participation of women and especially young girls and this project, Mother's Heart Peace Network Kenya, will play a crucial role in creating empowerment forums in which women can receive empowerment so as to play this crucial role as peace builders and nurturers in all levels in our society.

I also ask the international community and the culture of peace constituency to continue playing its leading role in fostering an international environment which recognizes and promotes women's and girls' rights by engaging women as well as men -- girls as well as boys -- in a quest for peaceful and non-violent societies. Let us work together to fulfill this vision of a peaceful and prosperous world. May God bless you all.

### **A victim turned rescuer**

By Mrs. Preet Kaur, an ambassador for peace from United Kingdom, was the guest of honor at the event. Dr. Preet Kaur has taken a strong stance as a former victim of forced marriage. She suffered through difficulty and now aids others and advocates abolition of this terrible practice. The following paragraphs are from her speech that day.

My initial meeting with the WFWP was in 2012 in the United Kingdom, where I live, through the Home Office and Mrs. Mitty Tohma the WFWP- UK president. She requested that I speak about my experience as a victim and survivor of a forced marriage and honor crime at the Houses of Parliament. Since then, I have heavily affiliated myself with WFWP and have been awarded as an ambassador for peace.

I run a small organization that evolved through my personal experiences called "It's my Right, No forced Marriages" that campaigns against and trains against forced marriages and "honor" crimes. Recently a book about my experience has been published, it's called Wed Locked.

I would like start with a quote from the Sikh scriptures that has inspired me endlessly as a woman, "From woman, man is born; Within woman, man is conceived; to a woman he is engaged and married. Woman becomes his friend, through a woman the future generation comes.

When his woman dies, he seeks another woman; to woman he is bound. So why call her bad? From her kings are born. Without woman, there will be no one at all."

This shows that the women are the backbone of the society. A woman's role is never-ending and we have

important roles to play, whether it is nurturing families or working in the society. All our endeavors are to promote a better society that lives in harmony, peace and love. As women, we have come a very long way, especially in a very patriarchal society. We have, we are and will continue to break the barriers through intergenerational cycles of abuse and strive for gender equality. We need to create support networks for the more impoverished, through education and empowerment for example by addressing serious issues like female genital mutilation, child marriages and gender based violence, which are perceived as traditions but in reality are harmful malpractices. Therefore, awareness and education are very important. Also commercialism and the media, promote sex in all forms that exposes and encourages abuse, which needs to be tackled.

As a part of a collective society, men too need to be involved in addressing relevant issues. More importantly, we need to impart knowledge to our future generations, our children through education, raising awareness and empowerment in order for our peace building roles to evolve. I thank you all once again and congratulations on the launch of the Mother's Heart Peace Network Project.